



2021+ STRATEGIC PLAN of the VŠFS

Prague – March 2021

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2021+ Strategic Plan of the University of Finance and Administration

- **The 2021+ Strategic Plan of the University of Finance and Administration – a private higher learning institution of the university type – for the period 2021-2031 is based on documents at the national level:**
 - Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports for the period from 2021
 - Strategy for the internationalization of higher education for the period starting with the year 2021
 - Plan for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Higher Education for 2021
 - Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training ET2020
- **As well as the following internal and operational documents:**
 - Statutes of VŠFS
 - Internal regulations of VŠFS
 - Internal assessment for the period 2015-2019
 - Annual activity reports
 - Medium-term development plan of VŠFS until 2024
 - Long-term plan for 2020 (countdown)
 - Research strategy framework for 2020
- **Mission of VŠFS**
 - “The mission of the University of Finance and Administration is to become a leading respected and sought-after academic and scientific research institution that creates the prerequisites for its graduates to achieve sustained career growth and full-fledged personal development. Upon graduating, they will gain a competitive advantage and find success in the labor market throughout their working lives.”
- **Vision of VŠFS**
 - Build and develop a full-fledged university-type workplace.
 - Preferably concentrate on business management, marketing communications, finance, regional development and public administration, information science, applied law, security, and criminalistics.
 - To engage in study and teaching activities in the European educational area.
 - Focus on the innovation and updating of study offering, develop high quality and standards in the provision of the educational process and related services.
 - Continuously innovate and further expand the portfolio of non-accredited educational products.
 - Offer special educational programs of an interdisciplinary character for graduates of other universities.
 - Provide new programs in the continuing education system to meet current demand.
 - Increase the proportion of basic research funded from external sources (Czech Science Foundation - GACR, Technology Agency of the Czech Republic - TACR, operational programs, etc.) and involvement in international projects.
 - Work with partners to continuously increase the managerial attractiveness of MBA programs.
 - Provide additional services to students in extra-curricular activities, create an alumni network and a program for supporting gifted students.
 - Provide informational services to alumni using research activities and original results.
 - Develop proprietary full-fledged publishing and editorial activities for the internal and external market.

- Apply the methods of modern best practices in the management of the school.
- Provide effective support for all areas of the school's activities through a high standard of its material and technical equipment.
- **Strategic objectives of VŠFS for the period 2021+**
 - Smoothly extend accreditations according to the new accreditation system, according to the term of validity of the accreditations of the individual degree programs, with the need to strengthen the academic staff through habilitation professors and associate professors and through thesis supervisors and thesis opponents with scientific rank (CSc., Ph.D.), including the staffing requirements for the supervisors of degree programs.
 - In the area of quality, focus on science, research, and publishing activities as a decisive factor in the assessment of higher learning institutions and cultivate international cooperation and mobility of students and teachers.
 - Implement the findings of the international research quality assessment at VŠFS in accordance with the Methodology for Evaluating Research Organizations and Research, Development and Innovation Purpose-tied Aid Programmes ("Methodology 17+").
 - Develop the doctoral degree program in Finance and successfully accredit the second doctoral degree program in Business Law (in both Czech and English versions) as an essential prerequisite for maintaining the status of VŠFS as a higher education institution of the university type.
 - Develop, innovate, or create new degree programs according to the needs of practice and the employability of graduates in the labor market, thereby maintaining a stable number of students (at least 3,000) and partners of VŠFS for securing the funds necessary for developing a private university and conforming to the tasks of the strategic plan.
 - Develop cooperation with foreign universities; maintain the number of foreign students at a minimum of 800.
 - Develop the Study Centers in Most and Karlovy Vary as full-fledged university facilities.

I. Develop competencies directly relevant for life and practice in the 21st century.

- Establish and develop the VŠFS as a **premiere educational institution** receiving general respect for its expertise, reflected in its involvement in research projects of various levels, and for its professionalism, reflected in the wide range of instructional methods used, applied proportionately to the individual degree programs and subjects
- Strengthen the respect of the University within the university environment
 - Develop a partnership with the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports and the National Accreditation Office for Higher Education; be a qualified opponent of proposals submitted by them, increase representation and activities in the working groups they create, and there to participate, for example, in simplifying the accreditation process and strengthening its transparency
 - By monitoring the needs of the National Accreditation Office for Higher Education for staffing its evaluation committees, have a ready selection of the University's top academics available, nominate them to the NAU's governing bodies when called upon, and thus increase the representation of VŠFS in these bodies crucial for accreditation
- Support the development of academic staff competencies for teaching
 - **By creating a system** of initial and ongoing **training of academic staff in teaching methods**, focusing in particular on early career instructors and those just starting to use new educational technologies
 - **By creating an incentive system** for academic staff that takes into account the quality of teaching, an important criterion of which will be the ability to introduce new methods into teaching and to implement them at a level comparable to the top entities in the higher education environment in the Czech Republic
 - **By developing methods for evaluating teaching**, including more frequent use of auditing and student (graduate) surveys conducted by the University Research Center.
 - **By supporting regular exchange of teaching experience** among academic staff members at the level of divisions, faculties, as well as the university as a whole, by creating a platform for sharing best practices in the VŠFS Information System
- Develop methods for quality assurance of educational activities and verification of learning outcomes, already at the stage of creating new degree programs or preparing them for submitting an application for extending their accreditation
 - Expanding the Scientific Board, which also acts as the Internal Assessment Board, to include **experts in higher education pedagogy** as well as external cooperation with experts on international trends in education
 - Consistent **use of the ECTS system** in the development of the curricula
 - Always **operate from the graduate profile** when creating curricula as the basis for deriving relevant learning outcomes and the subsequent development of individual courses of study, including the choice of appropriate teaching methods and organization of studies
- Strengthen the link between studies for practical application and future employment by
 - **Increasing the proportion of vocationally oriented degree programs** implemented by the University; prepare new applications for accreditation for these programs, using experiences drawn from the preparation and implementation of the vocationally oriented degree programs implemented thus far

- Emphasizing **soft skills and general competencies** in the curricula of degree programs, regardless of their focus
- **Supporting student entrepreneurship** through projects ensuring knowledge transfer between the academic and application spheres (e.g. student start-ups), while taking advantage of cooperation with the Association of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises of the Czech Republic and other university partners from different areas of the economy
- **Supporting the active involvement of students** in teaching, creative activities, and university life, by improving the system of special-purpose scholarships and supporting student social life, in particular the International Student Club, which is responsible for organizing joint events of domestic and foreign students, strengthening the integration of foreign students, and making their student exchange at VŠFS easier.
- **Incorporating socially and medically disadvantaged students and students with special needs** in all study and extra-curricular activities implemented at VŠFS and creating conditions for their future employment
- **Reducing the proportion of lectures** especially in professionally oriented degree programs and developing interactive teaching methods, e.g. student projects and workshops
- **Expanding the involvement of external partners in the preparation** of seminar, undergraduate, and diploma **theses**, using links with both traditional partners of the university and entities through which supervised professional practice is provided in professionally oriented degree programs
- **Designing curricula** with an emphasis on creating a clear vision and link to **future student employment**
- Continuous **monitoring of labor market needs** towards Industry 4.0, including the involvement of employer representatives and university graduates in the preparation of curricula
- Developing and continuously updating the **methodology of internship management** based on experience gained from its implementation
- Creating a **platform for regular meetings of academic staff** teaching in professionally oriented degree programs with **staff of partner entities** where supervised professional practice is being carried out, sharing experience in the implementation of hands-on learning and its integration with instructional methods
- Develop the professional profile and prestige of studies by
 - **Selecting the most suitable degree programs** by field of education for their accreditation and implementation as **professionally oriented programs**, at the same time sufficiently attractive according to the results of student and graduate surveys and the opinions of representatives of collaborating business and public entities
 - **Growing cooperation with vocational schools**, arranging the transition of their graduates to the university's bachelor's degree programs or transforming the educational programs of vocational schools into professional bachelor's degree programs
- Strengthen international mobility, as well as the internationalization of the university environment, by increasing the number of international students and academic staff, creating a motivating environment for participation in mobility, and promoting language and global competences among traveling staff

II. Improve the availability and relevance of flexible forms of education

- Increase the use of distance learning methods in full-time degree programs by
 - **Combining full-time and distance learning** take advantage of the benefits of both formats, innovate existing practices, and avoid the risks of weakening the social integration of students while enhancing distance learning methods. In so doing, pay increased **attention to socially disadvantaged students** who may not have sufficient means for access to e-learning resources
 - **Increasing the proportion of lectures streamed online**, with an emphasis on maximizing the capacity of key academic staff for teaching in Prague and at study centers
 - **Expanding the range of learning materials available in electronic form** and improving their accessibility to students
- Develop a range of flexible forms of learning, including online learning, by
 - **Offering excellent continuing education courses**, including courses provided internationally (online and summer schools)
- Ensure the quality of education provided through flexible forms, taking into account their specific features, by
 - **Systematically verifying the adequacy of the chosen educational methods** to the anticipated learning outcomes through auditing, observation sessions, evaluation workshops, and by creating a platform for sharing best practices, both within the University and through exchanging experiences with other similarly oriented universities
- Enable better alignment of studies with family and working life by
 - **Ensuring the availability of support services**, including all study administration, especially for students in combined studies caring for young children or other dependent persons
- Improve the recognition of results of prior in subsequent studies by
 - **Developing an internal system for recognizing the results of prior learning** in line with the principles of ECTS and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education
 - Implementing **revision of the internal regulations** governing the process of handling applications for recognition of prior learning in order to minimize its administrative complexity
- Increase the informative value of continuing education certificates for employers by
 - **Obtaining authorizations to conduct examinations** as part of the National Qualifications System and providing such examinations, especially for graduates of continuing education courses.
 - **Issuing certificates to students** in degree programs **who complete their studies unsuccessfully**, containing information on the credit value of courses and learning outcomes achieved
- Promote the offering of continuing education through career advisory services by
 - **Offering mentoring and coaching to graduates** in the context of continuing education, aimed at further career, technical, and personal development
 - **Growing cooperation** with regional branches and contact sites of the **Labor Authority of the Czech Republic** by offering continuing education as requalification courses.

III. Increase the efficiency and quality of doctoral studies

3.1. Anticipated trends of initial indicators of doctoral studies

- Maintain high demands on the quality of doctoral students' publications and their involvement in research, including research with an international dimension, by acquiring a sufficient number of doctoral students (in both Czech and English language programs).
- Obtain accreditation of the next doctoral program, *Business Law*, in both Czech and English. This field of study is intended for the Faculty of Legal and Administrative Studies.
- Increase the number of applicants admitted annually in the range of 5-10 applicants admitted. In English-language degree programs, maintain the number of at least 10 applicants admitted per year. To attract new applicants, use not only internal “resources” (i.e. own graduates) and internal tools (informative lectures by the degree program guarantor), but also external “sources” (graduates of other universities) and promotional tools in the form of study offerings on social networks and digital marketing in search engines.
- Seek to increase the proportion of full-time doctoral students who can be more involved in research.

3.2. Improving conditions for doctoral studies

- **Stimulate the interest of full-time doctoral students in working in departments by gradually increasing the doctoral student stipend.**
- Continue to encourage doctoral students to engage in research, including the international dimension of such engagement, through support in the form of funding for research-related costs such as publication fees, translation and proofreading costs, conference fees, travel, and similar costs.
- Strengthen the involvement of doctoral students in research through internal research projects and external projects such as those funded by the Czech Science Foundation and Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (in these cases consisting mostly of involvement in projects that have been awarded to the supervisors of doctoral students).
- Continue to organize doctoral student conferences involving doctoral students from other universities, as well as the doctoral student discussion seminar. Organize the same events also in the event that accreditation is also obtained for the *Business Law* degree program.
- Continue organizing the competition for the Prof. Vencovský Award, which is intended either for young economists up to 35 years of age or for doctoral students and recent graduates of doctoral degree programs up to 2 years after completion, as a form of indirect support of doctoral studies not only at VŠFS but also at other Czech universities.

3.3. Increasing the quality of doctoral studies and their openness and internationalization

- Pay attention to the dissertation topics offered. It is necessary to insist that the dissertation topics offered are based on the research activities of the supervisors and are not subordinated to the various individual interests of the candidates. **Therefore, when dissertation topics offered are updated annually, supervisors will be required to match their existing research activities (especially publishing activities) with the topics offered.**
- Strengthen the cooperation between the supervisor and the doctoral student in terms of ongoing communication throughout the academic year (communication regarding the completion of examinations

and credits, consultation on doctoral students' publications, etc.). **The intention is that the doctoral student's annual assessment should describe this communication or, alternatively, explain why it has not taken place.**

- **Progressively involve supervisors from other institutions** both in the current and especially in the forthcoming doctoral degree program *Business Law*.
- Monitor and enhance the publishing activities of doctoral students. The minimum mandatory publication requirements include at least two articles in peer-reviewed journals and at least two papers in conference proceedings. To motivate the improvement of doctoral students' publishing activities, the Program Committee of the *Finance* program will discuss the **possibility of announcing a competition for the best publication by doctoral students in a given academic year with a financial reward.**
- Enhance the professional activities of doctoral students abroad. Promote the involvement of foreign experts in the Program Committees and dissertation defense committees and their use as opponents or as supervisors.

3.4. Duration of doctoral studies and successful completion; graduates

- Reduce the duration of studies, in particular through financial incentives (payments for “unused” credits) and the influence of faculty advisors (their influence on doctoral students). **A revision of internal study regulations towards limiting the duration of studies by setting a definitive number of years for possibly extending studies is also under consideration.**
- Increase the success rate of doctoral graduation through measures for increasing the graduation success rates, namely:
 - strengthening the individual approach to the fulfillment of study obligations (e.g. the possibility of resubmitting term papers),
 - cooperating with the supervisor in publishing activities,
 - seeking opportunities for international activities of doctoral students.
- **Introduce the “postdoc” position. Establish a special employment relationship for a period of approximately five years, with incentive pay, with clearly defined research tasks that will be rigorously evaluated.**

IV. Strengthen the management strategy and efficient use of capacities in the area of Research and Development.

4.1. Change the environment and set up processes – mission, vision, goals

- Contribute to solving global research challenges (including through international research consortia) such as financial stability, the digital economy and Industry 4.0, and security including cybersecurity.
- Retain research organization status and the ensuing implementation of research projects, including projects with public support from major providers (Czech and foreign).
- Improve the skills and abilities of students through research. Ensure continuity of research by strengthening the competencies of early career researchers (e.g. through junior internal projects).
- Maintain and strengthen the quality of publications and create favorable conditions for research in terms of personnel, financial, institutional, and material resources.

- Organize academic conferences, seminars, and discussion forums to present results and to exchange views and experiences within the academic community, as well as competitions with prizes for winning papers.
- Implement the Research Organization Assessment Methodology *Methodology 2017+* (its nationwide Modules 1 and 2 and Modules 3, 4, and 5 for the higher education segment) and the institutional funding associated with it.
- Emphasize other sources of research funding (external research projects, contract research, supplemental activities such as consulting, expertise, training, and professional education).
- Where possible, also use dedicated support for SVV (according to a planned legislative change announced by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, this support will be merged with the support for DKRVO).
- Participate in both existing (e.g. bilateral Czech-Bavarian, Czech-Chinese, Czech-Polish collaboration, INTER-EXCELLENCE program, joint programming initiatives) and newly prepared programs of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports supporting international cooperation in the field of R&D.

4.2. Changing the environment and setting up processes/tools

- Provide incentives for the creative activities of academic staff through institutional rules, in particular:
 - by adjusting the minimum requirements for research, publishing, and other creative activities and their evaluation, place an ever greater emphasis on quality instead of quantity,
 - focus on correctly establishing and rigorously evaluating the “Personal Records” of academic staff in relation to quality research activities,
 - enhance compensation for high quality publications and reserve sufficient funds for such compensation.
- Make effective use of public research support, in particular:
 - consistently apply the rules for internal research projects, including university-specific research projects in order to maximize student involvement in research and to develop the careers of early career researchers,
 - continue to strongly support the development of project proposals for external providers through internal research projects (experience in forming research teams will be applied to the development of external research projects),
 - use new knowledge and experience from the implementation of research projects to develop new (interdisciplinary) research topics for the VŠFS and to support these topics financially,
 - use the support of external research projects (including multidisciplinary projects) to provide accredited degree programs with relevant research and development and support the professional growth of academic staff,
 - give preference and support to “Open Access” publishing, reimburse fees for publication in quality journals to the maximum extent possible.
- Provide professional support to academic staff for the conduct of research and development (and consequently their career development), in particular through the following institutions:
 - Department of Research and Development – searching for external grant opportunities (both national and international), administration and financial management of projects, internal assessment of the quality of R&D, transfer of information for external assessment of R&D; strategic development and

administrative support for the operation of the *Internal Grant Agency*, including assessment of projects at the proposal stage, during implementation, and after completion, which also includes administrative support for academic staff during project implementation; administrative and technical support for the production of publication outputs, documenting research and other creative activities, regularly evaluating them and reflecting them in guiding processes.

- Library Services Center and VŠFS Publishing – information resources for R&D, including electronic resources, publishing services,
 - University Research Center – discussion and project seminars, coordination of the activities of laboratories, particularly the **Laboratory of Criminal Science and Forensic Disciplines, Laboratory of Neuromarketing and Marketing Analysis, Laboratory of Interdisciplinary Projects and Strategic Grants.**
- Continually modify, supplement, or expand (based on recommendations including the assessment according to the *Methodology 2017+*) institutional policies affecting research and development at the VŠFS.

4.3. Development of infrastructure services

- Achieve 60,000 volumes in the library collection, with at least 12,500 at each study center. After reaching this benchmark, a 5% renewal of the collection per year is planned due to space constraints as part of depreciation.
- Electronic Information Resources:
 - ProQuestCentral – remain a member of the project for the period 2023-2027, which is already under preparation.
 - ProQuestBooks – retain and verify whether this could be under the CzechElib project, which would lead to cost savings.
 - New ASPI – expand access to book titles as of the current date.
 - Monitora – allow remote access through integration with the IS of VŠFS, while expanding the number of articles downloaded and providing new analytical modules and features.
 - EBSCO eBooks – to be used for purchasing titles of particular importance.
 - Transition to the eduID service operated by the Czech Academic Identity Federation (<https://www.eduid.cz/>).
- Develop the VŠFS Repository as a portal for the publishing activities of university staff. Following the launch of the new version of the National Repository of Grey Literature (NUSL) of the National Library of Technology in Prague, deepen cooperation and transfer of records from the VŠFS Repository to NUSL.
- VŠFS Publishing
 - produce expert monographs through VŠFS Publishing of such a standard that they continue to meet the requirements set out in the *Methodology for Evaluating Research Organizations and Research, Development and Innovation Purpose-ties Aid Programmes* approved by Government Resolution No. 107 of 08 Feb 2017, and which will aspire to achieve the best possible results within the module M1 – quality of the results selected for the assessment of research organizations according to the above mentioned Methodology,
 - develop the editorial plan in cooperation with the faculty management and the heads of the relevant departments,

- assign all articles in our peer-reviewed journals, as well as all e-books, proceedings, and other relevant production of VŠFS Publishing with a DOI (digital object identifier),
- continue publishing the scientific journal ACTA VŠFS at the established frequency of 2 issues per year,
- continue publishing the scientific journal *Forensic Sciences, Law, Criminalistics* at an increased frequency of 3 issues per year.

4.4. Supporting excellence and social relevance of research

- Develop socially relevant research, especially topics responding to current societal challenges in the Social Sciences (Finance, Business and Management, Media and Communications, Sociology, Psychology, Criminology and Forensic Disciplines, Law, Security, Regional Development, and Public Administration) and also partly in the Natural Sciences (Information Science), to ensure collaboration between researchers from different academic disciplines (interdisciplinarity). Most of these topics have an international dimension and will therefore be developed in cooperation with foreign research organizations.
- The VŠFS will financially support the development of new research topics in relation to accredited degree programs based on the proposals of the faculties, which may also submit proposals for new research teams.
- In its research activities, VŠFS will reflect the **National Policy for Research, Development, and Innovation of the Czech Republic 2021+ and the Innovation Strategy of the Czech Republic 2019-2030**, especially in the following research topics: the pillar of National Start-up and Spin-off Infrastructure; the pillar of Digital State, the pillar of Manufacturing; the pillar of Smart Marketing; **National Priorities of Oriented Research, Experimental Development, and Innovation (and the related National Smart Specialization Strategy)** especially in the priorities Competitive Knowledge-based Economy (especially “Strengthening the Sustainability of Manufacturing and Other Economic Activities” and “Mapping and Analysis of Competitive Advantages”), Social and Cultural Challenges (in particular “Governance and Administration” and “Culture, Values, Identity, and Tradition”), Secure Society (in particular “Security of Citizens” and “Security of Critical Infrastructures and Resources”).
- Contribute to improving the quality of research outputs through incentive mechanisms governed by internal regulations, in line with the recommendations of the International Assessment Board and also in keeping with new experiences arising from the assessment of research organizations at national level.
- Increase the excellence of research performed by obtaining external support for basic research projects, in particular from the Czech Science Foundation.
- Develop cooperation with the business community in research projects and public procurement contracts, in particular:
 - with the support of the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (continue to attract applied research projects in programs similar to the ÉTA program),
 - or direct cooperation, especially in the form of contract research (continue the successful cooperation in the field of security research and in the field of regulation of corporate governance; establish cooperation in other areas, especially in the financial sphere).
- Maintain at least two parallel projects supported by the Czech Science Foundation or Technology Agency of the Czech Republic and at least the same number of contract research projects.
- Continue to launch calls for internal research projects through the *Internal Grant Agency*. Preserve student

projects and their scope in view of the ambitions of expanding the opportunities for doctoral studies at VŠFS (*Finance* in both Czech and English, *Business Law* in both Czech and English), complete all documentation in English and allow full-fledged submission and implementation of internal student projects in English.

- Maintain the current trend of approximately 10-15 internal projects running in parallel, with a gradual predominance of student and junior projects.
- Use positive motivation tools (based on the principle of rewarding successful research teams) to provide support particularly to excellent publishing activities. Using the same instruments, try to reduce low-value publications. Thereby better approximate the publication practices common in countries with high R&D performance.
- Ensure that ethical principles are observed in publishing and other research activities. In this area, strengthen communication between the CKS and the OVV towards academic staff (predatory journals, proper citation of sources, analyses of collaborating institutions) as well as monitoring compliance with the principles set out in the *Code of Ethics of VŠFS* (provided by VŠFS as part of the internal assessment of R&D quality).
- Continue to maintain the publication of the two scientific journals of VŠFS *ACTA VŠFS – Economic Studies and Analyses* and *Forensic Sciences, Law, Criminalistics* and use these journals not only to support the publishing of academic staff of VŠFS, but particularly of authors outside VŠFS, both domestic and foreign.
- Sustain the presence of the journal *ACTA VŠFS* in the international databases RePEc, EBSCO, DOAJ, Index Copernicus, Elektronische Zeitschriftbibliothek, and ERIH PLUS. The journal's strategy is to gradually meet the conditions for inclusion in the Web of Science (in the ESCI collection first) and Scopus databases.
- Continue the tradition of conferences and strengthen their international dimension.
- Reinstate conferences on marketing communication and business management.

4.5. Development of international collaboration in the area of research

- Participate in the support for bilateral R&D cooperation of the Czech Republic as part of the INTER-EXCELLENCE program (in progress until 2024) and its sub-program INTER-ACTION, which enables the provision of support for R&D projects carried out by Czech research teams in bilateral relations in the fields of basic and applied research, with the involvement both of research organizations and companies in relations with EU and non-EU countries,
- Participate in the specific call for projects of the Operational Programme Research, Development, and Education and the related Operational Programme Johannes Amos Comenius to support international mobility of researchers, to include both secondments of Czech researchers at foreign research organizations and secondments of foreign researchers in research organizations in the Czech Republic.
- Achieve continuous involvement of VŠFS in at least one international research project. VŠFS will also strive to expand cooperation with foreign companies, especially in the form of contract research.
- VŠFS will try to introduce “post-doc” positions for early career researchers. Foreign researchers will be able to apply for these positions. This should contribute to strengthening the international research teams working at VŠFS.
- Implement mobility of academic staff, especially in the form of participation and presentations at

international (domestic and foreign) conferences. It is advisable to combine participation in these conferences with a secondment as part of the ERASMUS+ project. Navigate countries outside Central and Eastern Europe, particularly those with a mature evaluation culture and high R&D performance.

- Enhance international cooperation also in the area of academic journals, attracting foreign authors, including by maintaining partner relationships with the editors of foreign journals (add more to the existing two).

4.6. Cooperation with strategic partners

- VŠFS will continue to emphasize the provision of assistance to research organization assessors in accordance with the Methodology 2017+.
- Implement to the maximum possible extent the Research, Development and Innovation Council (RVVI) recommendations for facilitating the identification and recording of R&D results and their benefits (e.g. introduction of ORCID identifiers, Organization Enhanced in WoS). If the RVVI is interested, VŠFS will participate as a co-organizer of conferences on Methodology 2017+, in a similar way as in 2019. VŠFS is prepared to provide organizational support for its assessment in 2025. In this process, VŠFS will implement the experience and good practice principles from the evaluation carried out in 2020.
- Continue to responsibly process statistical tasks of the Czech Statistics Office in the field of R&D (Government Budget Appropriations on Research and Development – GBARD, VTR 5-01 - Annual Report on Research and Development). Adapt internal record-keeping to increasing demands for information collected (e.g. distribution of public support according to socio-economic objectives, categorization of academic staff according to the predominant academic discipline).

4.7. Development of the University Research Center

- The activities of the University Research Center are focused on the following activities:
 - Support and develop the research activities of faculties or departments, seek and assess the relevance of external research opportunities (including contract research, public contracts, and commercial bids) and publishing opportunities; create conditions for increasing the citation index of teachers,
 - participate in the development of project (idea) plans, with emphasis on interdepartmental/interfaculty collaboration, assess their overall relevance and the effectiveness of expected outputs within the criteria of Methodology 17+, propose and consult on the staffing of research teams, identify and recommend opportunities for joint interfaculty (interdisciplinary) research, carry out expert debates and internal opposition of project proposals on a platform of regular Project Seminars,
 - systematically navigate the area of scientific research and publishing activities in accordance with the profile of accredited degree programs of VŠFS (and priority research topics of the faculties),
 - regularly carry out in-house empirical surveys (subject survey of teachers, survey of graduates' employability, survey of students' social profile), provide commercial expert analyses and specialist consultations in the field of empirical research methodology, sociological and marketing analyses, and neuromarketing, as well as offering advisory and consulting activities in the field of criminalistics and forensic disciplines,
 - support pedagogical activities in illustrative, practical, and applied terms, especially by implementing

the project of criminalistics laboratories and applying the material equipment of instrumental techniques for neuromarketing measurement,

- at the same time, provide scholarly support for the preparation and production of thematically selected qualification (diploma and doctoral) theses requiring more demanding methodological and analytical procedures.

V. Build capacity for strategic management of VŠFS

- Develop tools for implementing key strategic priorities
 - Ensure independent evaluation of the implementation of the Strategic Plan of VŠFS, in particular assessing the achievement of the objectives set and the impact of the implemented activities on the quality of VŠFS
 - Select an implementer independent of VŠFS management
 - Implement the conclusions of the independent evaluation into updates of the Strategic Plan through the plan for its implementation for each year
- Establish an innovation support fund from own resources
 - Support innovation at the level of individual degree programs
 - Support modernization of teaching methods
 - Promote improvement of support services
- Strengthen strategic management at higher learning institutions
 - Develop internal capacity to analyze, prepare, discuss, implement, and evaluate strategies
 - Develop internal mechanisms for the allocation of funds and remuneration of academic staff to support the development of VŠFS in its identified priority areas
 - Cultivate the role of the Scientific Board of VŠFS
 - Staff the Scientific Board with personalities who move VŠFS forward and devote sufficient time and energy
 - Prepare the Scientific Board's decision-making documents in advance and at sufficient quality
 - Involve the Board of Directors and Scientific Board of VŠFS more in discussions regarding the VŠFS strategy
 - Improve cooperation and coordination between the different governing bodies of VŠFS
 - Build cooperation between the Board of Directors and the Scientific Board into the management system of VŠFS
 - Ensure quality cooperation between faculties and transfer of information from faculties to departments
 - Implement the meetings of the Rector's College, the meetings of the vice-rectors, deans, and department heads into the management system of VŠFS
- Promote cooperation and exchange of experience between VŠFS and other higher education institutions
 - Use CAMBAS and other organizations of universities for cooperation between VŠFS and other higher education institutions
 - Take advantage of the membership of academic staff of the school in the Scientific Boards and Program Committees of other universities
 - Take advantage of partnerships between VŠFS and specific universities, including foreign universities
- Strengthen the strategic management of human resources at VŠFS
 - Select and retain academic and non-academic staff with the necessary competencies
 - Expand capacities for ensuring care of human resource and support services

- Set criteria for staff assessments and regularly evaluate staff against these criteria
- Support horizontal mobility of academic and non-academic staff throughout their careers
- Ensure continuous generational renewal of middle management leaders
 - Motivate middle management to groom successors
 - Establish a system for identifying and preparing potential future leaders and developing their managerial skills
- Finish creating a fair remuneration system for academic staff
 - Evaluate academic staff according to quantitative and qualitative criteria
 - Emphasize personal interviews, reviews by supervisors, results of student surveys, and assessment of major publishing and scholarly outputs

VI. Reducing the administrative burden on university staff

6.1. Generally applicable systemic measures

- Place an emphasis on the formal organization of the University and the procedural model of management as part of fulfilling the mission and role of the University as a premium educational institution both efficiently and cost-effectively, so that the desired objectives are achieved in the most effective way on the basis of the set competencies.
- Primary activities, such as education and research, are managed according to the defined competencies of the Rector and individual vice-rectors, thus achieving centralization of the University's core agendas. As a result of the evaluation processes, the division into two faculties without legal subjectivity is maintained.
- So as to support the academic staff to fully pursue their mission and not be distracted from it by the administrative and operational agenda, there are support institutions established at the University that handle specific agendas. At the same time, a number of administrative activities have been outsourced to contractors.
- In order to optimize the achievement of the objectives, the University has set up a process management model, which is updated by continuous mapping of the University's activities so that the administrative burden is systematically reduced on the basis of simplification of processes.
- By developing the professional apparatus, the automation of administrative activities is being achieved with the help of information technology, and for the coming period the emphasis is on continued digitization.
- Effectively and cost-effectively fulfilling its mission towards society within the educational and creative role of the University, as well as its third role: namely supporting academic staff in their primary activities and reducing activities among senior staff that are not directly related to their primary tasks.
- Monitor whether the operational/technical staff of VŠFS perform primarily the activities actually necessary for the fulfillment of the University's mission and create sufficient staff capacity for these administrative apparatuses, including monitoring and deepening their technical preparedness.
- Identify reserves, redundancies, and activities that are completely unnecessary by continuously analyzing the process model of VŠFS management, i.e. by analyzing the structure and flow of processes. Free up resources (human, financial, material, etc.) by evaluating how processes are set up.
- Continue digitization by introducing new systems, especially in the area of support activities

(computerization of the circulation of internal documents), with the aim of reducing the administrative burden on university staff.

6.2. Anticipated operational objectives and measures of a specific nature in relation to the procedural classification of activities at the level of the VŠFS

- Educational and pedagogical activities

- In terms of administrative burden, two main activities are carried out within this process: the methodological management of the pedagogical process and the organization of studies. The methodological management of the pedagogical process includes preparation of the accreditation of degree programs, and their sustainability and evaluation. As part of the organization of studies, specialized staff members create and ensure the conditions for the effective implementation of accredited degree programs in the academic year.
- The external administrative burden is mainly due to the Higher Education Act. These include components relating to the assessment of the university and accreditation, decision-making on students' rights and obligations, and other legislative norms.
- The processes of methodical management of the pedagogical process and the organization of studies have been set in advance over the medium term by the study and examination regulations and over the short term by the organization of the academic year and other internal regulations, which are updated as a rule each academic year on the basis of an analysis and evaluation of the previous period. It is this regular updating that allows for effective simplification of processes.
- The VŠFS Information System is used in a comprehensive scope (the system is provided by Masaryk University) for administrating both of the above main processes and data management; also in use are a special program for creating timetables and organizing state final examinations and Microsoft Teams software for providing online forms of study. The intranet, common directories, and shared data repositories are used for internal process support.
- The VŠFS will maximize the use of the applications and functions of the VŠFS Information System in relation to quality assurance of educational activities, both from the perspective of the performance of the activities by the academic staff and from the perspective of the University.
- Introducing computerization of teaching records and thereby streamlining the process of monitoring teaching.
- Extension of the institution of electronic signatures in the matter of decision-making on students' rights and obligations in order to speed up and streamline the processing of applications under the Administrative Code.

- Organizing and managing studies as part of the student care process

- The administrative burden of this process consists mainly of keeping records of the course of study of individual students in accredited bachelor's, consecutive master's, and doctoral degree programs, organizing the admission procedure and its results, ensuring the ongoing care of students and maintaining long-term relations with alumni. The VŠFS Information System (VŠFS IS) is predominantly used for the administration of these processes.
- The external administrative burden cannot be further reduced in the provision of activities in the

given process, as this is mandatory data processing under the Higher Education Act or data processing in accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, the Ministry of the Interior, and the provision of statutory cooperation according to the applicable legislation.

- Prepare the development of the “Úřadovna” [Admin Office] application in the VŠFS Information System for the computerization of other types of applications of students and applicants and optimize the e-Filing application, especially with integration with tracking the financial obligations of students of the University.
- In cooperation with Masaryk University, continue to expand and innovate the VŠFS Information System depending on legislative changes and deepen digitalization.

- **Academic/research and publishing activities**

- In relation to the administrative burden, the following activities are essential in the field of research and publishing activities: preparation and implementation of research projects and internal and external quality assessment of research activities.
- For external projects, the processes are governed by the implementing regulations of the providers of support for specific programs and public competitions (Czech Science Foundation – GACR, Technology Agency of the Czech Republic - TACR, Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of Culture, international agencies, etc.). Proposals for external projects are submitted via the provider's forms or electronically in the provider's editorial system. For projects in progress, it is necessary to report annually on the progress of implementing the project. A final report is to be drawn up at the end of the project and reports on the implementation of the project results are to be submitted in the ensuing years.
- In the case of external research projects, this involves the administrative burden of completing the relevant project proposal forms, and in the case of research projects, the forms for the project progress report and for the final report and the report on implementation of the results. The technical part of these reports is prepared by the project implementers, while the other elements (including financial matters) are handled by the Department of Research and Development (OVV). For ongoing projects, academic staff are obliged to apply for reimbursement of research activities using internal forms (e.g. requests for foreign or domestic research trips, requests for translation or proofreading of scholarly texts, publication fees, purchase of materials or literature, etc.). These hard-copy forms then go through an approval process.
- Processes for internal projects are governed by internal regulations. Project proposals are submitted electronically on prescribed forms. Each project proposal is evaluated in terms of form by the OVV and in terms of content by two expert opponents. The projects are assessed during the course of implementation on the basis of an interim monitoring report prepared by the project implementers, and also after the end of the project on the basis of a final report from the project implementers.
- For internal research projects, the administrative burden is determined by the obligations towards the provider, the financial settlement of funding in relation to the state budget, and, in the case of earmarked support for specific university research, the preparation of a report on the use of the

subsidy. These duties are carried out by OVV's professional staff. Academic staff prepare project proposals and interim and final monitoring reports in electronic form on prescribed forms.

- With the internal quality assessment of research activities, the process is governed by internal regulations. Assessments are conducted in particular of the results of research activities (at VŠFS these are mainly publishing activities) and other creative activities (preparation and handling of external research projects, membership in various professional societies, committees, advisory bodies, etc., training of doctoral students, popularization of R&D).
- Data from the VŠFS Information System is used for the assessment. Annual summaries of the results and their point values are prepared and the fulfillment of the minimum standardized requirements of individual academic staff members is assessed according to their academic positions (professor, associate professor, assistant professor, teaching assistant). The data is summarized by creative teams/departments and faculties.
- The external quality assessment processes consist of activities as part of the assessment according to the Methodology for Evaluating Research Organizations and Research, Development and Innovation Purpose-tied Aid Programmes (Methodology 2017+), to which VŠFS is subject as a recipient of support for the long-term conceptual development of research organizations.
- The administrative burden on academic staff is limited to Module M1 (describing the professional parameters of the selected research results) and the relevant passages of the self-assessment report of Module M3. The other elements of the full evaluation process are handled by the OVV, and in the case of the self-assessment report, in cooperation with other administrative units of VŠFS. The activities necessary for the external evaluation of research activities use data from the VŠFS Information System and the WoS and Scopus citation databases.
- VŠFS will investigate the possibility of introducing new functionalities into the VŠFS Information System, which will enable a better overview of the activities of academic staff in the area referred to as other creative activities (membership in various professional societies, committees, advisory bodies, etc., training of doctoral students, popularization of R&D).
- The University is preparing the possibility of further reducing the administrative burden by digitizing forms for internal project proposals, which would allow the completion of the project proposal and its assessment by opponents in online format (editorial system).
- With the aim of reducing the administrative burden, the University will focus on linking various databases containing information about the research result (e.g. Web of Science – WoS, Scopus) and through unique identifiers of persons (e.g. Open Researcher and Contributor Identifier – ORCID) and papers (e.g. Digital Object Identifier – DOI), including integrating with the University's database in the VŠFS Information System.
- Creation of a system for computerizing internal requests for payments while carrying out external and internal research projects (e.g. requests for foreign or domestic research trips, requests for translation or proofreading of scholarly texts, publication fees, purchase of materials or literature, etc.). This process is linked to the computerization of the internal document flow, which allows for electronic approval of applications.

- **Foreign activities**

- In relation to the administrative burden, the main activities in the area of foreign activities related to the organization of MBA/BSBA, Erasmus+, and short-term study abroad programs can be divided into three main areas:
 - Projects – preparing and managing the projects and budgets of the individual programs, seeking out new project opportunities, obtaining accreditation of programs, communicating with accreditation institutions, foreign partners, and grant providers.
 - Organization – preparing the implementation of individual programs and mobilities, obtaining instructors, communicating with students and mobility participants, providing the necessary internal administration, promoting individual programs.
 - Implementation – arranging the direct implementation of activities within the individual programs.
- The external administrative burden primarily concerns the project and organization components of the activities. As part of the MBA/BSBA programs, this consists of acquiring accreditation documentation in relation to the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, the National Accreditation Institute, and the Czech Association of MBA Schools, contracts with CityU, and other forms necessary for providing teaching. In the Erasmus+ program, this mainly involves project documentation for European grants to the European Commission and the Czech National Agency for International Education and Research and administrative tasks related to implementing student and staff mobility, including obtaining grant agreements with partners. For short-term programs abroad, partnership agreements are negotiated with foreign partners.
- Activities are carried out using the VŠFS Information System and the MS Teams application. Individual systems also include CityU systems (SharePoint, BlackBoard, CityU Portal), Erasmus+ systems (Mobility Tool+, OLS, Funding and Tenders portal, Erasmus Dashboard, Erasmus App), and other systems such as the software of the Insurance Company VZP or the DHL system.
- The main internal administrative burden consists of keeping extensive records of student files, selection procedures related to student mobility, approval of grants, creation and approval of budget expenditures, and filing internal information related to these agendas.
- Prepare the development of the "Úřadovna" [Admin Office] application in the VŠFS Information System for the computerization of student applications related to the preparation and implementation of international mobility.
- For the MBA/BSBA programs, map the possibilities for using the International Relations Intranet (similar to the one already in use for the Erasmus+ program) adapted to its needs. This would result in the centralizing of documentation and student information.
- In the Erasmus+ program, the University will introduce MyAcademic ID as a unique student identifier and integrate it with the VŠFS Information System, as well as the European Student Card and the Erasmus Dashboard, which will be used for online approval of Erasmus student curricula.
- As part of the optimization of internal processes, the University will focus on achieving greater flexibility in individual programs in the use of funds for activities already approved as part of the overall approved budget of a given program.

- **Support processes**

- The administrative activities in the area of support processes mainly concern activities in the areas of economics, IT, human resources management, operations, and investments. These activities are carried out under contract by the outsourcing company Educo Uni Service, s.r.o.
- These consist of activities that are quite large in terms of administration. The administrative burden is mainly due to the applicable legislation. The main objective is to achieve a reduction of the administrative burden in relation to the primary mission of the University.
- Maintaining the support of the administrative apparatus by upgrading the intranet and network repositories, including the possibility to fill out and download unified internal documents.
- Monitoring options for the implementation of a comprehensive electronic document circulation system (Document Management System), while simultaneously implementing the expansion of the constituent electronic system to include additional functionality from the DMS area.
- VŠFS will continue to develop the digitization of documents in the internal information flow at the level of supporting processes, including an emphasis on software and hardware upgrades.
- Upgrading electronic attendance management, including electronic leave records in cooperation with the software company providing these services.
- Extending the mandatory regular training in Occupational Health and Safety and Fire Protection to include the option to undertake this training digitally.

VII. Internationalization strategy

• **Support language and intercultural training for students and staff of VŠFS**

- Support language and intercultural training for students

- Take measures to use foreign languages as an integral part of study and work at the university
- Ensure a sufficient supply of foreign language courses for students and academic and administrative staff
- Increase the proportion of academic subjects taught in foreign languages and arrange access to foreign language study materials
- Introduce courses for developing intercultural competences with an eye to understanding the culture of partner institutions
- Expand the range of types and forms of international mobility, building on accredited degree programs and taking into account the requirements of students
- Prepare and implement the digitization of international mobilities, including the possibility of combined mobilities consisting of a shorter stay abroad + online learning

- Support language and intercultural training for staff of VŠFS

- Expand the offering of types and forms of international mobility for employees
- Introduce measures leading to a system for developing the competences of academic and non-academic staff in the area of internationalization
- Increase the level of language proficiency of staff by offering language courses

• **Internationalization of the degree programs of VŠFS**

- Increase the number and quality of degree programs offered in foreign languages
 - Continuously monitor demand among foreign students for specific programs and respond flexibly with the offering of existing degree programs
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of the current offering of degree programs
 - Take measures to continuously monitor the quality of foreign language courses and ensure a standard comparable to the corresponding courses in the Czech language, including the design of available literature
- Increase the number and quality of joint degree programs
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of existing joint degree programs with an emphasis on their quality as well as on the demand for them among foreign students
 - Identify suitable foreign partners for the development of joint degree programs/propose and accredit them
- Simplify the process of recognition for education and results of studies abroad
 - In case of obtaining institutional accreditation, introduce a system of recognition of foreign education according to the relevant amendment to the Higher Education Act
- **Creation of an international environment at VŠFS and promotion abroad**
 - Creating an international environment
 - Provide comprehensive information services to foreign prospective students, not only about the degree programs on offer, but also about the process of recognition of prior learning acquired abroad and the process of obtaining visas
 - Support international students before and during their studies
 - Promote VŠFS abroad
 - Take advantage of the offer to present VŠFS on the part of cooperating agencies
 - Take advantage of the Study in the Czech Republic initiative
 - Utilize social media campaigns
 - Utilize partner universities from abroad
 - Cooperate with international student clubs, develop integration activities for international students
- **Strengthen strategic management of internationalization**
 - Apply a comprehensive approach to internationalization in strategic management as an overarching activity affecting all activities of the university
 - Support international cooperation in the form of strategic partnerships and membership in international organizations
- **Accreditation in the area of internationalization**
 - Seek inclusion in European networks of accreditation agencies – apply for membership in ENQA and for registration in the EQAR register
 - Seek non-European institutional accreditation or accreditation of specific degree programs

Prague, March 2021