

APPLICATION

Study field "Social Welfare" for assessment

Study field	<i>Social Welfare</i>
Title of the higher education institution	<i>Rīgas Tehniskā universitāte</i>
Registration code	<i>3391000709</i>
Legal address	<i>ĶĪPSALAS IELA 6A, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1048</i>
Phone number	<i>67089300</i>
E-mail	<i>rtu@rtu.lv</i>

Self-evaluation report

Study field "Social Welfare"

Riga Technical University

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1. Information on the Higher Education Institution/College

1.1. Basic information on the higher education institution/ college and its strategic development fields,.

Riga Technical University was founded in 1862 as Riga Polytechnic, later Riga Polytechnic Institute, and is the oldest technical university in the Baltic States. Following the restoration of the Republic of Latvia in March 1990, Riga Polytechnic Institute was renamed Riga Technical University (RTU). Over years RTU has become the leading centre of higher engineering education and science in Latvia, obtained a positive assessment of international experts and has been accredited by the Supreme Education Council of the Republic of Latvia.

RTU values include sustainable development, quality, openness and cooperation, creativity, academic freedom, motivation to explore and discover.

Until 2024 there were nine faculties at RTU (Faculty of Architecture; Faculty of Civil Engineering; Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology; Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities; Faculty of Electronics and Telecommunications; Faculty of Electrical and Environmental Engineering; Faculty of Engineering Economics and Management; Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Transport and Aeronautics; Faculty of Materials Science and Applied Chemistry). Since 2024 there are four faculties (Faculty of Construction and Mechanical Sciences, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Technologies, Faculty of Computer Science, Information Technology and Energy, as well as Faculty of Engineering Economics and Management), the Institute of Architecture and Design, and structural units Latvian Maritime Academy, Liepaja Academy and Rezekne Academy, carrying out academic activities, scientific research and support activities by approx. 2600 people. RTU is the second largest university in the Republic of Latvia in terms of number of students.

On 31 October 2022, the Latvian Maritime Academy was added to RTU, becoming as a structural unit of RTU. On 1 March 2024, Liepaja University was added to RTU, becoming as structural unit Liepaja Academy and on 1 April 2025, Rezekne Academy of Technologies was added to RTU, becoming as structural unit Rezekne Academy. With this addition, RTU took over several new study fields and study programmes.

This is reflected in the number of study programmes and study fields:

Table 1.1.1.1.

Year	Licenced new study programmes	Closed study programmes	Total number of study programmes	Total number of study fields
2018	0	0	143	12
2019	3	0	145	12
2020	16	0	161	12
2021	5	0	166	12

2022	2	20	148+11	12+2
2023	0	26	133	14
2024	1	2	132+29	14+5
2025 (until September)	0	0	161+33	19+1

RTU carries out active study and research work, acquiring new partners worldwide, working together on project implementation, student exchange and the development of joint study programmes. Active development of a student campus is underway in Ķīpsala, where new faculty buildings are being built, while those built during earlier years are getting a new look, modern content and design.

Many research and scientific projects are being carried out in cooperation with RTU partners, which result in both new patents and successful business activities. RTU successfully develops cooperation to strengthen its role in the development of higher engineering education in the world and in the development of Latvia.

RTU has defined its mission - we are building a competitive, educated, innovative and creative future, the vision - an internationally competitive, dynamic and modern university of science and technology.

Accredited RTU study fields and number of study programmes in September 2025:

Table 1.1.1.2.

Study field	Number of study programmes
Architecture and Construction	19
Economics	7
Energy, Electrical Engineering and Electrical Technologies	8
Physics, Materials Science, Mathematics and Statistics	5
Internal Security and Civil Defence	7
Information Technology, Computer Engineering, Electronics, Telecommunications, Computer Control and Computer Science	35

Study field	Number of study programmes
Chemistry, Chemical Technology and Biotechnology	5
Mechanics and Metalworking, Thermal Energy, Thermal Engineering and Mechanical Engineering	34
Manufacture and Processing	7
Translation	2
Management, Administration, Real Estate Management	29
Environment Protection	5
Transport Services	3
Education, Pedagogy and Sports (Education and Pedagogy)	13
Arts	4
Social Welfare *	4
Language and Culture Studies, Mother Tongue Studies, and Language Programmes	3
Health Care	1
Law	3
Total:	194

* The study programme “Social Work and Social Rehabilitation” (classification code 42762) is not subject to re-accreditation. The two first-cycle study programmes — “Social Worker” and “Social Work and Social Rehabilitation” — are based on the same occupational standard (Social Worker),

lead to the same professional Bachelor’s degree in Social Work, and confer the same qualification (Social Worker). Vilnius University Šiauliai Academy has informed by letter (attached) that, starting from the 2025/2026 academic year, it will discontinue the implementation of the joint programme “Social Work and Social Rehabilitation”. Having evaluated programme duplication, study quality, and resource optimisation, RTU will continue to deliver the first-cycle professional Bachelor’s study programme “Social Worker” at two delivery locations — Liepāja and Rēzekne. The accreditation of the aforementioned joint Bachelor’s study programme is valid until **31 March 2026**. By that time, students of the programme “Social Work and Social Rehabilitation” will be transferred to the programme “Social Worker” (delivered in Rēzekne), with individual study plans developed. The RTU Senate’s decision to close the programme “Social Work and Social Rehabilitation” will be adopted after all students have been transferred to the study programme “Social Worker.”

The offer of RTU study programmes is in compliance with the forecasts with regard to the needs of the labour market in both Europe and Latvia in the coming decade. The offered RTU study programmes ensure education and training of specialists in information and communication technologies (ICT), engineering, management, services, humanities and social sciences, for which a shortage in the labour market is observed now and predicted in future.

In recent years, the number of foreign students studying to obtain a degree or qualification in Latvia has increased. In addition, international student mobility growth is projected to continue also in the future. RTU has great opportunities to further increase the number of foreign students. It also provides an appropriate offer of RTU study programmes in English - 23 first-cycle higher education (Bachelor) study programme, 32 second-cycle higher education (Master) study programmes, and 17 third-cycle higher education (Doctoral) study programmes, and this list is updated from year to year.

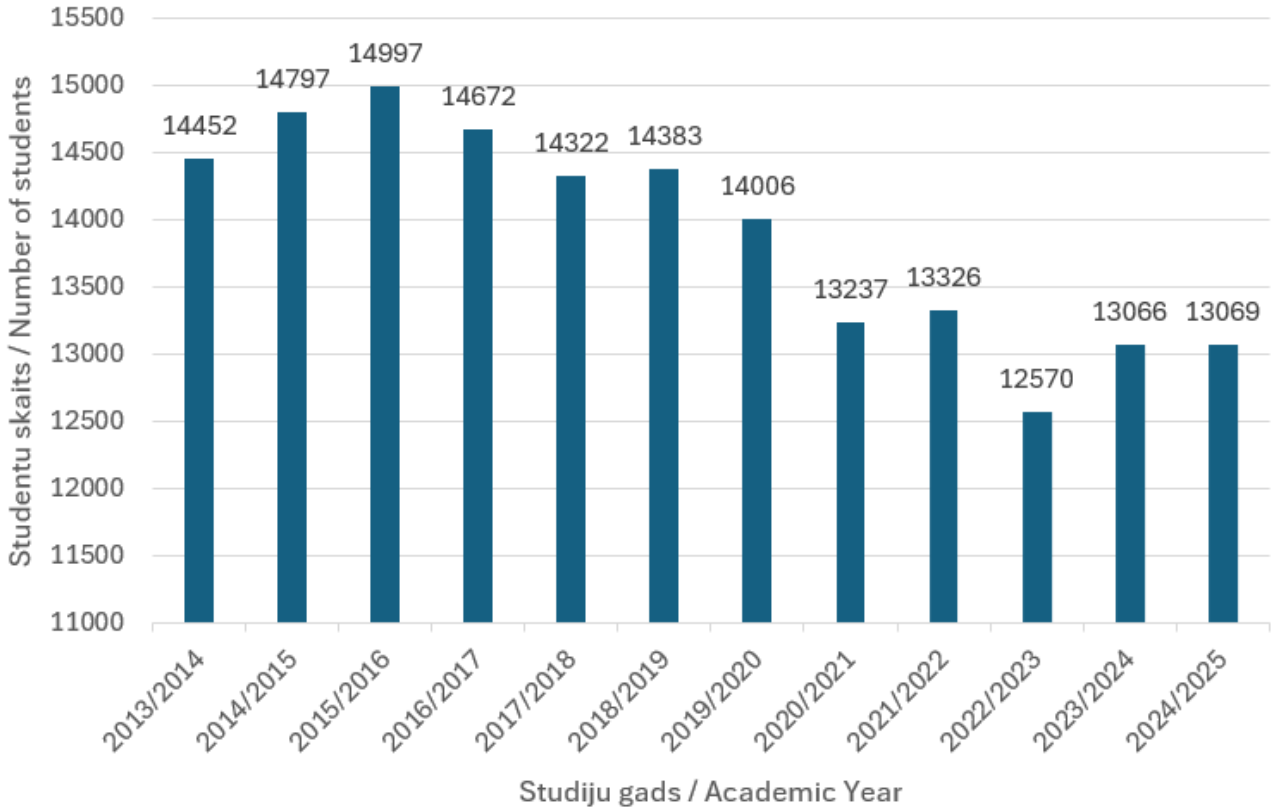


Figure 1.1.1.1. Dynamics of the number of students in RTU during the evaluation period:

In September 2025 at RTU tentatively 11,224 students studied in first and short cycle (undergraduate) study programmes, 2,734 students studied at second cycle (graduate) study programmes and 405 students - at the third cycle (doctoral) study programmes. In total - 14,363

students.

The guiding principle of RTU Strategy for 2023–2027 is the proactive link between the activity of the university and the needs of the national economy, focus on high quality and effectiveness. The basis for the activity of RTU is the study process built on science, innovation and in cooperation with the industry, which ensures preparation of specialists required by the Latvian national economy, thus serving as a foundation for sustainable growth of Latvia. RTU's strategy for the new programming period is a consecutive continuation of the previous strategy of the university for 2021–2025. It has been developed in compliance with the objectives and priorities defined in Latvian development planning documents.

According to the National Development Plan for 2021–2027 of Latvia (<https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/media/15165/download?attachment>), fundamental changes are planned in the near future in four directions – Equal Rights, Quality of Life, Knowledge Society, and Responsible Latvia, in the achievement of which a high-quality study process, excellent research, as well as sustainable innovation and commercialization activities play an important role, which are important elements in RTU's vision to become an internationally competitive, dynamic and modern university of science and technology.

Keynote of the RTU Strategy: High quality and effectiveness – proactive link between the activity of RTU and the needs of the national economy. RTU is one of the leading science and technology universities of the Baltic and Nordic region, which is acting based on a study system built on research, innovation and cooperation with the industry. RTU prepares European and global-level engineers – leaders: developers of new technologies.

In order to implement RTU's vision to become an internationally competitive, dynamic and modern university of science and technology, RTU's strategy defines four main objectives for the next programming period, three of which are related to the implementation of basic university functions: excellent science, quality studies and sustainable valorisation. The fourth, institutional excellence, is related to the university support function and the development of internal governance in the six areas: digitalisation, sustainable development, effective financial and administrative action, internationalisation, communication and cooperation, human resources development. For all the objectives identified in the strategy define specific tasks to be performed and result indicators to make it possible to follow the implementation of the strategy so that RTU can realise its vision.

The implementation of the RTU Strategy is approved by a decision of the RTU Senate. Following the approval of the Strategy, RTU Rector once a year ensures definition of the annual RTU aims and tasks with clear performance indicators set at the level of each RTU unit. RTU Strategy is implemented, and the results achieved are analysed annually with regard to the defined tasks.

RTU Strategy is published at <https://www.rtu.lv/en/university/strategy>.

1.2. Description of the management structure of the higher education institution/ college, the main institutions involved in the decision-making process, their composition (percentage depending on the position, for instance, the academic staff, administrative staff members, students), and the powers of these institutions.

The structure and administration of RTU are established in compliance with the University vision, mission and objectives and taking into account the specifics of the University management. The administrative structure is based on a decentralized decision-making process and obligations

arising from the Law on the Higher Education Institutions, the Constitution of RTU, resolutions of RTU Senate, the orders issued by the Rector, as well as other RTU documents. The functions of various organizational units have been approved in their regulations approved by the Senate. (Throughout the text and in all documents, wherever the term “structural unit” is used, the information also applies to RTU LA and RTU RA).

On 16 August 2021, the amending laws to the Law on Higher Education Institutions entered into force, which envisages changes in the internal management model and the procedure for electing rector, as well as defines a new typology of higher education institutions, setting specific eligibility criteria for each type. According to the new typology, RTU corresponds to the status of a university of science. Changes in the Law on Higher Education Institutions are one of the most important steps to create a modern, effectively managed higher education system in Latvia, based on science and research, oriented towards excellence, being internationally competitive and stimulating the country's economic development.

In view of this, during RTU is continuing a change process. On 31 August 2021, the new regulations of the RTU Senate were approved, on 20 September 2021 the new RTU Senate was elected. The RTU's Council was established in March 2022, a new Constitutional Assembly and a new Constitution was adopted on 24 May 2022. From the management point of view, the changes included in the amendments to the law concern the election process of a rector, the appointment/dismissal of deans, the establishment / reorganization of structural units based on the proposal of the rector, which now is decided by the order of RTU Council.

The council of the higher education institution is a collegial highest decision-making body responsible for the sustainable development, strategic and financial supervision of the university, but the senate will be responsible for the development of university's studies and scientific processes. The council must also ensure the operation of the state higher education institution in accordance with the goals set in its development strategy. The RTU Council consists of five representatives nominated by the RTU Senate, five external representatives of society or industry, who are not professionally related to the university, but whose presence allows the university to respond more flexibly to external changes and expand its strategic vision. The election of external representatives takes place in accordance with the regulations approved by the Cabinet, which ensures the transparency and political neutrality of the process. The council also has a representative nominated by the President of Latvia, thus facilitating strategical focus of the university according to development goals of the state.

Overall, RTU management can be divided into three levels: university level, administration level and faculty level.

At the University level, there is the Constitutional Assembly (200 representatives - 120 academic personnel representatives (60% of the total number), 40 student representatives (20% of the total number) and 40 general staff representatives (20% of the total number). The Assembly includes all 35 members of the RTU Senate, the other 165 members are elected by the central administration, faculties, and institutes that are not part of the faculties, study and science centres and the students' self-government in the amount to ensure proportional representation. The conditions for the formation of the Assembly are defined in Part II of the RTU Constitution (see the file of Annex 01 of the List of Internal regulations).

There are 35 senators in the Senate, of which 27 are representatives of the academic staff (not less than 75% of the representatives, including at least 14 professors or associate professors - not less than 50% of the total number of senators), seven students (not less than 20% of the total number of senators) and the Rector is a member of the Senate in accordance with the position. The conditions for the election of the representatives of the Senate are defined in the attached Article 7

of the Regulation of the Senate of RTU (available at <https://www.rtu.lv/lv/universitate/dokumenti/satversme> (in Latvian) and the file of Annex 02 of the List of Internal regulations).

RTU Scientific Council, which consists of Deputy Deans in for research, Vice-Rector for Research, Deputy Vice-Rector for Research; and representatives of doctoral students; the Rector, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, Vice- Rector for Strategic Development, Vice-Rector for Finance, and the Chair of the Senate also have the rights of membership of the Council.

At the level of administration, the operational management of the university is exercised by the Rector, whereas the Board of the Rector plays an advisory role in the adoption of such decisions, with the participation of the Rector, Chair of the Senate, Vice-Rectors, Administrative Director, , Director of the Legal Support and Document Management Department, Director of Infrastructure Development Department, President of the Student Parliament; the Deans Council comprising the Rector, Deans, Director of the Institute of Architecture and Design, , Director of Riga Business School, Director of the RTU Latvian Maritime Academy, Director of the RTU Liepaja, Vice-Rectors, Director of Administrative Department; operational management meetings uniting the Rector, Administrative Director, the heads of administrative departments (department directors, unit managers). At the faculty level, the highest decision-making bodies are faculty councils whose composition depends on the size of the faculty.

External partners and stakeholders are involved in the University management through the RTU Advisory Board (27 members). It provides an opportunity to receive independent opinion on important issues and possible solutions from various perspectives. Each faculty also has its own Advisory Board, which provides its own vision for improving the supply of study programmes in line with sectoral needs and market trends.

Each faculty also has its own student self-government, while RTU Student Parliament coordinates faculty student self-governments. Students are represented in all RTU decision-making bodies and can therefore participate in the University strategic decision-making.

The Rector, Vice-Rector for Research, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, Vice-Rector for Finance and Vice-Rector for Strategic Development are the senior officials of RTU. The Rector implements the general administrative management of RTU and represents RTU without a specific mandate. The Rector is elected by the Constitutional Assembly for a period of five years for no more than two consecutive terms for the same person. The Rector is elected, approved in office and removed from office pursuant to the regulatory enactments governing higher education institutions.

The operational management of RTU is exercised independently, in accordance with the delegation of the Rector, by the Vice-Rector for Research, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, Vice-Rector for Strategic Development and Finance, Vice-Rector for Innovation. The Senate elects the Vice-Rector for Research, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, Vice-Rector for Strategic Development and Finance based on the recommendation of the Rector for the term of office of the Rector. The Rector may also delegate certain functions to other RTU officials and, on the basis of the Rector's proposal; other Vice-Rector positions may be created by a Senate decision.

The RTU Advisory Council, composed of representatives from various sectors, advises the RTU Senate and Rector on development strategy issues. The Council has the right to propose matters for consideration by the Senate and the Constitutional Assembly. The RTU Strategy and its implementation development programme are presented to the Advisory Council, decision-making bodies, cooperation partners, sectoral associations, and leading companies, from whom comments and suggestions are received and subsequently incorporated into RTU documents;

The Vice-Rector for Development is responsible for stakeholder engagement, identifying current

needs, coordinating key priority activities, implementing recommendations, and promoting RTU's sustainable development;

The Vice-Rector for Research supervises and is responsible for Doctoral study programmes and research work, including support to young researchers, research infrastructure, research funding, applied research, intellectual property protection, RTU scientific publications and scientific conferences. The Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs supervises and is responsible for the study process at the short, first and second cycle study programmes, further education, including training programs, security and quality assurance in studies, credit points, determination of academic staff positions and workload, as well as the selection and admission of students. The Vice-Rector for Strategic Development and Finance is responsible for the development strategy and its successful implementation, supervises the implementation of projects important for the development of RTU, and represents the interests of RTU in interaction with public authorities, partners and the public, for the financial management processes of RTU and for allocating and planning financial resources to ensure the functioning of RTU and implementation of the development strategy. The Vice-Rector for Innovation is responsible for proactive, clear and engaging cooperation with industry and partners, expansion of the ecosystem, involvement of academic staff and students in innovation value chains, including the creation of high-tech start-ups, as well as for the improvement of the support model and mechanisms for the involvement of students and staff in innovation in processes.

The accounting, study administration, science administration and human resources administration at the university are centralized. Other administrative processes, such as procurement and project management, are centralized to the extent necessary to avoid institutional risks. At the same time, a decentralized management system has been provided at a high level at RTU, with a certain degree of autonomy for each academic unit. This means they have their own budget and self-governing structure, which allows defining and meeting the objectives of the organizational unit. This approach motivates the heads of departments to be proactive, to plan the development of the unit, and to apply for funding.

RTU governance structure information is published at <https://www.rtu.lv/en/university/structure-and-administration>.

1.3. Description of the mechanism for the implementation of the quality policy and the procedures for the assurance of the quality of higher education. Description of the stakeholders involved in the development and improvement of the quality assurance system and their role in these processes.

RTU has established an internal quality management system that respects the standards of Part 1 of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

RTU internal quality management system works in line with the "Excellence approach" (approved on 30 January 2017 at the meeting of the RTU Senate, Minutes No 606), as well as the "RTU Quality Policy" (approved by the Senate on 25 September 2017, Minutes No 612).

The Quality Policy is focused on the implementation of the RTU mission and the achievement of the strategic objectives. The Quality Policy lays out the framework and pathways for development and improvements of the RTU Strategy, research, study process and organization. The University

Quality Policy is aligned with the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) standards and guidelines. The RTU Excellence Approach and quality policy are mutually integrated documents which require RTU to use the quality model of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). On 23 September 2022, RTU received an award – a four-star rating "Recognized by EFQM" after evaluating the quality management system implemented by the university. This recognition confirms that RTU has clearly defined the goals to be achieved in Latvia and abroad, is aware of and closely cooperates with partners in industry, the non-governmental and the governmental sector for the implementation of common goals, as well as has clearly visible trends of positive development and growth in the long term.

The EFQM quality model assumes cooperation with students, employees, partners, professional associations, student organizations, other higher education institutions, businesses and organizations. RTU maintains an open dialogue to explore the needs of the parties involved and to respond appropriately by developing feedback to day-to-day and long-term cooperation.

By establishing links with the stakeholders, the administration of RTU contributes to the development of excellence and ensures the clarity, unity, building of the work environment and diversity management of the objectives to be achieved.

RTU staff participates in quality assurance by providing suggestions and feedback to improve the RTU Quality Management System. The heads of RTU departments are responsible for carrying out internal quality assurance procedures and processes in their departments.

Based on the results of regular student and graduate surveys, improvements in the quality of the study process are being planned.

Cooperation with partners, suppliers and other stakeholders takes place in accordance with the RTU Strategy, establishing appropriate cooperation networks and identifying appropriate policies, activities and processes for effective cooperation aimed at ensuring the quality of the RTU activities and acquisition of feedback. To ensure the topicality and continuous development of existing study programmes and before the introduction of new study programmes the interests of all stakeholders in modern and interdisciplinary technology education are considered.

External stakeholders (public authorities, cooperation partners, representatives of the public) assess the study process and its results in State Examinations, practical placements (internships) and accreditation, and contribute to improving the content and quality of study programmes.

The quality management of RTU Liepāja Academy and RTU Rēzekne Academy is being aligned with the RTU quality policy, taking into account the practices already established in these regional units.

More on these aspects, including the examples and efficiency discussion, are provided in section 2.2.1, 2.2.3 and 2.2.4.

RTU Excellence Approach is published at <https://www.rtu.lv/en/university/strategy/rtu-excellence-approach>.

RTU Quality Policy is published at https://www.rtu.lv/writable/public_files/RTU_quality_policy_of_rtu.pdf (also added to the file of Annex 03 of the List Internal regulations).

1.4. Fill in the table on the compliance of the internal quality assurance system of the higher education institution/ college with the provisions of Section 5, Paragraph 2(1) of the Law on Higher Education Institutions by providing a justification for the given

statement. In addition, it is also possible to refer to the respective chapter of the Self-Assessment Report, where the provided information serves as justification.

1	<p>The higher education institution/ college has established a policy and procedures for assuring the quality of higher education.</p>	<p>RTU internal quality management system works in line with the “Excellence approach” (approved on 30 January 2017 at the meeting of the RTU Senate, Minutes No 606; published at https://www.rtu.lv/en/university/strategy/rtu-excellence-approach), as well as the “RTU Quality Policy” (approved by the Senate on 25 September 2017, Minutes No 612; published at https://www.rtu.lv/writable/public_files/RTU_quality_policy_of_rtu.pdf, also added to the file of Annex 03 of the List Internal regulations).</p> <p>In line with the quality management system introduced by RTU, process analysis and improvement are ongoing. Performance indicators and feedback - the results of the stakeholder surveys are analysed. The quality report data are compiled after the end of the academic year.</p> <p>Annual agreements on the target study process performance indicators are signed with the faculties/academies; the quality is assessed by analysing the achievement of the defined objectives relative to the plan. For more details, see the 5th row of this table.</p> <p>The management of the study field is ensured by the study field director (represents one of the places of implementation of the study field)and deputy director (represents the second place of implementation of the study field) approved by the RTU Senate and the study field commission approved by the RTU Vice-Rector for Studies. The study field committee includes directors of all study programs, leading academic staff, employer representatives, and a student representative.</p>
2.	<p>A mechanism for the creation and internal approval of the study programmes of the higher education institution/ college, as well as the supervision of their performance and periodic inspection thereof, has been developed.</p>	<p>The development of study programmes takes place in accordance with the “Procedure for the application, elaboration and amendment of the study programmes” (approved at the Meeting of RTU Senate on 26 April 2021, Minutes No 649; see the file of Annex 06 of the List of Internal regulations).</p> <p>The institutes implementing the study process, Faculty/ academies Councils, the Office of Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, the Student Parliament and the Senate are involved in ensuring the internal study quality of RTU. These institutions carry out comprehensive assessment of the new study fields and study programmes, the changes to the study fields and programmes and the annual reports of the improvement of the study fields. At RTU, the operation of the internal quality assurance mechanism takes place at the level of the Rectorate, faculties/ academies, study fields and study programmes.</p> <p>At the level of the Rectorate, the internal study quality control of RTU is carried out by the Office of Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs. The Study Department performs: (1) the maintenance and control of the Study Programme Register, which involves control of the conformity of the study curriculum to the aims, tasks and learning outcomes of the study programme, as well as the control of changes; (2) maintenance and control of the Study Course Register, which involves control of the conformity of study course descriptions with the learning outcomes, as well as quality control of study course descriptions; (3) periodical student polling at the University level.</p> <p>After the reorganization and integration of RTA and LiepU, the self-evaluation of RTU study fields and study programs will be carried out by a unified study field committee. The self-evaluations of study fields and study programs will be evaluated by the RTU RA and RTU LA councils, but internal quality control will be carried out by the RTU Studies Department.</p>

3	<p>The criteria, conditions, and procedures for the evaluation of students' results, which enable reassurance of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes, have been developed and made public.</p>	<p>The evaluation of learning outcomes takes place in accordance with the "Regulation on the Assessment of Learning Outcomes" (approved at the Meeting of RTU Senate on 30 May 2022, Minutes No 663; see the file of Annex 04 of the List of Internal regulations) and "Regulation on Final Examinations at RTU" (approved at the Meeting of RTU Senate on 26 April 2021, Minutes No 649; see the file of Annex 08 of the List of Internal regulations). Regulation on the Assessment of Learning Outcomes (https://www.rtu.lv/lv/rtusp/sp-studijas/stud-process/studiju-rezultatu-vertesana)(Latvian only) states that the process of evaluating study results includes formative and summative evaluation and regulates summative assessment for evaluation of the achieved study results in RTU study courses. This regulation determines the procedure for summative evaluation of study results achieved in RTU study courses. Regulation defines different types of assessments, rating scales, assessment planning and procedure, determination of the final rating, procedures for appeals, academic debt settling and how to improve academic performance.</p> <p>The procedure for evaluating the study results achieved at the end of the study programme are determined by the Regulations on Final Examinations (https://www.rtu.lv/writable/editor_files/files/nolikums_par_studiju_nosleguma_parbaudijumi_em_rtu_2024.pdf)(Latvian only), which regulates the procedure for organization and conduct of final examinations, general requirements for study graduation papers, final theses (graduation papers), as well as the procedure of development and presentation of study final theses graduation papers. Detailed requirements for study graduation papers final theses, methodological guidelines for development of study graduation papers final theses and the procedure of presentation, pursuant to the present Regulations, is developed by the unit in charge for the implementation of the relevant study program and approved by the relevant Faculty Council.</p> <p>These Regulations apply to studies of all types and cycles, except for third cycle studies.</p>
4	<p>Internal procedures and mechanisms for assuring the qualifications of the academic staff and the work quality have been developed.</p>	<p>In order to ensure the qualification and performance quality of academic staff, professional advancement needs are regularly assessed when evaluating the results. Professional advancement training modules are developed by collecting information from: (1) academic staff surveys on professional advancement needs once in two years; (2) analysis of student polling results; (3) cooperation with student self-governments; (4) world trends and good practices of other Latvian universities in the field of professional advancement of academic staff; (5) information provided by academic staff on professional advancement topics of interest; (6) proposals from the heads of academic units for professional advancement of academic staff.</p> <p>The Centre for Academic Excellence (CAE) (https://www.rtu.lv/en/studies/academic-excellence-centre), a teaching and learning centre, was set up at the end of 2018; its aim is to develop a strategy for the professional advancement of academic staff, including in line with Article 16 of Cabinet Regulations No. 569. Other tasks of CAE are detailed in Section 2.3.6.</p> <p>In accordance with the RTU Policy on Professional Development and Qualification Improvement of Academic and General Staff (publicly available on the beforementioned AIC website), academic units organize regular or one-time professional advancement activities having assessed the need for professional training of academic staff. The units assess whether it is more appropriate to participate in a particular event for certain representatives of academic staff, all members of the unit or to invite also members from other units.</p>

<p>5. The higher education institution/ college ensures the collection and analysis of the information on the study achievements of the students, employment of the graduates, satisfaction of the students with the study programme, efficiency of the work of the academic staff, the study funds available, and the disbursements thereof, as well as the key performance indicators of the higher education institution/ college.</p>	<p>tudent expectations and satisfaction with the curriculum and study process are identified in sequential and planned surveys at all stages of study. Student surveys are organized in accordance with the Regulations on “Student Polling for Assessment of the Study Process” (approved by the resolution of RTU Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs No 02000-1.1-e/8A as of 1 February 2021; see the file of Annex 20 of the List of Internal regulations). The aim of polling is to clarify the adaptation of first year students to the university system and the satisfaction of all students with the study process, lectures, and practical classes after each semester, the satisfaction of students with the services offered by the University, and the overall satisfaction of graduates with the study programme. The results of the surveys are available to academic staff, heads of organizational units and students in a summarized form. The survey results also directly summarize the effectiveness of academic staff's work, as students also have the opportunity to add their comments to surveys on teaching staff's work abilities and professionalism. The analysis of student success information is the responsibility of the specific unit implementing the study programme. Information regarding the success of students within the scope of study courses and the weighted average mark in general shall be available in RTU Study Management system. Annually, the State Revenue Service provides information on employment of RTU graduates.</p> <p>The total quality management system of RTU, which is based on the EFQM quality model, includes and ensures the analysis and comparison of performance indicators of the study process and study programmes.</p> <p>At the beginning of September of each year, a faculty/academy Activity Plan on study process indicators is drawn up: (1) number of students; (2) number of graduates; (3) number of graduates who complete their studies on time; (4) number of students expelled from University; (5) number of foreign students; (6) average age of elected academic staff; (7) number of study programmes implemented in English; (8) average indicator of the evaluation of faculty academic staff; (9) number of persons with a scientific degree elected to academic positions (%); (10) number of foreign guest lecturers.</p> <p>The established Faculty Study Activity Plans for the following year are drawn up by Faculty Deans, together with Deputy Deans for Academic Affairs and institute directors; they are approved by the Rector of RTU.</p> <p>RTU administration meets with representatives of faculties/academies to evaluate the faculty activity plans on study process indicators, evaluating the progress in the previous academic year and defining the indicators to be achieved in the next two academic years. These indicators are used to monitor study process performance of the faculty. These indicators and other aspects influence the amount of performance-based funding allocated to the faculty/academy and contribute to the achievement of the objectives set forward in the RTU Strategy.</p> <p>The study process funds are administered in accordance with methodologies approved by the Senate or as stipulated by the Vice-Rector for Strategic Development and Finance. Principles of the methodologies motivate the heads of departments to be proactive, to plan the development of the unit, and to apply for funding. These methodologies are described in more detail in section 2.3.1. of the self-assessment report.</p>
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<p>6. The higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field whilst implementing their quality assurance systems.</p>	<p>At the level of the faculty and study field, internal quality is ensured by the Faculty Council, the Study field Committee and Directors of the study field, Directors of the study programmes, administration of the institutes implementing study programmes. Within the framework of the study programme, internal quality is ensured by the program director and by the academic staff implementing the program. Internal quality control at the level of the study programme is carried out by the administration of the relevant institute.</p> <p>In order to ensure continuous development of the study programmes, RTU Study field Committees monitor academic activities in the relevant study field and are responsible for the curriculum and quality of the study programmes within the study field, including the accreditation of the study field. Inclusion of employer representatives in the study field Committee is a mandatory requirement. Study field Committee acts in accordance with the “Regulation of the Study field Committee” (approved by the Resolution of RTU Senate Meeting on 26 April 2021, Minutes No 649, with amendments on 27 March 2023; the English translation is in the file of Annex 07 of the List of Internal regulations).</p> <p>The basic tasks of the Study field Committee are: (1) to analyse the situation in the labour market and make suggestions for the development of new study programmes as well as for the closure of the outdated study programmes; (2) to carry out expert assessment of the curriculum and quality of the study programmes, assess their compliance with the defined objectives and compliance with the research area represented and labour market requirements; (3) to organize and monitor the accreditation of the study field and the licensing of study programmes; (4) to analyse the assessment and recommendations made by external experts and organize elimination of identified shortcomings; (5) to carry out an analysis of the study field self-assessment report as well as the annual reports on study field development activities; (6) in order to achieve strategic objectives of the University, to assess the proposed changes to study programmes with a view to increasing the quality of all study programmes included in the study fields; (7) to analyse the results of student, graduate and employee surveys and organize elimination of identified shortcomings, as well as organize additional surveys.</p>
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2.1. Management of the Study Field

2.1.1. Aims of the study field and their compliance with the scope of activities of the higher education institution/ college, the strategic development fields, as well as the development needs of the society and the national economy. The assessment of the interrelation of the study field and the study programmes included in it.

Given the regional disparities in Latvia's development and the rapidly evolving demographic trends (changes in population size, age structure, birth and mortality rates), the need for social work professionals has become a critical factor in the context of sustainable national development. This necessity is particularly emphasised in the [Sustainable Development Strategy of the City of Liepāja until 2030](#), (Latvian only) where one of the key priorities is the strengthening of social infrastructure to promote social cohesion and safety in society.

Similarly, the Latgale 2030 strategy highlights the goal of a "Socially Responsible Latgale", placing emphasis on poverty reduction and the inclusion of marginalised social groups ([Latgale 2030](#)). Meanwhile, the [Sustainable Development Strategy of Rēzekne City and Rēzekne Municipality until 2035](#) outlines as one of its goals that all residents live in well-being in every aspect - socially secure, employed, with access to high-quality education, culture, sports, safety, social, and health services.

At the demographic level, Latvian society is ageing, resulting in an increasing need for gerontologically-oriented social work. Demand for social workers specialising in working with the elderly is expected to rise significantly over the coming decades, especially in regions with limited access to healthcare services. According to data from the [Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia](#), Latgale has the highest proportion of residents aged 65 and older (24%), followed by Kurzeme and Zemgale (22%).

Latvia's social policy is undergoing a paradigm shift - from institutional care to client-centred, community-based care. This transition encourages interdisciplinary collaboration between social workers and healthcare professionals, enabling clients to receive integrated services at home, reducing the need for hospitalisation and promoting individual autonomy.

This holistic approach requires a new set of professional competencies, encompassing both medical care knowledge and social rehabilitation skills. Therefore, the development of study programmes in the field of social welfare is not only relevant but critically important to prepare highly qualified professionals capable of responding flexibly to evolving societal needs at micro-, meso-, and macro-levels.

The **aim** of the study field *Social Welfare* is to provide high-quality and competitive professional higher education in the interdisciplinary domain of social welfare, preparing competent professionals who, based on the theoretical knowledge and practical skills, can effectively address contemporary social problems and adapt to the dynamic challenges of society. The goal is also to strengthen the social welfare system, promote an inclusive and just society, and contribute to the development of social work science in Latvia and the European Union.

Achievement of the defined aim is facilitated by the conceptual framework adopted in the implementation of the study field, which incorporates interactivity, systems analysis, goal-orientation towards sustainable development, adaptability to the rapidly changing contemporary world (including labour market needs), reflection of national economic and social needs, and principles of democracy and interactive communication in programme governance.

Considering that Latvia's development planning documents are also framed within a global context, the key challenge in education is to open the current social work education system to global perspectives. Ensuring interaction between global and local contexts fosters the ability to "think globally and act locally", which is fundamental to building a flexible education system and promoting international collaboration and mobility. This contributes to better labour market integration of graduates and alignment between education and labour market demands at both national and global levels. In today's world, successful professional realisation requires a shift from knowledge transfer to co-creation of innovation, balancing education, science, society, economy, social policy, and national development.

The relevance of the *Social Welfare* study field programmes is underpinned by the following factors:

1. Shortage of Social Workers. The *Social Welfare* study field is particularly relevant in today's Latvian social context - a significant shortage of social workers is observed at both national and municipal levels. Social workers support a wide range of target groups - families with children, seniors, persons with disabilities, individuals in crisis, and other socially vulnerable communities. Their shortage directly affects the quality of life and service accessibility for these groups. The Latvian Association of Social Workers and the Ministry of Welfare regularly highlight the high workload of social workers, contributing to professional burnout and high staff turnover. Several municipalities face difficulties in filling vacancies due to the limited number of qualified professionals. The Ministry of Welfare's informative review (as of March 3, 2025) shows that the number of social worker vacancies has remained relatively stable over the last three years (156 as of Sept 1, 2022; 148 as of Feb 1, 2023; and 152 as of March 3, 2025). The compiled information is available in the section Other Annexes in the file *Labklājības_Ministrija_Aptaujas_rezultatu_apkopojums_032025.docx* (available in Latvian only). Given the current situation, study programmes in the field of social welfare are becoming increasingly important for preparing professionals capable of addressing society's needs and strengthening social security in Latvia. These programmes provide both theoretical and practical knowledge necessary for effective work in complex and multifaceted cases, fostering high-quality and professional social support. The development and reinforcement of the "Social Welfare" study field are of strategic importance for ensuring long-term societal well-being in Latvia, as well as for responding effectively to demographic, economic, and social challenges.
2. Regional Needs. Strengthening the capacity of social workers at the regional level is particularly relevant in connection with the construction of a new prison in Liepāja. This infrastructure project implies not only security-related aspects but also an increased need for competent social work professionals in the resocialisation process, capable of providing long-term solutions based on the principles of humane justice.
3. Ageing Population. Latvia is experiencing an aging population, resulting in a growing need for gerontologically oriented social work. It is predicted that the demand for social workers specializing in working with seniors will increase significantly in the coming decades, especially in regions where healthcare services are limited.
4. Latvia's social policy directions reflect a paradigm shift - from institutional care to client-centred care based on societal needs. Interdisciplinary collaboration between social workers and healthcare professionals is being promoted, enabling the provision of integrated services at the place of residence, thereby reducing the need for hospitalisation and strengthening individual autonomy.

[Latvia's National Development Plan for 2021-2027](#) (Latvian only) (NDP2027), under the priority "Strong Families, Healthy and Active People", emphasises social inclusion - targeted social services, social assistance, and availability of social work and support measures for those at risk of

exclusion and discrimination.

[The Public Health Guidelines 2021–2027](#) (Latvian only) accentuate that good mental health is a key factor in creating a stable, safe, and prosperous society. The guidelines highlight that due to demographic trends and emigration, older adults are becoming a labour market resource, which necessitates enabling a longer, healthier life and improved quality of life. They also address the need to reduce non-communicable disease burden and promote optimal physical activity and participation.

In the NDP2027, the first strategic objective is stated as follows: “Equal opportunities are the most important element of social justice in reducing income inequality. We will ensure that everyone has equal opportunities to receive a good education and quality healthcare, to work in a decent job according to their abilities and preferences, to grow and live in a safe environment, and to be socially protected equally in all regions of Latvia” (Saeima (2020). *Latvian National Development Plan 2021–2027*. Approved by the decision of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia on 2 July 2020, pp. 12. <https://www.pkc.gov.lv/lv/nap2027>) (Latvian only). For the first time in Latvia’s development planning, a separate course of action has been dedicated to social inclusion, with its goal formulated as follows: “Social support is individualised, person-centred, and provided to everyone who needs it most or may need it the most.” (Saeima (2020). *Latvian National Development Plan 2021–2027*. Approved by the decision of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia on 2 July 2020, p. 25. <https://www.pkc.gov.lv/lv/nap2027>) (Latvian only).

In line with the direction set by the National Development Plan of Latvia for 2027 (NAP 2027) towards the Scandinavian model of a welfare state, the study programmes within the field of Social Welfare and their graduates will make a significant contribution to the achievement of Latvia’s strategic objectives and the implementation of its development priorities. The contribution of the Social Welfare study field to the attainment of Latvia’s strategic goals is grounded in the mission of social work, which is consistent with the principles defined by the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), emphasising the promotion of human rights, the advancement of social justice, the fostering of social cohesion, and the provision of particular support to vulnerable groups (IASSW & IFSW, 2014/2020).

In synergy with the guiding principle of the RTU Strategy, which emphasises a proactive alignment with the national economy’s needs and a focus on high quality and efficiency, the Social Welfare study field promotes a diverse educational experience. This fosters the development of competencies for both personal and professional self-expression in changing circumstances. To achieve these objectives, the principles of open cooperation and voluntary partnership with state institutions, municipalities, and non-governmental organisations are respected. The interconnectedness of contemporary society also plays a vital role, encouraging the mobility of students and academic staff at both national and international levels.

The study programmes in the Social Welfare field are designed in response to dynamic changes in the socioeconomic landscape and labour market, aiming to prepare highly educated professionals in social work who are equipped to meet current and future challenges.

The content of the study programmes included in the Social Welfare study field reflects openness to innovation and new approaches, with an informed understanding of global and local sociopolitical, welfare, economic, and educational processes. It supports the development of professional competences for creative self-exploration and engagement in diverse social environments, utilising communication technologies and resources. The development of programme content is based on the premise that completing the study programmes provides in-depth knowledge and a critical understanding of the national characteristics of social work education, the sociocultural dimensions

of society, and the developmental trends within the European Higher Education Area.

The study process, the content of the study programmes, and the expected learning outcomes are oriented toward professionalism, competence acquisition, and sustainability, as well as the ability to engage in research activities. The content of the study programmes within the study field guides students towards an understanding of their contribution to addressing social problems, maintaining quality of life, and ensuring societal competitiveness, while also fostering awareness of their role in the sustainable development of both current and future generations. The implementation of the study programmes provides students with experience in scientific research, fostering an in-depth understanding of the diversity of research methodologies and offering opportunities for professional and academic development through the attainment of bachelor's and master's degrees in social work. Furthermore, the study field contributes to the further development of social work theories and research, ensuring the integration and continuous improvement of social work practice across various levels of education.

The study field promotes a diverse educational experience that supports the development of competences for personal and professional self-expression in changing circumstances. To ensure this, openness to cooperation and voluntary partnerships is respected, involving state institutions, municipalities, and non-governmental organisations. The interconnectedness of contemporary society also plays an important role, fostering the mobility of students and academic staff both nationally and internationally.

The study programmes implemented within the "Social Welfare" study field at Riga Technical University Liepāja Academy (RTU LA) – the first-cycle professional bachelor's programme "Social Worker" and the second-cycle professional master's programme "Social Work Management" – as well as the programmes at Riga Technical University Rēzekne Academy (RTU RA, formerly Rēzekne Academy of Technologies) – the short-cycle programme "Social Rehabilitation" and the first-cycle bachelor's programme "Social Work and Social Rehabilitation" – reflect continuity in social welfare education.

As of 1 April 2025, following the integration of Rēzekne Academy of Technologies into Riga Technical University, the following study programmes will be implemented within the Social Welfare study field:

- Short-cycle professional higher education programme "*Social Rehabilitator*" (41762);
- First-cycle professional bachelor's programme "*Social Worker*" (42762);
- Second-cycle master's programme "*Social Work Management*" (47762).

Following the development of the first-cycle professional bachelor's study programme "*Social Worker*", graduates of the short-cycle professional higher education programme "*Social Rehabilitator*" are provided with the opportunity to continue their education in the "*Social Worker*" bachelor's programme. Upon completion, they obtain a bachelor's degree in social work and the professional qualification of a social worker. The 120 ECTS credits earned in the "*Social Rehabilitator*" programme (After 1 January 2015) are fully recognised within the "*Social Worker*" programme, covering the scope of the 1st and 2nd years of study (120 ECTS). The learning outcomes achieved in previous education (completion of the short-cycle higher education programme "*Social Rehabilitator*" and successful defence of the qualification thesis) allow students to continue directly in the 3rd year of the bachelor's programme, without the need for course-by-course comparison (in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 932. <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/96800-studiju-uzsaksanas-kartiba-velakos-studiju-posmos>) (Latvian only).

After completing the first-cycle bachelor's study programme "*Social Worker*", graduates have the opportunity to continue their education in the second-cycle master's programme "*Social Work*

Management”, obtaining a professional master’s degree in social work, the professional qualification of a senior social worker, and professional status, depending on the module chosen in part B of the programme.

Professional status (as indicated in the Diploma Supplement):

Holds competence to carry out social work in the following areas:

- Work with families with children;
- Work with children and youth;
- Work with individuals with addictions and co-dependency issues;
- Work with the elderly;
- Work with clients of the penitentiary and probation systems, promoting in the resocialisation phase.

2.1.2. SWOT analysis of the study field with regard to the set aims by providing explanations on how the higher education institution/ college expects to eliminate/improve weaknesses, prevent threats, and avail themselves of the given opportunities, etc. The assessment of the plan for the development of the study field for the next six years and the procedure of the elaboration thereof. In case there is no development plan elaborated or the aims/ objectives are set for a shorter period of time, information on the elaboration of the plan for the development of the study field for the next assessment period shall be provided.

The aim of the study field is to provide high-quality and competitive professional higher education in the interdisciplinary field of social welfare, preparing competent professionals who, based on the theoretical knowledge and practical skills, are capable of effectively addressing current social issues and adapting to the dynamic challenges of society. The study field contributes to strengthening the social welfare system, promoting an inclusive and just society, and advancing the development of social work science in Latvia and within the European Union.

Based on the analysis of key documents relevant to the development of the study field, as well as taking into account the latest European Union development policy guidelines—such as [Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, 2018](#), [the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area \[Bologna Process, 2005\]](#), [Latvia’s National Development Plan for 2021–2027 \[NAP2027, 2020\]](#), and the long-term development strategy [Latvia 2030](#) (Latvian only) [Saeima, 2010]—alongside the joint Development Programme of Liepāja City and South Kurzeme Municipality for 2022–2027 (updated in 2024) (Latvian Only), [Sustainable Development Strategy for Rēzekne State City and Rēzekne Municipality up to 2035](#) (updated in 2025), as well as the strategy [Riga Technical University \[RTU, 2020\]](#) and development documents, the following priorities have been defined as the foundation for the strategic development of the *Social Welfare* study field:

1. **Strengthening the attractiveness and accessibility of educational provision, promoting quality, social inclusion, and regional balance.** Focusing on the relevance, flexibility, and labour market alignment of study programme content in response to societal needs—particularly in the areas of care, welfare, and education—this priority aims to promote access to quality higher education for all target groups, including students from regions, those with special needs, and individuals from diverse social backgrounds. The approach is grounded in principles established by the National Development Plan 2021–2027 (NAP2027),

Latvia 2030, the European Pillar of Social Rights, and the Liepāja-South Kurzeme Development Programme.

2. **Development of a modern, diverse, and technologically integrated learning environment, fostering creativity and lifelong learning** By adapting study formats and content to the challenges of the 21st century—including digital and remote learning opportunities, green thinking, and interdisciplinarity—this priority aligns with Europe’s Green and Digital Transition, the European Skills Agenda, as well as the innovation and education strategies of RTU and the development plans of the Kurzeme and Latgale regions. It promotes a forward-looking study environment that supports creativity, sustainability, and flexible learning pathways.
3. **Strengthening international cooperation and research capacity by attracting resources and generating impact at regional and European levels.** The focus is on expanding partnership networks with European universities, social partners, and research institutions to promote joint research, academic mobility, the exchange of good practices, and access to funding (e.g., Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, and other EU instruments). This priority reflects the emphasis on the knowledge economy, innovation, and internationalisation highlighted in the European Education Area, NAP2027, and regional development strategies.

The SWOT analysis of the study field was updated and discussed at the extended meeting of the study field held on 9 January 2025 (Minutes No. 2025/1), with the participation of academic staff, students, and industry experts from Riga Technical University Liepāja Academy (hereinafter RTU LA) and Riga Technical University Rēzekne Academy (hereinafter RTU RA).

In relation to the strategic aim and priorities defined for the study field, the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats have been identified:

Strengths:

- Study programmes at all levels within the study field fully comply with the requirements of national education and professional standards;
- Vertical progression between study programmes ensures continuity within the thematic area of education;
- Material and technical resources (including library services) fully meet the requirements of the study programmes, are aligned with modern technologies, and are continuously improved;
- Programme content is regularly updated in line with the latest scientific knowledge and feedback from employers and alumni;
- Established cooperation with employers, regional municipalities, and sectoral institutions supports the continuous development of study and research activities;
- Employers are actively involved in providing internship placements and reflecting on the development of students’ professional competences;
- Students have opportunities to engage in solving practical problems, applying theoretical knowledge in selected courses through the use of problem-based learning (PBL) approaches;
- Both students and academic staff actively utilise Erasmus+ mobility opportunities;
- A high proportion of academic staff hold doctoral degrees;
- Guest lectures are delivered by sectoral professionals (e.g., Social Services of Rēzekne Municipality, State Probation Service units in Rēzekne and Liepāja, NGOs, Social Services of the Liepāja City Council and its structural units, and the Social Services of South Kurzeme Municipality);
- Students are purposefully involved in research activities, projects, and other initiatives that support their professional development;

- More than 70% of students are already employed in the field of social work during their studies.

Weaknesses:

- A low number of international students enrolled in the study programmes of the field;
- Limited geographical diversity among international teaching staff involved in the study field (primarily academic staff from Lithuania);
- Relatively low participation of teaching staff and students in international scientific conferences in the field of social work outside Latvia;
- Insufficient involvement in large-scale scientific project consortia (e.g., FLPP, Horizon, etc.) for project development and implementation;
- Limited capacity to attract fee-paying students due to high tuition fees and the relatively low salaries of social workers, which hinder affordability;
- Misalignments in professional and scientific classification systems impede the academic development of social work as a discipline and the strengthening of its professional identity. Until recently, it was not possible to obtain a doctoral degree in social work in Latvia, resulting in a lack of qualified researchers in the academic environment. Only recently has social work been included in the national classification of scientific disciplines as part of the field "Sociology and Social Work," which marks a step toward disciplinary autonomy and enhanced research capacity.

Opportunities:

- Academic staff are improving their English language proficiency with the goal of achieving C1 level;
- Academic staff are enhancing their professional experience through internships and employment within sectoral institutions;
- Academic staff are developing digital and leadership skills in line with the paradigm shift in higher education;
- Development of e-learning and distance learning opportunities within study programmes of the study field;
- Expansion of participation in national and international research projects in the field of social welfare;
- Potential to recruit graduates of the second-cycle professional master's programme "*Social Work Management*" as new teaching staff and researchers in the study field;
- Development of lifelong learning and professional development programmes through the integration of RTU LA and RTU RA, involving prospective academic staff in the design and implementation of such programmes;
- Strategic involvement in the development and implementation of projects such as FLPP, Horizon, and similar initiatives to advance the social welfare field and integrate research outcomes into the study process.

Threats:

- Demographic trends in Latvia and Europe (age structure and natural population decline);
- Limited number of state-funded study places allocated to the programmes within the study field;
- Low societal prestige of social welfare professions in Latvia (vacancies in remote municipalities remain open for extended periods - sometimes up to a year - and the number and qualifications of social work specialists employed in social services do not meet regulatory requirements);
- Lack of support from some employers for combining students' work and studies;

- Uneven socio-economic development across regions in Latvia.

To mitigate the impact of the identified weaknesses, RTU's Public Relations and External Affairs specialists participate in education fairs both in Latvia and abroad, promoting higher education opportunities. RTU continuously expands the geographic scope of its international partners, including through the ERASMUS+ programme. During the reporting period, the number of ERASMUS+ mobilities—both for academic staff and students—has significantly increased, supporting greater integration of academic staff into the European Higher Education Area and enhancing RTU's visibility. Study programmes are regularly improved in line with employer feedback and evolving student interests. Efforts are being made to increase student involvement in research activities. Academic staff have the opportunity to participate in commissioned research projects, such as those initiated by the Social Services of Rēzekne City and Rēzekne Municipality, which contribute to the practical scientific engagement of students.

RTU LA and RTU RA acknowledge the external risks affecting the development of the *Social Welfare* study field and implement targeted activities to mitigate these threats, while at the same time actively fostering a sustainable academic and professional environment. In the context of demographic trends, opportunities for adult education and retraining are being developed, flexible study formats (online and hybrid classes) are offered, and the recruitment of international students is promoted through the implementation of Blended Intensive Programmes. At the same time, new academic staff are purposefully recruited from among graduates of the professional master's programmes, ensuring the renewal and succession of academic staff.

Given the limited number of applicants, the University conducts targeted discussions both within the meetings of the Social Work Specialists' Cooperation Council and with municipalities on including social workers among the professions supported by municipalities through the provision of scholarships. This approach enhances the accessibility of studies in the regions and strengthens the recruitment of young specialists to municipal social services.

To strengthen the prestige of professions in the field of social welfare, the University cooperates with professional organisations and policy-makers, organises public awareness-raising events, and provides support to students in their placements by collaborating with social institutions and thereby facilitating the acquisition of high-quality professional experience. Regular cooperation with alumni and partner institutions is implemented both through day-to-day communication and through professional development events. The annual conference "*Current Issues in Social Work*", which has been organised by RTU Liepāja Study Centre for 19 consecutive years and is attended by more than 200 participants annually, serves as a significant platform for fostering academic and professional dialogue. Representatives of the study field are also regularly involved in the work of the Social Work Specialists' Cooperation Council at the Ministry of Welfare. It is equally important to highlight that the interim and final results of implemented projects are purposefully presented, thereby contributing to the development of the professional community. At the same time, active communication is carried out via social media, promoting study programmes and events, providing up-to-date information, and attracting new applicants. For example, in preparation for the 2025/2026 academic year, particular emphasis is placed on promoting the study programmes in the *Social Welfare* field, highlighting student international mobility (five students from the first-cycle study programme "*Social Work*" – one from the 2nd year, two from the 3rd year and two from the 4th year – will participate in Erasmus studies in the autumn semester), as well as drawing attention to the forthcoming Blended Intensive Programme scheduled for 16–19 September 2025.

To facilitate the reconciliation of work and studies, the University regularly involves employers in consultative councils, offers flexible study schedules and study methods, and concludes tripartite agreements between students, employers, and the University.

To address socio-economic disparities between regions, the University ensures the availability of studies in Latvian cities outside Riga, cooperates with municipalities and non-governmental organisations in providing placement and employment opportunities. At the same time, the digital accessibility of studies is being systematically expanded – students have access to a modern e-learning environment with online lectures, recordings, consultations, and study materials. This approach enables students to combine studies with work and family life flexibly, ensures equal opportunities regardless of place of residence, and promotes access to higher education in more remote regions. The University also provides digital support for the study process by using interactive platforms for group work, individual consultations, and international cooperation.

The *Social Welfare* study field Development Plan for 2025–2031 was approved at the meeting of the Study Field Council on 9 January 2025 (see Annex II.1.3.A. *Study Field Development Plan*). The Development Plan defines the strategic objectives of the study field and the directions for their implementation, providing a foundation for sustainable development and high-quality delivery of the study process. The Plan sets out four main objectives with corresponding measures:

1. ensuring qualified and sustainable academic staff in line with the aims and requirements of the study field, programmes and study courses;
2. strengthening the research activity and international cooperation of academic staff and students;
3. enhancing the quality of study programmes and the study process;
4. improving the material and technical resources of the study field.

The *Social Welfare* study field Development Plan for 2025–2031 was approved at the meeting of the Study Field Council on 9 January 2025 (see Annex II.1.3.A. *Study Field Development Plan*). The Development Plan defines the strategic objectives of the study field and the directions for their implementation, thus providing a foundation for sustainable development, academic excellence, and high-quality delivery of the study process. The Plan sets out four main objectives with corresponding measures:

1. ensuring qualified and sustainable academic staff in line with the aims and requirements of the study field, programmes and study courses, thereby fostering academic continuity and resilience;
2. strengthening the research activity and international cooperation of academic staff and students, with a particular emphasis on innovation, knowledge transfer and participation in international networks;
3. enhancing the quality of study programmes and the study process in order to ensure student-centred learning, employability, and compliance with European higher education standards;
4. improving the material and technical resources of the study field, ensuring a modern, inclusive, and technologically advanced study environment.

The Development Plan has been designed to secure the achievement of both short-term and long-term goals. It includes measures to be implemented within the next two to three years, as well as longer-term initiatives requiring gradual and systematic implementation over the entire planning period. The Plan is closely aligned with the recommendations provided during the previous accreditation cycle, thereby ensuring continuity, quality enhancement and institutional learning.

The objectives outlined in the Development Plan aim not only at safeguarding and improving the quality of study programmes, but also at strengthening broader institutional capacity – attracting and renewing academic staff, fostering research and innovation, expanding international cooperation, and ensuring a modern, technologically advanced study environment. The Development Plan is directed towards maintaining the study field's ability to prepare highly qualified specialists capable of responding to the evolving needs of the social welfare sector in Latvia and beyond, thereby reinforcing its societal impact and international competitiveness.

Thus, the Study Field Development Plan for 2025–2031 serves as a strategic roadmap which simultaneously ensures the enhancement of study programme quality, the sustainable and effective use of resources, and a solid foundation for productive and future-oriented activity in the years to come.

In the previous accreditation cycle, the expert recommendation *“Make better use of strategic planning and SWOT analysis for the study field Social Welfare”* highlighted the need to apply strategic planning and SWOT analysis more effectively in the development of the *Social Welfare* study field. In response to this recommendation, a comprehensive SWOT analysis of the study field was carried out in 2024. Its results were integrated into the Study Field Development Plan 2025–2031, which was approved at the meeting of the Study Field Council on 9 January 2025.

The SWOT analysis identified key external threats (demographic trends, the limited number of applicants, low professional prestige, regional disparities, and challenges in reconciling work and studies) as well as opportunities (expanding cooperation with municipalities, scholarship schemes, promoting student mobility, and broadening digital study provision). These elements are directly linked to the strategic objectives set out in the Development Plan, for example, in order to mitigate the risk of declining applicant numbers, targeted discussions are being held with municipalities on including social workers among the professions supported by municipal scholarship schemes. Alumni engagement and international activities have been strengthened, while digital study provision has been further developed.

In this way, strategic planning and SWOT analysis have become a continuous instrument for the development and quality assurance of the study field, serving both decision-making processes and the strengthening of cooperation with sectoral partners.

2.1.3. The structure of the management of the study field and the relevant study programmes, and the analysis and assessment of the efficiency thereof, including the assessment of the role of the head of the study field and the heads of the study programmes, their responsibilities, and the cooperation with other heads of the study programmes, as well as the assessment of the support by the administrative and technical staff of the higher education institution/ college provided within the study field.

Internal quality control at the faculty and at the level of the study field is ensured by the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs. The quality of the study programme is ensured by the Head of the study programme (job description is attached in the appendix "Head of the Study Programme Job Description" (in Latvian)) and the academic staff involved in its implementation, whereas the whole process is overseen by the administration of the responsible institute or department. Once per academic year, the abstracts and curriculum of the study programme, methodological materials, as well as the most recent study literature and methodological guidelines for study papers (including reports, study papers, internship reports, and graduation papers), are reviewed. The academic staff

and the administration of the study programme participate in various experience exchange activities. These include cooperation with higher education institutions in other countries, meetings with representatives of relevant institutions and entrepreneurs, and discussions on current developments in the field. Additionally, they analyse the results of students' research papers and projects.

The responsibilities and duties of the Head of the study programme are outlined in the official job description. The most important among them include: management of study programme development; improvement of the curriculum in compliance with the requirements of scientific fields or national economic sectors; Implementation of quality assurance; Supervision of study plan development; Promotion of internationalization; Cooperation with the RTU Study Department to provide input of data into the Information System; Collaboration with other RTU departments involved in the implementation of the study programme. The administration of the Faculty/Academy constantly monitors the compliance of premises and technical equipment with modern quality requirements. Appropriate classrooms have been equipped with the necessary multimedia tools. Support functions for the development and implementation of study programmes are provided by the RTU Study Department. The RTU Programmes Management and Curriculum Design Unit plays an important role in supporting the improvement of study programmes.

The Study Field Committee includes the directors of all study programmes within the specific study field, leading teaching staff, employer representatives, and a student representative (see Annex: "RTU Study Field Management Structure").

The **Study Field "Social Welfare" Committee** was renewed in 2025, bringing together staff from RTU LA and RTU RA. As the two implementation sites of the study field are geographically distant, and in order to ensure high-quality management at both sites, the composition of the Study Field Committee includes the Director and Deputy Director of the study field, as well as the Directors and Deputy Directors of the respective study programmes.

Regulations stipulate that one of these individuals must be based at one implementation site, and the other at the second site. Accordingly:

- The Director of the study field represents RTU LA, and the Deputy Director represents RTU RA;
- The Director of the short-cycle professional higher education programme represents RTU RA, and the Deputy Director represents RTU LA;
- The Directors of the professional bachelor's and master's programmes represent RTU LA, while the Deputy Directors represent RTU RA.

Given the geographical distance between the study programme implementation sites (5.5 hours one way), the Committee meetings are held via videoconferencing in the MS Teams group. This facilitates the Committee's work and enables its members to meet at convenient times.

The **Study Direction Committee** supervises the activities of the study direction, performing an annual review of the content and quality of the implementation of study programmes at the end of each academic year. The Committee evaluates the conformity of the programmes with the objectives of the study direction, the requirements of the relevant scientific field and the labour market, while also taking into account the opinions of graduates and students regarding programme quality.

The Study Direction Committee initially makes decisions on various issues, which are further approved by the Faculty Councils. These decisions are communicated to the RTU Study

Department, which prepares Senate proposals based on the decisions of both the Study Direction Committee and the Faculty Councils. These proposals are then reviewed by the Senate Study Quality and Programmes Committee, in which the RTU Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs also participates and engages in discussions on relevant issues. Only after the Senate Study Quality and Programmes Committee has reviewed and approved a proposal does it proceed to a hearing in the RTU Senate.

RTU has established a robust system for the management and development of study programmes. Proposals to introduce changes in the curriculum are made by the **Study Field Committee**, based on:

- Recommendations from academic staff;
- References from employers;
- Suggestions from student self-government;
- Observations of the latest trends in the national economy and labour market.

The Study Field Committee submits such proposals to the Faculty Council for review and approval. Based on the decision of the Faculty Council, the RTU Senate approves changes to the study field. Structural amendments to study programmes are approved by an order issued by the RTU Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs.

Technical support for the study field is provided by the study programme recordkeeping staff and the RTU IT Department. This cooperation in implementing the study programmes within the study field is evaluated as efficient and conducive to the continuous development of the field.

The effective operation of the study field at the implementation sites in Rēzekne and Liepāja is ensured by the following key units and roles:

- **Heads of the RTU RA Centre for Education, Languages and Social Technologies** and the **RTU LA Centre for Pedagogy and Social Work** are responsible for planning, managing, and organising the centres' activities. They oversee methodological and research work, set the centres' strategic objectives, delegate tasks to academic staff, and analyse and evaluate staff performance;
- **Study process specialists** are responsible for the academic administration and organisational aspects of the study process. Their tasks include maintaining study field data in information systems, planning academic staff workloads, managing class schedules, preparing diplomas and diploma supplements, generating reports, and producing study-related documents and certificates.
- **Staff of the Centre for Continuing Professional Development** organise professional development courses for teachers, as well as seminars and training for academic staff in university didactics and innovation in higher education.
- **Scientific library staff** ensure access to library resources for students and academic staff, participate in planning the acquisition of academic and scientific literature, and provide access to electronic databases.
- **Project management specialists** support academic staff in the planning and implementation of academic, research, infrastructure, and commissioned research projects.
- **Financial planning specialists** provide support in the financial planning of the study field, its programmes, and related projects.
- **Information and communication technology (ICT) specialists** maintain the IT infrastructure and provide technological support for educational and administrative processes.

The management system of the study field and its associated study programmes can be

conceptually assessed as well-considered, coherent, and aimed at the coordinated functioning of the study field. It is grounded in democratic principles and supported across all key operational areas, including academic administration, research activities, financial planning, professional development, and more. **Strengths of the management model** include: a clear and detailed division of responsibilities among stakeholders, as defined in the regulations of structural units and job descriptions; established procedures for all aspects of the implementation of the study field and related programmes; a transparent and inclusive decision-making system that is accessible to all stakeholders involved.

2.1.4. Description and assessment of the requirements and the system for the admission of students by specifying, inter alia, the regulatory framework of the admission procedures and requirements. The assessment of options for the students to have their study period, professional experience, and the previously acquired formal and non-formal education recognised within the study field by providing specific examples of the application of these procedures.

The student admission process and procedures for matriculation are defined by the RTU Admission Regulations. These are developed based on the *Law on Higher Education Institutions* and the *Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 846 (in Latvian only) (10 October 2006)* "Regulations on Requirements, Criteria and Procedures for Enrolment in Study Programmes" as well as the specific requirements of study programmes and relevant industry sectors. The RTU Admission Regulations are approved annually by the RTU Senate and published on 1 November (see Annexes 30-35 in the List of Internal Regulations).

Admission requirements are logical, transparent, and aligned with the goals defined in the RTU Strategy. The admission system is modern, easily accessible, well-structured, and continuously evolving in line with digitalisation trends. It provides prospective students with a convenient and user-friendly university registration platform.

Applicants are admitted to full-time and part-time undergraduate programmes based on the results of the Centralized Examinations (CE) in Mathematics, the Latvian language and the Foreign Language, and the final grades in individual subjects obtained in the Secondary Education, and the entry test results. If, in addition to these CEs, the applicant has a CE in Physics or Chemistry, the results of these CEs are taken into account in the ranking calculation.

If the applicant has additionally passed a CE in Physics or Chemistry, these results are also considered in the ranking calculation.

To compete for state-funded study places, the CE rating in Mathematics must be at least 15% (calculated as the average of all CE rating sections). Applicants with a Mathematics CE result below 15% are eligible only for tuition-based study places. Until 2022, the minimum acceptable rating was 12%.

Each CE result (average of all evaluation sections) and entry test (if applicable) is multiplied by a corresponding weighting factor, and the sum determines the candidate's ranking. For some programmes, an entry test is mandatory, and its result is included in the final score using the same weighted formula.

Individuals who completed secondary education before 2009 (inclusive), those who received secondary education abroad, or those exempted from state examinations (according to legal

provisions), may be admitted based on their final year grades in relevant subjects, as defined in the RTU Admission Regulations. Until 2019, this option applied to individuals who completed secondary education before 2004. In general, RTU follows the provisions of Cabinet Regulation No. 846.

Applicants who have not taken or failed the required CEs must pass the respective exams in accordance with *Cabinet Regulation No. 398 "Rules on the Content and Procedure for Centralised Examinations"* (in Latvian)). Applicants who have not passed the CE in Latvian and do not meet RTU admission requirements must take an entrance examination in Latvian as prescribed by RTU. The result is assessed in percentage terms.

In accordance with *Cabinet Regulation No. 795 (20 December 2022) "Regulations on the Replacement of the Foreign Language Centralised Examination in General Secondary Education Programmes with Foreign Language Examinations Conducted by International Testing Institutions"* (in Latvian), the CE in the foreign language may be replaced with a certificate from an internationally recognised language testing institution, which must be submitted to the RTU Admission Committee.

Applicants with a bachelor's degree in a field relevant to the study programme are eligible for admission to graduate study programmes. Selection is based on the weighted average grade of the completed bachelor's or professional study programme. The weighted average is calculated as the sum of all grades multiplied by the corresponding credit points, divided by the total number of credit points in the programme. If credit points are not available, the average is calculated by multiplying each grade by the number of contact hours and dividing the total by the number of contact hours completed.

Considering the spread of COVID-19, improvements were made to simplify the admission process, starting with the 2020 summer intake.

For undergraduate study programmes, applicants can apply for state-funded study places via:

- The *Joint Enrolment Undergraduate Study Programme Information System*, using the e-service portal www.latvija.lv;
- In person at the RTU Admission Committee, by presenting original documents.

For graduate study programmes, RTU undergraduate programme graduates can apply online via the RTU portal ORTUS. Since 2020, graduates from other state-accredited Latvian higher education institutions have also been allowed to submit applications online via the RTU website or by visiting the RTU Admission Committee.

Applicants who do not qualify for state-funded places, those who received education abroad, or in other specific cases, must apply in person at the RTU Admission Committee within the admission deadlines, submitting the required documentation.

Since the 2021 summer admission, electronic application for tuition-fee-based study programmes at all levels (undergraduate and postgraduate) has been introduced to further improve accessibility and efficiency.

Recognition of previously acquired formal and non-formal education at RTU is carried out in accordance with the "Regulation on the Recognition of the Courses Completed at Other Universities and RTU Study Programmes" (Resolution of RTU Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs No 02000-1.1/29 as of 4 April 2016) and the "Procedure for Recognition of Competencies Developed Outside Formal Education or From Professional Experience and Learning Outcomes Achieved in Previous Education at Riga Technical University" (approved at the Meeting of RTU Senate on 23 September 2019, Minutes No 632) (available at https://www.rtu.lv/writable/public_files/RTU_09._procedure_for_recognition_of_competencies_develo

[ped_outside_formal_education.pdf](#)) and in the file of Annex 09 of the List of Internal regulations).

RTU Admission Regulations are published at: <https://www.rtu.lv/lv/studijas/uznemsana/uznemsanas-noteikumi> (in Latvian) (for local students) and at <https://www.rtu.lv/en> (for foreign and exchange students).

The Study Field provides students with the opportunity to recognize learning outcomes acquired in previous education. For example, in the RTU RA professional bachelor's study program, students have had their prior learning outcomes recognized in the amount of 3 to 84 ECTS credits for studies completed at various higher education institutions in Latvia (such as the Baltic International Academy, Riga Stradiņš University, Daugavpils University, University of Latvia, among others), as well as abroad (e.g., Konin University of Applied Sciences in Poland).

In accordance with Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 932 "[Procedure for Commencing Studies at a Later Stage of Studies](#)" (in Latvian)), the study content has been harmonized between the short-cycle professional study programme "Social Rehabilitator" and the first-cycle professional bachelor's study programme "Social Worker". This enables students who wish to continue their studies toward obtaining a professional bachelor's degree and qualification as a social worker to have the content learned in the short-cycle programme recognized and to continue their studies starting from the third year of the first-cycle professional bachelor's study program.

2.1.5. Assessment of the methods and procedures for the evaluation of students' achievements, as well as the principles of their selection and the analysis of the compliance of the evaluation methods and procedures with the aims of the study programmes and the needs of the students.

Assessment of student learning outcomes is carried out in accordance with the "Regulation on the Assessment of Learning Outcomes" (approved at the Meeting of RTU Senate on 30 May 2022, Minutes No 633), which is available on Studies Regulations page of RTU webpage ([Studiju rezultātu vertēšanas nolikums](#) (in Latvian); the English translation is in the file of Annex 04 of the List of Internal regulations). Summative assessment system is used in appraisal of student achievements, it implies that the final grade is composed of numerous components.

In the study course descriptions of the study programme there is a set of relevant knowledge, skills and competences and their evaluation system, defined learning outcomes for the achievement of which credit points are awarded.

Pedagogical methods used in the implementation of study courses, as well as assessment forms and methods are selected by the instructors responsible for the study courses in compliance with course curriculum and specifics of the programme, as well as student needs. A member of academic staff should inform students about particular assessment criteria at the first lecture/practical class.

The main advantage of the summative assessment system is that the final grade is made up of several components. Therefore, the students may contribute to their final grade working during semester. Criteria for assessment of the study courses and individual/home tasks are published on ORTUS e-study system beforehand. During semester, the assessment for each home task, test, report, presentation and any other task is ascribed certain weight in the final grade. Exam grade may not exceed 50% of the final grade. Academic staff may take into consideration and also assess student attendance. Assessment structure for the study course is determined by the academic staff

themselves, abiding the resolution of RTU Senate that the exam grade may not contribute more than 50% to the final grade. Selecting assessment criteria and methods for evaluation of student achievements, specifics of each study programme and learning outcomes are taken into consideration.

In order to advance professional pedagogical competences of the academic staff, courses and seminars on the newest pedagogical methods are organized regularly. Qualification advancement is provided at both the University and faculty/academy level, organizing academic conferences and methodological seminars. The Centre for Academic Excellence has been established and successfully operates at RTU; it organizes various events aimed at professional advancement of academic personnel at the University level (in addition, see the description of each study course.)

2.1.6. Description and assessment of the academic integrity principles, the mechanisms for compliance with these principles, and the way in which the stakeholders are informed. Specify the plagiarism detection tools used by providing examples of the use of these tools and mechanisms.

Since 2010, all students that graduate from any RTU study programme should upload electronic versions of their graduation papers in ORTUS portal in order to improve the quality of graduation papers, create a bibliographic database of the graduation papers and introduce an automated control system for detecting plagiarism. RTU uses two major plagiarism control tools in the study process:

1. Since 2015, graduation papers of study programmes of the study field have been checked in the Joint Computerised Plagiarism Control System (JCPCS), which unites numerous Latvian universities and colleges. RTU uses the system in cooperation with the University of Latvia. This system is used to check graduation papers after their uploading to the ORTUS environment. JCPCS complements and extends plagiarism identification opportunities;
2. Starting from 20 December 2017, RTU has been having Turnitin®, the world's leading tool for the correction of written papers and combating plagiarism that is used daily by millions of students and academics around the world. Turnitin® tool is integrated with RTU ORTUS e-study system and provides full service of submitting, correcting, verifying the originality (plagiarism) and return of the submitted papers. Turnitin® offers two main platforms: a platform that automatically checks for the percentage of non-genuine content (plagiarism) and a platform that allows to electronically correct the submitted papers. This tool is used to check all the electronic versions of graduation papers submitted for defence and further control measures are operatively implemented for potential plagiarism detection.

All the above-mentioned support tools are available and are also applied at RTU LA and RTU RA to ensure compliance with the principles of academic integrity.

Graduation papers are checked in both systems in parallel, thus using the advantages of both systems. Since 2005, the Code of Ethics of RTU Students, Academic Personnel and Staff has been effective at RTU (see the file of Annex 19 of the List of Internal regulations).

Academic Integrity Code, approved at the RTU Senate meeting of 29 February 2016. The aim of the Academic Integrity Code is to strengthen academic culture and integrity in the academic environment of RTU, to explain the concept of academic integrity and related actions, to define main procedures in examination of academic fairness violations (in Latvian available at

[RTU_studiju_reglaments_7.1.1.4..pdf](#), English translation is in the file of Annex 38 of the List of Internal regulations).

There are procedures defined, how the report on the violation of the student's academic integrity is filled, registered, reviewed, and appealed. Informing and educating students about the aspects of academic integrity takes place both within the study courses and in specially organized seminars.

Both students and academic staff have access to the book "Glossary for Academic Integrity" published by RTU publishing house (in English available at <http://www.academicintegrity.eu/wp/glossary/>).

In addition, RTU participates in different initiatives that bring forward and solve academic integrity related issues. RTU is a member and one of the founders of the [European Network for Academic Integrity](#) (ENAI), where it is involved in active work sharing experience, keeping updated about academic integrity related issues, and organizing conferences. The *Dictionary of Academic Integrity Terms and Guidelines* is one of the newest aids that has been developed and published by RTU Press. In the framework of Specific Support Objective (SSO) 8.2.3 of the project "Development of Efficient Management of Riga Technical University", RTU, in cooperation with the University of Latvia (UL) and Rīga Stradiņš University, develops educational aids, as well as participates in the establishment of the Latvian national academic integrity organization and development of plagiarism control tools.

The organisational units implementing the study programme have developed a control mechanism, i.e., the initial check is performed in the process of interim assessment, which is performed by the work of the Advisory Examination Commission. When the student comes to these examinations, he or she should submit the electronic version of the performed work and the paper is checked in free plagiarism control tools in presence of the student. When students draft their graduation papers, they are instructed about plagiarism and its consequences several times. Methodological materials contain detailed instructions on correct presentation of references. This process allows to reduce plagiarism and highlights faults in the student's paper, which needs to be rectified. The generally accepted "good practices" show that more attention should be paid to the papers showing 20 percent or more matches. A message is received from the system, when the match level is higher than 20%. The papers are examined, reasons of matches in the text are evaluated and a decision is made whether the student should be allowed to defend his or her thesis.

During the reporting period, RTU Liepāja Academy (RTU LA) engaged in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science (MES), the University of Latvia (UL), Rīga Stradiņš University (RSU), and Riga Technical University (RTU) to establish a joint academic integrity collaboration platform aimed at enhancing professional development for academic staff.

Initiatives to promote academic integrity in Latvia were brought to the forefront, including the development of a shared vision for strengthening ethical standards among students and academic staff. The experiences and best practices of other higher education institutions were evaluated, with a particular focus on understanding and promoting academic honesty.

RTU LA also gained valuable insights into the functioning of UL's centralized digital plagiarism detection system, which was also employed by Liepāja University (now RTU LA) and Rēzekne Academy of Technologies (now RTU RA) to verify students' final theses. This system was instrumental in combating plagiarism and continues to be used for that purpose.

RTU LA representatives participated in seminars where institutional and national-level measures to foster academic integrity were discussed, and priorities for further action were identified. As part of the SAM 8.2.3 project "Ensuring Better Governance in Higher Education Institutions", a training course titled "Academic Integrity in the Study Process and Research" was delivered to RTU LA

teaching staff on 31 November 2020.

The key conclusion drawn was the need for Latvian universities to collaborate on academic integrity by implementing an effective plagiarism detection system, clearly defining what constitutes plagiarism, and adopting consistent sanctions in cases where it is identified. Furthermore, the importance of preventive measures was emphasized, including the education of both students and academic staff on academic ethics.

On 4 February 2025, RTU LA teaching staff participated in the online lecture “Understanding Plagiarism and its Detection” delivered by Dr. U. Kamboj (Lovely Professional University, India). On 8 February 2025, UL Professor Zanda Rubene gave a lecture on “Academic Integrity”, covering authorship criteria, types of plagiarism, and prevention strategies.

During the reporting period, no instances of text similarity were detected in state final theses submitted within the Social Welfare study field at either RTU LA or RTU RA, as verified through the centralized digital plagiarism detection system.

2.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System

2.2.1. Assessment of the efficiency of the internal quality assurance system within the study field by specifying the measures undertaken to achieve the aims and outcomes of the study programmes and to ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field and the relevant study programmes.

RTU operates in accordance with the *RTU Constitution*, approved at the RTU Constitutional Assembly on 23 May 2022 (see Appendix 01 of the Internal Regulatory Acts).

In order to ensure the effective implementation of the RTU Strategy, the University has developed the RTU Strategy Management System, through which strategic goals, activities, and tasks are cascaded down to the level of specific structural units and their staff.

RTU maintains an internal quality management system, in line with the RTU Quality Policy approved at the RTU Senate meeting of 25 September 2017 (Minutes No. 612; see [RTU Quality Policy](#)) (Latvian only) and the RTU Excellence Approach approved at the RTU Senate meeting of 30 January 2017 (Minutes No. 606; see [RTU Excellence Approach](#)) (Latvian only) . Since the study field is one of the 15 study fields implemented at RTU, its internal quality management system is fully aligned with and integrated into the RTU quality management system.

The RTU Quality Policy is directed towards the fulfilment of RTU’s mission and the attainment of its strategic objectives in the areas of research, studies, infrastructure, organisational excellence, and international recognition. The Quality Policy provides the framework for the implementation of the RTU Strategy and the pathways for the development and enhancement of research, study processes, and institutional growth. The RTU Quality Policy is fully harmonised with the ENQA Standards and Guidelines. The RTU Excellence Approach and the Quality Policy are interlinked documents, stipulating that RTU employs the EFQM quality model.

Since December 2018, RTU has been a member of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), joining a global quality collaboration network.

The RTU Excellence Approach (see image file *RTU Excellence Approach*) has been developed to

promote the purposeful advancement of the University as an organisation of excellence. It integrates the RTU Constitution, Strategy, and Quality Policy, and is founded upon the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG) and the core principles of the EFQM quality model.

The structure of the RTU Excellence Approach (see image file *RTU Excellence Approach Structure*) is designed in accordance with the criteria of the EFQM quality model. It provides the basis for sustaining a high level of performance, ensuring conditions for continuous improvement, and achieving sustainable results and excellence in RTU's operations.

Within the EFQM model, student results are highlighted as a distinct category and are integrated with the University's overall performance results. In this way, the quality of the study field is embedded in RTU's quality management framework.

To support the implementation of the EFQM comprehensive quality management model and the preparation of self-assessment reports, RTU established a working group on 29 September 2017 (Rector's Order No. 01000-1.1/225), consisting of 18 representatives from the administration, structural units, and the Student Parliament.

As part of the quality management system, a quality model review report is prepared, identifying areas where improvements are needed. The RTU quality management system uses performance indicators and survey results. Current data on RTU's quality management are compiled in a Power BI report, which presents recent performance, the defined target indicators, and comparisons with other universities and organisations. At present, the Power BI report is in the development stage.

Given that the consolidation of LiepU into RTU took place in 2024 and that of RTA in 2025, the integration of performance data from RTU Liepāja Academy (RTU LA) and RTU Rēzekne Academy (RTU RA) into the Power BI report will be implemented from the 2025/2026 academic year onwards. Until then, quality indicators were compiled separately in each institution. Particular attention has been paid to reducing student drop-out rates and increasing graduate employment. As a result, internal procedures have been developed and greater collaboration fostered between study process specialists, programme directors, and students in addressing issues encountered during their studies.

The implementation of the RTU Excellence Approach is process-oriented and includes a clearly defined sequence of processes and their interactions. In pursuit of excellence, considerable attention is paid to process planning, goal definition, and interaction analysis. RTU has established criteria and methods to ensure effective process operation and management. Feedback on processes is ensured through regular evaluation surveys. These analyses result in recommendations for process improvements, which are discussed with the process owner and responsible staff, then confirmed as actionable tasks with specific deadlines. The task-creation and monitoring mechanisms embedded in the documentation system, together with reporting at the level of each structural unit, provide the necessary support for achieving the annual goals and performance indicators defined in the RTU Strategy. As part of process analysis, the need to further develop the staff Performance Management System, linking it with the motivation system, has been identified.

To ensure quality across regional branches, RTU has developed *Guidelines for the Implementation of RTU Study Programmes in Regional Structural Units*. These guidelines set out the core principles for delivering study programmes in regional units, namely:

- to ensure academic quality in regional structural units, taking into account the specific needs of the regions;

- to utilise academic staff and other university resources for the effective delivery of study programmes in regional structural units;
- to foster cooperation between academic and administrative staff, students, and regional municipalities, institutions, and organisations.

The internal quality assurance of studies at RTU involves study-process centres, the Senates of RTU RA and RTU LA, the Vice-Rector for Studies' Office, the Vice-Rector for Development's Office, the Student Parliament, and the RTU Senate. These bodies evaluate new study fields and programmes, as well as modifications to existing study fields and programmes, and review the annual self-assessment reports of study fields. Internal quality assurance mechanisms thus operate at the levels of central administration, faculties, RTU RA and RTU LA, study fields, and study programmes.

The RTU study field commissions monitor academic activities within their respective fields and are responsible for the content and quality of study programmes, including field accreditation. The joint study field commission was established in June 2025 and will commence its work in the 2025/2026 academic year. Until then, quality assurance was carried out by the RTU LA study field commission and the RTA study field council. To ensure the quality of study fields and programmes, student self-government members are also actively involved, participating in RTU's decision-making bodies: the Constitutional Assembly, the Senate, Senate commissions, and faculty/RTU RA/RTU LA councils.

In accordance with ESG standards and the RTU Quality Policy, the study field quality system encompasses the following aspects:

- programme design, approval, and modifications,
- student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment,
- student admission, study process, recognition and assessment of study outcomes,
- academic staff and models of collaboration,
- learning resources and student support,
- information management and public communication,
- cyclical external quality assurance.

Monitoring and evaluation processes for the study field quality system are embedded in RTU's cyclical quality assurance and enhancement model, which includes process management, analysis of perception and performance indicators, and continuous improvement. Study quality is monitored by the RTU Study Department, which conducts regular student surveys at least once per semester regarding the quality of study content and teaching.

Survey results are made fully available to:

- each individual academic staff member for their own courses,
- the head of the academic staff member's structural unit,
- programme directors (on request) for the academic staff involved in their programmes,
- representatives of the Student Parliament.

The results are analysed and evaluated at study field commission meetings, where decisions are taken to enhance the quality of studies. Survey results are compared with those of previous years, and overall trends are discussed. For instance, students indicated the need to adjust the timing of

certain classes due to employment obligations. Consequently, class schedules are now planned with greater attention to students' interests, allowing them to gain professional competences through employment while studying. Issues related to specific staff members are addressed through discussions between the centre director, the study field leader, and/or the programme director and the academic staff concerned.

Further quality analysis is supported by data from the Graduate Monitoring Tool for higher education programmes, which provide retrospective information on graduates three years after graduation. Although the data have a time lag, they allow comparative evaluation across national higher education institutions in such categories as employment, employment combined with further study, income, and entrepreneurship.

Continuous quality enhancement of the study field is ensured through annual self-assessment, resulting in a yearly development report, which is reviewed and approved by the RTU Senate. The annual self-assessment covers aspects such as the implementation of accreditation recommendations, SWOT analysis, evaluation of the development plan and changes introduced, analysis of enrolment results, student numbers and mobility, plagiarism-prevention measures, survey results, availability of learning materials, staff composition, mobility planning, internship agreements and placements, compliance with professional standards, student achievements, infrastructure, and other relevant factors.

In 2025, the self-assessment of the study field and programmes was reviewed by the RTU Senate Study Committee, involving an RTU expert, and subsequently approved by the RTU Senate. In 2023 and 2024, the study field leaders at RTA and LiepU presented self-assessment reports and key performance results to the Senates of their respective universities. In 2022, the inclusion of programmes into the study field involved a comprehensive self-assessment and full documentation review, subsequently approved by the Senates of RTA and LiepU.

The effective functioning of the internal quality assurance system is also supported by collegial activities, such as:

- RTU RA and RTU LA Council meetings, attended by academic staff and students, where staff or students may propose issues for discussion relating to programme content and delivery, including the introduction of new courses, continuing professional development programmes, and participation in exchange programmes;
- weekly management meetings at RTU RA and RTU LA, attended by academy leadership and centre heads, where current operational issues, including study programme implementation, are addressed;
- meetings of the RTU RA Centre for Education, Languages and Social Technologies and the RTU LA Centre for Pedagogy and Social Work, where organisational matters of studies and research are reviewed, including project implementation, academic staffing, staff methodological and research activities, and their evaluation;
- study field commission meetings, where the content and delivery of study programmes are examined in relation to study field objectives and labour market requirements, analysing student, graduate, and employer surveys and planning necessary changes to enhance study quality.

Discussions are also held, both within the framework of state examination committees and separately, with employers regarding the quality and potential development of teacher education and education sciences programmes.

In addition, on the basis of student satisfaction survey results and direct proposals, since the 2023/2024 academic year the structure of the first-cycle professional Bachelor's programme *Social Work* has been revised by abandoning the modular system. This was one of the most significant student suggestions considered in improving quality assurance. Furthermore, at the students' request, the staff member responsible for internship coordination was changed, improving collaboration between students and placement providers. Course scheduling is increasingly aligned with students' interests and their need to balance studies with employment, demonstrating the flexibility of the study field and its responsiveness to student needs.

While all the initiatives mentioned above strengthen the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system, efforts are ongoing to develop new evaluation methods and refine existing ones.

All RTU staff are responsible for implementing and maintaining the Quality Policy and related procedures, assume responsibility for quality, and are engaged in quality assurance. The responsibilities, rights, and duties of staff are set out in job descriptions and procedures for all functions affecting quality. Overall, RTU, including RTU RA and RTU LA and the study field, has established a transparent and effective quality assurance system that supports the achievement of study field and programme objectives and learning outcomes, ensuring the continuous development and enhancement of study fields and programmes.

2.2.2. Analysis and assessment of the system and the procedures for the development and review of the study programmes by providing specific examples of the review of the study programmes, the aims, and regularity, as well as the stakeholders and their responsibilities. If, during the reporting period, new study programmes have been developed within the study field, describe the procedures of their development (including the process of the approval of study programmes).

Study programme development and revision processes are regulated according to the "Procedure for Application, Elaboration and Amendment of the Study Programmes" (published at [RTU_studiju_reglaments_4.6._programmu_izstradasanas_kartiba.pdf](#) (in Latvian); the English translation is in the file of Annex 06 of the Internal regulations), which in detail specify activity sequence and parties involved, starting with drawing up an application for new study programme elaboration and finishing with study programme closure. Procedures are reconciled with the effective national regulatory enactments pertaining to study programme licensing and amendment.

Revision of the study programme curriculum is the responsibility of the Study field Committee. The responsibilities and activities of the committees are regulated by the "Regulation on the Study field Committee" (approved at the RTU Senate on 26 April 2021, Minutes No 649; published at [RTU_studiju_reglaments_4.7._studiju_virziena_komisijas_nolikums.pdf](#), (in Latvian); the English translation is in the file of Annex 07 of the List of Internal regulations).

Expert assessment of the study programme is performed by the Study field Committee, then - by the Faculty Council or the councils of several faculties involved. The expert assessment procedure is finalized by the Study Department. The Study field Committee evaluates the quality of the draft study programme and the compliance of its curriculum to the planned aims and tasks.

In reflecting on the changes and highlighting the progress made, by 1 March 2024, the study programmes implemented within the Social Welfare study field were reviewed during a meeting of the Study Field Council. This was part of the process of addressing the recommendation from the

previous accreditation to “strengthen the role and impact of the Study Field Council on the development of the study field.” In response, Council meetings were held four times per academic year (twice per semester). As of 1 March 2024, when Liepāja University became RTU Liepāja and Rēzekne Academy of Technologies prepared for its transition to RTU Rēzekne, the implementation of the Social Welfare study field was coordinated through joint meetings of the Social Welfare Study Field Council. From 1 April 2025, the task of reviewing and evaluating the study programmes within the study field has been carried out by the Curriculum Committee, whose meetings are, as in the previous period, scheduled regularly—at least twice per semester.

During the reporting period, the Study Field Councils (formerly operating at Liepāja University and Rēzekne Academy of Technologies) reviewed and approved the annual self-assessment reports of the study field. These reports not only described the study programmes but also analysed student, graduate, and employer survey results related to the programmes within the field, linking them to the broader development of the Social Welfare study field. Student surveys included input from all enrolled students, while employer satisfaction was primarily assessed through questionnaires completed by the chairs of the final/state examination boards. Additionally, internship evaluation forms included questions regarding students’ theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and recommendations for the further improvement of both the study process and future employment.

The implementation of study programmes in cooperation with employers and industry professionals is a vital component of quality assurance. The concept of the study programmes is oriented towards work-based learning (including internships, projects, study visits, and courses taught by practitioners) and highlights the importance of practical training within the university (practical classes, seminars, etc.). During the evaluation period, particular attention was paid not only to the involvement of industry professionals in course delivery but also to the review of the specialisation pathways within the study programmes—conducted regularly through the meetings of the Study Field Council and its extended sessions.

Each academic year, an electronic graduate survey has been carried out. The results are compiled for each study programme and included in both the study field’s self-assessment report and the study programme description. During the reporting period, graduate engagement increased significantly—not only through guest lectures and experience-sharing sessions, but also in the teaching of individual courses and in the management of study programmes. It should also be noted that representatives appointed by the Student Council actively participate not only in the review of the study programmes offered in the study field but also in the strategic planning of the field itself.

The study programme evaluation process includes analysis of the university’s and the programme’s existing resources and development trends, student enrolment dynamics, student engagement in research and exchange programmes, and graduate employment in the profession, among other aspects. During the reporting period, special attention was devoted to identifying regional priorities and aligning them with RTU's strategic directions, ensuring that the study field offering corresponds to regional needs.

Throughout the evaluation period, the procedure for reviewing study programmes was improved. All procedural descriptions, regulatory documents, document templates and forms, and development and planning documents of RTU and its structural units are available to staff and academic personnel in the ORTUS system.

The system and processes for the development and review of study programmes operate in accordance with the RTU Quality Management System and the relevant national regulations of the Republic of Latvia.

2.2.3. Description of the procedures and/or systems according to which the students are expected to submit complaints and proposals (except for the surveys to be conducted among the students). Specify whether and how the students have access to the information on the possibilities to submit complaints and proposals and how the outcomes of the examination of the complaints and proposals and the improvements of the study field and the relevant study programmes are communicated by providing the respective examples.

In order to promote continuous improvement of the quality of studies and provide students with the opportunity to submit proposals and complaints on various study-related issues in accordance with the ESG, in the reporting period from 2013 to mid-2019, at RTU, the examination of students' recommendations and complaints was carried out; this was done by involving the structural units to which the applications related, as well as the student self-government of the respective faculty.

A new document was approved in 2019 and now students' complaints and proposals are considered in compliance with "Procedure for Submission and Examination of RTU Students' Proposals and Complaints" (published at <https://www.rtu.lv/en/university/proposals-and-complaints>).

The procedure stipulates how RTU students can submit suggestions and complaints concerning the study process and other issues, determine the terms for consideration and reply to applications (if the applicant has provided contact details) and prepare a summary of application statistics.

For example, since May 2022 RTU has received more than 100 complaints/proposal applications of which more than half were submitted anonymously. Among the applications, 18% complaints, 75% problems and 7% proposals have been submitted. The top topics are following:

- Foreign students' questions
- Study process
- IT issues
- Maintenance of infrastructure issues
- Culture
- Accommodation
- Scholarships
- Work environment
- Vacations

Analyzing the number of anonymous complaints, we can conclude that the number mostly consists of foreign students' submissions, where the anonymity is based on some system error, because the majority of anonymous submissions have the applicant's signature under the description of the problem, but it is not visible in the application form.

At the beginning of 2023, a total of 41 submissions have been received at RTU regarding a sudden change in the teaching format from correspondence to face-to-face, which constitutes 41% of all submissions submitted during this period. Evaluating the remaining submitted complaints regarding the study process, mainly the complaints are about the attitude and communication of the teaching staff, as well as in reachability in electronic communication regarding study issues. Comments were also received on topics such as the methods used in the study process; on the organization of face-

to-face classes while the study process is planned remotely; on the procedure for submitting final papers for foreign students; someone has mentioned that there is insufficient inventory to ensure the study process. Several complaints have also been received about the fact that the next semester's schedule is not available in time. It should be mentioned that the Latvian students also recommended to review the lecture schedule and not to schedule one lecture per day, especially if it is face-to-face, because a large number of students do not live in Riga or very close to Ķīpsala, therefore, more time has to be spent on the way to one lecture than in the learning process itself. There was contact with the unfairness of final grade evaluations.

Other issues include problems such as loss of personal belongings; the amount of the deposited deposit for living in the dormitory has not been received.

The IT department has received a proposal regarding the first contact of new students with the university, there is not enough information about the first steps. The portal ORTUS contains outdated information. Several proposals for calendar synchronization have been received again. Problems with activating the mandatory student edu.rtu.lv e-mail. There have also been issues with creating a MS Teams student profile.

In the field of maintenance, a recommendation has been received to carry out large mechanical/economic works in the later hours at day, not in the morning, because the residents of the dormitory are still sleeping, especially during the final periods of the semester. Also received a comment about the unavailability of class schedules at the portal ORTUS. Complaint about complex room access system for employee's identification cards.

There were no clear conditions for scholarships, how and where to apply. Two complaints were received from the same person about not receiving the scholarship when it was supposed to. As there was a misunderstanding between the scholarship approval and only approval of the received application, here is a suggestion for improving communication.

In the cultural field, it is recommended to think carefully about the event on the first of September in the Colonnade, because, unfortunately, only the front rows can see and hear the entire program, and those standing further down neither see nor hear what is happening.

In dormitory mostly have problems with the presence of various insects in both shared and personal rooms, where the comment that the resident has been facing this problem for two years. Complaints also about the noise of neighboring residents.

The list of problems and complaints of foreign students mainly consists of comments about the change of study format and its announcement only a week before the change.

Improvements implemented in response to submitted suggestions and complaints:

- In response to repeated requests for the timely publication of timetables, RTU introduced stricter deadlines for the preparation and publication of class schedules in the ORTUS system, improving students' ability to plan their studies and personal life.
- Following suggestions on the need for calendar synchronisation, the RTU IT Service developed a technical solution enabling the integration of timetables with personal calendars.
- In the management of student dormitories, additional disinfection and pest control measures were introduced in response to complaints concerning hygiene and insect infestations.
- Based on student recommendations, the scheduling of maintenance work in dormitories was revised, with noisier tasks moved to midday hours to avoid disturbing students' rest.
- In light of student concerns about insufficient communication on scholarship allocation,

information on scholarship competitions and application procedures was clarified and made more accessible in the ORTUS system.

Provision of feedback to students:

In accordance with the established procedure, if a student has provided contact details, they receive an individual response on the outcome of their submission within the specified timeframe. Where a submission is anonymous, or the matter concerns a wider group of students (for example, timetables, the organisation of the study process, or hygiene conditions in student dormitories), information on the decisions taken and the improvements implemented is published on the RTU website and in the ORTUS system, and is also communicated through the faculties' student councils. This ensures that feedback is provided not only to the individual submitter but also to the broader student community affected by the issue.

No complaints were received regarding the implementation of the Social Welfare study field during the reporting period.

2.2.4. Provide information on the mechanism for collecting the statistical data, as developed by the higher education institution/ college. Specify the type of data to be collected, the regularity of collection, and the way the information is used to improve the study field. Describe the mechanism for obtaining and providing feedback, including with regard to the work with the students, graduates, and employers.

RTU Quality Policy provides the framework for implementation of the Strategy, the paths for development and improvement of research, study and organization processes. RTU Quality Policy and implementation thereof employ a fact-based approach – decisions are based on the acquired objective data, information analysis and monitoring.

RTU draws up quality reviews based on the analysis of processes and their results. Quality reviews are drawn up once a year, summarizing the data on performance indicators of RTU administration, core activities and support processes.

28 performance indicators characterizing process quality are set for one of the RTU core activity process "Organization and Management of the Study Process". The data are summarized once a year for the previous academic year by study level and study programme.

Performance indicators characterize the quality of entrant enrolment process, study process planning and the quality of implementation of studies - implementation of the initial admission plan, number of matriculated entrants vs. number of entry applications, number of entry applications with RTU as the first priority vs. all matriculated students, number of graduates vs. total number of students, number of exmatriculated students (except for graduates) vs. total number of students, number of students with academic arrears vs. total number of students, number of students exmatriculated due to academic failure vs. total number of exmatriculated students, number of timely signed learning agreements vs. all signed learning agreements, etc.

Observing the current study programme performance, reachable qualitative or quantitative aims are set for the indicators, when possible, e.g., 65 percent of graduates of RTU undergraduate study programmes continue studies at graduate study programmes (across RTU as a whole).

The data in the quality review that is submitted to RTU administration are analysed by study level, by faculty and study field. Indicators of numerous study programmes are compared with the

general average RTU level.

The Study Department organizes further review and data forwarding to the faculties and directors of the study programmes, whereas process managers introduce the necessary improvements. Changes to the approved processes occur in cooperation with quality management specialists.

In addition to performance indicators characterizing study process quality, which are summarized in the review, a study programme quality visualization tool has been created in Power BI environment, which will be used to reflect Bachelor and Master study programme performance in an academic year with the help of radar chart. In the chart, study programme results at each study level will be presented comparatively - in relation to the best performance at the respective level. The tool is envisioned for the directors of the study programmes and faculty administration to facilitate collection of transparent information on each study programme performance considering numerous indicators simultaneously, as well as to rank the programme in relation to the best performance. It will be also possible to compare the programme performance in several academic years. The tool is currently at the development and test phase. Performance indicators of 11 study programmes are planned to summarize in the radar chart: academic staff vs. number of students, academic staff with scientific degree, ratio of graduates to the number of matriculated students, number of students who continue studies (not exmatriculated), proportion of foreign students, number of outbound mobility students, Bachelor programme graduates who continue studies at RTU, number of matriculated students from the respective Bachelor study programmes, average assessment of the study programmes in student polls, number of study materials published on ORTUS e-study system and applicability thereof, as well as financial revenue generated by study programmes per student. Comparative reviews of the study programmes results will be available to directors of all RTU study programmes. It is planned to develop and improve the tool for collection of statistical data necessary for evaluation of the study programme performance and data visualization within the framework of SSO 8.2.3 project.

In addition, RTU Study Department summarized and annually submitted until 2024 to the Central Statistical Bureau and the Ministry of Education and Science a statistical review "Review of the University, College at the Beginning of Academic Year 20_/20_" (Cabinet Regulations No. 812 of 20 December 2016, Annex 5 (<https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/287576>) (Latvian only). The Review contains the following information (sources of information and/or RTU employees responsible for data collection are indicated in parentheses).

- Distribution of students by study programme (Study Management System | Reports | University Review at the Beginning of the Academic Year);
- Enrolment results (University Review at the Beginning of the Academic Year);
- Students having obtained a degree or qualification in the academic year (University Review at the Beginning of the Academic Year);
- Distribution of enrolled students by age (University Review at the Beginning of the Academic Year);
- Distribution of students by age (University Review at the Beginning of the Academic Year);
- Distribution of students having obtained a degree or qualification by age (University Review at the Beginning of the Academic Year);
- University staff in the reporting year as of 1 October (Administrative Office);
- Premise floor area (the Unit of Legal Provision in Real Estate Issues);
- University revenues in the previous year (Planning and Economic Analysis Unit);
- Budget expenditure of the University in the previous year (Planning and Economic Analysis Unit);
- Number of students who reside in student hostels (Study Organization Unit);
- Number of students by the language of instruction;

- Distribution of enrolled students by place of residence (University Review at the Beginning of the Academic Year);
- Number of mobility students in the total number of students (University Review at the Beginning of the Academic Year);
- Number of mobility students in the total number of students who have obtained a degree or qualification (University Review at the Beginning of the Academic Year);
- Own revenue from allocation of the mobility student tuition fees by country in the previous year (International Cooperation and Foreign Students Department);
- Revenue from allocation of foreign financial study grants by country in the previous year (Project Financial Management Unit);
- Revenue from allocation of foreign financial study grants for research by country in the previous year (Project Financial Management Unit).

Summarized statistics on the number of students/graduates are used for the following purposes:

- Improvement of the study field. For example, if at some study programme the annual number of student dropouts is much higher than the number of graduates who obtained degree/qualification, the causes of such a situation are sought for with scrutiny;
- If at some study programme the number of enrolled students decreases annually, the cause should be identified, and potential programme closure should be considered;
- Allocation of financing (for state budget funded seats);
- Compilation of RTU information materials, press, etc.

To analyse study fields and obtain feedback, RTU has developed a cycle of surveys:

- At the start of studies at RTU, students complete a survey concerning their expectations, information availability, and the admissions process. This survey is conducted electronically via the ORTUS portal;
- Each semester, both mid-semester and at semester end, students enrolled in study programmes complete surveys evaluating the quality of teaching staff's work and the study programme itself. These surveys are also conducted electronically through the ORTUS portal. The results are received individually by each academic staff member and by the head of the respective structural unit. The aggregated results are discussed at departmental/centre meetings, the Study Field Committee, and Faculty Council meetings;
- After each graduation, alumni surveys are conducted at Bachelor's and Master's levels. The results are taken into account in the further development of the study programmes within the respective study field and are discussed during methodological seminars;
- An annual doctoral student and doctoral graduate survey has been implemented, and a doctoral student survey is planned during the admissions procedure. An admissions and study commencement survey has also been introduced. The aggregated results are published on the ORTUS portal. These results are used to improve the doctoral study process and the quality of support provided to doctoral candidates;
- A regular centralised survey of RTU employers is planned. Currently, employer surveys are conducted at the completion of each student's internship and as part of study programme development activities.

To obtain feedback from employers, the following mechanisms are utilised:

- Employers, as providers of student internships, submit online evaluations of students' knowledge and skills upon completion of internships, thereby also assessing the relevance of study programme content to industry needs;
- Employer opinions are obtained via the Advisory Council, participation in sectoral associations, and employer evaluations provided through the prakse.lv (Latvian only) portal

(RTU has been the most recommended university by employers for several consecutive years – <https://www.prakse.lv/top>)(Latvian only);

- To gather study programme feedback, student surveys are conducted each semester in accordance with the regulations "On Student Surveys in Study Process Evaluation" (approved by RTU Vice-Rector for Studies order No. 02000-1.1-e/9 dated 1 February 2021; published at [RTU_anketesanas_nolikums.pdf](#), (Latvian only) also included as Appendix 20 to the Internal Regulatory Acts list);
- Once per academic year, course annotations and syllabi, methodological materials, latest teaching literature, and methodological guidelines for academic works (essays, term papers, internship reports, and theses) are reviewed;
- The Study Field Committee analyses recommendations from employers and external experts, upon which changes to study programmes are organised and implemented.

For feedback from RTU alumni, the RTU Alumni Association (<http://alumni.rtu.lv/>),(Latvian only) <https://www.facebook.com/RTUAlumni/>) and its established online community platform (<https://rtuconnect.net/>) (Latvian only) are active. Their aim is to develop alumni traditions. To facilitate experience transfer from alumni, the RTU Alumni Association provides mentor training, maintains a database, and recruits mentors for students. The Association organises various events that bring alumni back to the university to network, foster cooperation among themselves and with the university, and engage in university activities. A significant event organised by the RTU Alumni Association is the RTU Grand Graduation, which brings together graduates of the respective academic year from all nine RTU faculties, academic staff, employees, and guests.

2.2.5. Specify the websites (e.g., the homepage) on which the information on the study field and the relevant study programmes is published (in all languages in which the study programmes are implemented) by indicating the persons responsible for the compliance of the information available on the website with the information published in the official registers (State Education Information System (VIIS), E-platform).

Detailed information on the study field and the study programmes pertaining to it with the indication of the languages of instruction is available at RTU webpage:

1. RTU webpage in the section on education opportunities in the Latvian language (<https://www.rtu.lv/lv/studijas>) (in Latvian only) (responsible person – Head of the Admission Department);
2. RTU webpage in the section containing comprehensive information on education opportunities in the English language (<https://www.rtu.lv/en/studies>) (responsible person – Director of International Cooperation Department);
3. Interactive webpages dedicated to RTU study fields, study programmes therein, as well as the detailed description of the offered study courses in the Latvian and English languages (<https://stud.rtu.lv/rtu/vaaApp/sprpub> and <https://stud.rtu.lv/rtu/discpub/list?english=true>) (responsible person – Deputy Director of the Study Department);
4. Webpage designed for the foreign student target audience on RTU study programmes implemented in English and student mobility opportunities (<https://international.rtu.lv>, <https://apply.rtu.lv>) (responsible person – Director of International Cooperation Department);
5. Higher Education Quality Agency E-platform (responsible person – Deputy Director of the Study Department);
6. State Education Information System (responsible person – Project Manager of the Information

Technology Department).

Information about the study programmes corresponding to the Social Welfare study field is published on the websites of RTU Liepāja and RTU Rēzekne (<https://www.rtu.lv/lv/liepaja>; (in Latvian only) <https://www.rtu.lv/lv/rezekne>) (in Latvian only)

Responsibility for the publicly available information on the study field and its related programmes lies with Head of the Study Department at RTU LA, and Head of Study Process at RTU RA.

1. Information about the short-cycle study programme “Social Rehabilitator” is available online here:
<https://www.rta.lv/studiju-programmas/socialais-rehabilitetajs>; (in Latvian only)
2. Information about the first-cycle bachelor’s study programme “Social Worker” is available on the RTU Liepāja website:
<https://www.rtu.lv/lv/studijas/visas-studiju-programmas/atvert/SCD?department=0L000&type=P>; (in Latvian only)
3. Information about the second-cycle professional master’s study programme “Social Work Management” is available online here:
<https://www.rtu.lv/lv/studijas/visas-studiju-programmas/atvert/SGV?department=0L000&type=A>. (in Latvian only)

The admission regulations for the 2025/2026 academic year for the study programmes “Social Rehabilitator”, “Social Worker”, and “Social Work Management” are published in Latvian on the RTU Liepāja and RTU Rēzekne websites: [RTU Liepāja](#) (in Latvian only) and [RTU Rēzekne](#). (in Latvian only)

The responsible staff member for the published admission information in Latvian on the RTU Liepāja website is Secretary of the RTU Liepāja Admission Committee. At RTU Rēzekne, the responsible person is Head of Study Process.

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field

2.3.1. Provide information on the system developed by the higher education institution/college for determining and redistribution of the financial resources required for the implementation of the study field and the relevant study programmes. Provide data on the available funding for the scientific research and/or artistic creation activities, its sources and its use for the development of the study field.

According to the Conceptual Report “Introduction of a New Higher Education Financing Model in Latvia” approved by the Cabinet on 29 June 2015 (<http://likumi.lv/ta/id/274944-par-jauna-augstakas-izglitibas-finansesanas-modela-ieviesanu-latvija>, in Latvian), Latvia has introduced structural reforms in the sector to ensure the development of an efficient and sustainable higher educational system. A three-pillar funding model has been introduced to reconcile the supply offered by higher education with the needs of Latvia's economic development and labour market, high-quality research-based higher education content and performance management in higher education institutions. The base funding for the provision of the study process is the 1st pillar, performance funding is the 2nd pillar, and development funding is the 3rd pillar. The first pillar, or base (base funding), is implemented through state budget funded study seats. Determination of the number of state budget funded study seats are regulated by

Sections 51 and 52 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (<http://likumi.lv/ta/id/37967-augstskolu-likums#p-50515>, (in Latvian)).

RTU funding from the basic state budget is made up of the study base financing corresponding to the list of study programmes and the number of students; it is used to cover such expenses as utilities, taxes, infrastructure maintenance (including data for the Student and Graduate Register), purchase of equipment and supplies, staff remuneration, and funding for research activities.

The number of study seats is allocated after discussions with the Ministry of Education and Science. Funding from the state budget is allocated for full-time studies. The amount of study base funding is determined on the basis of the number of study seats determined by the state at RTU, as well as the state-defined study seat basic expenses and study cost coefficients in the thematic areas of education. Study cost coefficients for thematic areas of education are indicators that determine the amount of study seat costs in the respective thematic area of education in relation to the basic costs of the study seat.

The cost coefficients for the study programmes in the thematic areas of education for Bachelor and professional study programmes are set by in Annex 1 of Cabinet Regulations of 12 December 2006 "Procedure for Financing Higher Education Institutions and Colleges from the State Budget" (<https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=149900> (in Latvian)) (further in the text - the Regulations).

Values of study cost coefficients are 1.5 times higher for Master study programmes and three times higher for Doctoral programmes than the study cost coefficients specified in Annex 1 to the Regulations for the respective thematic area of education. The amount of the study funding granted to the institution of higher education or college from the state budget for the implementation of Bachelor, professional and Master study programmes is calculated using the following formula:

$F_s = T_b \times [S(k_i \times n_i) + 1,5 \times S(k_i \times m_i)] + S_b \times S(n_i + m_i)$, where F_s - the amount of study financing;

T_b - basic costs of the study seat;

k_i - coefficient of the study costs in the relevant field of education (Annex 1 to the Regulations);

n_i - the number of study seats for a higher education institution or college at undergraduate and professional study programmes in the relevant thematic area of education;

m_i - the number of study seats at the Master study programmes in the relevant thematic area of education;

S_b - study seat social security expenses at undergraduate, professional and Master study programmes (Annex 2 to the Regulations).

The basic costs of a study seat and the social security expenses of a study seat are determined in accordance with Annex 2 to the Regulations. Each year, the Ministry of Education and Science calculates the basic costs of a study seat for the following budget year and, by November 1 of the current year, coordinates the calculations with the Ministry of Finance and those Ministries which have higher educational institutions and colleges subordinated to them.

RTU funding from the state basic budget for the provision of study seats in the respective academic year is distributed in accordance with the decision of RTU rector "Methodology for the distribution and use of funding for the structural units of RTU in academic year 2023/2024" (see the file of Annex 16 of the List of Internal regulations; hereinafter - the Methodology). The Methodology is reviewed and revised every year and is subjected to any necessary changes.

RTU has a decentralized budget, and each organizational unit is allocated a separate budget. In a general sense, a budget is a plan of revenues and expenditures for a specific period of time, work, event or function. The revenues and expenditures of RTU shall be administered in accordance with principles approved by rector or as stipulated by the Vice-Rector for Strategic Development and Finance. According to the Budget

Allocation Methodology, the financing is allocated to the organizational units either according to the financial or budget year or immediately after receiving the financing. The financial or budget year of RTU organizational units is from October to September of the following year, and for this period the financing is calculated and distributed:

- Subsidy or basic budget funding (training of state budget-funded students) is divided into monthly limit - 1/12 of the estimated annual funding per month is allocated to the organizational unit;
- Tuition fee funding (training of both local and foreign fee-paying students) is allocated twice a year (in October and April) as a monthly limit - 1/6 of the estimated funding per semester is allocated to the unit monthly;
- Debtors' payment funds (including recovered) are distributed twice a year (October and April) in one payment;
- Performance funding (research support funding) is allocated as a monthly limit - 1/12 of the estimated annual funding is allocated to the unit per month;
- Research base funding (research support funding) is allocated annually in October.

Each head of RTU organizational unit is provided with remote access to operational financial information on the unit's budget, including the envisaged workload and correspondingly allocated funding for the implementation of study programmes and study courses in subsequent periods. Based on this information, the head of the organizational unit plans the work of the unit at the beginning of each financial or budget year, including remuneration issues for academic staff members who are subordinate to the head of the unit, and develops a procurement plan for the following year in compliance with the implementation and development of the study programme or study course, etc.

According to the World Bank research on higher education governance in Latvia, which was conducted in 2017 and 2018, the World Bank concluded that RTU used the opportunities offered by the system-level funding model reform to gradually adjust the internal distribution of decision-making powers by strengthening the position of deans. Prior to the introduction of the second pillar of the state funding model, RTU funding was provided to units below the level of faculties. To address the issue of weak positions of deans, more than half of the new 2nd pillar performance income is used to provide funds to faculties where the dean is the budget holder. First, it opens up new opportunities for faculty-level strategic development. Second, deans now have greater opportunities to ensure the development of faculties, which is their responsibility. Third, since the academic year 2019/2020, deans of the faculties have additional funding from the tuition fees of foreign students.

In the academic year 2020/2021, RTU has made changes in the Methodology to ensure that the basic state budget funding for the provision of study seats is distributed by study programmes and thematic areas of study courses, ensuring precise distribution of funding according to the indicators by which RTU receives the state budget funding. In addition to the seats financed by the state basic budget, the study programme financing also consists of tuition fee revenue from the resources of natural or legal persons, which can be divided into two subgroups:

1. revenue from local fee-paying students;
2. revenue from foreign fee-paying students.

Funding from local fee-paying students is allocated in compliance with the Methodology where, in order to provide greater opportunities for the development of fee-based study programmes, for several academic years, a significant amount of the funding received has been channelled to the head of study programme, who may appropriately use this funding to renew facilities and attract higher-level specialists for the implementation of the study process, etc.

Until academic year 2021/2022, the funding from foreign fee-paying students in a respective academic year was allocated in accordance with the Resolutions of RTU Senate “On Approval of the Methodology for Allocation of Funds for Study Process Provision at the International Cooperation and Foreign Students Department” in the Respective Academic Year (see the file of Annex 41 of the List of Internal regulations hereinafter – Methodology2). It was revised and approved every year taking into account necessary changes.

Starting from 2022/2023 acad. year RTU has one "Methodology of funding distribution and utilization for RTU structural units" approved by the order of the rector, which includes the distribution and utilization of funding from the state funds, local student fees, and foreign student fees. This year, RTU made significant changes in the Methodology in order to bring the principles of distribution of foreign fee-paying students closer to the principles of distribution of local fee-paying students, thus facilitating the work process responsible for the realization of study programmes – both by bringing the funding distribution periods and principles closer.

Analysing the financing procedure of the study programmes and the study fields at RTU as a whole, it can be seen that the state basic budget and local fee-paying student funding, in the long run, are determined taking into account the basic principles established by the state (starting from 2022/2023 acad. year, the principles of calculation for foreign students have been equated to the principles of calculation for local students). In the process of determining the amount of funding, the study cost coefficients of the thematic areas of studies and the values of the study cost coefficients according to the level of the study programme, as well as the number of students at the study programme and the study courses implemented therein are taken into account. As mentioned above, by using study cost coefficients of the thematic areas of studies, it is possible to determine the amount of financing required for the implementation of a particular study programme and study course. In the Methodology for the academic year 2018/2019, RTU Senate approved that in the future the study cost coefficients of the thematic areas of studies would be applied individually to each study course of the study programme, thus ensuring an even more appropriate amount of financing for the implementation of study courses included in the study programmes. In order to implement this system, the Expert Committee was established by order of the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, who determined thematic areas of studies for each study course.

To ensure the operation and sustainable development of study programmes, RTU has historically adopted the practice of annually reviewing and improving the Methodology—and previously also Methodology2—in accordance with changes in both external and internal environments. This approach also serves to mitigate potential risks in the implementation of study programmes or their constituent study courses. The revision process involves all relevant stakeholders, thereby ensuring transparency and a clear decision-making process.

Proposals for necessary changes are initially initiated by the RTU Vice-Rector for Development and Finance, while additional amendments may be proposed by any RTU employee by submitting a formal request either to the Vice-Rector for Development and Finance or to the RTU Senate Finance and Budget Committee. The Finance and Budget Committee of the RTU Senate comprises 20 senators (the number may vary), including deans, heads of faculty structural units, professors, and student representatives with voting rights, as well as nine RTU Senate advisors who mainly represent various administrative units such as vice-rectors, department directors, and similar roles.

Once the Finance and Budget Committee has reviewed and evaluated the proposed amendments, it forwards the revised Methodology or its new version for the upcoming academic year to the RTU Senate, which consists of 35 senators, for approval. After the Senate has endorsed the draft Methodology and its core principles, the RTU Rector formally approves the document. It should be

noted that, historically, amendments to the Methodology have been introduced following thorough analysis, including measures to limit any potential negative impact on the implementation of study courses within study programmes.

The financial resources of the study field *Social Welfare* are planned within each structural unit—RTU RTU LA and RTU RTU RA

In order to ensure the effective and high-quality implementation of the study field, RTU LA and RTU RA conduct annual financial flow planning and budget preparation.

The financial resources for the study programmes corresponding to the study field at RTU LA and RTU RA consist of state budget allocations (constituting the largest share of income) and own revenue (tuition fees) (see Figure 2.3.1.1 for the financial structure of RTU LA and Table 2.3.1.1 for RTU RA). The study programmes are financed in accordance with the cost norms for education programmes set by the Cabinet of Ministers. Tuition fees, included under “own revenue,” are covered by natural or legal persons, namely students’ personal funds, employers’ contributions, or student loan resources. The amount of the tuition fee and the payment procedure for each academic year are determined in accordance with RTU guidelines and approved by the Senate. Tuition fees are paid according to an agreed payment schedule, with mandatory compliance with the deadlines for each year’s instalments.

The financial resource base at RTU LA and RTU RA is stable. The management of financial resources is closely linked to the annual budget development and forecasting of financial flows, allowing for the efficient allocation of available resources while considering both the development needs of the study programmes and broader institutional goals.

State budget funding constitutes the main portion of the total financial resources and is allocated based on the cost norms of educational programmes as defined by the Cabinet of Ministers. Own revenue mainly consists of tuition fees, which are financed through the resources of natural and legal persons—this may include students’ personal funds, employer support, or loans obtained for the purpose of covering study costs.

To increase own-source revenue and stimulate student enrolment, RTU LA and RTU RA actively implement marketing and sales strategies. These include advertising campaigns, open-door events, collaboration with secondary schools, and the provision of informational support to prospective students. These efforts are aimed at informing and attracting potential students, which directly affects the dynamics of own-source income in future academic years.

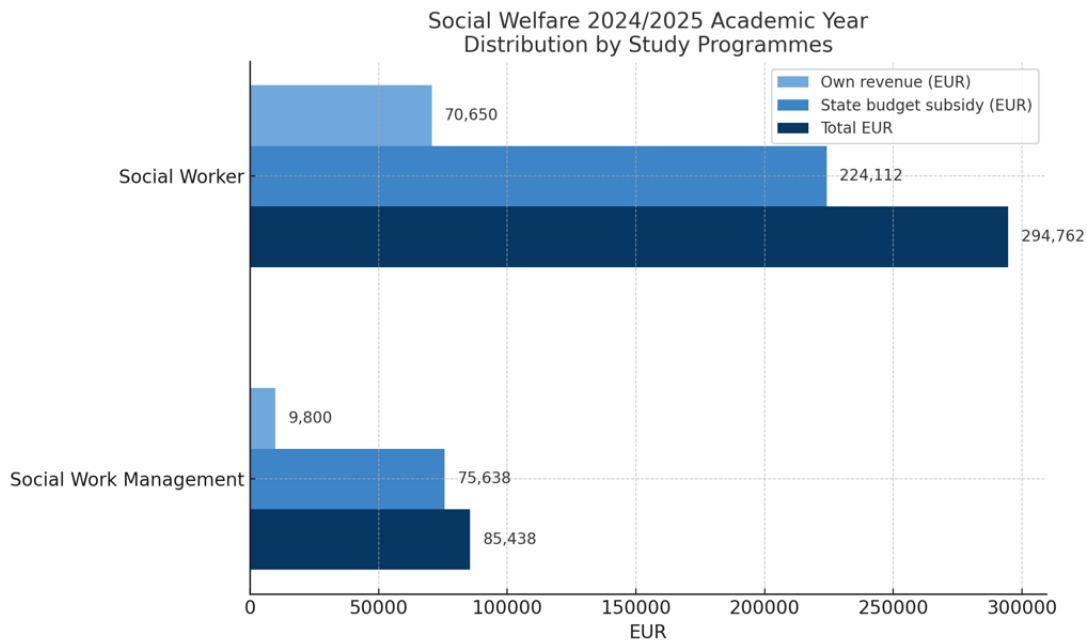


Figure 2.3.1.1. Funding of the Study Field *Social Welfare* at RTU LA in the 2024/2025 Academic Year, EUR

Study Place Costs per Student and Their Assessment

The funding for study places from the state budget is allocated annually in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 994 of 12 December 2006 “*Procedure for Financing Higher Education Institutions and Colleges from the State Budget*” and the agreement between the Ministry of Education and Science and Liepaja University regarding the preparation of a defined number of specialists.

For the Master's study programme *Social Work Management*, the planned cost calculations for full-time studies in the 2025/2026 academic year are based on the base cost per study place set in 2025 (EUR 1,867.60), the thematic field coefficient determined by the Ministry of Education and Science for the field of *Social Welfare* (3.0), and the cost coefficient for first-level professional higher education programmes (1.5). Thus, the cost per study place in 2025 is EUR 8,404.20, and the total tuition fee for the entire two-year study programme is EUR 16,808.40. The number of state-funded study places for the 2025/2026 academic year is determined accordingly.

The tuition fee for full-time studies approved by the RTU Senate for the 1st year of the 2025/2026 academic year is EUR 8,400 and remains unchanged for the entire duration of the studies. The total tuition fee for the two-year study programme is EUR 16,800.

Assessment of Cost Distribution within the Study Field

The total funding allocated for the study field *Social Welfare* in the 2024/2025 academic year (see Figure 1) amounts to EUR 380,200. The percentage breakdown of costs among study programmes is presented in Figure 2.3.1.2.

The Master's study programme *Social Work Management* constitutes 22% of the total costs. As of 1 March 2025, 16 students were enrolled in this full-time programme.

Consequently, the study programme *Social Work* accounts for 22% of the total expenditure within the study field *Social Welfare*.

Distribution of the Study Field "Social Welfare" by Study Programmes

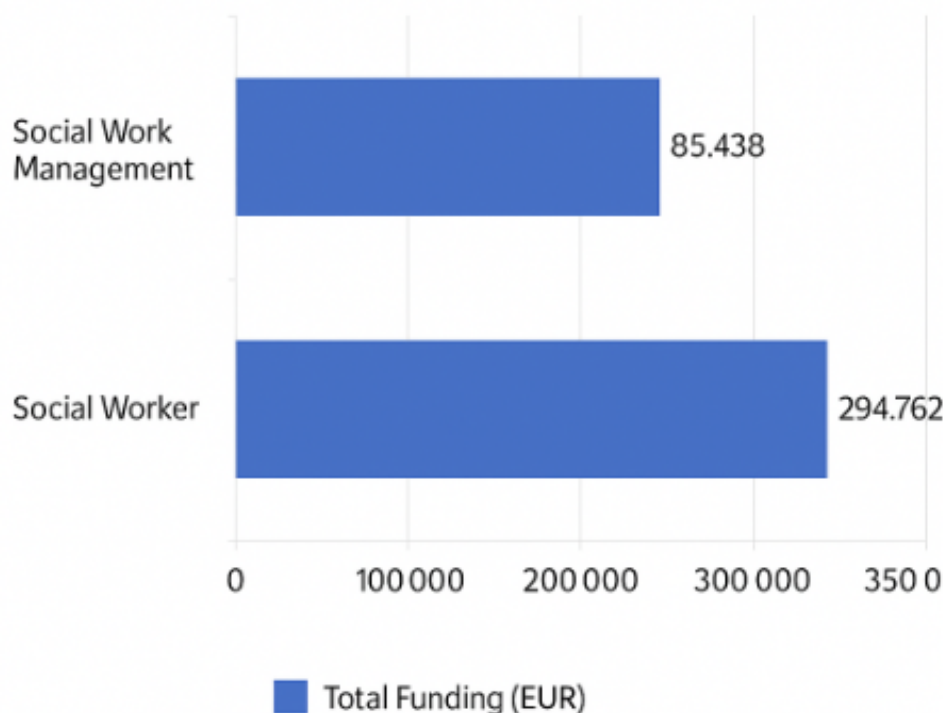


Figure 2.3.1.2. Distribution of Study Programme Costs at RTU LA in the 2024/2025 Academic Year

The planning of expenditures for the study field at RTU Liepāja is carried out in an integrated manner alongside the budgeting of other study fields, ensuring a unified approach to financial management. The study field "Social Welfare" at RTU LA is structurally included within the Centre of Pedagogy and Social Work (CPSW), which serves as the institutional unit responsible for the administration and coordination of these programmes.

An analysis of the basic budget expenditure structure (see Figure 2.3.1.2.) reveals that the dominant expenditure components are personnel remuneration, with a significant share allocated to academic staff salaries and author royalties. These cost items are directly correlated with the academic staff's involvement in course design, implementation, and content maintenance, which constitutes a key quality criterion. The next most significant expenditure category consists of utility payments, followed by costs associated with services, goods, and other operational expenses. These cover student services, marketing activities, and the technical maintenance of infrastructure.

The aforementioned budget items are systematically reviewed and optimised based on principles of efficiency and cost-effectiveness. The main objective is to ensure an ergonomic and student-friendly environment that supports the learning process. Investments in the quality of the study environment are considered a strategic priority, promoting both student satisfaction and the competitiveness of the programmes.

Expenditures related to academic support resources – acquisition of literature, subscription to periodicals, and access to electronic databases – are centrally covered from the general RTU LA basic budget. As a result, all programmes within this study field benefit from academically adequate resource provision, including access to the RTU LA library infrastructure and services that support research activities.

It can be concluded that the current expenditure structure is rationally constructed and based on clearly defined strategic objectives and priorities derived from RTU LA’s development strategy. The funding structure ensures efficient allocation of resources across key operational areas – academic activity, research, infrastructure maintenance and development, and administrative capacity. Thus, it demonstrates institutional capability to create a sustainable and functionally balanced budget that maintains an optimal compromise between the provision of high-quality education and cost efficiency. This approach aligns with the principles of good governance in higher education institutions and provides a foundation for systemic growth through the attraction of external financial resources while simultaneously strengthening internal sustainability.

Funding of the Study Field “Social Welfare” at RTU RA

The funding for the study field "Social Welfare" at RTU RA consists of:

- base funding for studies, allocated for specific study programmes and provided from the state budget, based on the number of state-funded study places, base costs per study place, and cost coefficients for specific education fields;
- performance-based funding related to results in research and graduate output;
- a proportion of basic funding for science;
- tuition fee income.

The amount of state budget funding allocated to study programmes implemented at RTU RA during the period from 2021 to 2025 is shown in Table 2.3.1.1.

Table 2.3.1.1.

RTU RA State Budget and Tuition Fee Funding for the Period 2021 to 2025

Study Programme	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
State budget funding					
1 Short-cycle professional higher education study programme “Social Rehabilitator”	80’874,72	90’984,00	84’493,00	93’893,00	83’347,00
2 First-cycle Professional Bachelor’s Study Programme “Social Work and Social Rehabilitation”	35’382,69	60’656,00	72’182,00	144025,00	170’497,00
Tuition fee revenue					
3 First-cycle Professional Bachelor's Study Programme “Social Work and Social Rehabilitation”	1’174,00	1’304,00	6’977,5	11’505,6	148,5*

Total programme funding	117'431,41	152'953,00	163'652,5	249'422,6	253'992,5*
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*Funding as of 1 April 2025

The allocation of state budget funding at RTU RA is carried out across study programmes in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 994 “[Regulations on the Procedure for Financing Higher Education Institutions from the State Budget](#)”, (Latvian only) the agreement between the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) and the higher education institution, and the annual protocol of agreement on the preparation of specialists and provision of scientific activity financed by the state budget.

The agreement between the higher education institution and the MoES stipulates that, in order to ensure rational and efficient use of financial resources, the institution is entitled to adjust the number of state-funded study places within the granted state budget subsidy. This may involve redistributing no more than 10% of the initially allocated number of state-funded study places within a single thematic field of education across different levels and programmes, provided a financial impact assessment of the redistribution is carried out beforehand.

The state budget funding is intended to support the core activities of the field of study, which includes the maintenance and development of study programmes. Funding for the development of programmes plays a significant role in the acquisition of resources for the RA library collection. This funding is not divided by fields of study, since, in the case of interdisciplinary studies, library resources are used by students from multiple fields. Essential literature for each course is subject to cyclical renewal, while the most relevant supplementary literature is updated on a regular basis.

Funding for the student self-government is guaranteed annually at no less than one two-hundredth of the state budget allocation for the study process and tuition fee income, typically amounting to approximately EUR 12,000 per year.

The base funding for scientific activity (state-provided base funding) is distributed among faculties according to performance-based output indicators, i.e. the number of publications (considering impact factor and citation index), funding attracted through research projects and industry contracts, and defended doctoral theses (also accounting for the duration required to complete doctoral studies). The calculation is conducted according to a transparent methodology approved by the RTU Science Council (document: “Methodology for Distribution of Base Funding for Scientific Activity among RTU Structural Units”, approved on 20 November 2018). Decisions on budget distribution between faculty institutes are made by faculty councils.

RTU organises two internal project competitions each year. The first is an internal funding competition to support master’s students, aiming to increase the number of highly qualified master’s students capable of producing internationally citable scientific publications and continuing into doctoral studies, thus strengthening the development and capacity of RTU's scientific staff. This objective is aligned with RTU’s strategic goals: to promote graduate employment at RTU, increase the number of internationally recognised scientific publications, and develop high-quality scientific research integrated into the study process. Expected outcomes of such a project include: employment of a master’s student in scientific work, at least one full-text publication submitted and accepted for publication per grant recipient (in a scientific journal or conference proceedings), enhancement of the scientific assistant’s research skills, and encouragement for master's students to continue their studies at RTU doctoral level. For the past three years, the annual competition

budget has been EUR 120,000, supporting at least 17 master's students each year.

The second competition supports projects involving RTU cooperation with industry partners, aimed at promoting interfaculty and interdisciplinary research within the six RTU research platforms. Normative documents are generally adopted by the RTU Science Council. However, decisions regarding the selection of specific researchers or projects are made by expert groups organised at the level of the Vice-Rector for Science, the faculty, or the research platform (Research Platform Coordinators' Council; RTU Senate Decision No. 600 "On the Approval of the RTU Research Platform Coordinators' Council Regulation", adopted on 23.05.2016). Project administration is carried out by the Office of the Vice-Rector for Science, which also coordinates the administration of externally funded research projects, such as those under the Horizon 2020 programme. Administration of research projects funded by EU structural funds is handled by the Office of the Vice-Rector for Development.

The RTU Science and Innovation Support Fund (RTU Rector's Order No. 01000-1.1-e/48 of 2 February 2024 "On the Approval of the RTU Science and Innovation Support Fund Regulations") (see section "Other Appendices" (Latvian only)) aims to provide financial support for various research-related activities. These include maintaining research equipment, protecting and licensing intellectual property, covering expenses related to doctoral studies, publishing scientific journals, attending and organising scientific conferences, and supporting researchers in establishing new laboratories in promising research fields. This fund serves as a support instrument for research activities, promoting the development of strategically important research areas. Each year, 10% of the scientific activity base funding (state budget) is allocated to the Science and Innovation Support Fund.

The fund has already supported the establishment of several new laboratories or centres, including:

- RTU High-Energy Particle Physics and Accelerator Technologies Centre (in cooperation with CERN);
- Biochip Laboratory;
- Scientific Laboratory of Experimental Mechanics of Materials;
- Electromechatronics Research Laboratory;
- Research Centre for Communication Systems Technologies;
- Electrotechnology Ergonomics Research Laboratory.

The RTU Science Council has decided, through an annual competitive process, to support at least one new promising research field each year (RTU Science Council Decision No. 04000-3/09, adopted on 21.09.2020).

The basic research funding at RTU Rēzekne Academy (RTU RA) is used for a range of programme development-oriented tasks, including: remuneration of research staff, support for institutional operations, achievement of strategic goals, co-financing of EU structural funds, other foreign and international financial instruments, and international research projects, as well as covering the costs of academic staff participation in conferences and other scientific networking activities (including participation fees).

The state budget subsidy from general revenues for performance-based funding aimed at supporting research-driven higher education at RTU RA is allocated for: remuneration of academic staff, increasing workload allocations for research staff, introducing new research staff positions, purchasing equipment, ensuring co-financing for EU structural funds and other international research projects, and covering participation and travel costs for conferences. Additionally, it supports various activities related to programme development, quality enhancement, and the integration of study and research.

In response to the accreditation experts' recommendation "*Support/cover publication costs in impact factor journals in the social work area*", targeted measures have been undertaken. By consolidating higher education institutions into a unified ecosystem, RTU RTU LA and RTU RA plan to pool their resources to strengthen research capacity and ensure more sustainable financial support for publications in internationally recognised scientific journals (the objective of publishing one to two articles per academic year in social work journals is also included in the *Social Welfare* study field Development Plan 2025–2031).

An illustrative example of this approach is the research and development grant "*Social Rehabilitation of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder Using Smart Sensory Toys and Psychological Profiling*" (RTU-PA-2024/1-0074), implemented within the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility-funded project No. 5.2.1.1.i.0/2/24/I/CFLA/003 "*Implementation of Consolidation and Management Changes at Riga Technical University, Liepāja University, Rēzekne Academy of Technology, Latvian Maritime Academy and Liepāja Maritime College for the Progress towards Excellence in Higher Education, Science and Innovation*" (RTU ID 4835). Within this project, two scientific publications have already been submitted, one of which has been published in a second quartile (Q2) journal – *IAFOR Journal of Education: Volume 13 - Issue 2 - Technology in Education*.

To date, the implementation of this recommendation has also been ensured through attracting funding for the publication of interdisciplinary research results, which integrate significant aspects of social welfare. This has enabled the dissemination of findings not only in the field of social work but also in a broader context, emphasising the interconnections of social welfare with technology, health and education. In addition, publications specifically in the field of social work have been developed on the basis of research conducted by students of the second-cycle professional Master's study programme "*Social Work Management*". Once defended, these studies have served as the foundation for peer-reviewed scientific articles, thereby enhancing the visibility of student research and strengthening the evidence base of the discipline.

A further important contribution to the fulfilment of this recommendation is the collective scientific monograph prepared within the framework of the Latvian Council of Science Fundamental and Applied Research Programme project "*The Transformation of Educational Values for the Growth of Social Community Culture and Economy*" (project No. Izp-2020/1-0178, 2021–2024). The monograph has been published in print, and its digital version will be released by 15 September 2025. It contains analytical insights into significant studies in social welfare and social work, demonstrating an interdisciplinary approach and the active involvement of RTU researchers, students and partner institutions. This publication represents a substantial contribution to strengthening the scientific capacity and international visibility of the *Social Welfare* study field (among the authors of the collective monograph were six academic staff members engaged in the delivery of the study field and two students).

2.3.2. Provide information on the infrastructure and the material and technical provisions required for the implementation of the study field and the relevant study programmes. Specify whether the required provision is available to the higher education institution/college, available to the students, and the teaching staff.

RTU Ķīpsala Student Campus (hereinafter - the Campus)

The construction of the RTU Ķīpsala Student Campus (hereinafter – the Campus) began in 1965 with the aim of creating a unified centre for studies and science. Construction is ongoing, and it is planned that from 2021 the majority of the University’s students will be concentrated in Ķīpsala. Upon completion, the RTU Campus will become the most modern engineering study centre in the Baltic States.

In developing the Campus, sustainability is a key focus. To demonstrate its commitment to sustainable development and the desire to contribute to its promotion, RTU joined the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) (in English only), which seeks to achieve the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. RTU is currently the only organisation from the Baltic States admitted to this network (info) (in English only).

By participating in the network, RTU, as a higher education and research institution, has prioritised the achievement of seven UN goals that are aligned with the University’s research platforms. The primary focus of RTU is to ensure the provision of quality education and the promotion of lifelong learning. RTU also intends to contribute to the research and innovation of sustainable and modern water technologies, electricity supply systems, infrastructure and urban environment. The University is also committed to promoting the creation and dissemination of sustainable products.

The Campus buildings are equipped with modern climate control systems and technical solutions that are remotely monitored and allow tracking of energy consumption, making the facilities more comfortable for students, academic staff, researchers, and visitors. One of the achievements in developing RTU infrastructure is participation in the Green Metric ranking (<https://greenmetric.ui.ac.id/rankings/overall-rankings-2024>), where RTU was recognised as the 40th greenest university in the world. Within the Baltic region, RTU is a leader in green infrastructure development.

To reduce human impact on the environment and climate change, the concept of “Green Ķīpsala” has been introduced in the Student Campus, by upgrading infrastructure in line with sustainability principles, changing the habits of students and staff, and applying innovative green products and technologies developed by RTU scientists in the Campus infrastructure.

The Campus infrastructure is fully equipped to meet the needs of students, staff, and visitors, including bicycle and car parking, free access to drinking water points, and facilities designed with all user groups in mind, including persons with special needs. Parking spaces are provided at each building, with barrier-free access to lecture halls, laboratories, and other premises. Information is available in Braille, and sanitary facilities have been constructed in line with requirements. The Association of People with Disabilities and their Friends “APEIRONS” (<https://www.apeirons.lv/>) has positively evaluated RTU’s achievements in ensuring accessibility in infrastructure for persons with disabilities.

At present, the Campus has 54 lecture rooms, 187 laboratories, 19 specialised classrooms, 10 computer rooms, 12 workshops, and several national research centres. The Campus also houses a student dormitory with 950 beds, including a dedicated block for students with special needs to ensure comfortable living conditions.

International students, guest lecturers and University visitors may also use the renovated RTU dormitory (Āzenes Street 22a, Riga).

Additional elements of RTU infrastructure available for students and academic staff include canteens and cafeterias located in every RTU complex, copying services, student hostels, RTU sports and recreation centres, a swimming pool, and vending machines for drinks and snacks installed in RTU premises.

Wireless internet coverage is ensured in all Campus lecture halls, allowing students to access study materials available on the RTU study portal ORTUS.

RTU RA Infrastructure and Material-Technical Resources

At the Rēzekne study location, a 4.2-hectare student campus has been developed, bringing together education and research resources in one place, thereby ensuring higher quality, greater attractiveness, and, most importantly, more rational and cost-effective maintenance of infrastructure. The study process is carried out in four academic buildings. The total area of the central building is 4,844.5 m², where 19 lecture rooms with a total area of 2,059.4 m² are used for studies. All study rooms are equipped with appropriate furniture and technical equipment, including multimedia facilities that allow lecturers to use online materials in their lectures and enable students to present their research through multimedia presentations. The lecture rooms are equipped for access via MS Teams or other remote access platforms, ensuring opportunities for remote or hybrid learning. Four lecture rooms are equipped with video/audio tracking systems for lecturers, supported by movable 360-degree cameras, to facilitate remote lecture streaming. Portable computers are also available for students during classes, with all computers connected to a central network. The central building also houses a cafeteria and a dance and aerobics room equipped with appropriate facilities. The material and technical base of RTU RA is continuously updated and improved.

The Engineering Centre building contains two computer rooms with areas of 104.9 m² and 97.9 m², equipped with 25 and 21 computers, respectively. A comprehensive library and reading room are also available for students. All buildings are accessible to persons with mobility impairments, with adapted entrances and internal lifts. Both staff and students can use free Wi-Fi access. Full access is provided to the suite of Microsoft development tools, servers, and platforms. Special programme licences allow subscribers to install software on all computers for educational and scientific purposes. Equipment has also been purchased for small-scale conference and international seminar translation.

Since 2005, the Laboratory of Special Pedagogy has been operating, ensuring the link between science and practice by developing, testing, and implementing preventive educational and integrated correctional programmes and methodologies in Latvia's special and general education institutions. The laboratory is equipped with a warm-sand device and a Barboleta balance platform. The Laboratory of Social Pedagogy and Rehabilitation Technologies provides an experimental base for the testing of scientific research, and conducts methodological work, including solving problems in special pedagogy. Equipment for this laboratory was purchased within the INTERREG LAT-LIT projects MODPART LLI-223 and POZCOPING LLI-163. In 2018, a Multisensory Room was established – one of the most modern in the Baltic States – with equipment for research in social rehabilitation and stress reduction. Within the National Research Programme INOSOCTEREHI (2014–2018), research was carried out on the introduction of telerehabilitation in inclusive education, ensuring interdisciplinarity across the social sciences (education), medical sciences (rehabilitation), and information technologies. Meanwhile, the Pedagogical Technologies Laboratory supports scientific and methodological work in the development of innovative technologies and methodologies for addressing issues in pedagogy.

For the acquisition of practical skills, facilities are available for visual arts, sewing, and design workshops, a nutrition laboratory, and a choreography hall. In cooperation with the Engineering Centre, study facilities include laboratories in Ecology, Physics, Chemistry, Human Environmental Health, Microbiology, CAD/CAE/CAM, Electrical Engineering, Electronics and Electric Drives, Ecotechnology, and Mechatronics. Musical and artistic skills are developed using pianos and

recorders. For foreign language learning, video and audio equipment and computer technology are utilised. For preschool and primary science courses and the development of students' research skills in natural sciences, available equipment includes research kits in natural sciences, physics, and biology, microscopes, micro-preparation kits, and digital learning materials. To develop students' methodological skills and foster logical thinking, problem-solving, and programming competences, two Lego robot sets and two Photon robot sets are provided.

For study programme implementation and project work, collaborative spaces are available in the Innovation Laboratory "SalesLab". Students have access to a renovated dormitory located within the student campus. Facilities are also provided for student interests, including choir activities and other extracurricular programmes. For sports activities, students use the infrastructure of the Rēzekne Olympic Centre, with which RTU has signed an agreement for sports infrastructure use.

RTU LA Infrastructure and Material-Technical Resources

The study process in Liepāja is implemented in two buildings — Lielā Street 14, Liepāja, and Kūrmājas Prospekts 13, Liepāja. The total area of the Lielā Street 14 building is 7,873.3 m², with 50 lecture rooms of a total area of 4,514.76 m² used for studies. The total area of the Kūrmājas Prospekts 13 building is 1,291.5 m², with 15 lecture rooms of a total area of 858.90 m² used for studies.

The student dormitory located at Ganību Street 36/46, Liepāja, has a total area of 4,830.9 m² and accommodates approximately 120 students. RTU Liepāja also owns two other buildings – Kuršu Street 20 (1,540.0 m²) and Kr. Valdemāra Street 4 (2,713.70 m²). At present, studies are not conducted in these facilities.

To support the study process, RTU LA provides diverse and modern material-technical resources that ensure a high-quality and efficient learning process at different study levels. There are 356 computers available for study activities, located both in computer rooms and open-access areas, enabling students and academic staff to carry out both academic and research tasks. To facilitate visual material demonstration and interactive teaching methods, facilities include two Odin glass boards, 23 video projectors, and 17 interactive whiteboards used in lectures and seminars. In addition, study rooms are equipped with four interactive screens, two interactive displays, and five conference displays.

An important technical resource also includes six copiers, as well as photographic and video equipment – 11 cameras and seven video cameras – used for documenting the study process and implementing student projects. Five lecture rooms are equipped with conference video systems featuring automatic lecturer tracking through 360-degree cameras, significantly improving the quality and interactivity of distance learning.

For organising practical seminars and adapting the study process to modern learning approaches, RTU LA has established authentic learning environments in two specialised classrooms. These are equipped with mobile desks and ergonomic composite chairs for students, as well as functional workplaces for lecturers. Each classroom contains a digital Odin board, enabling a digitally based and visually interactive learning process. In addition, a corridor has been equipped with a modern relaxation and discussion area using the OneTwenty multifunctional modular system, combining acoustic walls, pouffes, and Signs modular seating to create a creative and collaborative environment for students.

Wireless internet access is available in all RTU LA buildings, with 36 access points installed to ensure stable and fast connectivity. RTU is also a participant in the international Eduroam network, enabling students and staff to use wireless internet at higher education institutions worldwide without the need to create a guest account, thereby supporting academic mobility and research

collaboration.

To ensure flexible study opportunities and access to specialised software, RTU LA has introduced a workstation virtualisation solution. Three computer rooms are equipped with workstation clients, providing a total of 80 workplaces. Each student is allocated their own virtual computer, not tied to a specific workstation, enabling access to the study environment from any location and ensuring enhanced data security and technical reliability.

RTU LA has a modern network infrastructure that supports network virtualisation and a unified **CAMPUS network**, connecting all study buildings into a single digital environment. In cooperation with Microsoft, RTU has signed a licensing agreement for MS Office and MS Windows software – academic staff and students have free access to the MS Office 365 suite and 1TB of cloud storage.

For research and academic development, students are provided with access to international scientific databases – EBSCO, Letonika, ScienceDirect, SCOPUS, Web of Science and Cambridge Journals Online – ensuring access to the latest research and publications across disciplines.

The infrastructure at the Lielā Street 14 building in Liepāja is being systematically upgraded. In 2024, three lecture rooms were renovated and equipped with new interactive whiteboards and air-conditioning systems to improve the learning environment. A modern video surveillance system was installed, and the entrance doors of the building were restored, enhancing both security and preservation of architectural heritage.

Overall, the infrastructure and material-technical resources available for the implementation of the study field and corresponding programmes at RTU LA are fully compliant with the established academic and research objectives. They provide a high-quality, technology-based educational environment accessible to both students and academic staff, supporting competence development, innovative thinking, and international cooperation.

2.3.3. Provide information on the system and procedures for the improvement and purchase of the methodological and informative provision. Description and assessment of the availability of the library and the databases to the students (including in digital environment) and their compliance with the needs of the study field by specifying whether the opening times of the library are appropriate for the students, as well as the number/area of the premises, their suitability for individual studies and research work, the services provided by the library, the available literature for the implementation of the study field, the databases available for the students in the respective field, the statistical data on their use, the procedures for the replenishment of the library stock, as well as the procedures and possibilities for the subscription to the databases.

Support for RTU LA students and academic staff in the study process and research is provided by the RTU LA Library (information about the library is available in the library section of the RTU LA website here: <https://www.rtu.lv/lv/liepaja/studijas-liepaja/biblioteka-liepaja>). The library's mission is to ensure the RTU study process and research activities with the necessary information, provide high-quality library, bibliographic, and informational services to students, academic staff, and employees, as well as to develop the library into a modern education and information centre, offering prompt and high-quality services to users. In fulfilling its mission, the library develops a collection and provides services.

The RTU LA Library (14 Lielā Street, Liepāja) holds approximately **61,000** information resources

(93% books, 7% serial publications and other items). 72% of the entire collection is available on open-access shelves, thus enabling academic staff and students to independently choose the most appropriate publications. The thematic structure of the collection corresponds to the “Social Welfare” study field programme “**Social Worker**”. Literature is available in accordance with course topics such as social work, psychology, inclusive and special education, social pedagogy, sociology, gerontology, research in social sciences, entrepreneurship and project management, professional ethics, health and first aid, addictions, social integration and socialisation, conflict, violence and aggression, information technologies, foreign languages (Lithuanian, German, English), and others. Approximately **12% of the collection** consists of resources on the topics mentioned above.

If the required information resources are not available in the library's collection, Interlibrary Loan (ILL) and International Interlibrary Loan (IILL) services are offered. Successful cooperation has been established with the National Library of Latvia and other libraries in Latvia. IILL requests are fulfilled in collaboration with colleagues from the RTU Scientific Library (SL). The total number of domestic ILL and foreign IILL literature requests in 2024 was 21.

Free access to databases is offered for both student and academic staff needs, ensuring access to subscribed, trial, and open-access databases within and outside the RTU network. To access databases remotely, users must use their RTU ORTUS portal credentials. The content of the study programme “Social Worker” corresponds with such centrally subscribed RTU SL online databases as “Cambridge Journals Online,” “EBSCOHOST,” “EBSCOHOST eBook Academic Collection,” “SpringerLink e-books,” “Science Direct,” “Wiley Online Library,” “ProQuest Ebook Central,” as well as Dienas Bizness publications “Uzņēmuma vadītāja rokasgrāmata” and “Personāla vadības rokasgrāmata.” RTU LA Library also provides access to locally developed open-access databases: the Academic Staff Publications Database, the Doctoral Theses Database, and the Final Theses Database.

For the needs of the study programme “Social Worker,” the databases offer resources on various course topics; for example, the EBSCO eBook collection includes approximately **17,000 electronic publications** under keywords such as social pedagogy and psychology, social work, social integration and inclusion, gerontology, special pedagogy, and others. The “Cambridge Journals Online” database contains electronic journals in the following subjects: sociology (18 journals), psychology (18 journals), medicine (38 journals), management (10 journals). The library provides training, reference services, and consultations on the use of information resources and services. In 2024, the RTU LA Library's available databases and other digital resources were accessed in 24,400 sessions.

Library infrastructure and services

The library is open to users 47 hours per week (on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; on Thursdays from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). In 2024, the average number of in-person visitors was 70 users per day. Available services include the Circulation Desk (information resource lending and returns, consultations), Copy Centre (copying, printing, scanning, and binding), Group Discussion Room (on request; 9 user places), as well as 65 independent study and research workplaces in the Reading Room and library lobby, 16 computerised workstations with internet access in the Electronic Resource Reading Room. During library opening hours, users can borrow and return books using the Self-Check machine located in the Circulation area. Outside of library hours, books can be returned using the Book-drop box located in the RTU LA lobby. Free wireless internet is available throughout the library. Since 2011, an RFID security system has been used to identify and protect the library's information resources.

For over 30 years (since 1992), the library's operations have been automated. In the ALISE library

information system, the following library processes are automated: bibliographic data processing, acquisition, reader registration, circulation, ordering and reservation, remote access to WebPAC, mobile WebPAC, and other. The RTU LA Library’s electronic catalogue (<https://alise.liepu.lv/>) is accessible remotely on both computers and mobile devices. The electronic catalogue enables unified bibliographic searches of the collection and local databases developed by the library. Remote access allows users to log in to the “My Library” section from any location and monitor loans, due dates, request extensions, and reserve or queue for desired materials. In 2024, there were **160,500 search requests** registered in the electronic catalogue. In May 2024, the consolidation of library information systems with RTU SL began – transitioning from BIS ALISE to BIS ALEPH. Upon completion, information about the RTU LA Library collection will be available in the national union catalogue of Latvia's major libraries. The latest information on library services and opening hours is available in the library section of the RTU LA website (<https://www.rtu.lv/lv/liepaja/studijas-liepaja/biblioteka-liepaja>). RTU LA Library also shares updates via its social media profiles: Facebook – RTU Liepāja bibliotēka /RTU Liepāja Library; X – LiepULib.LiepULib.

Procedures for Supplementing the Library Collection and Subscribing to Databases

The library collection is compiled in accordance with the needs of study programmes, in cooperation with academic staff and students. Academic staff complete and electronically sign the form “A-12-1 Request for Supplementing the RTU Liepāja Academy Library Collection.” Any academic staff member (both appointed and invited) may complete and submit the request with recommendations for acquiring information resources to the Head of the RTU LA Library. Students can submit acquisition suggestions by completing the publicly available web form “Student's Recommendation for Book Purchase” in the Services section of the RTU LA Library website (available here: <https://www.rtu.lv/lv/liepaja/studijas-liepaja/biblioteka-liepaja/pakalpojumi-6>). Applications are reviewed in accordance with the Library’s Acquisition Policy. The decision on database subscriptions is made in several stages. First, the following data are analysed: 1) usage statistics of free trial databases; 2) usage statistics of subscribed databases in multi-year dynamics. Attention is also paid to recommendations from academic staff. Second, any changes to the database offerings are discussed by the RTU SL Council, which includes academic staff and students from all faculties. Third, the matter of subscribing to databases is discussed with the RTU management. After compiling opinions, a final decision is made.

RTU RA Library Overview

The library is located at Atbrīvošanas aleja 115, Building 4. The library offers well-equipped premises — a reading room, a circulation desk, and spaces suitable for independent study and research work. The total area of the library is 459 m², providing users with 30 workstations. Information on the area of the premises and their suitability for independent and research work is provided in Table 2.3.3.1.

Table 2.3.3.1

Area and suitability for permanent and research work

Library facilities	Condition	Notes, comments
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Total area of the premises (m ²)	459	While working in the reading room, users can use library computers or bring their own and connect to the Wi-Fi network.
Area for reader services (m ²)	418.8	
Number of reader workstations	30	
Technical condition of the premises (good, satisfactory, needs repair, in emergency condition)	good	
When was the last reconstruction, capital or routine cosmetic repair carried out	The building was constructed in 2014, in 2022, the exterior finish was renovated.	

The library collection corresponds to the study programmes implemented by RTU RA. The total size of the physical collection is 53,298 units. The latest literature relevant to the respective fields is regularly purchased, with the majority of the allocated funding for acquisitions used for books in English. Book request lists are regularly submitted to the library. To streamline and expedite the submission process, a Library Collection Supplement Request Form was created and made available electronically. A significant contribution to the collection development is made by books purchased or published within the framework of various projects. For example, in 2020, books in education sciences and special education were acquired for the amount of EUR 3,194.53 using indirect cost funding from the ESF project "Competency-Based Approach in Curriculum" under measure 8.3.1.1 "Pilot Implementation and Introduction of a Competency-Based General Education Curriculum" (8.3.1.1/16/I/002). Interlibrary loan services are available to library users. The distribution of literature by field available in the library for the implementation of the study direction is provided in Table 2.3.3.2.

Table 2.3.3.2

Distribution of Literature by Field in the RTU RA Library for the Implementation of the Study Direction as of 24.02.2025.

UDC Index, Field	Number of Copies	Number of Titles
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008 Civilization. Culture. Progress	589	230
303 Methods in Social Sciences	103	39
31 Demography. Sociology. Statistics	1786	848
36 Social Security and Welfare	819	242
37 Education	5419	2044
5 Natural Sciences	6843	1735
6 Applied Sciences	9878	3590
61 Medicine	1023	525
7 Art	2405	1502
74 Drawing and Drafting. Decorative and Applied Arts. Handicrafts. Design. Interior	588	309
81 Linguistics	4702	1878
82.0 Literary Studies	963	608
9 Geography. History	4400	2171

In the 2024/2025 academic year, the library offers its users access to the following databases:

- Skolas Vārds e-publications and a repository of methodological and digital tools providing access to:
 - e-journal "Skolas Vārds";
 - e-newspaper "Izglītība un Kultūra";
 - e-journal "Pirmsskolā";
 - Digital learning tools (Grades 1-9);
 - Database of methodological materials for preschool and schools (Grades 1-12);
- Jurista Vārds - the largest specialised legal periodical database in Latvia;
- iFinances - an online journal database on taxation, accounting, and financial management, providing up-to-date information on legislative changes and practical application guidance;
- iTiesības - an online journal database on practical application of legal acts, latest legislative amendments, and their interpretation;
- iBizness - a publication database on topical issues in management, marketing, human resources, technology, finance, and taxation;
- Latvijas Standartu bibliotēka (Latvian Standards Library);
- BilancePLZ - a portal for accountants, financial specialists, entrepreneurs, and HR managers;
- EBSCO - a multidisciplinary database of e-journals, e-books, and other electronic resources, comprising several full-text and abstract databases;
- ScienceDirect - a database in humanities, social sciences, natural and technical sciences, life sciences, and medicine;
- Scopus - a multidisciplinary database of bibliographic and citation information on scientific publications;

- Web of Science – a multidisciplinary bibliographic and citation index database of scientific publications;
- LNB Digital Collections – collections of the National Digital Library of Latvia: periodicals (periodika.lv) and books (lndb.lv).

These databases can also be accessed remotely. In 2024, the databases were used in 36,333 sessions, with 40,939 downloads. To help students gain knowledge about the library's e-resources, their usage and availability, the library offers training sessions and individual consultations. The library regularly provides trial access to electronic resources from various international publishers.

Using the electronic catalogue of the library, it is possible to filter literature by the desired subject field. For user convenience, a special "e-resources" section has been created on the library's website, compiling links to databases, scientific articles from RTU and other universities, open access resources, and e-books.

The library uses the Latvian Library Information System ALISE for managing its holdings, which ensures remote access to the library's catalogues and diverse search options, as well as ordering/reserving publications for authorised users. From the e-catalogue website, users can access the [Union Catalogue of Higher Education and Special Libraries](#), the [Rēzekne Regional Union Catalogue](#), and the National Union Catalogue, enabling resource searches and interlibrary loan requests.

The library is open on weekdays from 9:00 to 17:00. Each year, based on requests from master's/part-time students or study field management, the library also provides services on Saturdays. These schedules are adapted to current demand.

In response to the expert recommendation *“Number of literature on social work and social rehabilitation available in the library in foreign languages should be increased”*, RTU is implementing targeted measures to enhance the development of its library collections. The University library system provides access not only to printed publications but also to a wide range of international e-resources, including databases such as **EBSCO, ScienceDirect and Taylor & Francis Online**, which contain comprehensive collections of publications in social work, social rehabilitation and related disciplines. At the same time, systematic acquisitions of new titles are carried out to ensure that students and academic staff have access to the latest international research, study materials and professional guidelines. This approach is closely aligned with RTU's strategic objective of strengthening its international dimension, thereby providing students of the *Social Welfare* study field with access to cutting-edge knowledge and global practice.

Moreover, the implementation of this recommendation is not reduced solely to the quantitative expansion of the library collections. Significant emphasis is also placed on the development of students' academic competences, including the ability to navigate the existing range of resources independently, to critically evaluate diverse sources of information, and to acquire the skills of purposeful searching, reading and analysing literature in foreign languages. Such an approach ensures not only the availability of resources but also the capacity of students to make full use of the potential of the international academic environment, thereby enhancing both the quality of the study process and the overall research capacity.

2.3.4. Provide a description and assessment of information and communication technology solutions used in the study process (e.g., MOODLE). If the study programmes within the study field are implemented in distance learning, the tools specially adapted for this form of study must also be indicated.

Owing to a high level of digitalization, the available infrastructure and material and technical facilities for the implementation of the study field and corresponding study programmes provide an opportunity to increase the University's competitiveness, improve operational quality and efficiency, as well as to make information available by integrating IT solutions into administrative, academic and research processes of the University and providing administrative and academic staff with modern, reliable, secure and unified IT infrastructure and quality IT services.

The Information Technology Department works in three areas:

1. Creation, development and maintenance of an integrated information system of RTU providing support for administrative, academic and research work of RTU;
2. Provision of high-quality and uninterrupted voice and data communication services throughout the territory under the control of RTU, as well as maintenance of RTU data centres and key network resources;
3. IT service support, incl. providing information on new IT solutions, giving necessary consultation and organizing IT training.

To ensure easy and efficient identification of IT users, an IT user identity management system has been introduced; as a result, each IT user has a unique electronic identity that is valid in all information systems. In addition to the aforementioned, a user session management system is ensured in IT systems, which means that there is no need for IT users to re-authenticate when logging in to RTU information systems. It gives the experience of using a unified integrated information system without having to memorize different identification data and re-enter them, implementing different IT application scenarios.

All IT users (including RTU LA and RTU RA) are provided access to the centralized portal ORTUS (<https://ortus.rtu.lv> (access for registered users)- screenshots of the interface are attached in "RTU IT sistēmu saskarnes / Screenshots of RTU IT systems", which functions as a single digital gateway, combining information from all RTU information system components and providing users with an easy-to-use way of accessing the directory of all IT services in one place.

The centralized Study Management System is used for efficient administration of the study process, which ensures digital provision of the study life cycle, incl. Electronic Register of Study Programmes (its public part is available at <https://stud.rtu.lv/rtu/vaaApp/sprpub> - screenshots of the interface are attached in "RTU IT sistēmu saskarnes / Screenshots of RTU IT systems"), drawing up learning agreements and enrolment of students in study programmes, Register of Study Courses (its public part is available at <https://stud.rtu.lv/rtu/discpub/list?english=true> - screenshots of the interface are attached in "RTU IT sistēmu saskarnes / Screenshots of RTU IT systems"), designing student's individual study plans, drawing up orders, implementing study courses and study process, registering grades, recognizing study courses, awarding qualifications, administering payments, hostel information, gathering information to issue diploma supplements, etc. This system is one of the main cornerstones in the administration of RTU study process.

To ensure effective implementation of the study process, Moodle e-learning system is used, where all relevant information is compiled in an automated way (study courses, users, groups, access rights, etc.). This system ensures student-instructor communication. The academic staff members place various electronic materials, assessment tests, homework assignments, information on a particular study course, etc. in the system. Students can also view their financial information on the

ORTUS portal, as well as make request for documents (references, transcripts of records, copies of a learning agreement, etc.). For online distance learning RTU academic staff has options to use *Zoom* or *Microsoft Teams* video conferencing platforms.

Since 2007, more than 130,000 unique study course sites have been generated in the e-learning environment of RTU. Students can access electronic learning resources anytime and anywhere.

Digitization of classrooms and schedules has been carried out to ensure efficient premises management and study planning (<https://nodarbibas.rtu.lv/?lang=en> – screenshots of the interface are attached in “RTU IT sistēmu saskarnes / Screenshots of RTU IT systems”). Each RTU student and academic staff member can access their schedule, which provides information on the venue, time, instructor, room, title and type of lecture. In addition, for user’s convenience purposes, the system greatly facilitates lecture planning and scheduling, as well as optimizes the use and efficiency of premises.

Electronic Staff Management and Record-keeping Systems, which cover the circulation of record - keeping and personnel documents at RTU (<https://docs.rtu.lv/> (in Latvian) – screenshots of the interface are attached in “RTU IT sistēmu saskarnes / Screenshots of RTU IT systems”), are also used to ensure the efficient administrative work. Electronic document coordination and document e-signing functionality have been introduced, thus reducing print-based document circulation and significantly increasing document circulation speed. Since autumn semester 2019, students have been provided with electronically signed learning agreements. Since 2016, RTU graduates have been receiving electronically signed transcripts of records.

In terms of quality assurance, a digital student survey system is used, with the help of which the quality control of study courses and study programmes is implemented each semester. Based on the results of quality control, regular measures are taken to improve study programmes and the study process, in general.

For the additional convenience of RTU students, academic and general staff members, RTU leases Microsoft Windows and Microsoft Office software, which provides all IT users with access to the latest Microsoft software. RTU students can use the licensed Windows operating system and the Microsoft Office productivity suite provided by RTU for study needs. All IT users have access to Microsoft Office 365 cloud computing platform with one terabyte of storage space available to each user and access to a variety of additional collaboration and productivity tools (Microsoft Teams, SharePoint Online, Forms, OneNote, OneDrive, Outlook, etc.). RTU students, academic and general staff have access to the University’s email system.

To support research activities, RTU has developed the Centralized Research Support System, which records all information on publications, patents, commercialization applications, Doctoral Theses, RTU scientific journals, research staff, etc. The system provides access to information according to Open Access principle (screenshots of the interface are attached in “RTU IT sistēmu saskarnes / Screenshots of RTU IT systems”). RTU students and academic staff also have centralized access to research software.

RTU has high-speed fibre optic Internet and extensive wireless network infrastructure with over 400 access points, including the international *Eduroam* service. In addition, desk phones and mobile communications are provided for fast and easy communication.

To ensure a stable and secure operation of the information technology infrastructure, continuous monitoring of the IT infrastructure and systems is performed, resulting in proactive incident control. Data backup is also ensured.

The Information Systems Security Policy has been developed and implemented with the primary

goal of ensuring the secure use of RTU information systems by establishing and maintaining a sufficient set of measures to reduce or prevent potential or resulting harm. Implementation of the Information Systems Security Policy envisages security checks, data transmission network monitoring, as well as preventive measures. Regular IT security and personal data protection training is organized for IT users. Automated security incident management and risk management have been implemented. Statistics demonstrate that the number of IT security incidents dropped significantly over the last five years.

The IT User Support Centre provides IT user support, by applying a one-stop approach to process applications based on ITIL guidelines. Since 2007, the IT User Support Centre has processed and resolved more than 160,000 IT user applications.

RTU information and communication solutions are also available to RTU LA and RTU RA. After RTA is integrated into RTU (as of 01.04.2025), these solutions are being gradually implemented and will be fully established starting from the 2025/2026 academic year.

2.3.5. Provide information on the procedures for attracting and/or employing the teaching staff (including the call for vacancies, employment, election procedure, etc.), and the assessment of their transparency.

The implementation of RTU personnel policy focuses on three main goals within the professional development of the academic staff: renewal of the academic staff, by promoting academic work of Doctoral students, improvement of the professional competence of the existing academic staff and attraction of foreign academic staff. The action plan sets out, for each goal, the activities and sub-activities to be carried out, defines the results to be achieved, the responsible organizational units and the implementation schedule.

Elections of RTU academic staff are held in accordance with the requirements of the Law on Higher Education Institutions and Cabinet regulations based on the recommendations of the Council of Higher Education, in accordance with the Constitution of RTU and the regulations approved by the Senate "On the Procedure of Electing Professors and Associate Professors" and "On the Procedure Of Electing Assistant Professors, Lecturers and Assistants" (publicly available at <https://www.rtu.lv/lv/universitate/vakances-rtu/personalatlases-dokumenti> (in Latvian); the English translation is in the file of Annex 42-43 of the List of Internal regulations), as well as in compliance with other internal laws and regulations.

At the proposal of organizational units, the faculty council or the institute board shall consider and approve a reasoned proposal made by the head of a respective organizational unit for announcement of the competition for vacant academic positions, which expire in the respective academic year. The faculty council or the institute board shall submit the proposal under consideration to the RTU Personnel Department together with the job description and qualification requirements, including the workload (full-time or part-time).

Regarding academic positions for professors and associate professors, where the term of election expires in the respective academic year, periodic evaluation of scientific and pedagogical qualifications is performed in accordance with the Procedure for Election of a Candidate for the Position of Professor or Associate Professor and the Procedure for Assessing the Qualification of an Existing Professor or Associate Professor approved by the RTU Senate meeting on 30 May 2022 (published at

https://www.rtu.lv/writable/public_files/RTU_par_profesoru_un_asocieto_profesoru_periodisko_novert_esanu_apstiprinasanu.pdf (in Latvian); the English translation is in the file of Annex 42 of the List of Internal regulations).

The Personnel Department informs the head of the structural unit of the professor or associate professor about the need to organize the evaluation of the professor or associate professor. The evaluation is performed by the Board of professors of the field in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the Regulations of Councils of RTU professors and the Regulations on periodic evaluation of professors and associate professors approved by the RTU Senate. After the evaluation, the Council of the professors of the field submits an opinion on the result of the evaluation to the Rector and the Personnel Department. Taking into account the evaluation of the Board and the procedures and criteria set by the higher education institution, the employment contract with the associate professor or professor may be extended for a definite or indefinite term. If, as a result of the evaluation, the scientific and pedagogical qualification of a professor or associate professor meets the evaluation criteria set by the higher education institution, the employment relationship is continued. If, as a result of the evaluation, the qualification of a professor or associate professor does not meet the evaluation criteria set by the higher education institution:

- the relevant employment contract of the professor or associate professor is terminated;
- the department may decide to announce a new vacancy.

The Personnel Department announces a competition for academic staff positions at RTU website, the [Euraxess](#) vacancy portal and at least in one mass medium distributed throughout Latvia. The applicant shall personally submit or send by email the signed application documents no later than one month after the date of competition announcement.

The employment relationship shall be established by means of a written employment agreement between the Employer and the Employee at least two working days before the commencement of employment. The employment agreement shall be drawn up in duplicate. One copy shall be kept by the Personnel Department of the Department of Personnel and Working Environment (in accordance with RTU File Nomenclature) and the other shall be issued to the Employee. Prior to entering into the employment agreement, the applicant is acquainted with RTU Rules of Procedure.

Employee's duties are defined in accordance with the Classification of Occupations of the Republic of Latvia and RTU Position Catalogue, Unified Work Remuneration Procedure at RTU (see the file of Annex 44 of the List of Internal regulations), RTU Rules of Procedure and the requirements laid down in the job description, which is an integral part of the employment agreement. Job description shall be presented to and signed by the Employee. Job description shall be drawn up in duplicate; one copy shall be issued to the Employee and the other shall be kept according to RTU Case Nomenclature.

Before taking up the employment, the Applicant shall present an identity document - passport or identity card, the Foreigner shall additionally present a visa or residence permit, as well as a work permit if such a permit is required in accordance with regulatory enactments.

Visiting academic staff (an academic staff who has been elected to an academic position at another higher education institution) are employed in accordance with:

- Law on Higher Education Institutions (<https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=37967> (in Latvian));
- Labour Law (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/26019-darba-likums> (in Latvian));
- Immigration Law (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/68522-imigracijas-likums> (in Latvian));
- Cabinet Regulations No. 568 "Regulations Regarding the Procedure by which a Research Institution Concludes and Terminates Employment Agreements with a Foreign Researcher" as

- of 21 July 2008 (<https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=178749> (in Latvian));
- Cabinet Regulations No. 225 "Regulations Regarding the Amount of Financial Means Necessary for a Foreigner and the Determination of the Existence of Financial Means" as of 25 April 2017 (<https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=290808> (in Latvian));
- Cabinet Regulations No. 25 "Implementing Regulations for the First, Second and Third Project Applications Selection Round of Specific Objective 8.2.2 "To Strengthen Academic Staff of Higher Education Institutions in the Areas of Strategic Specialization" of the Operational Programme "Growth and Employment"" as of 9 January 2018 (<https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=296513> (in Latvian));
- RTU internal regulations "Procedure of Involvement and Employment of Visiting Academic Personnel at RTU" as of 26 November 2018 (see the file of Annex 25 of the List of Internal regulations);
- RTU internal regulations "Unified Work Remuneration Procedure at Riga Technical University" as of 27 April 2020 (amendments on 28 September 2020, 21 December 2020, 25 January 2021, 31 January 2022) (see the file of Annex 44 of the List of Internal regulations).

According to the results of the applicant selection competition, the employment agreement with the visiting academic staff is signed within a month, specifying an hourly rate. Job description is also provided, which includes specific job responsibilities (delivering lectures, designing study courses, lecture cycles, supervising study papers, etc.). The workload of the visiting academic staff member may include the provision of face-to-face work (delivering lectures, providing tutorials, conducting seminars, supervising graduation papers, etc.) and remote work if it complements the face-to-face work (video lectures, tutorials, supervision of graduation papers). If the work is to be carried out remotely, face-to-face visits (e.g., tutorials) should be provided at the organizational unit.

The visiting academic staff member shall enter into the employment agreement in compliance with the requirements of the Latvian regulatory enactments. During the term of the employment agreement, all assignable copyrights for the work created by the visiting academic staff member, including curricula, materials, and any other teaching aids developed by the visiting academic staff member, shall pass to the Employer. The visiting academic staff member, upon termination of the employment agreement, shall be obliged to transfer the work created within the framework of the employment agreement, including study materials, to RTU. Before terminating the employment agreement, the visiting academic staff member shall submit to the head of a respective organizational unit the reports and other documents stipulated in the employment agreement.

2.3.6. Specify whether there are common procedures for ensuring the qualification of the academic staff members and the work quality in place and provide the respective assessment thereof. Specify the options for all teaching staff members to improve their qualifications (including the information on the involvement of the teaching staff in different activities, the incentives for their involvement, etc.). Provide the respective examples and specify the way the added value of the possibilities used for the implementation of the study process and the improvement of the study quality is evaluated.

At the end of 2018, the Centre for Academic Excellence (teaching and learning centre) was established at RTU in order to support RTU academic staff (in the areas of pedagogical, intercultural communication and self-development). The main tasks of the Centre for Academic Excellence are as follows:

- to organize various educational events, such as seminars, thematic series of events, guest lectures, conferences, discussions with the participation of the Latvian and foreign specialists;
- to coordinate experience exchange activities within faculties and other organizational units;
- to inform (including posting to ORTUS) the academic staff about the latest teaching and learning trends that are appropriate for RTU;
- to provide guidance to academic staff on the use of teaching and learning methods, as well as on the assessment of students' knowledge, skills and competence;
- to inform students about learning opportunities, such as platforms, systems, applications, effective methods and forms of learning that can be used both in the study process and individually.

Each semester, a core set of activities is offered taking into account the professional competence and needs of the academic staff, which are identified through a survey, in which the lecturers indicate the most important topics and areas in which they want to improve themselves. Student surveys data and information from student self-governments are also evaluated, to gain some topics which should be improved for lecturers from students' point of view. At the same time, proactive actions are being taken to assess the potential needs of academic staff.

The Centre for Academic Excellence organizes two methodological conferences a year. The conference organized in the autumn semester is dedicated to the modern content of the study courses, while the conference held in spring focuses on modern teaching and learning methods. Materials of all events are available on ORTUS *Moodle* within the study course "Materials of the Centre for Academic Excellence".

After each professional development event, participants complete assessment questionnaires, which enable organizers to improve the range of offered events. In order to promote the development of competences of the academic staff, the student surveys are analysed each semester, as well as discussions with the representatives of faculties, student self-governments and the instructors themselves take place.

Lecturers have the opportunity to improve their English language skills by applying to the courses offered by the RTU Institute of Applied Linguistics or by the RTU Riga Business School, which are organized thanks to SAM 8.2.2 project funding.

With the emergency situation and lecturing switching to the remote mode, the CAE on the ORTUS portal prepared a site "Support in the provision of remote courses". The site consists of six sections: General Information, Technical Assistance, Pedagogical Assistance, Experience Stories, Distance Exams and Mutual Support. Each section is regularly updated with relevant resources. Lecturers appreciate such a resource, and also suggest what other materials should be included.

Since March 2020, almost 80 webinars have taken place (both organized by CAE and international partners, in which RTU lecturers were invited to participate). Webinars organized by the CAE were recorded, with more than 400 participants participating online, and the recordings were viewed more than 650 times.

RTU IT User Support Centre regularly organizes training on IT systems and the latest technology tools for RTU academic and general staff. Training is organized on the following topics:

- e-learning environment (*Moodle*) for beginners;
- e-learning environment (*Moodle*) for advanced users;
- *MS Outlook* email and calendar;
- *Office365 Teams* and *OneDrive*;
- searching in subscribed databases;

- record-keeping systems;
- basic IT security issues working with RTU information systems.

In May each year, the Student Parliament of RTU organizes the contest “Annual Award of the Student Parliament of Riga Technical University”. During the event, RTU staff and members chosen by the students are awarded the honorary titles “Instructor of the Year” and “Student Support of the Year”.

To recognize and appreciate RTU academic staff, since 2018, RTU has been organizing contests “Annual Academic Excellence Awards” and “Young Academic Staff Member of the Year” in cooperation with the foundation “Riga Technical University Development Fund” and Industry Service Partner Ltd. The aim of these events is not only to award the best academic staff members, but also to promote creativity in the academic environment.

Evaluation and Enhancement of Academic Staff Qualifications at RTU RA and RTU LA is implemented through several approaches. Once during the election period, all elected academic staff members are required to complete a professional development programme “Higher Education Didactics” or “Innovation in the Higher Education System” comprising 160 academic hours. These programmes include courses on personal development, academic writing, and other current topics in higher education, such as student-centred approach, quality management, etc.

Academic staff members in the study field regularly improve their academic qualifications by participating in conferences, seminars, project work, and academic staff exchange programmes. The knowledge and contacts acquired are further applied to enhance the study process and scientific research activities. Academic staff participate in courses and seminars on the latest pedagogical methods, and attendance at professional development courses is encouraged. Academic staff and study programme managers take part in various experience exchange events in collaboration with foreign universities, meetings with relevant institutional representatives and entrepreneurs, as well as mutual discussions on sectoral updates, student research works, and projects, analysing their outcomes;

Prior to integration into RTU, all academic staff members had the opportunity to apply for an academic performance quality evaluation, which involved the determination of a quality coefficient. The indicators for evaluating academic performance were aligned with the principles of a student-centred approach, assessing the lecturer’s contribution to the development of students’ academic, scientific, and professional competencies. After the integration into RTU, at the end of each year, a mandatory performance evaluation of academic staff (an oral interview following the completion of the academic staff evaluation form in the ORTUS system) is carried out within each structural unit, along with setting objectives for the following year.

In accordance with the requirements of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the scientific and pedagogical qualifications of professors and associate professors are evaluated by the respective Professors’ Council once every six years. Additionally, every two years the performance of professors and associate professors is reviewed by the RTU RA and RTU LA Councils.

When planning the renewal and development of academic staff, attention is paid to identifying the most capable students and motivating them to engage in academic work (related to both teaching and research). At RTU RA, several graduates or doctoral degree candidates from the doctoral programme “Pedagogy” (operational until 2022) or the doctoral programme “Educational Sciences” have been involved as teaching staff or researchers. Graduates of the master’s study programme “Social Work Management” at RTU RA and RTU LA have been engaged in teaching professional study courses. Academic work also involves members of social institutions or the non-governmental sector (for example, the Latvian Association of Social Workers, the Ethics Commission of Latvian

Social Workers, Social Services, etc.). The involvement of professionals fosters student interest and significantly improves the quality of studies.

Work-based learning justifies the need not only for knowledgeable academic staff who follow the latest developments in theoretical literature but also for practitioners who are familiar with current practical issues. Practitioners are also engaged in supervising pedagogical practice and organizing concluding practice conferences.

The procedure for hiring academic staff is transparent, as open calls are announced for vacant academic positions. Voting for election to academic positions is public. Both RTU academic staff and other interested candidates may apply for vacant teaching positions, provided they meet the requirements set for the position.

2.3.7. Provide information on the number of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the relevant study programmes of the study field, as well as the analysis and assessment of the academic, administrative (if applicable) and research workload.

A total of 59 academic staff are involved in the implementation of the study field *Social Welfare*, of whom 38 are elected and 21 are non-elected staff, yet with substantial practical and/or academic expertise in the respective field. Among the 38 elected academic staff, 74% (28 staff members) hold a doctoral degree (Dr. oec., Dr. paed., Dr. sc. admin., Dr. hist., Ph.D.), while 26% (10 staff members) do not. Overall, 54% of all 59 academic staff (32 staff members) hold a doctoral degree. This includes four non-elected RTU academic staff involved in the programme who either hold positions at other higher education institutions or pursue professional activities in institutions of other fields.

Table 2.3.7.1. Proportion of academic staff involved in the implementation of the study field *Social Welfare*

Indicator	Number	%
Total academic staff	59	100%
Elected academic staff	38	64%
- with a doctoral degree	28	74% of elected staff
- without a doctoral degree	10	26% of elected staff
Non-elected academic staff	21	36%
- with a doctoral degree	4	
Total with a doctoral degree	32	54% of all staff
Without a doctoral degree	27	46% of all staff

The state language proficiency of the academic staff employed in the study field complies with the regulations regarding the scope of state language knowledge and the procedure for the state language proficiency examination required for the performance of professional and official duties, allowing any study course to be fully delivered in the state language.

The types of academic workloads, normative volumes, and procedures for planning, accounting and control are regulated by the procedure for planning and accounting of the academic staff's workload for the current academic year.

Research work is a mandatory component of the academic staff's duties. It can be carried out by holding a scientific position such as leading researcher, researcher, or scientific assistant. Academic staff elected to a scientific position perform research activities according to the regulations on planning, accounting, control, and remuneration of scientific workloads. The scientific workload comprises participation in scientific projects/contract work, preparation of scientific publications, research work related to studies (if the scientific staff member is studying at the master's or doctoral level), and other forms of scientific activity, such as expert evaluations, assessments, reviews of scientific work, compiling collections of articles and materials, scientific editing, etc. A researcher may simultaneously hold an elected academic position as professor, associate professor, docent/assistant professor, lecturer, or assistant. It is ensured that the total annual workload of academic staff does not exceed the number of working hours stipulated by labour legislation. For full-time academic staff, a 40-hour work week is envisaged. The total annual workload of academic staff must not exceed the number of working hours defined in the labour legislation.

Within the study field, the academic workload of the teaching staff generally exceeds the volume of research work. This is determined by two factors: first, in accordance with Latvian legislation, the base salary of one unit of scientific personnel corresponds to 50 percent of the minimum monthly salary rate for a professor, which sometimes provides weak motivation for academic staff to actively engage in scientific research; moreover, scientific activity is combined not only with the teaching workload but also with administrative duties, which limits researchers' opportunities to participate in large-scale research projects.

Following the integration of RTU LA and RTU RA academic resources, the structure of teaching staff workloads was significantly optimised, ensuring a balanced distribution of teaching, research and administrative tasks. Previously observed workload disproportions, which were linked to the concentration of personnel in a single regional unit, have been successfully overcome, promoting the equalisation of academic capacity between the two branches. This solution significantly increases the functional efficiency and synergy of the academic staff.

The academic workload of most academic staff members is focused on the implementation of study courses; however, balanced involvement in research is also ensured – indicating a trend towards research-informed teaching practice. Academic staff with doctoral degrees and elected positions are, on average, more actively involved in research projects, methodological work, and international cooperation activities.

The unified human resource structure promotes greater diversity in the academic environment, interdisciplinarity, and internal quality assurance. At the same time, it has strengthened access to education at the regional level, as the redistribution of workloads allows for regular and high-quality academic presence in both Liepāja and Rēzekne.

It can be concluded that the current management of academic staff resources is structurally efficient, with clearly defined workloads, and aligns with RTU's strategic priorities in building sustainable, regionally accessible, and research-based education.

2.3.8. Assessment of the support available for the students, including the support provided during the study process, as well as career and psychological support by specifying the support to be provided to specific student groups (for instance, students from abroad, part-time students, distance-learning students, students with special needs, etc.).

RTU Well-being and Career Support Centre provides students with a wide range of career and psychological support services.

Career development support involves:

For prospective students:

- consultation on study programme selection;
- consultation on study selection and skills profiling;
- attendance an annual Career Day;
- career choice seminars within RTU Open Days and upon request.

For current students:

- regular seminars and individual consultations on the development of careermanagement skills, writing CVs and cover letters, job interview process;
- seminars on the development of entrepreneurial skills;
- project "RTU Golden Fund" to honour the best graduates and to promote new opportunities in the labour market;
- student summer camps for the development of career management and social skills and competences;
- online resource <https://ekarjera.rtu.lv/> (in Latvian);
- an annual career day aimed at informing students majoring in engineering, natural and social sciences about the best and leading companies in the respective fields and bringing them closer to potential partner companies for undertaking internship and employers.

Psychological support involves:

- individual consultations and support in case of difficulties with studies (time planning, lack of motivation, social anxiety, adaptation difficulties) and individual psychologist consultations on personal issues and difficulties (including crisis intervention).

Seminars and workshops on the following topics:

- adaptation events for first-year students - informative classes within the study course "Introduction to Study Field", seminars on the development of learning and communication skills;
- stress management methods;
- time planning methods; o self-motivation;
- emotion management and development of emotional intelligence;
- public speaking skills.

Support is differentiated by the target groups (<https://www.rtu.lv/en/wellbeing/reading-room/mental-health-1>):

- prospective students (secondary school pupils, vocational school graduates, other

prospective students): consultations concerning the studies are available, including skills diagnostics;

- first-year students: informative classes within the framework of the study course "Introduction to Study Field"; seminars on the development of learning skills; information letters on career and psychologist support opportunities; individual career and psychologist consultations; and other activities in cooperation with businesses and non-governmental organizations;
- all RTU students: individual career and psychologist consultations, seminars and classes, guest lectures, RTU Career Day;
- foreign students (Erasmus+ mobility and full-time): individual and career support consultations are available in English; wherever possible, seminars and classes are conducted in English, such as seminars on writing CVs and cover letters, time management;
- students with special needs: psychological and career support consultations are provided upon request; physical access to the room; opportunity to come with one's mentor or interpreter;
- graduates: career support consultations are provided if necessary; consultations on writing CVs and cover letters, job interview process, career opportunities;
- staff: consultations on work and study related issues are provided to RTU academic and general staff members, if necessary.

As a result of pandemic, the offer has become even more accessible, as counselling and also career classes can be offered remotely.

In 2019, work was started on strengthening support for students with disabilities and in 2020 guidelines were issued with recommendations for effective communication and improvement of the study environment for people with disabilities and special needs: <https://www.rtu.lv/en/wellbeing/well-being/support-for-students-with-disabilities>.

For students, various types of support and counselling are also provided by the RTU Student Parliament, whose structure includes all faculty Student Councils and the International Students Council (ISC), which also represents the rights and interests of foreign students. Every RTU student in all level study programs have the right to get involved in Student Parliament, as well as faculty Student Council's and ISC, both extramural and intramural, as well as full-time and part-time students. Student Parliament and faculty Student Council's organise study evenings where students can help each other learn different topics together; promote involvement in science and student clubs in order to develop different practical knowledge in the study field; organize various academic-type events, such as panel discussions and guest lectures, excursions with collaborators from different sectors, providing students with the opportunity to explore different future potential jobs and to further develop understanding between acquired knowledge in lectures and in the specific work environment.

Further information available at: <https://www.rtu.lv/en/rtusp>.

RTU International Cooperation and Department has academic consultants who consult foreign students on studies and practical issues. Academic consultants keep track of the students' academic performance and attendance, as well as meet students on a regular basis to make sure their studies are successful, both in and outside the classroom. Shortly after the arrival of students, academic seminars are held, which are compulsory for all new students. Academic seminars are held approximately twice a week at the beginning of each semester, in line with the student influx. During these seminars, academic consultants introduce students to RTU internal rules, their responsibilities and rights, academic integrity, and various other practical aspects. In the future, it is planned to divide the students into groups according to the study programmes and to involve the

heads of the study programme in the seminars so that the students would get acquainted with the management of the programme in due time. If during the semester a student is observed to face difficulties with the study process (attendance, academic arrears), the student is invited to an individual meeting with his/her academic consultant to discuss the best possible solutions to the problem. Each academic consultant has to arrange meetings with 10-15 students per week. After a month, students are invited to the meeting again to discuss their progress and make sure the situation has improved.

At RTU International Cooperation Department, students have a contact person for facilitating the immigration process. The contact person organizes immigration seminars and document examination at the beginning of the semester. The Department arranges an appointment for students with the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs of the Republic of Latvia and verify the compliance of the submitted documents with the requirements specified in regulatory enactments.

RTU International Cooperation Department (ICD) foreign student admission team organizes introductory or orientation virtual seminars for foreign students, which take place before the beginning of the academic year / semester and students' arrival in Latvia, to inform students about practical issues related to entry and stay in Latvia (entry requirements, vaccination, self-isolation, accommodation, etc.)

ICD in cooperation with the Student Service provides its students with a career counselor, who explains employment-related issues to students and introduces them to available vacancies, thus facilitating students to gain work experience and develop their skills and abilities.

Prospective and current students of all RTU study programmes, irrespective of the location of programme delivery, are encouraged to take advantage of all the aforementioned support opportunities both prior to commencing their studies, by attending events in person, or by joining them remotely. This enables students to familiarise themselves with the study environment, requirements, and available resources even before admission to the University, thereby promoting informed and well-considered study choices.

Students enrolled in the *Social Welfare* study field may fully utilise all forms of support throughout their studies, selecting the most suitable option for them – by attending consultations and events in person, or by participating in online activities. Although neither RTU Liepāja Academy (RTU LA) nor RTU Rēzekne Academy (RTU RA) currently have permanent career counsellors, students are provided with the opportunity to arrange individual consultations with an RTU career counsellor remotely, by prior appointment. In addition, both RTU LA and RTU RA employ a psychologist who provides professional psychological support to students of all levels and modes of study, thereby contributing to students' emotional well-being and the successful progress of their studies.

It is important to emphasise that no data are collected regarding the use of psychological support or career counselling services, in order to guarantee confidentiality, a sense of security, and free access to support services for both current and prospective students. In view of this arrangement, it is not possible to determine or present the proportion of students or prospective students from the *Social Welfare* study field programmes delivered at RTU Liepāja Academy or RTU Rēzekne Academy who have sought such support.

2.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation

2.4.1. Description and assessment of the fields of scientific research and/or artistic

creation in the study field, their compliance with the aims of the higher education institution/ college and the study field, and the development level of scientific research and artistic creation (provide a separate description of the role of the doctoral study programmes, if applicable).

Scientific activity at RTU LA and RTU RA, which can be analysed in relation to the implementation of the study field “Social Welfare”, is carried out in three strategic directions – social sciences, humanities and arts, as well as engineering and technology. Research in the study field “Social Welfare” is closely linked to the content of studies, particularly in the fields of social work and social pedagogy. The study field “Social Welfare” primarily focuses on improving the social and economic situation of society, paying special attention to the needs of different social groups, their inclusion in society, and the enhancement of their quality of life.

Scientific activity at RTU LA is conducted in research institutes and laboratories, such as the Language and Speech Research Laboratory and the Art Research Laboratory, which enable research in both speech therapy and new media art. RTU LA's priority areas – sustainability of human capital, language and culture in the context of regional development, and information and environmental technologies – ensure relevance and significance at both national and international levels.

Scientific and artistic creativity is closely connected to the strategic goals of RTU, RTU LA, and RTU RA, supporting an innovative, research-based study process that emphasizes interdisciplinarity and sustainable societal development. Thus, research at RTU LA and RTU RA fully aligns with the objectives of the University and the national priorities for the development of science.

Characterising RTU LA, it is important to highlight that its scientific activity aims to promote the development of education, science, innovation, and culture in Liepāja and the Kurzeme region, to ensure competitive, nationally and internationally relevant studies necessary for regional development, to implement research recognized both nationally and internationally in connection with the study fields, and to promote the sustainable development of society. RTU LA and RTU RA's scientific objective is to develop knowledge-based potential for economic development by ensuring technological excellence and transfer to the business environment and national economy. However, following the consolidation of RTU LA and RTU RA research resources, RTU LA has developed a research strategy (2025–2030) focused on improving scientific quality, internationalization, academic staff development, and fostering cooperation with industry. The transfer of research results to society is ensured by integrating knowledge into study content and participating in international projects.

The scientific and applied research directions in this study field include a variety of aspects such as the development and evaluation of social services, the reduction of social exclusion, analysis of social problems, human rights issues, the provision of social support, social policy, etc. In this context, an interdisciplinary approach is essential, synthesizing sociology, psychology, economics, and politics to offer solutions to societal problems.

Academic staff participation in conferences, scientific seminars, and their publication profiles and themes are reflected in the annual RTU RA and RTU LA Scientific Activity Reports, which are also available in the NZDIS system: https://sciencelatvia.lv/#/pub/institucijas_publ_parskats/254278. (Latvian only)

2.4.2. The relation between scientific research and/or artistic creation and the study process, including the description and assessment of the use of the outcomes in the study process.

The study process in the field of social work and social welfare at RTU LA and RTU RA is closely integrated with scientific and applied research conducted in an interdisciplinary context, grounded in current societal challenges and sustainability goals. Scientific activity at RTU LA and RTU RA focuses on addressing regional and national social issues such as reducing social exclusion, promoting access to education, public health matters, the development of an inclusive society, dimensions of social support provision, accessibility of social services in rural areas and their adaptation to the needs of local residents, as well as penitentiary social work.

The content of study courses within the study field is directly enriched by research findings, for example, the outcomes of the study “Social rehabilitation of children with autism spectrum disorder using intelligent sensory toys and psychological profiling” (RTU-PA-2024/1-0074) are integrated into the courses “Social Rehabilitation”, “Information Technologies”, etc. Research from the Erasmus+ project “Overcoming Social Distance” (GEgen COvid – Soziale Distanz überwinden) is included in the content of courses such as “Diversity of the Pedagogical Process in Educational Institutions in the Context of Social Work”, “Social Pedagogy”, and “Social Work with the Individual”. Further topics include family support mechanisms and the needs of various societal groups, including people with disabilities or those from at-risk groups. Students are actively involved in research activities during their studies – both within qualification and bachelor theses, as well as in projects supported by the RTU Science and Innovation Support Fund – fostering the development of their research and professional competences. Similar to best practices at other European universities, such as the University of Tampere (Finland) and Aalborg University (Denmark), RTU LA and RTU RA implement a community-engaged approach to the study process, enhancing students’ ability to act as agents of change in society.

Special emphasis is placed on community engagement and participation in research – RTU LA and RTU RA organize scientific-practical conferences, working seminars with social partners, and develop cooperation with municipalities and NGOs. This ensures that research results are not only used in the study process but also contribute directly to strengthening social welfare both regionally and nationally.

Research-based learning in social work studies not only promotes academic excellence but also cultivates understanding of the significance of research in professional practice, supporting students’ critical thinking, empathy, and capacity for action – essential competences for contemporary social workers.

The Institute of Regional Studies (here in after REGI) is a structural unit of the RTU Rezekne Academy’s Centre for Education, Languages and Social Technologies. REGI is the only scientific institution in the Baltic States engaged in the development of regional studies as a new scientific discipline, implementing the European Union’s regional policy and promoting regional growth and sustainability.

The Institute’s objective is to conduct interdisciplinary research in the fields of humanities and social sciences, ensuring the study of the Latgale region in the Latvian, European, and global context; to develop the scientific base of the Institute; and to promote the practical application, commercialization, and integration of research results into the study process and society at large.

Scientific fields:

- Social sciences (Educational Sciences, Economics and Business, Psychology);
- Humanities and arts (Linguistics and Literary Studies, History and Archaeology, Philosophy, Ethics and Religion, Music, Visual Arts and Architecture).

Of the RTU RA teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study field programmes, 11 (65%) lecturers are also researchers at REGI.

REGI's research is organized according to the following directions:

- Social sciences: research on personality socialization (PSPV), including educational sciences, sociology, and social work;
- Humanities and arts: linguistics and literary studies.

REGI's operations are based on three key factors:

1. **Open Innovation**, based on two main principles:

REGI uses external knowledge and technologies to enhance its own innovation capacity (active researcher participation in conferences and international projects ensures the integration of external knowledge and technologies into its innovative research).

REGI creates value from internally developed innovation not immediately applied internally (researchers with innovative ideas and scientific methodology are invited to participate in national and international contract projects, e.g., contracts with Palgrave Macmillan publishing company, the Latvian Language Agency, the Ministry of Education and Science, etc.). The innovation process is also open to individuals with experience in other interdisciplinary fields (e.g., VPP INOSOCTEREHI; INTERREG LAT-LIT project POZCOPING, etc.).

2. **Open Science**, which ensures access to the scientific process with special attention to knowledge dissemination via digital and collaborative technologies (e.g., FLPP DocTDLL and LV-UA projects, open access publications, etc.).
3. **Global Openness** in promoting international collaboration among researchers, enabling access to innovations and fostering their transfer and adaptation. As a result, foreign scholars, such as Dr. H. F. Marten (Germany), are involved in REGI activities.

REGI prepares peer-reviewed scientific publications included in internationally accessible databases. Since 2020, the international scientific e-journal *EDUCATION. INNOVATION. DIVERSITY* has been published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License. Research findings of the Institute are published in leading disciplinary forums (Thomson Reuters WoS, SCOPUS, Journals CI) and have a significant impact on the development of their respective disciplines.

2.4.3. Description and assessment of the international cooperation in the field of scientific research and/or artistic creation by specifying any joint projects, researches, etc. Specify those study programmes, which benefit from this cooperation. Specify the future plans for the development of international cooperation in the field of scientific research and/or artistic creation.

International cooperation in scientific and applied research at RTU RA and RTU LA is implemented through at least three mutually complementary approaches:

- (1) by organizing international scientific conferences that promote the internationalization of the

academic environment and the dissemination of the latest research findings;

(2) by actively participating in international research and educational projects that foster cross-border collaboration and strengthen research capacity;

(3) by publishing scientific articles in internationally peer-reviewed journals, including those with international editorial boards, thereby ensuring compliance with globally recognized quality standards and enhancing researchers' visibility in the international academic community.

International cooperation in scientific and applied research at RTU LA and RTU RA takes place in at least three ways: first, by organizing international scientific conferences; second, by participating in international projects; and third, by publishing the proceedings of international scientific conferences and scientific journals with international editorial boards.

Within the study field of "Social Welfare", international cooperation is implemented in a targeted and academically rigorous manner, providing a direct and practically applicable contribution to all study programmes offered within the field.

This cooperation facilitates the continuous updating of study programme content by ensuring a research-based learning process, promoting student involvement in international projects, and supporting the professional development of academic staff. At the same time, it enables the expansion of academic networks and contributes to the preparation of future professionals in line with contemporary international labour market demands and societal needs.

International cooperation in the field of Social Welfare is illustrated by several key activities carried out during the reporting period:

- Academic staff of the Social Welfare study field, in collaboration with researchers from Lithuania, have published both joint and individual research papers in the peer-reviewed journal *Social Welfare: Interdisciplinary Approach* (indexed in the EBSCO Academic Search Complete database), thereby strengthening bilateral academic exchange and cross-border knowledge dissemination;
- In cooperation with scholars from Šiauliai Academy, Social Welfare academic staff actively participate in the international scientific conference "Society. Integration. Education." organised by the Institute of Regional Studies at RTU RA. They also regularly contribute to the conference proceedings, which during the reporting period were indexed in the Web of Science database (<http://journals.rta.lv/index.php/SIE>);
- Academic staff of the study field (RTU RA) are actively involved in scientific committees and editorial boards of international conferences and scientific journals, including as peer reviewers. Notable examples include: *CROMA Journal* (<http://journal.avada.lt/editorial-board>), *International Scientific Conference "Society. Integration. Education."* (<http://journals.rta.lv/index.php/SIE/about/editorialTeam>), *ASERC Journal of Socio-Economic Studies* (<https://www.ajses.az/editorial-board>), *Scientific Journal of Polonia University*.

Projects and Results:

- The ERASMUS+ Strategic Partnership project "Distance learning for students and kids with autism spectrum disorder (DILASD)" (2021–2023) resulted in the development of a practically applicable methodological guide, which is used in the training of social workers and rehabilitation specialists. This provides a direct contribution to the "Social Worker" study programme, enhancing its relevance for inclusive education and support services.
- The ERASMUS+ project "Empowering Foster Parents" (2022–2024) produced two practical handbooks—one for social workers working with foster families and another for foster parents working with children under the age of 10 who exhibit behavioural challenges. These materials have been integrated into course content related to family and child social work,

thus supporting competency-based learning in the study programmes.

- The Latvian Council of Science (LZP) fundamental research project “Transformation of Educational Values for the Cultural and Economic Development of the Social Community” (2021–2024) provides a theoretical framework that is embedded in the research-focused courses of the study programmes “*Social Worker*” and “*Social Work Management*”. The project contributes to the strategic understanding of regional development in Latvia, linking academic inquiry with practical policy recommendations.

Evaluation of Cooperation:

The activities carried out demonstrate that international cooperation within the study field is not episodic but rather systematic and well-structured, with a purposeful impact on the quality of studies, research capacity, and the academic environment. The outcomes of this cooperation are directly applicable to the continuous improvement of study programme content and the professional development of academic staff.

Future Plans for the Development of Cooperation:

- To deepen engagement in European research networks (e.g., the COST programme), with the aim of preparing joint applications for Horizon Europe projects;
- To expand collaborative research with higher education institutions in the Baltic and Nordic countries, with particular focus on the intersections of climate change, ecosocial work, and social welfare;
- To develop joint summer schools for students, grounded in current research projects and aimed at integrating early-career researchers into the international academic community.

This approach promotes sustainable international cooperation, which not only enhances the competitiveness of the study field at both national and European levels but also contributes to the generation and practical application of scientific knowledge essential for societal development.

In response to the recommendation provided by the previous accreditation experts “*To increase international cooperation by becoming a member of an international association in order to raise opportunities to participate in social work related conferences (consider options to join the European Association of Schools of Social Work, the International Association of Schools of Social Work, the European Social Work Research Association)*”, since 2023 RTU LA has become a member of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) (the institution is listed under its former name, Liepāja University). Membership in IASSW strengthens international cooperation in the fields of social work education and research, ensures access to current global developments, and promotes the internationalisation of study programmes. The study programmes “*Social Worker*” and “*Social Work Management*” benefit from this collaboration by gaining wider opportunities to integrate the latest global research findings into the study process, to provide students with international learning resources, and to expand opportunities for academic mobility.

Furthermore, in line with the experts’ recommendation, academic staff holding researcher status have registered with the European Social Work Research Association (ESWRA). Membership in this research network supports the development of RTU LA’s scientific capacity, provides access to the latest publications, methodological approaches and European-level studies. It contributes to the development of joint projects and scientific initiatives, fosters the integration of research into the study process, and strengthens cooperation with international partners.

Following the integration of RTU RA into RTU, discussions are also underway regarding the involvement of RTU RA researchers in international associations. This expands the overall academic and research capacity of the institution, promotes interdisciplinary collaboration, and ensures broader participation of Latvian social work researchers in European and global research networks.

It should be noted that cooperation agreements with IASSW and ESWRA are not included in the list of bilateral agreements, since joining these associations does not require the signing of separate contracts. Therefore, a screenshot has been attached as an annex (Other Annexes) showing Liepāja University among IASSW members, while formal confirmation of researchers' membership in the ESWRA network has been requested from the association in order to provide official evidence of participation.

Looking ahead, RTU LA and RTU RA plan to systematically strengthen international cooperation by increasing engagement in IASSW and ESWRA activities, integrating international research into study content, and broadening institutional representation in international scientific networks. This strategy aims both to enhance the quality of research and to improve the international competitiveness of the study programmes.

2.4.4. Specify the way how the higher education institution/ college promotes the involvement of the teaching staff in scientific research and/or artistic creation. Provide the description and assessment of the activities carried out by the academic staff in the field of scientific research and/or artistic creation relevant to the study field by providing examples.

It is a requirement of RTU that academic staff are actively involved in research apart from their involvement in the study process. Professors and associate professors are re-evaluated and re-elected every six years. Candidates are obliged to comply with certain criteria in terms of scientific research, i.e., number of publications or patents, supervised Doctoral candidates, etc. (Decision of RTU Senate No. 633 "On approval of the RTU Regulations "On the Procedure for Election of a Candidate for the Position of Professor or Associate Professor and the Procedure for Assessing the Qualification of an Existing Professor or Associate Professor" in a new edition" as of 30 May 2022). In order to be allowed to supervise Doctoral students, the academic staff have to be approved experts in their fields, which is possible only if criteria regarding the number of publications/patents are met (decision of RTU Senate No. 602 "On Amendments to RTU Regulation on Doctorate" as of 26 September 2016). Approval process for the experts is organized by the Latvian Council of Science. The database of the experts is published on the National Research Information System (NRIS; <http://sciencelatvia.lv>).

Every year, the Rector and faculty deans sign agreements by which each faculty undertakes to achieve certain key performance indicators, many of which are based on research output, e.g., the number of publications/patents, obtained research project funding, etc. Achievement of these indicators has an impact on financing received by the faculty from the so-called performance-based funds.

RTU Research and Innovation Support Fund (order of RTU Rector No 01000-1.1-e/48 "RTU Regulation of Research and Innovation Support Fund" as of 2 February 2024) aims at providing financial support for various research related activities, such as support for maintenance of research equipment, protection and licensing of intellectual property, covering of expenses related to the Doctoral study process, publishing of scientific journals, participation and organization of scientific conferences, support to researchers in establishing new laboratories in a prospective research field. The Research Support Fund is an instrument to support research activities, which Foster the development of the strategically important research fields.

Six research platforms in the main strategic research areas of RTU were established in 2013 as an instrument for fostering inter-disciplinary and inter-faculty cooperation of researchers in the areas of importance for industry and society. These platforms areas follows: “Energy and Environment”, “Cities and Development”, “Information and Communication Technologies”, “Transport”, “Materials, Processes and Technologies”, “Security and Defence. Each platform has a dedicated coordinator, and they comprise the Council of Coordinators responsible for implementing the activities within platforms. The Council is supervised by the Office of Vice-Rector for Research (Decision of RTU Senate No. 600 “On Approval of the Regulation of the Council of Coordinators of Research Platforms at Riga Technical University” as of 23 May 2016). Similar to the faculties, the platforms have the Research Program (Decision of RTU Senate No. 590 “On Authorization to Approve RTU Research Program by RTU Scientific Council” as of 27 May 2015; “Research Program of Technical University 2016–2020”), annual action plan and dedicated funding from the Research Support Fund. Internal project calls within the platforms are organized every year, allocating 90–120 thousand EUR in total to six projects selected on a competitive basis. A mandatory requirement for the projects is a minimum 20% industry co-financing and participation of more than one faculty. In the period of 2016–2020, 16 projects were supported and nearly 300,000 EUR of funding was allocated to the projects. Regular series of seminars and visits to companies are also organized by the research platforms to stimulate networking and cooperation with industry.

Efficiency of these mechanisms can be illustrated by growth of SCOPUS indexed publications in the period of 2013–2019. The total number of the publications increased from approximately 440 publications per year in 2013 to 879 in 2021. Number of SCOPUS publications per researcher (expressed in full-time-equivalent (FTE)) increased from circa 0.9 in 2013 to circa 1.7 publications/FTE per year in 2021 (the data were obtained from Elsevier “SciVal” database on 16 November 2021).

Academic staff within the study field are actively engaged in scientific research, participating in collaborative research projects in partnership with universities and institutions both in Latvia and abroad. During the reporting period, the following national-level projects were either implemented or initiated:

- VPP LETONIKA project “*Development of a Sustainable and Cohesive Latvian Society: Solutions to Demographic and Migration Challenges*” (No. VPP-IZM-2018/1-0015) (2019–2021);
- VPP LETONIKA project “*New Solutions for the Study of Demographic and Migration Processes for the Development of a Latvian and European Knowledge Society*” (No. VPPLETONIKA2021/4-0002) (2022–2024);
- VPP project “*Living with COVID-19: Evaluation of the Crisis Management and Recommendations for Enhancing Societal Resilience*” (No. VPP-COVID-2020/1-0013) (2020–2021);
- FLPP project “*Transformation of Educational Values for the Cultural and Economic Development of the Social Community*” (No. Izp-2020/1-0178) (2021–2023);
- FLPP project “*Testing Interventions and Developing a Knowledge-Based Recommendation System for Reducing Plate Waste in School Catering in Latvia*” (No. Izp-2022/1-0492) (01.01.2021–31.12.2023);
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia grant project “*Web-Based Support System for Teachers Working with Children in Conflict-Affected Regions to Reduce Anxiety*” (No. GPK-07/2022) (2022–2023).

Academic staff from the study field have presented their research findings at conferences held in Latvia (RTU, University of Latvia, Daugavpils University), as well as in international academic forums in Lithuania, Poland, Spain, Croatia, Bulgaria, Taiwan, and other countries. Their scientific publications have been published in journals indexed in SCOPUS, Web of Science (WoS), ERIC PLUS,

EBSCO, among others. Additionally, several faculty members contribute to high-impact journals rated in Q1 and Q2 quartiles.

Lecturers involved in the study field serve as experts for the Latvian Council of Science (LZP) in the fields of educational sciences, linguistics and literary studies, economics, and business. Many are also members of doctoral promotion councils or act as reviewers of doctoral theses, contributing to the academic advancement of their respective disciplines at the national level.

Academic staff engagement in scientific research at RTU RA during the reporting period (including the 2024/2025 academic year) **was supported** in the following ways:

- **Project funding** was used to support and motivate scientific personnel. From 2018 to 2022, RTU RA implemented the project “Support for International Cooperation Projects in Research and Innovation at RTU RA” (No. 1.1.1.5/18/I/012), which provided financial support for the preparation of Horizon 2020 project proposals;
- The scientific activity support system included the **application of a coefficient** to the remuneration of research staff who exceeded the planned workload for research activities;
- RTU RA operated a **Scientific Activity Support Fund**, which provided financial support to each research staff member—up to EUR 400 per year until 2020, and EUR 200 per year from 2020—for participation in conferences or publication in international scientific journals;
- **Performance-based funding** allocated to RTU RA’s scientific structural units was used for scientific activity support measures, including the application of remuneration coefficients for academic staff, increased workload capacity for research staff, the introduction of new research staff positions, and the coverage of conference fees and travel expenses, among other purposes;
- RTU RA staff were offered **financial discounts** for publishing in scientific journals issued by RTU RA;
- RTU RA announced **internal scientific grants** to promote student involvement in research and cooperation with external partners;
- Academic staff received **methodological and career support**. The institutional base support system established by RTU RA provided opportunities for academic career development, which is closely linked to engagement in research. Doctoral study programmes at RTU RA further supported scientific career development. In addition, RTU RA organised professional development courses and seminars on topics relevant to scientific activity, such as the preparation of scientific publications, academic integrity, intellectual property and patent regulation, among others;
- Academic staff at RTU RA also received moral recognition. According to the institutional **award** regulations, categories such as “Researcher of the Year” and “Innovation of the Year” were established to acknowledge achievements in research and innovation.

RTU LA supported academic staff engagement in scientific research during the reporting period through the following measures:

- Funding from the European Structural and Cohesion Funds under the 2014–2020 planning period of the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund, within the Operational Programme “Growth and Employment,” including measures 8.2.2 “Strengthening Academic Staff of Higher Education Institutions in Strategic Specialisation Areas,” 1.1.1 “Enhancing the Research and Innovation Capacity of Latvian Scientific Institutions and Their Ability to Attract External Funding by Investing in Human Resources and Infrastructure,” and 1.1.1.2 “Support for Postdoctoral Research,” among others;
- Basic research funding and performance-based funding allocated for various support measures for scientific activities, including remuneration for academic staff;

- In cooperation with the City of Liepāja, RTU LA researchers were awarded an annual science prize for scientific achievements, which also included financial support;
- The professional development needs of scientific personnel were identified based on evaluation results and/or individual consultations. As a result, LiepU research staff improved their competencies through courses, seminars, forums, and other experience-sharing events, including: (1) English language courses for achieving C1 level; (2) specialised training for academic research staff to enhance management and collaboration skills with industry; (3) development of pedagogical excellence, etc.

Following integration into the RTU ecosystem, the development strategy for RTU LA research staff was aligned with RTU's human resource policy, the RTU Science Strategy, and the RTU LA Science Strategy 2025–2030. The RTU LA research staff development strategy is based on the strategic objective of strengthening the international competitiveness of scientific and creative activities, enhancing the support system for research implementation, promoting academic staff renewal, attracting international researchers, ensuring publication quality, and facilitating the commercialisation of research results.

The RTU LA research staff development strategy includes: (1) ensuring access to continuing education programmes for professional development and the creation of mentoring programmes to support early-career researchers; (2) evaluation of research staff performance and implementation of regular feedback mechanisms; (3) funding for research projects and professional development, including access to necessary resources such as laboratory equipment, research devices, etc.; (4) promoting high ethical standards in all research activities; (5) encouraging international cooperation and exchange programmes, participation in international conferences and seminars, as well as promoting a culture of innovation and creativity by supporting the development and implementation of new projects.

The support measures provided for scientific activities enhance the competitiveness of academic staff, allow researchers to choose their research topics freely or participate in broader research projects. Academic staff are ensured scientific mobility and the opportunity to form both national and international scientific partnerships. The scope and results of academic research are assessed as relevant to the development of the field.

Quantitative data on the academic staff involved in the study field "*Social Welfare*" (Hirsch indices according to the SCOPUS/WoS databases), where the first set of figures reflects data for 2022 (if available) and the second set for 2025, is included in the section "*Other Annexes*".

The increase in the Hirsch index values among the academic staff engaged in the study field "*Social Welfare*" demonstrates the gradual strengthening of research capacity and the enhancement of research quality between 2022 and 2025. This process cannot be reduced merely to the quantitative growth in the number of publications and citations in international databases (SCOPUS, Web of Science), but is more appropriately interpreted as the systematic accumulation of research outputs, the broadening of their international visibility, and the growth of their scholarly impact.

The significance of this development for the study field can be observed in several dimensions. Firstly, higher Hirsch index values reflect the consolidation and recognition of academic contributions within the international circulation of knowledge, thereby reinforcing institutional capacity and alignment with contemporary standards of scientific quality. Secondly, such development ensures closer integration of the study content with the most up-to-date scientific insights, which constitutes a key prerequisite for the implementation of research-based education. Thirdly, the growth in citation and impact generates further opportunities for participation in international research consortia, expands the institution's collaborative network, and fosters the advancement of interdisciplinary approaches.

In sum, the rise in Hirsch index values should be regarded as evidence of the strengthening of the research environment within the study field, simultaneously enhancing the competitiveness of the programmes and ensuring a perspective of sustainable development.

2.4.5. Specify how the involvement of the students in scientific research and/ or applied research and/or artistic creation activities is promoted. Provide the assessment and description of the involvement of the students of all-level study programmes in the relevant study field in scientific research and/ or applied research and/or artistic creation activities by giving examples of the opportunities offered to and used by the students.

In the study field “*Social Welfare*”, doctoral programmes are not implemented; however, RTU has established mechanisms that promote student involvement in research activities at all levels of study. This ensures that students in this field are encouraged to develop research competences through participation in projects, publication activities, and interdisciplinary collaboration initiatives. Such an approach is important not only for fostering research skills during studies but also for motivating graduates of master’s programmes to pursue an academic career by enrolling in doctoral studies. At the same time, this system encourages the involvement of associated academic staff in research, thereby strengthening the integration of the study field into the wider research environment of the university and contributing to the development of new scientific capacity in the future.

RTU has mechanisms for involvement of students from all study levels and programs in research activities. There are activities aimed at strengthening the Doctoral studies and providing career opportunities during the post-doctoral period to young researchers.

Doctoral grants are provided to Doctoral students on a competitive basis. International calls are made to attract to post-doctoral projects. In addition, the internal Research Excellence Grant for young scientists was established in 2018 as a new initiative, providing 270 000 EUR for 3-year period based on international competition (conditions are similar to EC ERC grant with international call and evaluation performed by external, i.e., foreign well-recognized researchers). The grant allows young and talented researchers to establish their own research groups and make research career at RTU. Internal project calls provide additional funding for publishing articles in SCOPUS/WoS indexed editions, and internal projects within 6 research platforms stimulate involvement of Doctoral and Master students in multi-disciplinary and inter-faculty research projects in cooperation with the industry. The Research Support Fund (10% of the research base funding is allocated to this fund) provides support to Doctoral students (attending conferences, publishing papers and thesis, etc.). Employment of Doctoral students and post-doctoral researchers at RTU went up from 0 FTE in the period of 2013-2016 to 88 FTE (Doctoral students) and 97 FTE (Post-doctoral researchers) in 2018. 17 post-doctoral 3-year long projects with total funding of 2.28 million EUR were launched in 2017. The funding covered salaries, costs of materials and mobility, as well as support for further development of research skills (circa 134,000 EUR are allocated to one project). 16 post-doctoral 3-year long projects were launched in 2018 and 12 post-doctoral 3-year long projects were launched in 2019 with total funding of 3.7 million EUR. 18 post-doctoral 3-year long projects with a total funding of 2.4 million EUR have been launched in 2020. In 2021, at least 10 projects should be launched. The post-doctoral projects allow attracting new researchers to RTU from abroad and other Latvian research institutions, and providing academic career

opportunities to Doctoral students who graduate from RTU.

Internal project calls within the six research platforms, which are organized every year, have criteria regarding the involvement of students in the project, giving an additional score if students at the Bachelor, Master or Doctoral level are involved in the project.

The Design Factory (DF) of RTU Science and innovation centre (see additional information about the DF below) organizes the study course "Vertically Integrated Project" (VIP), during which interdisciplinary student teams develop a challenging long-term research project under the guidance of experienced researchers. The course is implemented in cooperation with researchers from the Georgia Institute of Technology (the USA). Within the course, cross-disciplinary student teams are assembled, bringing together students from at least three different study programmes, and ranging from first-year Bachelor students to Doctoral students, as well as involving pupils from the Engineering High School (EHS) of RTU (see additional information about the EHS below). During the course, students participate in research work under supervision of RTU researchers, working together with students of other study programmes and gaining experience in research as well as in team and project work. At the end of the course, each team presents its progress and demonstrates the results obtained.

The Engineering High School of Riga Technical University is the first general secondary education establishment in Latvia that has been founded within the framework of a university. It is the place where the most talented Latvian pupils can acquire the study courses in exact and natural sciences at an advanced level to get prepared for the engineering studies. At the EHS, special attention is paid to the integration of engineering studies and scientific research activities into the study process.

A success story is the establishment of DF Labs (<http://rtudf.rtu.lv>) for design and prototyping. Idea of having the Lab at RTU was inspired by a positive example of Aalto University in Finland. Its task is to provide expertise and shared infrastructure for developing prototypes of new products and technologies, based on ideas of students and researchers. RTU DF also works with industry, start-ups and spin-offs and has established a very good reputation. We could observe that it considerably improved the involvement of students at all study levels in research and innovation activities and promoted cooperation of RTU with industry.

On the basis of DF, in January 2022 the RTU Science and Innovation Centre was opened (<https://www.rtu.lv/en/research/science-and-innovation-centre>). The Science and Innovation Center (SIC) enables the capacity of innovators, implements innovation and knowledge transfer processes, attracting, balancing and adjusting the resources necessary to ensure the innovation system and operation in the following main aspects:

1. Helping innovators to improve their knowledge and skills in various entrepreneurship development programmes. More than 1,000 RTU students and 300 students from other universities take part in them every year;
2. By implementing various activities that ensure the generation of ideas: development of ideas (prototyping), pre-incubation, an incubator of science-intensive ideas and an accelerator of climate neutrality. More than 150 teams receive support every year;
3. Implementing partnerships, representing innovation and knowledge ecosystems in Latvia and the Baltics.

ZIC's support to students and scientists by enabling their skills and providing open infrastructure develops their prototyping skills and collaboration with industry. The goal is to integrate ZIC activities in the distribution of state funding, as an important parallel process in the improvement of educational research.

At the same time, the ongoing of cooperation with the European institutions is taking place. It ensures the transfer of experience, knowledge, mobility and promotion of RTU services. An important direction is the development of products with added value, where it is necessary to stabilize the flow of requests.

In the field of innovation capacity in security, there is close cooperation with the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Latvia. In 2020 the first "Security Hackathon" was implemented, where more than 100 participants within 48 hours developed prototypes of security solutions, demonstrating their operation to the jury. This successful event and active participation of RTU scientists in the "Innovation grant competition" of Defense, a repeated event was held in 2022.

At the same time, active work is underway to the implementation of the NATO acceleration programme "Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic" in Latvia, which would provide additional support to start-ups in the security sector.

Students are encouraged to meet an academically motivating requirement - to participate at least once during their studies in a student scientific conference by presenting a paper. This serves as a tool for developing research competence and public communication skills. Participation in such events promotes not only knowledge transfer but also enhances understanding of and integration into the scientific community. Additionally, students are provided with opportunities to publish the results of their research in various academic outlets—student scientific conference journals, peer-reviewed publications, or internationally indexed conference proceedings. Such publications ensure student involvement in scientific discourse and foster the development of academic excellence.

For example, students of the professional bachelor's study programme "*Social Work*" at RTU Liepāja Academy (RTU LA) consistently participate in the annual student scientific readings held within the framework of the "Student Science and Creativity Days." These activities provide a platform for interdisciplinary exchange of ideas and support the development of students' intellectual autonomy. RTU LA students also participate in international student scientific conferences organised in cooperation with Kaunas University of Applied Sciences (Lithuania), thus expanding opportunities for scientific mobility and presenting research in a transnational academic environment.

Meanwhile, RTU RA students actively participate in the annual scientific conference "*Personality. Time. Communication*", which emphasises a multidisciplinary research approach and encourages critical reflection on current societal issues. Second-cycle professional master's students in the "*Social Work Management*" programme are systematically involved—together with their academic supervisors—in scientific research development and presentation, particularly through participation in the RTU RA-organised international conference "*Education. Innovation. Diversity*." This conference offers students not only the opportunity to present original research but also strengthens their understanding of the significance of science, innovation, and diversity in contemporary society.

Students who achieve significant results in scientific research are eligible for one-time financial incentives in the form of targeted scholarships, which motivate further research activity and individual academic development. This type of support mechanism encourages students to produce intellectually original and scientifically sound research, as well as to engage more actively in research processes in line with higher education quality standards and the principles of the Bologna Process.

During the reporting period, a positive trend in student engagement in research activities has been observed—particularly notable is the increasing participation in various research projects and the development of project management skills. Some students are integrated into scientific research

teams, actively participating in data collection, analytical work, and interpretation of results, thereby enhancing their methodological competence and understanding of the empirical research cycle.

In addition, student initiative is evident in the independent or collaborative development of scientific articles, methodological materials, or case studies, prepared either individually or in cooperation with academic staff. These are submitted for publication in scientific journals, conference proceedings, or other peer-reviewed academic publications. Such activities make a valuable contribution to strengthening the research capacity of the study field and advancing scientific excellence.

In response to the previous accreditation experts' recommendation "*Encourage joint publications based on students' thesis*", since 2023 the study field "*Social Welfare*" has systematically introduced the practice of integrating the results of students' research into the wider academic environment. This approach ensures a closer link between research and study processes, strengthens knowledge transfer mechanisms, and expands students' engagement in scholarly communication.

At the master's level, within the professional master's programme "*Social Work Management*", the findings of master's theses have been transformed into scientific publications that are regularly published in the RTU RA scientific journal "*Education. Innovation. Diversity*". (year 2024) This practice ensures that the outcomes of master's research are not confined to the completion of studies, but acquire broader academic relevance, contributing to international visibility and aligning with contemporary research trends in social work. At the same time, it promotes the practice of co-authorship between academic staff and students, which is consistent with internationally accepted quality standards and fosters the consolidation of a research culture.

It is important to note that since December 2024, with the launch of the project "*Social Rehabilitation of Autism Spectrum Disorders through the Use of Smart Sensory Toys and Psychological Profiling*", a master's student from the 2024/2025 academic year has been included in the research team. Such practice not only promotes the integration of students into the research environment already during their studies, but also provides the opportunity to acquire research skills through participation in internationally recognised studies. The student in question has already become a co-author of two publications, both of which were accepted for publication in July 2025 in internationally peer-reviewed journals and will be indexed in the SCOPUS scientific database. This demonstrates that the research competences acquired during studies are effectively transformed into internationally recognised academic outputs.

At the bachelor's level, students of the "*Social Work*" programme are actively involved in scholarly communication by presenting the results of their bachelor's theses at international student scientific conferences organised by Kaunas College (2023, 2024, and 2025). This engagement provides students with valuable experience in an international academic setting, enhances their presentation and discussion skills, and enables them to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their field. In addition, their research outputs are published in student scientific journals, ensuring wider accessibility and confirming the academic value of their work.

Overall, this systematic approach demonstrates that the study field "*Social Welfare*" consistently ensures the integration of research and study processes by:

1. fostering the development of early-stage researchers' competences;
2. strengthening the institution's research capacity;
3. ensuring compliance of study programmes with international quality standards; and

4. motivating students to pursue further academic careers at higher levels of study.

This practice confirms that the recommendation has been implemented in a substantively and strategically significant way, directly contributing to the enhancement of the quality and competitiveness of the study field.

The list of scientific publications is available in the section “*Other Annexes*”.

2.4.6. Provide a brief description and assessment of the forms of innovation (for instance, product, process, marketing, and organisational innovation) generally used in the higher education institution, especially in study field subject to the assessment, by giving the respective examples and assessing their impact on the study process.

In order to improve the quality of the study process, RTU ensures that new ideas, developments, and technologies in scientific, technical, social, cultural, and other fields are integrated into the study process and aligned with RTU’s strategic objectives. Particular attention is paid to study process indicators such as the relevance of study programmes to current developments in the field, alignment with industry needs, research-based studies, and a student-centred approach to learning. For this purpose, the following innovations have been independently or collaboratively developed and implemented:

1. RTU has established a study field commission that oversees the activities of the study field, conducts expert assessments of the content and implementation quality of study programmes, evaluates the alignment of learning outcomes with industry needs, and identifies areas for improvement in programme content and didactic strategies. The commission includes the study field director, study programme directors, leading academic staff, as well as employer and student representatives. Recommendations from employers and students regarding improvements in study content and process significantly enhance the relevance of study programmes to labour market demands.
2. As a result of the RTU RA Latvia-Lithuania cross-border project "*Development of a psychosocial support system through the implementation of the Positive Coping Strategies method and the improvement of social inclusion for vulnerable population groups (POZCOPING INTERREG)*", a multisensory room has been created. Students are introduced to its functionality and use in classes, and seminar workshops are organised for teachers.
3. An authentic learning environment has been created at RTU LA in two classrooms and adjacent corridors to support practice-based learning. This environment facilitates wide-ranging collaboration, including expanded opportunities for integrated learning, educational video production, and more.
4. ICT tools are utilised in the study process, including digital student registration for semesters and courses, and a digital attendance tracking system. These innovations reduce administrative burden and free up time for growth-oriented tasks.
5. Since 2015, the Eastern Latvia Secondary School of Technologies has been operating within RTU RA, strengthening the link and continuity between secondary and higher education.
6. In 2022, in cooperation with SIA “WARMSANDBOX,” a heated sand therapy device was installed in the Special Education Laboratory at RTU RA. Academic staff educate students on the use of heated sand in working with children.
7. Since 2024, RTU RA and RTU LA jointly publish an annual methodological collection titled “*Nest of Ideas (Ideju pūznis): A Collection of Methodological Materials for Preschool*”

Teachers". This publication compiles methodological works developed by students in the field of early childhood education.

8. In cooperation with universities from Latvia and abroad in the field of educational sciences, an international scientific e-journal titled "*Education. Innovation. Diversity*" is published. The journal is a joint initiative between six universities from four different countries.
9. Contemporary digital tools are used in the implementation of the study process (interactive panels, 360-degree cameras, LEGO and Photon robots, etc.), enhancing students' learning experiences and preparing them for a technology-rich future.
10. Innovation is promoted through the involvement of doctoral students, professionals from industry organisations, and employer representatives in course instruction or seminars. This fosters mutual knowledge exchange. For example, in the course "*Development and History of Social Work Worldwide*" (RTU LA), Inese Motte has shared her personal experience in social work in African countries. The course "*Addiction Prevention*" has been delivered in collaboration with specialists from the Addiction Prevention Centre of the Liepāja City Municipality Social Service.
11. Students involved in the study field are purposefully engaged in innovation through participation in or development of projects that result in new products or activities. For instance, in the implementation of the research and development grant No. RTU-PA-2024/1-0074 "*Social Rehabilitation for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders Using Smart Sensory Toys and Psychological Profiling*," a second-cycle master's student from the "*Social Work Management*" programme has been involved. Meanwhile, a second-year bachelor's student from the "*Social Work*" programme has developed and submitted a project titled "*Digital Tool for Public Information Support on Access to Social Assistance*."

2.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation

2.5.1. Provide the assessment as to how the cooperation with different institutions from Latvia (higher education institutions/ colleges, employers, employers' organisations, municipalities, non-governmental organisations, scientific institutes, etc.) within the study field contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field. Specify the criteria by which the cooperation partners for the study field and the relevant study programmes are selected and how the cooperation is organised by describing the cooperation with employers. In addition, specify the mechanism for the attraction of the cooperation partners.

In the study field *Social Welfare* and its related study programmes, the selection of cooperation partners is primarily determined by the content of the programmes, as well as by the fact that the programmes offered at RTU LA and RTU RA lead to a professional higher education qualification. Collaboration with employers within the programmes is largely the result of the active engagement of study programme directors and academic staff involved in the study process, including the use of personal contacts and information provided by alumni.

The main criteria for selecting cooperation partners among social institutions include:

- the area of activity and the target group, in alignment with the content of the study courses implemented in the programme;
- the organisational structure of the institution;

- the duration of the institution's activities and its initiative to collaborate;
- prior experience of cooperation, the presence of alumni within the institution, and the relevance of the issues addressed to the student's professional development.

Attention is also paid to the interest expressed by the cooperation partners themselves and to the mutual contributions of RTU LA and RTU RA students and employers.

The promotion of cooperation is strengthened not only by informal links with interested and loyal partners of the study programmes, but also through written feedback received regarding the relevance of the programmes (emphasising and justifying the importance and necessity of professional training) and their implementation (including student internship evaluations, summaries following final qualification examinations, etc.).

Formal support is provided through cooperation agreements concluded within the study field. Collaboration with social institutions is also ensured through the involvement of employers in various academic and professional activities, including:

- participation in the work of State Examination Committees (e.g., during defence of bachelor thesis: I. Paudere, V. Gūtmanis, D. Zeļģe, S. Veinberga, L. Geležina, I. Lapiņa), supervision and evaluation of internship reports, and other related activities;
- participation in scientific and applied research conferences (*Topical Issues in Social Work* at RTU LA, *Integration. Diversity* at RTU RA), including involvement in the annual RTU LA and RTU RA *Creativity and Science Days*;
- participation in surveys analysing and evaluating the professional activities of students in the study field;
- provision of internship placements for students enrolled in study programmes of the Social Welfare field;
- support and facilitation of study visits to introduce students to the operations of social institutions and cooperation partners;
- publication of their own research findings in conference proceedings and scientific journals issued by RTU LA and RTU RA.

Key forms of cooperation:

- Provision of internship placements for students;
- Participation in the organisation of events (including discussions);
- Involvement in the implementation of the "Career Days" event;
- Participation in State Final Examination Commissions;
- Guest lectures and seminars for students and staff;
- Involvement of industry professionals in academic teaching positions;
- Recommendations for research topics;
- Academic staff placements and internships in institutions;
- Educational activities for students, such as study visits.

Cooperation with employers plays a particularly important role in ensuring the quality of studies. Employers such as director of Liepāja City Social Service, director Saldus Municipal Agency "Saldus Social Service", and director Ventspils Social Service are members of the Study Field Council for *Social Welfare* and are nominated for continued involvement in the study field commission from 1 April 2025. They actively participate in the development of study programmes. Moreover, the employment of graduates is one of the key indicators of programme quality and recognition of the education acquired by employers.

The integration of studies and practical training within the study field fosters strong links with employers not only in the cities where the programmes are implemented—Liepāja and

Rēzekne—but also in nearby regions and small towns, establishing closer cooperation and networking. Collaboration is also taking place through various project initiatives. For example, within the FLPP project “Transformation of Educational Values for the Economic Development of Social and Cultural Communities” (IzVeTSKKEI) (implemented from 2021 to 2024), cooperation was established with social services, educational institutions, and other social organisations in the municipalities of Liepāja and Rēzekne. Similarly, in the research and development grant No. RTU-PA-2024/1-0074 “Social Rehabilitation of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Using Smart Sensory Toys and Psychological Profiling”, cooperation is taking place with educational and social institutions in Liepāja City and South Kurzeme Region. It should also be noted that there is purposeful involvement in seminars organised by educational institutions, in which prospective social workers have participated with the aim of promoting the profession of social worker (a first-cycle professional bachelor’s study programme first-year student together with a second-cycle professional master’s study programme “Social Work Management” first-year student took part in promoting the profession of social worker at Liepāja Raiņa Secondary School; the director of the first-cycle professional bachelor’s study programme at Liepāja O. Kalpaks Secondary School; two second-year students of the first-cycle professional bachelor’s study programme at Dobeles Secondary School, etc.); involvement in the activities of non-governmental organisations (a lecturer participates in the seminars and support activities of the association *Patvērums ģimenei*; the programme director and a lecturer in the support activities and information seminars of *House of Hope*); and in events related to social welfare organised by municipalities/small towns (for example, every year first-year students of the first-cycle professional bachelor’s study programme “Social Worker” participate in the Senior Citizens’ Days organised by the structural unit “Residential House for the Elderly” of Liepāja City Social Service, in the Hospice Days organised by the Baltic Rehabilitation Centre (held annually in 2022, 2023 and 2024). Therefore, it can be stated that there also exists an informal feedback loop, and the opinion of employers is taken into account when planning the development and improvement of the study programmes within the study field.

During the reporting period, collaboration continued with social services, organisations, and associations in Liepāja and Rēzekne, as well as in neighbouring municipalities and towns (e.g., Marta Resource Centre, Baltic Rehabilitation Centre, *Patvērums ģimenei*, Liepāja Society of the Blind, among others). As part of the study process, students interact with employers and cooperation partners, engage in discussions with professionals about current challenges, prospects, and possible solutions, and also conduct practical research on topical issues in the social field. For example, in the 2022/2023 academic year, *Social Work* student participated in a working group initiated by the Liepāja City Social Service for developing a programme on child rights protection. Her bachelor thesis focused on the topic “Improving Social Services in the Development of Child Rights Protection Programmes,” and her recommendations were included in the municipality’s official Child Rights Protection Programme. In the 2023/2024 academic year, fourth-year *Social Work* student, upon the request of the Liepāja City Social Service, conducted a study on the effectiveness of social services in addressing family dysfunction. Her bachelor thesis was titled “The Effectiveness of Social Services in Preventing Family Dysfunction”.

At the national level, collaboration with the Ministry of Welfare is of particular importance, especially through involvement in the Social Work Professionals Cooperation Council (SWPCC), in which manager of study field “Social Welfare” serves as a council member. The SWPCC is an advisory body established to promote the development of professional social work, the education and support of social work specialists, and to encourage the participation of society representatives in shaping social work policy. Collaboration with representatives from the Ministry of Welfare is also evident through their participation in the annual RTU LA-organised conference “Topical Issues in Social Work”. This conference is held in cooperation with the Baltic Rehabilitation Centre and Marijampole College of Mykolas Romeris University. Director of the study field participated in the

working group for the development of the Occupational Standard for the Social Worker (Bachelor level). Lecturer, recommended by the Council of Rectors, was involved in the expert group on occupational standards. In turn, academic staff from the study field collaborated with experts from Rīga Stradiņš University and University of Latvia in the development of the Occupational Standard for Senior Social Worker (Master level).

Cooperation with the Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia is manifested not only at a formal institutional level, but also creates additional dimensions for the development of the study field, providing broader perspectives for the professional growth of academic staff and students. Within the framework of this cooperation, students and academic staff are offered opportunities to participate in summer schools organised by the Ministry of Welfare, which may be defined as intensive educational and research platforms. These interactive and multidisciplinary activities particularly emphasise the enhancement of professional competences, the translation of academic knowledge into practice, as well as the acquisition of innovative approaches to social innovation and sustainable community development. The summer schools are characterised by pronounced interdisciplinarity, transnational exchange of experience among representatives of various Latvian and foreign higher education institutions, as well as critical reflection on the most topical trends in social work, social policy, and examples of good practice. It is of particular importance that these activities also function as a significant platform for academic and professional networking, strengthening the institutional capacity of the study field and the visibility of its representatives in national and international discourse. In one such summer school in 2024 – *Social Work in the Community* – the director of the second-cycle professional master's study programme *Social Work Management* and four students of this programme purposefully engaged. Their participation illustrates the openness of the study field to innovation, its capacity to adapt to social transformations, and its aspiration to position itself as a leader in the strategic discourse of professional education and social welfare.

In the implementation of the *Social Work Management* study programme, cooperation with the Agency for International Youth Programs is also of notable significance. As a result of this cooperation, in the 2022/2023 academic year, a module was integrated into the programme with the aim of enhancing the intercultural and professional competence of future social workers in youth work, improving the quality of social services, applying non-formal education methods, and promoting synergy with international cooperation in higher education.

The development of the study field *Social Welfare* is strengthened through purposeful cooperation with other higher education institutions in Latvia, which enables the deepening of programme content and ensures its alignment with the needs of the sector. During the reporting period, particularly significant collaboration has been established with Rīga Stradiņš University and the University of Latvia in the elaboration of professional standards, thereby ensuring the coherence of study programme content with qualification requirements and contributing to a unified academic space in social work education.

A central role should also be attributed to Rezekne Academy of Technologies, which has become an important implementer of the study field *Social Welfare* and within which joint research and scientific publications have been developed, as well as participation in and co-organisation of the international scientific conference *Society. Integration. Education..* Equally important is the annual RTU Liepāja conference *Social Work Actualities*, organised in cooperation with Latvian and international partners, which promotes inter-university academic networking. This experience demonstrates the sustainability of cooperation and the importance of inter-institutional synergy in enhancing the quality of studies. In addition, the involvement of RTU researchers in joint projects and academic publications further consolidates the substantive dimension of social work and its research base.

Cooperation with other Latvian higher education institutions is also defined as a component of the development plan of the study field, ensuring continuity of content, fostering interdisciplinary initiatives, and strengthening programme quality in the long term. Thus, the recommendation to cooperate with other higher education institutions in Latvia in the context of strengthening the social work content of study programmes has been purposefully implemented and continues to evolve, generating added value both for the quality of the study field and for the professional advancement of the sector as a whole.

The metacognitive benefits resulting from these collaborations include:

1. Support for achieving the defined objectives of the study field and its programmes—most notably, ensuring the acquisition of high-quality and competitive interdisciplinary professional higher education in the field of social welfare. This is accomplished by preparing academically and professionally educated specialists in the social field, who are capable of applying theoretical and practical knowledge, skills, and competences to address social problems in response to real-world challenges;
2. Enhancement of study programme content and development of scientific activity, contributing to the assurance of quality in the study process.

2.5.2. Provide the assessment as to how the cooperation with different institutions from abroad (higher education institutions/ colleges, employers, employers' organisations, municipalities, non-governmental organisations, scientific institutes, etc.) within the study field contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field. Specify the criteria by which the cooperation partners suitable for the study field and the relevant study programmes are selected and how the cooperation is organised by describing the cooperation with employers. In addition, specify the mechanism for the attraction of the cooperation partners.

The selection of cooperation partners is grounded in the accumulated experience of the study field and the expertise developed through collaboration with international institutions in studies, research, project development, participation in associations, and other forms of academic engagement.

In the sphere of internationalisation, RTU aims to enhance its global competitiveness and foster cooperation in science, innovation, and education, while strengthening its international profile and recognition. Strategic objectives include the attraction of international partners and foreign students, as well as the continuous improvement of the study process for international cohorts.

To achieve these objectives, the following priorities are pursued:

- encouraging student and academic staff participation in the ERASMUS+ exchange programme;
- engaging international academic staff in the delivery of study programmes;
- organising international scholarly communication events (conferences, seminars);
- expanding opportunities for placements abroad;
- enhancing the export capacity of study programmes through the development and implementation of study modules in English for international students;

- fostering collaboration with foreign higher education institutions in joint research and publication;
- engaging creatively in European education and research initiatives, thereby supporting student, academic, and staff mobility.

Collaboration with the international academic sector is guided by a set of criteria:

- implementation of study programmes in the field of social welfare;
- established or ongoing cooperation in joint projects and conferences;
- collaboration in other related study fields;
- a shared vision regarding the education of social workers;
- joint research and publications.

The RTU Department of International Cooperation provides the institutional framework for establishing and maintaining international partnerships, ensuring the quality of studies and research, and preparing and concluding cooperation agreements with higher education, research, and other institutions worldwide.

Within the study field of *Social Welfare*, cooperation with foreign institutions is systematically oriented towards the achievement of strategic goals and intended programme learning outcomes. Partner institutions are selected whose academic or professional competence corresponds to the Latvian context of social work and whose experience can enrich the study process with international insights, good practice models, and research-informed approaches to professional practice.

Partner selection is determined by several factors: the relevance of programmes and research to social work or social welfare, institutional recognition and quality assurance systems, participation in international networks (e.g. EASSW, EASWR), and the capacity to provide mobility opportunities, joint research projects, and visiting lecturers. Equally significant is the potential for shared developmental initiatives, for instance, within the framework of the European Social Fund, Erasmus+, or other international projects.

Cooperation is realised through multiple forms: student and academic staff mobility (Erasmus+), joint courses and seminars, collaborative research, participation in international projects, and the establishment of inter-university cooperation networks. The involvement of non-governmental organisations and employers abroad is also ensured through project activities and professional placements, enabling students to acquire diverse experiences in social work contexts. For example, academic staff engaged in the implementation of the study field have enhanced their professional development through collaboration with member organisations of the *Comenius Association*. The programme director actively participates in partnership-building activities, such as those held in 2024 at the *University of the West of Scotland*. The association's mission is to create a network of partner institutions, promote international exchange and intercultural competence development in joint projects and educational initiatives, and strengthen the intercultural dimension in the professional training of European teachers and social workers. One of its current priorities is the advancement of students' critical thinking, encouraging them to move beyond their "comfort zone" and embrace new ideas and approaches.

To ensure alignment with labour market needs, international employers and professionals are regularly involved in expert discussions, guest lectures, conferences, and the organisation of professional placements. This cooperation supports the continuous updating of study content and

ensures that students acquire practical competences in line with international standards.

The mechanism for employer engagement relies on the careful selection of partners, the signing of cooperation memoranda, the implementation of joint development projects, and the maintenance of close links with the alumni network, which frequently serves as a bridge between the academic environment and professional practice abroad.

By integrating the international cooperation resources of RTU Liepāja Academy and RTU Rēzekne Academy, collaboration with the international academic sector has expanded, particularly with institutions implementing comparable study programmes. This has resulted in the implementation of joint projects, applied research, conference organisation, creative initiatives, and other academic activities.

International Projects

International cooperation has been further reinforced through collaboration with the *Westfälisches Forum für Kultur und Bildung e.V.*, under the leadership of Professor and Honorary Doctor Ulrike Kurth, through the implementation of projects.

- **2022-1-DE03-KA210-SCH-000080773** – *Landschaft und Gesellschaft – geprägt durch Wasser. unser Leben (LAGE)*. Two students from the *Social Work* study programme participated.
- **2022-1-DE02-KA210-ADU-000080898** – *GEgen COvid – Soziale Distanz überwinden (GeCo)*. Seven students from the *Social Work* study programme participated, supported by director of programme and academic staff.
- **2022-2-DE02-KA210-ADU-000093955** – *Tradition und Moderne / TRAdition und INnovation – Kunst, Kultur und Sprache (TRAM/TRAIN)*, implemented in partnership with *KoKoLeLe e.V.* and *Westfälisches Forum für Kultur und Bildung e.V.*. Three students from the *Social Work* study programme participated.
- **2023-2-DE03-KA210-SCH-000176573** – *Wasser – Quelle der Inspiration (Waqui)*. Two students from the *Social Work* study programme are currently involved (project implementation since 1 June 2024).

The mapping of potential international partners within the study field is conducted in a structured and targeted manner, involving an analysis of academic and research profiles, quality assurance mechanisms, and alignment with the strategic objectives of the study field. Partner identification is informed by existing cooperation experience, opportunities provided through international networks and associations, and participation in scientific conferences and project consortia. Following the initial analysis, pilot activities such as guest lectures, student mobility, and the preparation of joint publications are undertaken, serving as instruments for evaluating and consolidating long-term cooperation.

2.5.3. Specify the system or mechanisms, which are used to attract the students and the teaching staff from abroad. Provide the assessment of the incoming and outgoing mobility of the teaching staff in the reporting period, the mobility dynamics, and the issues which the higher education institution/ college faces with regard to the mobility of the teaching staff.

Attracting International Students

RTU's approach to attracting international students is based on two main target audiences: internal (management team, staff, academic personnel, and current students) and external (potential international students in Latvia and abroad, alumni, media, opinion leaders, educational institutions, recruitment agencies, and Latvian diplomatic missions). The communication strategy makes use of a variety of channels – paid advertising, public relations, direct and digital marketing.

A key method of attracting international students is participation in educational fairs and recruitment seminars organised in target markets. This activity is supported by RTU information and study centres abroad, which ensure access to reliable information and facilitate student recruitment. Potential students are also offered regular online consultations, virtual seminars, and individual meetings with staff from the RTU International Cooperation Department (RTU ICD) and programme directors.

RTU's recruitment efforts target both internal audiences (management, staff, academic personnel, and current students) and external audiences (potential international students in Latvia and abroad, their parents, alumni, media, opinion leaders, partner institutions, recruitment agencies, and Latvian embassies and consulates).

The communication strategy makes use of multiple channels adapted to each audience, including media advertising, event marketing, direct and digital marketing. Special importance is attached to participation in international education fairs and agency-organised seminars. These activities are complemented by collaboration with partner universities and agencies, as well as RTU's own information and study centres abroad, which ensure constant presence and high-quality information provision.

Virtual seminars are frequently organised, involving RTU ICD staff, current students, and programme directors. These provide detailed information on RTU's infrastructure, study opportunities, admission requirements for international students, and career prospects after graduation.

International students are offered regular online consultations, scheduled two months prior to admission deadlines. Potential applicants who have expressed interest but not yet submitted applications are contacted at least once a month.

Corporate communication relies on public relations instruments (press releases, media events, interviews, opinion articles) and RTU's social media channels (Facebook, WeChat, WhatsApp, YouTube, etc.). Internal communication makes use of the ORTUS portal, e-mail, information sessions, and special events.

RTU has collected data on international student admissions since the 2013/2014 academic year. For example, in 2014/2015, 38 applications were processed, of which 20 students enrolled; in 2017/2018 there were 28 applications, with 16 enrolments; and in 2021/2022 there were 16 applications, of which only 3 students enrolled. These figures show that the number of applications received exceeds the number of actual admissions, reflecting the challenges of competition in the international education market as well as migration and visa procedures.

Attracting International Academic Staff

RTU LA and RTU RA attract international academic staff through international cooperation mechanisms, including Erasmus+ mobility agreements, long-term collaboration with partner universities, joint research projects, and participation in international professional associations (e.g. the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), the European Social Work Research Association (ESWRA)). Within the study field "Social Welfare", both RTU LA and RTU RA have hosted guest lecturers from abroad, offering students international perspectives and fostering intercultural

competence.

Student Mobility

Student mobility is mainly implemented through the Erasmus+ programme. RTU LA and RTU RA students take part in short-term study periods and internships abroad, while incoming international students are hosted in Latvia. The level of mobility is stable but limited, influenced by financial resources, language proficiency, and the intensity of study workloads.

Staff Mobility

Outgoing staff mobility is supported by Erasmus+ and other international cooperation projects, enabling academic staff to participate in conferences, seminars, and short teaching assignments abroad. Incoming mobility is facilitated through guest lectures, international conferences, and partner university initiatives.

Challenges and Difficulties

In implementing mobility, RTU LA and RTU RA face several challenges. For students, these include insufficient funding for long-term mobility, occasional difficulties in aligning mobility periods with study schedules, and language barriers. For academic staff, the main difficulties are high workloads and limited possibilities for course replacement during mobility, which make longer mobility periods challenging. Attracting international staff for longer-term commitments is also difficult due to high competition in the global academic labour market.

Despite these challenges, RTU continues to strengthen international cooperation by expanding its partner network, offering more flexible mobility opportunities, and enhancing the intercultural experience of both students and academic staff, which is of key importance for professional education in social work.

2.6. Implementation of the Recommendations Received During the Previous Assessment Procedures

2.6.1. Assessment of the fulfilment of the plan regarding the implementation of the recommendations provided by the experts during the previous accreditation of the study field, as well as the assessment of the impact of the given recommendations on the study quality or the improvement of the study process within the study field and the relevant study programmes.

Study Field "Social Welfare"

The study field "*Social Welfare*" was accredited for a two-year term in the previous accreditation cycle, both at RTU LA and RTU RA. The recommendations of the accreditation expert panel served as a significant strategic instrument for the qualitative development of the study field, facilitating the conceptualisation of study content, the refinement of implementation mechanisms, and the strengthening of the academic and institutional environment. The experts' guidance functioned as a catalyst for change, creating preconditions for enhancing educational quality in line with the principles of the Bologna Process and the standards of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

One of the most important structural developments following the previous accreditation was the institutional integration of the former Liepāja University and Rēzekne Academy of Technologies into RTU's academic and administrative structure. This consolidation significantly strengthened the

functional cohesion of the academic ecosystem, enabling more effective management of academic staff resources, synchronised study process planning, and more purposeful coordination of development strategies across the study field. The consistent implementation of recommendations has facilitated a qualitative transformation of the study process, improving organisational efficiency and the achievement of learning outcomes.

First-cycle Professional Bachelor's Study Programme "Social Work"

The accreditation experts highlighted the need to strengthen students' professional preparedness during practice. Consequently, the practice system was revised – practice objectives, tasks, and intended learning outcomes were clarified, and structured supervision and support mechanisms were introduced. Students now acquire professional skills in diverse and practice-relevant contexts of social work, working with a wide range of target groups, including socially excluded, marginalised, and high-risk populations.

At the same time, the study content has undergone significant transformation. The study plan was redesigned, taking into account the results of student surveys – a shift away from the modular system was implemented, as it was considered a less effective form of organising the study process. This change has ensured greater flexibility and transparency of the study process, as well as improved monitoring of student achievement and feedback mechanisms.

The revised study plan also emphasises the development of students' research competencies. A dedicated research practice has been introduced into the practice model, enabling students at bachelor's level to integrate theoretical knowledge with empirical inquiry skills. This innovation strengthens students' capacity to conduct professionally relevant research and aligns with contemporary European trends in social work education.

Overall, the changes in the bachelor's programme reflect a clear orientation towards practice-based and research-integrated education.

Second-cycle Professional Master's Study Programme "Social Work Management"

At master's level, a targeted support system for the development of research work has been introduced, based on thematic orientation and supervisory guidance aligned with students' chosen specialisations.

A substantial change has also occurred in the programme content: the specialisation "*Social Worker for Work with Diversity*" has been discontinued, while two new specialisations have been introduced – "*Social Worker for Work with Older Adults*" and "*Social Worker for Work with Clients of the Penitentiary and Probation Systems during the Resocialisation Stage*". These specialisations reflect contemporary societal needs and ensure the programme's responsiveness to labour market demand.

Endorsements from employers (see the section *Other Annexes*, available in Latvian) as well as a recommendation from the Latvian Association of Social Workers confirm the programme's professional relevance and its significance in preparing qualified specialists at both regional and national levels.

Importantly, the second-cycle professional master's programme "*Social Work Management*", like the other study programmes within the study field "*Social Welfare*", is planned to be implemented not only at RTU Liepāja Academy (RTU LA) but also at RTU Rēzekne Academy (RTU RA). This approach broadens the accessibility of the programme across regions, strengthens the capacity of regional higher education, and enriches the diversity of the study environment. At the same time, it fosters closer cooperation with local municipalities and non-governmental partners, expands student placement opportunities in various social work contexts, and enhances the alignment of the

study process with the specific social needs of the respective regions. In this way, both the availability of qualified social work professionals for local communities and the sustainable development of the study field at national level are ensured.

Institutional Measures

At the institutional level, RTU has implemented a range of measures to strengthen the capacity of academic and administrative staff. These include the optimisation of administrative functions, professional development opportunities in foreign languages, digital skills, leadership, and organisational competences, as well as a targeted strategy for the renewal of academic staff.

Within this process, graduates of the professional master's programme "*Social Work Management*" have been recruited into academic positions (two as lecturers in the courses "*Social Pedagogy*" and "*Professional Competence and Communication in Social Work*", and one as a researcher). Additionally, to enhance the scientific and international dimension of the programme, two academic staff members from Vytautas Magnus University (Lithuania), both holding doctoral degrees in social work, have been recruited. This significantly strengthens the academic and research potential of the study field, fostering international cooperation and the transfer of knowledge.

2.6.2. Implementation of the recommendations given by the experts during the evaluation of the changes to the study programmes in the respective study field or licensed study programmes over the reporting period or recommendations received during the procedure for the inclusion of the study programme on the accreditation form of the study field (if applicable).

(Not applicable)

Annexes

I - Information on the Higher Education Institution/ College		
Information on the implementation of the study field in the branches of the higher education institution/ college (if applicable)		
List of the governing regulatory enactments and regulations of the higher education institution/ college	Internal_regulations.zip	ieksejie_normative_akti.zip
The management structure of the higher education institution/ college	RTU_Management_Structure.pdf	RTU_Parvaldibas_Struktura.pdf
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.1. Management of the Study Field		
Plan for the development of the study field (if applicable)	Development_Plan_Social_Welfare_2025-2031_specified.docx	Studiju_virziena_Sociālā_labklājība_attīstības_plāns_2025-2031_precizēts.docx
The management structure of the study field	Study_Field_Management_Structure.jpg	Studiju_virziena_parvaldibas_struktura.jpg
A document certifying that the higher education institution or college will provide students with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution/ college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.	Sadarbības_ligumi.7z	Sadarbības_ligumi.7z
A document certifying that the higher education institution or college guarantees compensation for losses to students if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme license is revoked due to actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.	01000-2.2.1-e_262.edoc	01000-2.2.1-e_262.edoc
Standard sample of study agreement	Sample of study agreement.zip	Studiju_ligumi.zip
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System		
Analysis of the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers	Annex II.2.2.4_Analysis of Student, Graduate and Employer Surveys_Social Welfare_specified.docx	Pielikums II.2.2.4_ Studjošo, absolventu un darba devēju aptauju rezultātu analīze_2025_precizēts_11.docx
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field		
Basic information on the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study field	Annex II.2.3.7_Basic Information on the Academic Staff Involved in the Implementation of the Study Field "Social Welfare"_specify_2025_2.xlsx	II.2.3.7.Pielikums_Pamatinformācija par studiju virziena īstenošanā iesaistītajiem mācītājiem Sociālā labklājība_2025_precizēts_aktuals_2.xlsx
Biographies of the teaching staff members (Curriculum Vitae in Europass format)	Macibspeku_cv_ENG - kopija (2).pdf	Macibspeku_cv_LV - kopija.pdf
A statement signed by the rector, director, head of the study programme or field that the knowledge of the state language of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programmes within the study field complies with the regulations on the state language knowledge and state language proficiency test for professional and official duties.	Confirmation - knowledge of the state language.edoc	Apliecinājums - valsts valodas zināšanas.edoc
A statement of the higher education institution/ college on the respective foreign language skills of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programme at least at B2 level according to the European Language Proficiency Assessment Levels (level distribution is available on the website www.europass.lv, if the study programme or part thereof is implemented)		
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation		
Summary of quantitative data on scientific and/or applied research and/or artistic creation activities corresponding to the study field in the reporting period.	Annex II.2.4.1_Summary of quantitative data on scientific applied research, artistic creativity activities.xlsx	II.2.4.1.pielikums_Kvantitatīvo datu apkopojumu par studiju virzienam atbilstošām zinātniskās jaunr aktivitātem.xlsx
List of the publications, patents, and artistic creations of the teaching staff over the reporting period.	II.Annex II.2.4.4_pielikums_List of scientific publications and artistic creativity of academic staff_specified.docx	II.2.4.4.pielikums_Macibspeku_publicācijas_un_maksim_jaunrade_Sociāla_labklājība_precizēts.docx
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation		
List of cooperation agreements, including the agreements for providing internship	Annex 2_List of Cooperation agreements_specified.docx	2.pielikums_Sadarbības_ligumu_saraksts_2025_precizēts.docx
Statistical data on the teaching staff and the students from abroad	Annex II.2.5.3.A_Information on International Students and Academic Staff_specify.doc	II.2.5.3.A.pielikums_Statistikas_dati_par_ārvalstu_studjošajiem_un_mācītājiem_precizēts.doc
Statistical data on the incoming and outgoing mobility of students (by specifying the study programmes)	Annex II.2.5.3_Statistical data on outgoing and incoming mobility of students_Social Welfare.docx	II.2.5.3_Statistikas_dati_par_studjošo_izejolo_un_ienākošo_mobilitāti_studiju_virzienā "Sociālā labklājība".docx
Statistical data on the incoming and outgoing mobility of the teaching staff	Annex II.2.5.1_Statistic data_Academic Staff incoming and outgoing mobility.docx	II.2.5.1.pielikums_Mācītāpeku_ienākošā_un_izejolo_mobilitāte_Soc_labkl_precizēts.doc
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.6. Implementation of the Recommendations Received During the Previous Assessment Procedures		
Report on the implementation of the recommendations received both in the previous accreditation and in the licensing and/or change assessment procedures and/or the procedures for the inclusion of the study programme on the accreditation form of the study field.	Annex 3_Recommendations_Social Welfare_specify.docx	3.pielikums_Studiju_virziena_Sociālā_labklājība_rekomendāciju_izpilde_2025_precizēts.docx
An application for the evaluation of the study field signed with a secure electronic signature	02000-2.2.1-e_175.edoc	02000-2.2.1-e_175.edoc
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme.		
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period		
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard		
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme		
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)		
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules		
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)		
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		

Other annexes

Name of document	Document
RTU IT sistemu saskarnes.zip	RTU IT sistemu saskarnes.zip
Screenshots of RTU IT systems.zip	Screenshots of RTU IT systems.zip
Labklājības Ministrija_Aptaujas_rezultatu_apkopojums_032025.docx	Labklājības Ministrija_Aptaujas_rezultatu_apkopojums_032025.docx
Programmas_direktors_amata_apraksts.pdf	Programmas_direktors_amata_apraksts.pdf
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Vilņas universitātes Šauļu akadēmijas vēstule par kopējās studiju programmas "Sociālais darbs un sociālā rehabilitācija" slēgšanu Šauļu akadēmijā / Letter from the Vilnius University Šiauliai Academy regarding the closure of the joint study programme "Social Work and Social Rehabilitation" at the Šiauliai Academy.	2024_11_VU+Šiauliai+Academy_2024-11-21.pdf
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Social Work Management (47762)

Study field	<i>Social Welfare</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Social Work Management</i>
Education classification code	<i>47762</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>Second-cycle (professional master's) study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Santa</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Melķe</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>santa.melke@rtu.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Mg. paed.</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>+37163407735</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>To prepare highly qualified and professionally competent specialists in the field of social work with an in-depth understanding of social work management, by developing students' knowledge, skills, value-based attitudes, and research competencies in order to promote the quality, effective governance, and sustainable development of the sector both nationally and internationally.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. To provide students with the opportunity to acquire in-depth professional knowledge in social work management, psychology, and research, in order to prepare competent specialists capable of adequately understanding and effectively addressing professional and research-related tasks in collaboration with clients, sector professionals, and experts from other fields.</i> <i>2. To develop competencies in social work management by enhancing the ability to analyse social processes and their interrelations, efficiently plan and manage resources, design solutions to social problems, and elaborate development strategies, while fostering coordinated cooperation at local, national, and international levels.</i> <i>3. To improve professional reflection and research skills, enabling students to evaluate social work management practices, identify current challenges within their chosen specialisation, and develop innovative solutions in the field of social welfare.</i> <i>4. To promote the motivation of students, as future leading social work professionals, for continuous professional growth, encouraging initiative, entrepreneurship, and responsibility in professional practice, as well as the ability to collaborate across disciplines and institutions to create sustainable solutions for improving individual and societal well-being.</i>

Results of the study programme	<p>Upon completion of the study programme, graduates will:</p> <p>Knowledge:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate knowledge of the fundamental principles and current innovations in social work management, including strategic planning, supervision, and coordination. 2. Understand the significance of research in the field of social welfare and its role in the development of professional practice and knowledge. 3. Possess knowledge of the principles of good governance, human rights, ethics, and non-discrimination in the context of social policy and practice development. <p>Skills:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are able to plan and conduct research activities, analysing sector-specific challenges and development trends. 2. Are able to identify, formulate, and critically analyse challenges in professional practice and propose evidence-based solutions. 3. Are able to engage in well-reasoned discussions with professionals in the field and assess the development perspectives of the sector. 4. Are able to apply interdisciplinary knowledge and methods in professional practice, based on contemporary theoretical approaches. <p>Competence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are able to make independent decisions and act responsibly within social work management processes, adhering to professional ethics. 2. Are able to professionally lead and manage organisations and teams in accordance with the principles of democracy and participation. 3. Demonstrate initiative and responsibility in contributing to the improvement of social policy, based on sectoral analysis. 4. Are able to reflect on and critically evaluate their professional activities, identifying opportunities for growth and directions for improvement. 5. Are motivated for continuous professional development, including participation in further education and the transfer of knowledge into practice.
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	Master's Thesis

Study programme forms

Full time studies - 2 years - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	2
Duration in month	0
Language	<i>latvian</i>
Amount (CP)	120
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>First-cycle professional higher education in the humanities and arts, or in medical and health sciences, or in social sciences; entrance exam.</i>

Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Professional master's degree in social work</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	<i>senior social worker</i>

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Riga Technical University	RĪGA	ĶĪPSALAS IELA 6A, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1048

Full time studies - 1 years, 5 months - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	<i>1</i>
Duration in month	<i>5</i>
Language	<i>latvian</i>
Amount (CP)	<i>90</i>
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>First-cycle professional higher education in social work or a professional Bachelor's degree in social work in Social Work; entrance exam</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Professional master's degree in social work</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	<i>senior social worker</i>

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Riga Technical University	RĪGA	ĶĪPSALAS IELA 6A, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1048

3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

3.1.1. Description and analysis of changes in the parameters of the study programme made since the issuance of the previous accreditation form of the study field or issuance of the study programme license, if the study programme is not included on the accreditation form of the study field, including changes planned within the evaluation procedure of the study field evaluation procedure.

The implementation of the second-cycle professional master's study programme "Social Work Management" was developed in 2021. In 2022, following the accreditation of the study field "Social Welfare"—within which the "Social Work Management" programme is delivered — 17 students were enrolled in the 2nd year of studies after transferring from the discontinued professional master's programme "Social Work" at Liepaja University.

In the previous accreditation cycle, the developer and implementer of the programme was the University of Liepāja. Since the integration of RTU LA into the unified RTU ecosystem, the second-cycle professional master's study programme *Social Work Management* has been implemented exclusively at RTU LA. For the study field evaluation, a revised programme has been prepared, which, starting from the 2026/2027 academic year, is planned to be delivered at both RTU study locations where the study field *Social Welfare* is implemented. This ensures the provision of competence-based, research-informed, and practice-oriented master's level studies in social work in Latvia, while simultaneously consolidating resources and enhancing the quality of master's level education. The programme offers a student-centred and up-to-date curriculum, making a significant contribution to the professional development of social work in Latvia. By realising the plan to implement the programme across both institutions within the study field, its accessibility in the regional context will be expanded.

In the previous accreditation cycle, Liepaja University was the programme's developer and implementer. Since the integration of RTU Liepaja Academy and RTU Rezekne Academy into RTU's unified ecosystem, the programme is planned to be implemented at both institutions delivering the "Social Welfare" study field. This enables the offering of competence-based master's level studies in social work that are grounded in research and professional practice across Latvia, ensuring more efficient resource consolidation and enhancing the overall quality of master's studies. The programme is student-centred, up-to-date, and represents a significant contribution to the professional development of social work in Latvia. Implementing the programme in both institutions also improves its accessibility within a regional context.

The programme offers two study durations. For applicants with a previously obtained professional bachelor's degree in social work and/or the professional qualification of social worker, the duration is one year and five months. For applicants with an academic or professional education in another field, the duration is two years.

Planned changes to the study programme content within the framework of the study field evaluation procedure include the following:

After completing the general and professional specialization courses (Part A), students are offered the opportunity to choose one of several specializations. As part of the evaluation procedure, five specializations are now offered instead of the previous four, with substantial revisions made to their content and orientation. The previously available specialization "Social Worker for Work with

Diversity,” which focused on issues related to cultural diversity, gender equality, disability, ethnic identity, and other dimensions of inclusion, has been discontinued. This decision was based on student interest and feedback, activity levels, and analysis of sector demand and labour market trends (see Table 3.1.1.1.)

Instead, two new specializations have been developed to reflect the challenges of contemporary society, incorporating input from industry experts, employer needs, and international trends:

Social Worker for Work with Seniors - This specialization responds to demographic changes and the ageing of society in Latvia and across Europe. In line with the [European Commission’s “Green Paper on Ageing”](#) (2021) and the World Health Organization’s [“Decade of Healthy Ageing 2021-2030,”](#) social work with seniors plays a critical role in supporting social inclusion, self-determination, and quality of life for older people. There is a growing need for professionals who can provide targeted support to seniors in the areas of health, care, housing adaptation, and psycho-emotional well-being.

Social Worker for Work with Clients of the Penitentiary and Probation System in the Resocialization Phase - This specialization aligns with the priorities outlined in the development documents of Latvia’s Ministry of Justice and the Prison Administration, as well as the recommendations of the United Nations and the Council of Europe concerning human rights in detention and post-incarceration settings. According to the UN’s [“Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners \(Nelson Mandela Rules\)”](#) and the Council of Europe’s [“Recommendation CM/Rec\(2010\)1 on the Council of Europe Probation Rules,”](#) the role of the social worker in resocialization, restoring social ties, reducing stigma, and minimizing recidivism is essential. In Latvia, there is a growing demand for professionals capable of working with complex life situations, supporting the reintegration of former prisoners into society, and ensuring cooperation within inter-institutional teams. (See table 3.1.1.1.)

Table 3.1.1.1.

The range of specialisations offered within the study programme “Social Work Management”

Specialisation within the programme from the 2022/2023 academic year to the 2025/2026 academic year	Specialisation within the programme from the 2026/2027 academic year onwards
Social Worker for Working with Families with Children	Social Worker for Working with Families with Children
Social Worker for Working with Children and Youth	Social Worker for Working with Children and Youth
Social Worker for Working with Individuals with Addictions and Codependency	Social Worker for Working with Individuals with Addictions and Codependency
Social Worker for Working with Diversity	Social Worker for Working with Seniors
	Social Worker Working with Clients of the Penitentiary System and Probation in the Resocialisation Phase

2. The study programme has incorporated a new course “*Social Pedagogy*” (6 ECTS), delivered by a lecturer from RTU RA. As a result, graduates of the programme, in line with the provisions of [Cabinet Regulation No. 569](#) (Clause 10) (Latvian only), will also be eligible to work as social pedagogues, thereby broadening their professional scope and enhancing their employment potential.

3. Taking into account the recommendation provided by the previous accreditation experts — “*Develop specific regulations for each internship, which would include the description of the aims, objectives, outcomes, and duties for each stakeholder in the realization of the practice, as well as the documentation which should be filled in both by students and practice supervisors at the institution during and end of the field placement*” — the content of the specialised internships (B1; B2; B3; B4; B5 “*Master’s Internship in Specialisation*” (9 ECTS)) has been supplemented with supervision as a significant instrument for professional development and reflection. To ensure high-quality supervision, a specialist from the Latvian Association of Supervisors has been engaged, providing professional support that enables students to gain deeper insights into challenges encountered in practice and to strengthen their professional identity.

Changes in the planning of the second-cycle professional Master’s study programme “*Social Work Management*”

In the two-year study programme (120 CP), modifications have been introduced to the programme plan with the aim of increasing study efficiency and adapting it to students’ prior education and learning needs. Starting from the 2026/2027 academic year, the admission process will be organised as follows: students without prior education in social work will be admitted in the first semester to acquire the fundamental knowledge and competences necessary for subsequent studies in both general and specialised courses. This semester can be considered an introductory or preparatory phase designed to ensure equal starting opportunities for all students, regardless of their previous educational background. The second group, with a study duration of 1 year and 5 months (90 CP), is admitted once the students of the two-year programme have completed their first semester. As these students already hold prior education in social work, they are not required to undertake the introductory semester. After this initial stage, both groups are merged into a single study stream, in which they continue to pursue the content of the programme together. Under the previous programme plan, the additional semester for students in the two-year track was placed at the end of their studies as a concluding stage. However, based on student feedback and reflections on programme organisation, content, and workload distribution, it was identified as more effective to shift this semester to the beginning of the study process. This adjustment helps avoid excessive workload at the final stage of studies, ensures a more balanced study schedule, and allows students to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills progressively.

These changes also promote academic inclusiveness and provide stronger support for students without prior experience in social work, while maintaining high quality standards in professional preparation. At the same time, the model fosters an interdisciplinary and experience-based learning environment, where students with varying levels of prior knowledge study together, creating opportunities for mutual learning and enhancing the academic and professional value of the programme.

2. In the second-cycle professional master’s study programme *Social Work Management*, a transition has been made to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), ensuring full compliance with the requirements of the European Higher Education Area and international comparability. The implementation of ECTS enhances the transparency of learning outcomes, facilitates student mobility and the recognition of graduates’ qualifications abroad, and strengthens the competitiveness of the programme at both the national and international levels.

3.1.2. Analysis and assessment of the study programme compliance with the study field. Analysis of the interrelation between the code of the study programme, the degree, professional qualification/professional qualification requirements or the degree and professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements. Description of the duration and scope of the implementation of the study programme (including different options of the study programme implementation) and evaluation of its usefulness.

The second-cycle professional Master's study programme "Social Work Management" has been developed in response to the declining number of students in higher education in Latvia in recent years (see: <https://stat.gov.lv/lv/statistikas-temas/izglitiba-kultura-zinatne/augstaka-izglitiba/preses-relizes/20762-aktualais?utm> (Latvian only)). A similar trend continues, with 74,000 students enrolled in higher education in the academic year 2023/2024, which is 1.8% fewer than the previous year (<https://stat.gov.lv/lv/statistikas-temas/izglitiba-kultura-zinatne/augstaka-izglitiba/preses-relizes/20762-aktualais?themeCode=IG>). This situation poses new challenges for higher education, requiring it to become a competitive sector of the national economy by managing resources efficiently and offering student-centred, labour market-relevant programmes.

The European Commission recognises lifelong learning as a fundamental right of every citizen (see: <https://www.esfondi.lv/izglitiba-prasmes-muzizglitiba>), the second Cycle Professional Master's study programme "Social Work Management" is designed to provide students with opportunities for continued academic and professional development. It allows for specialisation in one of the programme's directions and the fulfilment of lifelong learning goals.

The second-cycle professional Master's study programme "Social Work Management" is intended both for current social workers aiming to develop innovative and multifaceted social work practices, and for specialists from other fields who wish to expand their competence in social work and management. The programme provides access to a research-based, internationally recognised Master's-level education that fosters change, innovation, and modernisation in social work practices, while simultaneously strengthening leadership skills and professional management competencies. The programme's goals and objectives are aligned with the awarded degree—Professional Master's in Social Work—and the corresponding qualification—Leading Social Worker. The programme's objectives are achieved through the integration of theoretical and practical study courses, achievement of planned learning outcomes, completion of professional practice assignments, development and defence of a Master's thesis, and active participation in creative and professional development activities beyond the direct study process.

Rationale for the Structure of Programme Duration

Within the implementation structure of the second-cycle professional master's study programme "*Social Work Management*", it is envisaged that students with a previously obtained professional bachelor's degree in social work and the professional qualification of social worker (study duration – 1 year and 5 months) commence their studies **one semester later** than students enrolled in the two-year programme. This means that once the two-year programme students have completed their first semester, the shorter programme students are admitted, after which both groups continue their studies together.

This implementation model is both economically and academically efficient, as it ensures the effective use of study courses and resources, while at the same time enabling the integration of

different student target groups within a single academic environment. It fosters intergroup collaboration, the exchange of experiences between students with different competence, and the enrichment of the study process with diverse professional perspectives. As a result, the programme's interdisciplinary dimension is reinforced, and the sustainability of the study process is strengthened.

Table 3.1.2.1.

Compliance of the study programme with the objectives of the development plan for the study field 'Social Welfare

Priority areas and tasks defined in the development plan for the study field 'Social Welfare		Compliance of the study programme
Qualified and sustainable academic staff aligned with the goals and requirements of the study field, study programmes, and courses		
Organisation and Management	Promotion of constructive collaboration and teamwork	The implementation of the study programme is carried out in cooperation with the RTU LA centres (PSDC, HMZC, DIC, VSZC) and RTU RA, involving academic staff from the Centre of Education, Languages and Social Technologies, thereby ensuring a strong and appropriately qualified teaching team
Staff Policy	Provision of Qualified Academic Staff	The qualifications of the academic staff are appropriate to the specifics of the study programme and its implementation requirements, as well as in line with the relevant regulatory standards
<i>Research Activity and International Cooperation of Academic Staff and Students</i>		

<p>Scientific Activity and International Cooperation</p>	<p>Enhancing the research activity of academic staff involved in the study field and promoting the visibility of their scientific work</p>	<p>The study programme ensures an integrated approach to studies, practice, and research. The compulsory part of the study programme includes courses in the fields of social work and social welfare.</p> <p>In the development of the master's thesis, students are required to elaborate a theoretical framework, justify the research methodology, conduct data analysis and interpretation, visualise research data, and engage in a discussion of the research findings, among other components.</p>
	<p>Promotion of International Cooperation</p>	<p>RTU LA is a member organisation of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), the Comenius Association, and the European Association of Social Work Research (EASWRA). International cooperation within the study programme is fostered through the involvement of international academic staff in programme delivery, as well as through the development and implementation of blended intensive programmes, which support student mobility.</p> <p>In 2024, an international online master's conference titled "<i>Social Work Practice and Social Welfare in a Diverse World</i>" was organised in collaboration with students and academic staff from the Šiauliai Academy of Vilnius University.</p>
<p>Engagement with Society</p>	<p>Promotion of the Study Field and Targeted Attraction of Prospective Students</p>	<p>Information about current developments within the study programme is published on the university's website and shared via social media channels.</p> <p>Academic staff and students of the study programme actively participate in career days, education fairs, and visits to educational institutions.</p> <p>To promote the study programme, students regularly take part in scientific conferences, including in organisational roles.</p> <p>A regular scientific-practical conference titled "<i>Topical Issues in Social Work</i>" is held, with the 19th edition taking place at RTU LA in 2025.</p>

Within the framework of the study programme, research, management, and professional

competences demanded by the labour market are developed in accordance with Level 7 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF). This includes the ability to demonstrate in-depth and broad knowledge in a relevant scientific field or professional domain; the capacity to independently apply theories, methods, and problem-solving skills in research, artistic, or highly qualified professional activities in changing contexts; and the ability to independently formulate and critically analyse complex scientific and professional problems, integrate knowledge from different fields, and contribute to the creation of new knowledge (https://www.latvijaskvalifikacijas.lv/jedzieni/?doing_wp_cron=1743341605.8930120468139648437500) These competences are developed to enable graduates to pursue employment opportunities corresponding to levels 3, 2, and 1 of the basic occupational groups of the Latvian Classification of Occupations, in line with the requirements defined in the [Regulations on the Classification of Occupations, Core Tasks and Basic Qualification Requirements for Professions](#).(Latvian only)

Second Cycle Professional Master's Study Programme "Social Work Management"

Duration of Studies: 2 years

Admission requirements:

First-cycle professional higher education in the humanities and arts, or in medical and health sciences, or in social sciences; entrance exam.

Admission conditions: entrance exam

Entrance paper on current issues and challenges in social work.

Interview on motivation for studies, previous experience in social welfare or social work management, planned professional activities after graduation, research interests, resources, and professional challenges.

Evaluation Criteria:

- *Entrance paper* – relevance of the selected issue, originality of the work, connection with real practice and social work.
- *Interview* – ability to describe one's leadership skills through reflective analysis of experience and professional challenges; ability to communicate effectively and use appropriate terminology.

Second Cycle Professional Master's Study Programme "Social Work Management"

Duration of Studies: 1 year and 5 months

Admission requirements:

First-cycle professional higher education in social work or a professional Bachelor's degree in social work in Social Work; entrance exam.

Admission conditions: entrance exam

Entrance paper on current issues and challenges in social work.

Interview on motivation for studies, previous experience in social welfare or social work management, planned professional activities after graduation, research interests, resources, and professional challenges.

Evaluation Criteria:

- *Entrance paper* – relevance of the selected issue, originality of the work, connection with real

practice and social work.

- *Interview* – ability to describe one's leadership skills through reflective analysis of experience and professional challenges; ability to communicate effectively and use appropriate terminology.

The specialisation directions offered in the study programme have been analysed and revised to ensure the achievement of the planned learning outcomes. In this process, current trends in the field of education were taken into account ([European Commission report](#) (2019), and students' research intentions were summarised. In cooperation with colleagues from RTU RA, the specialisation directions offered in the study programme were reviewed and supplemented.

Specialisation: "**Social Worker for Work with Families with Children**"

This specialisation is designed to prepare highly qualified professionals capable of effectively addressing social problems faced by families with children and promoting their well-being. The necessity of this specialisation is determined by various factors, including demographic trends, social challenges, and national policy in Latvia – for example, the [Guidelines for the Development of Children, Youth and Families for 2022–2027](#).(Latvian only)

The aim of the specialisation is to deepen students' knowledge and skills in understanding family functioning, risk factors, and social work methods in working with families with children. This leads to students' ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practice when working with families at social risk. At the same time, the development of students' research competences is fostered to promote innovative approaches and improve existing practices in social work with families.

Statistical and Strategic Justification

According to [Official statistics from child protection centres on the activities of orphans'](#) (Latvian only) courts in 2024, information was provided to municipal social services about 1,328 families in which risks were identified for the proper care and upbringing of 2,424 children. In the [2024 report by the State Police on juvenile delinquency and crimes against children](#),(Latvian only) it is stated that 664 children were recognised as victims of criminal offences, and 3,827 individuals committed violations of children's rights. Behind each figure are specific families and situations where adequate support for parents and children was not provided in time.

As early as 2009, the [United Nations Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children](#) emphasised the proactive role of state policy and the need to provide resources to develop services aimed at preventing family separation. The [Law on the Protection of the Rights of the Child](#) (Latvian only) stipulates that the social worker is one of the child protection actors who ensures the observance of the best interests of the child. The 2020 methodological material developed by the Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia, [Methodology for Social Work with Families with Children](#), (Latvian only) highlights the need for in-depth training of social workers in this field. In light of these facts, the specialisation "Social Work with Families with Children" is strategically important for preparing professionals capable of effectively addressing current social issues and promoting family well-being in Latvia.

Specialisation Justification: "**Social Worker for Work with Children and Youth**"

The content of the specialisation "Social Work with Youth" is designed to prepare highly qualified professionals who can effectively address the social problems of young people and promote their well-being. This specialisation is necessitated by various factors, including demographic trends, social challenges, and national policy – such as the [Guidelines for the Development of Children, Youth and Families for 2022–2027](#).(Latvian only) In Latvia, young people aged 13–25 make up a

significant part of society, and their integration and well-being are important for national development. For example, according to the [Central Statistical Bureau, in 2024](#) (Latvian only) the youth unemployment rate in Latvia was 13.6%, which is 1.3 percentage points higher than a year earlier. These data highlight the need for qualified social work specialists who are able to provide support to young people and promote their successful integration into society.

The objectives of the specialisation include deepening students' knowledge and skills related to the specific characteristics of youth development, risk factors, and social work methods when working with young people. Practical skills are developed to apply theoretical knowledge in practice and to improve young people's social functioning and quality of life. At the same time, students are prepared for research activities in social work to promote innovative approaches and improve existing practices.

Statistical and Strategic Justification

There are several social challenges in Latvia that affect young people. For example, according to the Ministry of Welfare, in 2022 approximately 10% of youth aged 15–24 were not employed, in education, or in training (NEET youth). This significantly increases the risk of social exclusion and poverty and negatively impacts national economic development. Moreover, research shows that youth are at high risk for mental health issues. According to the [Centre for Disease Prevention and Control](#), (Latvian only) 18% of young people aged 15–24 reported symptoms of depression in 2021 (SPKC, 2022, pp.46). Additionally, in the 2024 report by the State Police on juvenile delinquency, it was recorded that 7,347 administrative offence proceedings were initiated against minors, 573 committed criminal offences, and 118 were convicted in criminal cases – indicating a rise in deviant and delinquent behaviour.

These data highlight the need for specialised social workers who can provide targeted support for young people. This is also emphasised in the 2023 methodological material by the Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia, *Methodology for Social Work with Youth*, which identifies social workers for youth as a distinct specialisation. Considering these factors, the specialisation "Social Work with Youth" is strategically important for preparing professionals capable of effectively addressing current social issues and improving youth well-being in Latvia.

- Specialisation: "**Social Worker for Work with People with Addictions and Co-dependence**"

This specialisation has been developed in response to the current needs of society, national policy priorities, and challenges in the professional environment. Addiction issues affect a broad segment of society – not only those with addictions but also their relatives and the wider social environment. As addiction is a chronic condition that increases the risk of relapse and social exclusion, there is a need for highly qualified social workers capable of providing long-term and interdisciplinary support. The aim of the specialisation is to develop students' competences for targeted work with people with addictions and co-dependence across all stages of support – from prevention and psychosocial assessment to treatment support, rehabilitation, and social reintegration. The programme also emphasises professional cooperation with health care, education, and crisis intervention systems.

Statistical and Strategic Justification

The use of addictive substances remains a significant public health and social challenge in Latvia. At the same time, co-dependence – as an emotional, social, and functional dependence on a relative's problematic behaviour – is still insufficiently recognised, yet an important factor affecting family well-being and social resilience. According to both EU and WHO guidelines, social work is recognised as an essential component of health promotion and rehabilitation. Thus, the

implementation of this specialisation is strategically justified and necessary.

- Specialisation: "**Social Worker for Work with the Elderly**". The choice of this specialisation is based on the growing proportion of the elderly population in both Latvia and globally. Ageing is accompanied by various changes and challenges, raising the question of how to ensure and improve the quality of life of older people. According to [eurostat](#), by 2030, 23.8% of Europe's population will be aged 65 or older – twice the level of 1990. In 2024, Latvia had 399.5 thousand seniors aged 65 and over (in a population of 1.87 million), representing 21.3% of the total population. According to the data of [the Ministry of Welfare](#), the number of seniors in Latvia will increase by 17% by the year 2040.

This specialisation is based on the recognition that the elderly stage of life has specific characteristics distinct from other adult life stages. The focus is on addressing age-related problems and ensuring quality of life, well-being, independence, autonomy, and dignity. Older adults are in varied situations in terms of functioning, health, and financial capacity. After age 75, the need for regular services and support increases significantly. The social worker's role is to advocate for seniors, provide support, and improve their social environment, as well as foster their inclusion in society. When developing municipal social assistance and services, it is important to ensure benefits and services that meet basic and other social needs.

These issues highlight the need for social workers to have in-depth knowledge, skills, and competences for working with the elderly.

- Specialisation: "**Social Worker for Work with Clients of the Penitentiary System and Probation Services in the Resocialisation Stage**"

This specialisation was developed in response to the growing need for professionally trained social workers who can work competently and ethically with one of society's most vulnerable groups – persons in prison, released from incarceration, and probation clients. The specialisation covers social work practices both in correctional facilities and in the community, preparing specialists to operate across the full spectrum of the resocialisation process.

Aim of the Specialisation

The aim is to develop students' professional and interdisciplinary competences for high-quality social work both in prison and in freedom – supporting clients' reintegration, reducing recidivism, and enhancing public safety and social resilience. Emphasis is placed on practical skills for working with individual cases, groups, and inter-institutional teams.

Statistical and Strategic Justification

Recidivism remains a significant societal challenge. According to [The Research on the Social Situation of Prisoners and Their Families and Their Integration into Society in Latvia – Problems and Solutions](#) (Latvian only) (2024), up to 80% of former inmates reoffend if sufficient social support is not available post-release.

Source: [ppdb.mk.gov.lv](#)

There is a shortage of social workers in specialised fields. Latvia lacks professionals with specialised knowledge of the penitentiary environment, probation system, and resocialisation approaches. This specialisation helps fill a significant gap in professional practice – particularly in prison work, where a specific understanding of closed environments, behaviour correction, and crisis intervention is needed.

Compliance with National and EU Policies. National development plans, as well as documents of the Ministry of Welfare and the Ministry of Justice, repeatedly emphasise the need to support the

integration of former prisoners and develop human resources in the justice and social sectors.

Social Security and Cost-Effectiveness. Evidence shows that investments in quality resocialisation – especially during imprisonment and the transition to freedom – significantly reduce recidivism and generate savings in justice, health, and social systems.

One of the programme's competitive advantages is its ability to respond rapidly to professional further education needs – providing both client-centred learning and financial sustainability. Each course will also be offered as a continuing education course (with the possibility of obtaining RTU LA and RTU RA CPs), allowing students to complete the programme gradually and, after enrolment, complete the necessary courses and final assessments.

The Master's programme "Social Work Management" is developed based on a student-centred approach, reflected in the formulation of programme objectives and tasks, as well as in the precise and purposeful definition of learning outcomes. This approach ensures that the study process complies with quality standards and is grounded in competence-based learning methods. The implementation mechanism of the programme includes flexible learning principles aligned with professional field requirements. This provides an effective structure for the study process, promotes links with the real working environment, and ensures regular feedback that supports critical self-analysis and reflection.

Student workload corresponds to 28 hours of study work per 1 credit point (CP).

Rationale for the Structure of the Programme Duration

Within the implementation structure of the second-cycle professional master's study programme "*Social Work Management*", it is envisaged that students who already hold a professional bachelor's degree in social work and the professional qualification of social worker (study duration – 1 year and 5 months) commence their studies **one semester later** than students enrolled in the two-year programme. This means that when the two-year programme students have completed their first semester, the shorter programme students are admitted, after which both groups continue their studies together. Such an implementation model is both economically and academically efficient, as it ensures the effective use of study courses and resources while enabling the integration of different student cohorts within a unified academic environment. At the same time, it promotes intergroup collaboration, the exchange of experiences between students with varying levels of prior preparation, and the enrichment of the study process with diverse professional perspectives. As a result, the programme's interdisciplinary dimension is strengthened, and the sustainability of the study process is ensured.

3.1.3. Economic and/ or social substantiation of the study programme, analysis of graduates' employment.

In the development of the professional Master's study programme *Social Work Management*, aimed at promoting sustainability in the field of social work, primary emphasis was placed on analysing employers' perspectives regarding the programme's necessity in the labour market, as well as conducting a labour market analysis to ensure meaningful alignment with social work practice.

To explore employers' opinions, an online discussion was held in March 2022. The initiative was led by the Head of the *Social Welfare* study field at Liepaja University. The purpose of the discussion

was to gather views on the relevance and significance of the programme in the Latvian labour market. During the discussion, employers confirmed the programme's potential and expressed their readiness to provide written statements affirming its necessity. These letters of support from employers, highlighting the demand for leading social workers in the field, are available in the section *Other Annexes* (available in Latvian only).

To further underscore the relevance of the *Social Work Management* study programme to the labour market, it should be noted that, in addition to general study courses, the programme includes specialisation tracks designed to prepare new professionals (leading social workers) in specific areas:

- social work with families with children,
- social work with children and youth,
- social work with individuals affected by addiction and co-dependency,
- social work in the penitentiary system and with probation clients in the resocialisation stage.

During the programme development, the shortage of professionals in these specialisations—highlighted by employers—was a decisive factor in determining the specialisation framework, both from a social and economic justification perspective. Simultaneously, human resource mapping was conducted to ensure high-quality programme implementation.

Social Worker for Work with Families with Children

Social work with families with children has been a topic of professional and academic discussion for more than a decade. The preparation of competent professionals in synergy with the [Methodological Guidelines for Social Work with Families with Children](#) (2020) (in Latvian only) represents a valuable resource for implementing support policies. This enables the establishment of a long-term multidisciplinary support programme offering diverse services and clearly defined functions for municipal social workers who work with families with children,

Social Worker for Work with Children and Youth

The socio-economic rationale for this specialisation is primarily based on research regarding services for adolescents and findings on youth well-being ([Youth Well-being in the Baltic States: Research Report \(Latvia\)](#), JSPA, 2019). (in Latvian only) Children and youth are recognised as future taxpayers and active members of society. Employers have pointed to urgent challenges in the field, including the need to enhance social workers' competencies, a shortage of specialists, and burnout among existing professionals working with this group.

Social Worker for Work with Individuals Affected by Addiction and Co-dependency

The socio-economic justification for this specialisation is grounded in findings from relevant studies. For example, the study [Prevalence of Psychoactive Substance Use Among the Population in 2020](#) (CDC, 2021) revealed an upward trend in the use of illegal substances—16.8% in 2020 compared to 11.3% in 2015. Similarly, tobacco-related addiction rates remain high (above 70%). Both the study and employer consultations during programme development confirmed low public awareness in Latvia regarding substance abuse and prevention policies. These findings emphasise the need to train specialists capable of supporting national drug and alcohol policy through targeted and specialised professional preparation.

Social Worker for Work with Seniors

The socio-economic rationale for the specialisation *Social Worker for Work with Seniors* is based on demographic ageing, as highlighted in a [United Nations report projecting](#) that the global senior population will double by 2050. The increasing longevity of life creates a growing demand for personalised support services for seniors. These changes generate new social and economic needs that require a focused approach in social work. This specialisation is crucial to providing effective

support, promoting seniors' well-being, social inclusion, and quality of life.

Social Worker for Work with Penitentiary and Probation Clients in the Resocialisation Stage

The socio-economic justification for this specialisation is based on regional development needs. A new prison facility is being constructed in Liepāja, reflecting a shift in correctional philosophy—from supervision to resocialisation—in line with 21st-century professional standards. The planned staffing requirement for the new facility is approximately 450 professionals, compared to the current 150 in the existing prison. The contribution of newly trained specialists in this specialisation is therefore considered a vital resource for the successful implementation of resocialisation practices.

Analytical overview of employment of graduates of the second-cycle professional Master study programme "Social Work Management"

The employment of graduates of the second-cycle professional Master's programme *Social Work Management* (analysis based on the data of the 2023 graduates; the data of the 2025 graduates are still in the process of being collected) demonstrates a high correlation between the objectives of the study programme and the demand of the labour market. Employment data were provided by 11 out of 17 graduates of 2023, all 11 of whom are employed. The professional fields of employment of the graduates reflect multisectoral involvement – they work in municipal social services (Ogre, Tukums, Valmiera, Liepāja), in state institutions (VSAC "Kurzeme"), in the non-governmental sector (Children's Palliative Care Association, SAIF "Kurzemes ģimeņu atbalsta centrs"), and also in the field of education (as social pedagogues in pre-school institutions). Such an institutional spectrum is in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (available only in English) (SDG 3 – Good health and well-being, SDG 10 – Reduced inequalities). This demonstrates that graduates are prepared to work in complex, multi-level social policy implementation environments. From the perspective of job positions, graduates hold the roles of social worker, social pedagogue, head of department, and manager of organisations, which demonstrates the professional multiperspectivity of the study programme and its ability to prepare specialists who are able to function at the micro-level (direct client work), the meso-level (management of organisations and institutions), and the macro-level (development of social policy and service systems). Particularly significant is graduate employment in the non-governmental sector, while the presence of municipal and state institutions in the structure of employment demonstrates the programme's coherence with the national social policy priorities as defined in the [National Development Plan of Latvia 2021–2027](#) (in Latvian only) and the Social Protection and Labour Market Policy Guidelines 2021–2027 of the Ministry of Welfare. The regional geography of employment (Kurzeme, Vidzeme, Zemgale, Pierīga) demonstrates the mobility and adaptability of the graduates, which is important in view of Latvia's sociodemographic disparities and the trends of population ageing, as regularly reported in the [United Nations World Population Ageing Reports](#) (available only in English).

Of the six graduates who completed the programme in January 2025, five are already actively integrated into professional employment within the social welfare sector, which once again demonstrates the programme's purposiveness, pragmatism, and the high demand for its graduates. One graduate is on parental leave, which represents a temporary and socially justified circumstance and does not correlate with the programme's employability indicators.

These data confirm that graduates are successfully absorbed into the labour market, obtaining professionally relevant positions that enable them to develop their careers and consolidate their professional identity in the field of social work. Furthermore, given the structurally increasing demand for qualified social work specialists, it is expected that this trend will be sustained in the future, when the number of graduates from the two-year programme can be determined with even greater precision.

On the basis of these data, it may be concluded that graduate employment following the completion of studies is very high, which indicates the programme's competitiveness, professional validity, and capacity to provide students with the necessary competences to integrate successfully into the labour market structure. The fact that graduates are employed by leading institutions and organisations in the sector further confirms the programme's strong reputation and its compliance with professional education standards and regulatory frameworks.

Conclusion

The employment structure of graduates of the study programme "*Social Work Management*" demonstrates its high relevance, professional validity, and sustainable correlation with labour market demands. Graduates integrate into various levels of the social welfare sector, demonstrating the ability to perform managerial functions, ensure intersectoral synergy, and respond flexibly to transformations in social policy. This aligns with the European Union's strategic orientations on social protection and inclusion (European Pillar of Social Rights, 2017), which emphasise the need for professional leaders in social work capable of ensuring sustainable social innovation and societal cohesion.

3.1.4. Statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down into different study forms, types, and languages.

In analysing the statistical indicators of graduates and students of the Professional Master's study programme "*Social Work Management*", it is important to emphasise that during the reporting period the first graduation ceremony took place in 2023. At this ceremony, 17 students completed the programme with a study duration of 1 year and 5 months, which fully corresponds to the number of students admitted at the outset of programme implementation (17 admitted). This demonstrates both stable demand for the programme and the sustainability of its capacity.

The second graduation of the same study duration included 6 graduates (January 2025), while in the two-year programme the graduation took place in July 2025 with 16 graduates. This trend reflects the programme's growth potential and the increasing demand for it, which can be attributed to the purposeful implementation of quality and accessibility strategies, as well as the programme's ability to maintain a sustainable development trajectory.

With regard to the expert recommendation "*To increase the number of students (better advertising; less drop-out)*", it should be noted that at the beginning of the 2025/2026 academic year the programme recorded a very low drop-out rate. Nevertheless, programme implementers continue to strengthen student recruitment and retention strategies in a targeted manner by expanding the range of promotional and public relations activities, enhancing cooperation with employers and professional associations, and introducing support mechanisms to meet students' individual needs (mentoring system, personalised study plans, flexible study schedules, and psychosocial support). As a result of these measures, both programme accessibility and student retention are being consistently improved, ensuring a high-quality learning environment and sustainable programme development in line with national requirements and the European Higher Education Area.

Overall, the statistical analysis and dynamics of the programme demonstrate its competitiveness,

its ability to attract students with diverse profiles, and its effective response to expert recommendations, thereby strengthening both programme accessibility and sustainable development.

3.1.5. Substantiation of the development of the joint study programme and description and evaluation of the choice of partner universities, including information on the development and implementation of the joint study programme (if applicable).

3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

3.2.1. Analysis of the content of the study programme. Assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators with the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study courses/ modules and compliance with the needs of the relevant industry, labour market and with the trends in science on how and whether the content of the study courses/ modules is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science.

Objectives, Content and Outcomes of the Master's Study Programme "Social Work Management"

The objectives and intended learning outcomes of the Master's study programme *Social Work Management* are closely integrated with the content of the courses/modules, the defined aims, the scope of knowledge to be acquired, and the intended outcomes for students.

The structure and content of the programme are designed to ensure the targeted development of professional competences required for leading social workers, with a particular emphasis on strategic thinking, managerial skills, research capacity, and the ability to address complex social problems in a rapidly changing environment.

The courses provide the necessary theoretical knowledge and practical skills aligned with the programme's objectives - to prepare highly qualified leading social work professionals capable of independently analysing social situations, planning, managing and evaluating social services, as well as conducting research activities.

The intended learning outcomes of the programme (knowledge, skills, and competences) are aligned with the outcomes of specific study courses, for example:

- Management theory and strategic planning courses (*Innovation in Social Work Management, Human Resource Management in Social Work, Models, Theories and Methods of Social Work Management, Principles of Social Policy and Law*) develop the ability to lead organisations

and processes;

- Social policy analysis and research courses (e.g. *Dimensions of Diversity in Social Work Practice, Innovation in Social Work Research*) strengthen the capacity to conduct scientific research and to justify decisions with evidence;
- Practice and professional specialisation courses enhance the ability to address real professional situations and challenges in work with specific target groups.

This integrated approach ensures that each course directly or indirectly reinforces the overall aims of the study programme and contributes to the intended learning outcomes. The programme also promotes an interdisciplinary perspective, which is essential in contemporary professional practice in social work management.

The logical structure of the study programme, the interconnection between its aims, course content and intended learning outcomes ensures the achievement of professional qualification requirements and the development of the professional identity of a social work manager.

The outcomes of the programme correspond to its objectives and tasks as defined in the relevant regulatory framework. They also comply with the knowledge, skills and competences set out in the Professional Standard for Leading Social Workers. The learning outcomes are formulated in line with the descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), Level 7.

In this second-cycle Master's programme, the content of courses and modules is developed and regularly updated, taking into account trends in the development of social work, the current demands of the labour market, and the latest scientific knowledge in both Latvian and international contexts.

The content of the courses reflects the labour market demand for professional social work managers who are able to take strategic decisions, implement change management, develop social services, and apply research skills in social work. Particular attention is paid to management processes in social work, quality management, the implementation of innovations in practice, interdisciplinary collaboration, and social policy analysis.

Course and module updates are carried out regularly by evaluating sectoral developments, legislative changes, recommendations from employers, feedback from professionals and graduates, as well as by analysing international trends and scientific research in social work. The enhancement of course content also takes into account such contemporary issues as digitalisation, the use of technology in social work, the Sustainable Development Goals, social diversity and inclusive practice, as well as new models for addressing social problems.

Within the programme's specialisations, course content is supplemented with the latest research findings, practical examples and case studies from both Latvian and international practice, thus providing students with the opportunity to acquire up-to-date knowledge and skills essential for professional practice and research in social work management.

During the reporting period, the professional Master's programme *Social Work Management* has been implemented and is planned to continue to be implemented as a full-time programme. Lectures and seminars are delivered in both face-to-face and online formats, with two sessions per month (over two weekends – Thursday, Friday, Saturday). A significant proportion of the learning process is formed by independent work carried out individually and in groups, including consolidating lecture content, analysing sources, completing practical tasks and preparing for seminars.

An additional prerequisite for ensuring the relevance of courses to actual labour market needs is

the involvement of academic staff whose daily professional activity is closely related to the sector. In planning to implement the programme in both Liepāja and Rēzekne, industry professionals and academic staff from RTU Liepāja (RTU LA) and RTU Rēzekne (RTU RA) were purposefully engaged in the programme's development, following the principle of theory based on scientific evidence and content relevant to practice. Consequently, to ensure the integration of theory and practice, practitioners were invited to teach courses within the specialisations.

Graduate Monitoring, Feedback and Implemented Improvements

To evaluate whether the programme meets actual labour market demands, graduate career trajectories are monitored and their feedback is systematically analysed. A range of methods is used for this purpose: regular graduate surveys and interviews on employability and the relevance of acquired education to professional tasks; employer surveys on the professional competence levels of graduates; analysis of publicly available labour market statistics and graduate employment databases. In addition, information from the RTU Career Centre and the monitoring of selected graduates' professional experience is utilised.

The collected information is compiled, structured and presented at study field council meetings, where it is analysed and discussed. The results are applied to improve course content, enhance the organisation of practice placements, and develop new study courses. This systematic approach ensures that the programme content is continuously updated in line with sectoral developments and labour market requirements.

Specific improvements introduced on the basis of feedback from graduates, students and employers include:

- the development of the course *Human Resource Management in Social Work*, whose content incorporates dimensions such as digital tools for teamwork, responding to employer recommendations on the need to strengthen digital competences in management processes;
- in professional practice specialisations (9 ECTS), the inclusion of supervision as a structured tool of professional support and reflective practice, recognised as an essential component of adult learning and professional self-development. Supervision provides students with the opportunity to analyse and critically reflect on their practice experiences, thereby strengthening their ability to integrate theoretical knowledge with professional challenges. It fosters not only the deepening of professional competences, but also the development of professional identity, a sense of self-efficacy, and the capacity to work in complex and emotionally demanding situations. This approach ensures students' long-term preparedness for the role of leading social workers, as supervision functions as a metacognitive element of the learning process, enabling them to recognise, manage and enhance their own professional practice;
- the removal of the specialisation *Social Worker for Work with Diversity* from the programme, based on student survey results and discussions with employers. The analysis indicated that the professional boundaries of this specialisation were too narrow and fragmented in practice, and its content overlapped with knowledge already acquired in other courses (e.g. inclusive practice, intercultural communication, human rights). To ensure consistency and efficiency, the content was integrated into the course *Dimensions of Diversity in Social Work Practice*, maintaining the emphasis on diversity and inclusion in society while eliminating the duplication of professional boundaries.

A significant contribution to the relevance of course content is also provided by the experiences and feedback gained by students during professional placements and employment, as well as by

the recommendations of social institutions hosting practice placements.

Compliance with the National Standard of Professional Higher Education

The second-cycle professional Master's degree programme "*Social Work Management*" has been developed in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 305 of 13 June 2023 "*Regulations on the National Standard of Professional Higher Education*". (in Latvian only). The programme's aims, content and intended learning outcomes are aligned with the requirements defined in the Standard regarding knowledge, skills and competences characteristic of Level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the Occupational Standard of the Leading Social Worker.

The programme's scope (90-120 ECTS), structure, and the balance between theoretical studies, professional courses, the research component and professional practice exceed the minimum statutory requirements, thereby ensuring conceptual consistency of the study process and the development of professional identity. The compulsory courses cover management science, social policy and law, research and innovation, as well as environmental and civil protection dimensions, thus guaranteeing methodological complementarity of the programme.

The intended learning outcomes emphasise critical analysis, strategic thinking, evidence-based decision-making and interdisciplinary collaboration, which are central to ensuring both professional qualification and academic progression. Graduates are awarded the professional Master's degree in Social Work and the professional qualification of Leading Social Worker, confirming full compliance with the national standard and securing eligibility for further doctoral studies. Compliance with the National Standard of Professional Higher Education is demonstrated in Annex 6.

3.2.2. In the case of master's and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation. In the case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels (if applicable).

The awarding of a Professional Master's degree in the Master's study programme *Social Work Management* is firmly grounded in the theoretical foundations of social work as a scientific discipline, current research findings, and international developmental trends. The content of the programme is developed in accordance with the latest scientific advancements in the fields of social work and social management, integrating research outcomes from both international and Latvian scholars.

The content of the study courses, the applied teaching methodology, and the requirements for research work are aimed at developing students' abilities to analyse and address complex social problems using theoretically grounded and evidence-based approaches. The programme fosters the capacity to apply scientific knowledge in practical settings, to design and lead social processes and organisations, as well as to conduct scientifically sound research within the domain of social work.

The Master's thesis, as the final examination component, constitutes a significant part of the study programme. It serves to assess the student's ability to independently carry out scientifically substantiated research in the field of social work management, to analyse the obtained results, and to develop practical solutions for the advancement of the sector. Consequently, the awarding of the Master's degree not only certifies the student's professional competence but also their capacity to

apply and generate innovative solutions based on scientific knowledge and sectoral development trends.

Thus, the study programme ensures that the conferred Professional Master’s degree in Social Work Management is underpinned by contemporary achievements of the relevant academic discipline, its theoretical underpinnings, and empirically validated insights.

3.2.3. Assessment of the study programme including the study course/ module implementation methods by indicating what the methods are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. In the case of a joint study programme, or in case the study programme is implemented in a foreign language or in the form of distance learning, describe in detail the methods used to deliver such a study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.

Description and Application of Study Methods

The implementation of the second-cycle professional Master’s study programme “*Social Work Management*” is grounded in contemporary, student-centred and research-based study methods, through which the achievement of course learning outcomes and programme objectives is ensured. The study process is delivered through a range of pedagogical and andragogical approaches, which foster the acquisition of theoretical knowledge, the development of practical skills, and the formation of professional competences in line with the requirements of the social work management sector and the principles of the European Higher Education Area.

Table 3.2.3.1.

Study methods applied and their contribution to the achievement of programme objectives

Method	Application	Outcome and contribution to programme objectives
Lectures and interactive discussions	Transmission of knowledge, explanation of theoretical concepts and paradigms, promotion of critical thinking and reflective analysis	Ensures the acquisition of academic knowledge and the ability to critically analyse theoretical information
Case studies	Analysis of real and simulated situations from social work management practice	Develops analytical skills, problem-solving strategies and systems thinking

Method	Application	Outcome and contribution to programme objectives
Practical tasks and group work	Engagement in real and simulated situations, enhancement of collaborative skills	Promotes the development of teamwork, communication and leadership competences
Project development and presentations	Individual and group projects on topical issues in the field	Strengthens research skills, the ability to argue, defend and present ideas
Applied research and Master's thesis	Independent, scientifically substantiated research on a chosen topic	Enhances research competence, innovation and the creation of new knowledge in practice
Professional placement	Work in social work institutions at managerial level	Provides real professional experience and integration of theoretical knowledge into practice
Reflection and self-assessment	Individual tasks and discussions on professional development	Encourages critical self-evaluation, self-efficacy and the formation of professional identity

The methods employed in the implementation of study courses are selected and combined in accordance with the course content, intended learning outcomes and objectives, thereby ensuring a balance between theoretical content and practical application. The principles of adult education (andragogy), as well as methodological complementarity between courses, are observed, thus guaranteeing a comprehensive process of self-directed learning.

Particular emphasis is placed on methods that foster active student engagement, independent work, research activity, and the resolution of practical problems. This is essential to ensure that students are prepared to act as competent, innovative and responsible leaders in social work practice, grounding their professional activity in up-to-date scientific knowledge, international guidelines and best practice.

The methods applied in the implementation of the programme are purposefully and consistently selected, complementing one another and ensuring the attainment of intended learning outcomes and programme objectives. In this way, both the acquisition of academic knowledge and the development of professional skills are promoted, preparing students for employment in the field of social work management in line with contemporary professional requirements and societal development trends.

Implementation Sites of the Second-Cycle Professional Master's Study Programme "*Social Work Management*"

The programme is planned to be implemented in two locations – at RTU Liepāja and RTU Rēzekne study centres – in compliance with unified academic, methodological and quality assurance principles. The programme content, intended learning outcomes and objectives will be identical at both implementation sites.

Differences will arise only in relation to the organisation of professional placement, as placement institutions will be selected according to regional opportunities. These differences will not affect the overall coherence of the programme and will ensure that students at both sites achieve equivalent outcomes.

A unified approach to programme implementation will be ensured through a centralised programme management and coordination mechanism. This will include harmonised course descriptions, aligned teaching plans, a shared repository of study materials, as well as consistent application of assessment criteria and academic requirements. Regular coordination will take place through meetings of the academic staff involved in programme delivery, working groups, and digital platforms, thereby ensuring methodological consistency and academic integrity.

Such an approach will guarantee that, irrespective of the implementation site, students will obtain comparable academic and professional preparation that meets RTU quality standards, the requirements of the legislation of the Republic of Latvia, the European Qualifications Framework, and the standards of international guidelines in social work management education.

3.2.4. If the study programme envisages an internship, describe the internship opportunities offered to students, provision and work organization, including whether the higher education institution/ college helps students to find an internship place. If the study programme is implemented in a foreign language, provide information on how internship opportunities are provided in a foreign language, including for foreign students. To provide analysis and evaluation of the connection of the tasks set for students during the internship included in the study programme with the learning outcomes of the study programme (if applicable).

In the professional Master's study programme *Social Work Management*, practical placements play a vital role, serving as a platform for the integration of theoretical knowledge and practical skills acquired during the study process. The implementation of practice is aimed at enhancing students' professional competences, developing the ability to analyse and evaluate real-life social work situations, and strengthening leadership, research, and problem-solving skills.

Types and Description of Practice

The study programme includes two key components dedicated to professional practice:

1. Master's Placement in a Specialisation Field (9 ECTS)

This placement is designed for students enrolled in the 1.5- or 2-year study track who already hold prior qualifications in social work.

The main objective of the placement is to strengthen the professional competences of a senior social worker within a specific area of social work specialisation, such as:

- Working with families and children;
- Working with children and young people;
- Working with individuals affected by addiction and co-dependency;

- Working with older persons;
- Working with clients of the penitentiary and probation systems during the resocialisation phase.

During the placement, students develop:

- Professional communication skills;
- Organisational and planning abilities;
- Strategies for working with specific client groups;
- Research skills in practical settings.

2. Master's Placement in Social Work Management (21 ECTS)

This placement is intended for students enrolled in the 2-year study programme who do not hold a prior professional qualification in social work.

The objective of this placement is to gain an in-depth understanding of the functioning, management, planning, and quality assurance of social work organisations and institutions, with the aim of enhancing students' ability to act as social work managers.

During this placement, students acquire:

- Skills in organisational analysis;
- Resource and quality management;
- Service planning and organisation;
- Personnel management and cooperation enhancement;
- Evaluation of management processes.

Placement Opportunities and Provision

The implementation of practice is coordinated by the management of the Social Work study programme at Riga Technical University (RTU), in close collaboration with students and placement institutions. Students are given the opportunity to select their placement site independently or with the support of the university, working in cooperation with relevant sector organisations, institutions, and social services both in Latvia and abroad.

Additionally:

- RTU provides informational and advisory support in the search for placement opportunities;
- Students may undertake placements abroad through the Erasmus+ programme and receive a scholarship;
- The organisation of practice is based on agreements between RTU and the placement institution;

- Supervisors are appointed both from RTU and from the host institution.
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Analysis and Evaluation of the Alignment Between Placement Tasks, Programme Aims, and Learning Outcomes

The tasks within the practice modules are closely aligned with the general aims of the study programme and its specific intended learning outcomes, as evidenced by the programme and course mapping (Annex 8).

Practice constitutes an essential component of the study process, in which:

- Theoretical knowledge is integrated with real-world situations in the workplace;
- Competences in social work management and strategic planning are developed;
- Research activity is promoted, and the experience gained during practice contributes to the development of the Master's thesis;
- Decision-making, problem-solving, and organisational planning skills are fostered;
- Logical and critical thinking, as well as professional reflection, are cultivated.

As a result of the placement, students are provided with the opportunity to:

- Test and consolidate acquired knowledge in real-life work settings;
- Develop leadership, planning, and resource management skills;
- Understand professional and ethical standards in social work practice;
- Apply a research-based approach to the analysis and resolution of social work issues.

3.2.5. Evaluation and description of the promotion opportunities and the promotion process provided to the students of the doctoral study programme (if applicable).

3.2.6. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the marks of the final theses.

Within the framework of the professional Master's study programme *Social Work Management*, the topics of the final theses demonstrate students' ability to identify and investigate current issues in social work practice, with a particular focus on aspects of management and organisational processes in social work. The selection of thesis topics is largely oriented towards addressing practical challenges in the field, including the development of social services, organisational management, resource planning, professional burnout among employees, analysis of client needs, the creation of new models for social service provision, and the optimisation of management processes.

A notable trend is the growing interest among students in topics that reflect labour market demands and current developments in the social work sector in Latvia, such as:

- Quality management of social services;
- Development of effective inter-institutional cooperation models;
- Accessibility of social services for families with children;
- Opportunities for improving youth social work;
- Use of digital solutions in social work;
- Development of management practices in social care centres;
- Enhancement of support systems for social workers.

An analysis of thesis assessments during the reporting period reveals that the majority of works received high or above-average evaluations, indicating a strong level of student preparedness, the ability to conduct independent research, analyse practical situations, and propose solutions to real-world problems. Most theses were graded "8" (very good) and "9" (excellent), with several receiving the maximum grade of "10" (outstanding), reflecting the high quality of the submitted work.

It is also important to note that several theses received recognition from placement institutions and professionals in the social sector, indicating their practical relevance and potential impact in the labour market. In some cases, the findings and recommendations of the theses have been used to improve internal processes within organisations or to support the development of new services.

Overall, it can be concluded that the final thesis topics are purposefully selected, aligned with current labour market needs and developments in the social work sector, and contribute to the enhancement of students' practical and research competences, thus ensuring the achievement of the programme's aims and intended learning outcomes.

3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

3.3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples.

he resources available for the implementation of the professional master's study programme "Social Work Management" are sufficient and of high quality, ensuring the alignment of the study process with the programme's objectives and intended learning outcomes.

Study base

As noted previously, the second-cycle professional master's study programme "Social Work Management" is implemented solely at RTU Liepāja Academy (RTU LA) until 2026, after which it is planned to be delivered in two RTU structural units – RTU LA and RTU Riga Academy (RTU RA). At both implementation sites, modern and well-equipped lecture rooms are available, suitable for lectures, seminars, and practical classes. The classrooms are equipped with projectors, interactive whiteboards, and internet access. In both sites, computer rooms with licensed software and free internet access are available, providing students with opportunities to apply data processing and analytical tools in both study and research activities. Detailed information on the available classrooms is provided in sections 2.3.1. and 2.3.2., and all facilities are equally accessible for students of the second-cycle professional master's study programme "Social Work Management".

Special facilities and laboratories

At both RTU Liepāja Academy and RTU Riga, rooms are available for practical classes, group work, and research or project activities. Although the second-cycle professional master's study programme "Social Work Management" does not require specialised engineering laboratories, students have access to RTU's research centres, which provide opportunities to engage in interdisciplinary research. The study process makes use of RTU's research infrastructure, enabling students to acquire applied research skills and implement them in the preparation of master's theses.

Library and information base

At both implementation sites, students have access to RTU's library services – the RTU Library in Riga and the RTU Liepāja Academy Library. The library collections include up-to-date books, periodicals, and teaching materials in social work, social policy, management, psychology, and pedagogy. In addition, extensive electronic resource collections are available, including:

- international databases (*EBSCOhost, Emerald Insight, ScienceDirect, Sage Journals, SpringerLink, Taylor & Francis, Wiley Online Library*),
- e-book collections, regularly updated with publications relevant to social work and management,
- interlibrary loan services, ensuring access to resources from other libraries in Latvia and abroad.

Students are provided with access to subject-specific resources (e.g., *European Journal of Social Work, Journal of Social Policy, Administration in Social Work, International Journal of Social Welfare*), which are essential for the preparation of master's theses and the development of research competencies. RTU library specialists organise regular training sessions on effective use of databases and reference management tools (*Mendeley, Zotero, EndNote*).

IT resources and software

The study process makes use of both RTU-licensed tools and open-source or free-access software, providing a broad range of options for data processing and analysis:

- *R Studio* and *Python* – for quantitative and qualitative data analysis (e.g., analysis of student surveys and human resource management data),

- *GNU Octave* and *Scilab* – for data modelling and resource planning tasks,
- *QGIS* – for geographic information analysis, such as assessing the availability of social services across regions,
- *NVivo* (available through RTU licence) – for qualitative data analysis (e.g., processing of interviews and focus group research).

Assessment of adequacy

The resources available at RTU LA and RTU RA ensure the high-quality implementation of the programme in both locations. Differences between the two sites do not significantly affect the quality of studies, as students in both locations have comparable access to facilities – classrooms with appropriate equipment, computer rooms with specialised software, library and electronic resources, and the RTU e-learning platform ORTUS, which guarantees a unified study process and access to course materials.

The resources of the study programme are sufficient to support the preparation of master’s theses, as students have access to international-level literature, databases, and software tools for both quantitative and qualitative research and analysis.

Conclusion

The resource provision at both implementation sites – RTU Liepāja Academy and RTU Riga Academy – is appropriate and sufficient for the successful implementation of the “*Social Work Management*” programme, ensuring the achievement of all intended learning outcomes, including the preparation of master’s theses in line with national requirements and the standards of the European Higher Education Area.

3.3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific base support, including the resources provided within the framework of cooperation with other science institutes and higher education institutions (applicable to doctoral study programmes) (if applicable).

3.3.3. Indicate data on the available funding for the corresponding study programme, its funding sources and their use for the development of the study programme. Provide information on the costs per one student within this study programme, indicating the items included in the cost calculation and the percentage distribution of funding between the specified items. The minimum number of students in the study programme in order to ensure the profitability of the study programme (indicating separately the information on each language, type and form of the study programme implementation).

Financial Planning and Budget Preparation

In order to ensure the effective implementation of the study field, RTU Liepāja must undertake annual financial flow planning and budget preparation. The financial resources of the study programmes *Social Worker* and *Social Work Management* consist of a state budget subsidy (the

main part of the income) and self-financing (tuition fees).

The study programmes are financed in line with the costs determined by the Cabinet of Ministers. Tuition fees under the self-financing section are covered by natural and/or legal persons, i.e. students' personal funds, employers' contributions, or study loans.

The amount of tuition fees and payment procedures for each academic year are set in accordance with RTU guidelines and approved by the Senate. Tuition fees must be paid in line with an agreed payment schedule, with each year's instalment covered within the specified deadline.

Student Recruitment Measures

To encourage an increase in student numbers through marketing and recruitment strategies, RTU Liepāja implements a range of activities aimed at attracting prospective students. Tuition fees related to the study process are approved annually by the RTU Senate. The provision of financial resources is stable.

Study Place Costs per Student and Their Evaluation

State budget funding is allocated each calendar year in accordance with Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 994 of 12 December 2006 "Procedure for Financing Higher Education Institutions and Colleges from the State Budget" and by agreement between the Ministry of Education and Science and RTU LA on the preparation of a specified number of specialists.

For the second-cycle professional master's study programme *Social Work Management*, the planned costs for full-time studies in 2025–2026 were calculated using the base cost set in 2025 (EUR 1,867.60 per study place), the coefficient for the thematic field *Social Welfare* (3.0), and the coefficient for second-cycle professional higher education programmes (1.5).

The cost per study place in 2025 amounts to EUR 8,404.20, with the total tuition fee for the two-year programme being EUR 16,808.40. The number of state-funded study places in 2025/2026 is 20.

The tuition fee approved by the RTU Senate for full-time studies in the academic year 2025/2026 for first-year students is EUR 8,400. This fee remains fixed for the entire study period, with the total tuition fee for the two-year programme being EUR 16,800.

Evaluation of the Percentage Distribution of Costs

The total funding for the study field in the academic year 2024/2025 amounts to EUR 380,200. Of this, 22% of the costs are accounted for by the second-cycle professional master's study programme *Social Work Management*.

As of 1 October 2024, there were 21 students enrolled in this programme, six of whom were expected to graduate in January 2025. As of 1 March 2025, there were 16 students in the full-time programme.

The planning of expenditures within the study field is carried out together with the other study fields implemented at RTU Liepāja. Within RTU Liepāja, the study field *Social Welfare* is part of the Centre of Pedagogy and Social Work (PSDC).

Structure of Expenditure

Analysis of the core budget expenditure items shows (see Fig. 3.3.3.1) that the largest category of expenditure is remuneration, with a significant share devoted to academic staff salaries and honoraria for course delivery and content maintenance.

The second-largest category of expenditure is utilities, followed by services, goods, and other costs directly related to student support and services, marketing expenses, and other technical maintenance costs. These are regularly reviewed and optimised, with priority given to ensuring a comfortable and student-friendly study environment on campus.

Expenditure on the acquisition of literature, periodicals, and subscriptions to electronic databases is included in the overall RTU Liepāja core budget. All programmes within the study field have access to study and research resources provided by the RTU Liepāja Library.

Overall, the expenditure structure is assessed as optimal and consistent with the development strategy.

Funding for Scientific Research and Artistic Creativity

Funding for scientific research is derived from several sources: base funding for scientific activity provided by the Ministry of Education and Science, performance-based funding, competitively allocated resources (internal grants, project co-financing, projects), and the RTU Liepāja Scientific Research Development Fund.

In accordance with amendments to Cabinet Regulation No. 994 “*Procedure for Financing Higher Education Institutions and Colleges from the State Budget*”, performance-based funding is awarded for achievements in research and artistic creativity. The allocated funding for the previous year’s results is used by RTU LA in line with the approved budget.

Support for Academic Staff Research Activity

To support the research activities of academic staff involved in the study field, funding is allocated from the RTU Liepāja Faculty of Pedagogy and Social Work development budget and the RTU Liepāja Scientific Research Development Fund.

The priorities for receiving funding are as follows:

- full or partial financial support for publications indexed in Web of Science and Scopus databases, and in the case of the humanities, also ERIH+;
- full or partial financial support for publications in other discipline-specific databases (e.g.

EBSCO, etc.);

- the development and publication of peer-reviewed scientific monographs;
- preparation and publication of RTU Liepāja scientific journals and other outputs included in scientific databases.

Each study centre's budget also includes funding for participation in scientific conferences (covering registration fees and travel expenses), as well as support for student research activities.

Funding Sources and Financial Management

The annual general budget of RTU Liepāja consists of a cash flow budget, encompassing all planned income and expenditure for the calendar year. The primary financial resources for the implementation of the study process are as follows:

- state budget allocations for higher education;
 - income from paid services, including tuition fees;
 - project-based contributions to cover centralised expenses;
 - donations and gifts;
 - earmarked income for specific purposes;
 - other internal revenue sources;
 - European Union Structural Fund financing;
 - carry-over funds from the previous calendar year.
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Budget Planning and Control

The overall income plan is prepared by the Assistant Director for Financial Affairs and the RTU Liepāja Director, in coordination with the RTU Financial Department, which also sets the expenditure limits for structural units.

The head of each study centre, together with their team, develops a detailed expenditure plan within the allocated limits and submits it for approval. Where expenditure limits might hinder the achievement of objectives or the implementation of new initiatives, managers may present reasoned arguments during the budget review process.

Budget planning follows the *Instruction on Budget Preparation*, with income and expenditure classified according to the main categories of costs. Funding provision is reviewed and analysed annually.

Student Council Funding

Each year, RTU Liepāja and its Student Council renew their cooperation agreement to support and promote student self-government. In accordance with Article 53 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the funding allocated to the Student Council from the basic budget may not be less than one two-hundredth of the annual budget.

Financial Stability

The results of economic activity are regularly reported in the annual report and auditor's opinion. The financial indicators of RTU Liepāja demonstrate a stable financial position.

Financial Analysis of the Second-Cycle Professional Master's Programme *Social Work Management* (RTU Rēzekne Academy of Technologies)

In the event of successful accreditation of the study field, the implementation of the second-cycle professional master's programme *Social Work Management* at RTU Rēzekne Academy of Technologies is planned to commence in the academic year 2026/2027.

For this purpose, RTU RA has carried out a cost forecast for programme implementation. The funding of the specific study programme will consist of the study base funding, part of the science base funding, and own revenue.

The study base funding is earmarked for a specific study programme and allocated from the state budget, based on the number of state-funded study places in the programme, the base cost of a study place, and the cost coefficients of study fields. The state budget study base funding covers utility payments, taxes, infrastructure maintenance (including data provision for the student and graduate register), purchase of equipment and inventory, staff salaries, as well as funding for scientific activities. Study base funding ensures accessibility of education and supports the development of the study programme by providing stable and regular financing, which allows planning and implementation of the programme and covering its essential needs, in particular staff remuneration, updating of study literature, and inventory costs.

For the master's study programme "*Social Work Management*" the following costs per student are forecasted:

- Study base costs (EUR): 1,896.98
- Funding in state budget-funded study places (EUR): 68,399.00
- Scholarship amount (EUR): 251.98
- Sports, culture, student hostel (EUR): 13.52
- Number of students on 01.10. of the academic year: 8
- Full-time equivalent (FTE): 2.4
- Costs per student (EUR): 28,499.58

Main expenditure items

- Total cost per student (EUR): 28,499.58
- Staff salaries per student (EUR): 18,447.83
- Employer's compulsory state social insurance contributions per student (EUR): 4,351.84
- Travel and mission expenses per student (EUR): 569.99
- Service costs per student (EUR): 1,424.98
- Materials, energy, water, and inventory costs per student (EUR): 1,994.97
- Book and journal purchase per student (EUR): 854.99
- Equipment purchase and modernisation per student (EUR): 854.99

Performance-based funding for research-based higher education also includes resources allocated for graduate preparation, which reflects a shift from quantitative to qualitative indicators and serves as an essential measure of programme development capacity. It sets concrete performance indicators (number of graduates and their employment), which provide strong potential for assessing and improving programme quality, ensuring graduates' competitiveness in the labour market, promoting cooperation with employers, securing internships for students, and facilitating employment opportunities.

The science base funding and performance-based research funding at RA are not allocated by study field but are directed to the support of RA's scientific activities in accordance with RA's *Regulations on the Principles of Distribution of Research Funding*, including activities aimed at programme development, such as:

- remuneration of research staff employed in the programme,
- co-financing of international research projects,
- conference travel and other scientific networking activities (including participation fees),
- allocation of coefficients for remuneration of academic staff employed at the institute,
- increasing workload volumes for research staff,
- introduction of new research staff positions,
- purchase of equipment.

The minimum number of students is planned to be 20 per academic year. If the number of students is below 20, then, in accordance with RTU Rector's order No. 01000-1.2-e/66 of 08.08.2025, the programme may be implemented by ensuring resource sharing for 80% of the study volume, excluding internships and the final thesis.

3.4. Teaching Staff

3.4.1. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members (academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

One of the most important quality assurance factors in the *Social Work Management* professional Master's study programme is the academic staff, who are highly qualified specialists in their respective scientific disciplines, including social work. The programme is delivered by academic and professional teaching staff with relevant educational backgrounds, scientific and professional qualifications, and practical experience in both social work and management. The qualifications of the teaching staff fully comply with the requirements set out in the legislation of the Republic of Latvia for Master's level study programmes, and they are well-aligned with the aims and content of the study programme.

The teaching team includes lecturers holding doctoral or Master's degrees in social work, management, education, psychology, and related fields, as well as individuals with significant professional experience in organising, managing, and researching social work. Certain courses are also delivered with the participation of visiting lecturers and practitioners—professionals in social work, organisational leaders, industry experts, and specialists with international experience—ensuring that the programme remains closely connected to current sectoral trends and practice.

The qualifications of the academic staff significantly contribute to the achievement of the programme's learning outcomes in the following ways:

- Ensuring that course content is current and aligned with the latest theories and research in social work and management;
- Developing students' research, analytical, and practical skills;
- Providing students with experience-based knowledge and practical solutions to real-world situations;
- Promoting critical thinking and problem-oriented approaches in social work management;
- Offering supervision and guidance in the development of Master's theses and research skills;
- Integrating best practice examples from both Latvian and international contexts into the study process.

The academic staff's qualifications and professionalism ensure that course-level learning outcomes are fully achievable and that the overall aims of the study programme—preparing highly qualified, competent, and development-oriented professionals in social work management—are met.

The qualitative composition of the academic staff meets the requirements set forth in the *Law on Higher Education Institutions*. The academic staff's qualifications are appropriate for the specific nature and implementation conditions of the study programme and conform to the relevant regulatory requirements.

The elected academic personnel are experts in their respective scientific fields and have demonstrated competence in research, the use of digital tools in the study process, participation in national and international projects, and the development of scientific publications, teaching materials, and monographs.

To ensure the high-quality and innovative delivery of the programme, a range of criteria are applied in the selection of teaching staff. This ensures that each course is led by qualified, scientifically and methodologically prepared lecturers—specialists in their respective academic fields—who employ modern approaches in their teaching.

Mandatory selection criteria for teaching staff include:

1. Compliance of academic qualifications with regulatory requirements;
2. Research focus and/or methodological work relevant to the content of the study programme or course;
3. Proficiency in the official state language and foreign languages.

In addition, the professional and academic biography of teaching staff must demonstrate compliance with at least one of the following supplementary criteria:

1. Professional development in higher education didactics or teaching methodology;
2. Participation in academic conferences, research, or development projects.

The academic staff involved in the implementation of the programme meet these criteria, and their qualifications are aligned with the specific nature and implementation conditions of the study programme, as well as with regulatory standards in the field of education. The lecturers are professionals in their field who have demonstrated research competence in the field of *Educational Sciences*, engaged in conferences, seminars, and project work, and developed teaching materials and creative outputs.

Given the specific nature of the study programme's implementation, the academic staff have not been categorised according to their affiliation with RTU Liepāja Academy or RTU Rēzekne Academy. A number of academic staff are sector experts whose professional activities are carried out outside these locations, while others involved in the implementation of the programme are not affiliated with RTU LA or RTU RA but are directly employed by RTU. This organisational model ensures flexibility and the possibility of engaging highly qualified specialists in the study process regardless of their geographical location, thereby strengthening the quality of the programme and its research potential. Basic information on the academic staff involved in the implementation of the study field is provided in Annex II.2.3.7 of this report.

The professionalism of the teaching staff and their ability to integrate research into the teaching process are evidenced by research and publications produced during the reporting period, as documented in their academic biographies and summaries of research output. A significant number of publications have appeared in the proceedings of international scientific conferences and journals indexed in *Web of Science*, *Scopus*, or other recognised databases.

The academic staff have authored monography, including those developed within the following project:

2021-2023: Fundamental and Applied Research Programme project "*Transformation of Educational Values for the Cultural and Economic Growth of the Social Community*" (IzVeTSKKEI), project no. Izp-2020/1-0178 (Link to the published monograph: [Izglītības vērtības transformācija](#). (Latvian only) A digital version of the monograph is also appended under the "Other attachments" section.)

Information on academic staff's creative work and completed professional development programmes is available in their biographies.

3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.

To effectively promote the acquisition of professional competences required of senior social workers within the study process, the academic staff team at RTU LA was expanded during the reporting period to include Dr paed. Airisa Šteinberga, Mg psych. Anete Hofmane, and Dr paed. Tamāra Pīgozne. These changes in the composition of the academic team significantly strengthen the quality of the study programme and enhance its alignment with the current educational standards in social work management.

Given the specific nature and strategic development direction of the programme – to train highly qualified social work managers – there was a clear need to involve specialists holding doctoral degrees in social work (R. Naujaniene, J. Vyšniauskytė-Rimkienė) and in related fields of research and practice. Accordingly, academic staff have been recruited in cooperation with Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas. The involvement of doctoral-level lecturers ensures deeper academic justification of the study content, enhances the development of students' research skills, and fosters the integration of the study process with the latest scientific knowledge and developments in social work.

These changes have also had a positive impact on the research component of the programme, promoting higher-quality Master's theses and strengthening students' research capacity. Simultaneously, this creates opportunities to develop innovative study methods, including the integration of research-based content and the development of practical solutions for social work management.

Overall, these strategic adjustments in the composition of the academic staff significantly improve study quality, broaden the thematic and methodological diversity of the courses, and strengthen the programme's compliance with higher education standards and labour market demands. Since the launch of the programme (spring semester 2022), some changes have occurred within the academic staff. These changes have had no negative impact on the quality of studies and fully comply with the programme implementation requirements and legal regulations.

The following teaching staff members are no longer involved in the programme:

- Dr paed., Prof. Linda Pavītola. Reason: the specialisation "*Social Worker for Work with Diversity*", in which the professor taught, is no longer offered;
- Dr paed., Prof. Alīda Samuseviča. Reason: objective circumstances.

The following academic staff have been added to the programme:

- Dr paed. Tamāra Pīgozne, who will teach the course "*Social Pedagogy*". Her academic specialisation is in social pedagogy, and her doctoral dissertation was also developed in this field;
- Dr paed. Airisa Šteinberga, who will contribute to the course "*Innovations in Social Work Research*".

A significant development in the *Social Work Management* programme during the reporting period is the establishment of the specialisation "*Social Worker for Work with Clients of the Penitentiary and Probation Systems in the Process of Resocialisation*". This specialisation responds to the growing demand for professionally trained managers in social work who are capable of working with one of the most complex target groups – individuals undergoing resocialisation and reintegration into society after imprisonment or probation supervision.

The high quality of this specialisation is ensured by the involvement of leading field professionals in the study process. The content and delivery of the specialisation's courses are supported by

experts with in-depth practical and research competence who are directly engaged in probation and penitentiary work, as well as in policy, management, and education processes in this field: **Ineta Kēla, Mg sc. soc.**, Head of the Kurzeme Regional Division, State Probation Service – contributes insights on regional probation service management and interinstitutional cooperation; **Krista Skara, Mg sc. soc.**, Head of the Probation Programmes Division, State Probation Service – focuses on behavioural intervention models, group programmes, and motivational approaches; **Zita Balande, Mg sc. soc.**, Senior Officer, Resocialisation Department, Liepāja Prison – offers perspective on social work within closed institutions and the challenges of resocialisation; **Dr sc. soc. Anvars Zavackis**, Lead Data Analysis Expert, Training and Research Division, State Probation Service – provides expertise in evidence-based practice, data analysis, and research development.

The contribution of these professionals offers multiple benefits to the study process:

- It ensures direct integration of real-world sectoral practice into the curriculum, grounded in contemporary probation and penitentiary contexts;
- It promotes interdisciplinary perspectives, combining elements of criminology, psychology, social work, and public administration;
- It enhances students' professional identity and decision-making competence, particularly in high-risk contexts, ethical dilemmas, and client network collaboration;
- It strengthens empirical and analytical thinking, encouraging students to conduct research based on real data and sectoral needs.

The implementation of this specialisation, supported by both academic and professional staff, significantly enhances the overall quality of the programme, ensuring an education that is not only academically rigorous but also validated by practice. It builds a solid foundation of professionals capable of leading, developing, and innovating social work practice in the probation and penitentiary fields in line with current societal and human rights challenges.

These considered and purposeful changes in academic staff composition significantly reinforce the academic and professional capacity of the *Social Work Management* study programme. They ensure that the content remains aligned with current sectoral developments and enable the delivery of a high-quality, practice-oriented study process. As a result, the programme is increasingly well-positioned to prepare professionals for complex and socially significant areas of social work.

In response to the accreditation experts' recommendation - *“Attract more field professionals and graduates to balance the workload of the academic staff and therefore allow the academic staff to be more involved in the development of the SF, get more involved in the international mobilities, research etc.”* – several strategic measures have been conceptualised, operationalised, and are further envisaged within the programme implementation.

Firstly, in the curricular design and pedagogical delivery of the course *“Social Pedagogy”*, a graduate of the Master's programme *“Social Work Management”* has been engaged. In addition to holding Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Social Work, she possesses formal pedagogical qualifications (Social Pedagogue) and substantial professional praxis. This integrative approach ensures epistemically robust and praxis-oriented course content, while simultaneously reinforcing the nexus between academic provision and labour market exigencies.

Secondly, within the Master's practice specialisations, alongside the incumbent academic responsible for practice placements (himself a graduate of the professional Master's programme *“Social Work”* at Liepāja University), an additional academic has been recruited. This lecturer, also a holder of a professional Master's degree in Social Work from Liepāja University, facilitates

structured professional supervision. Supervision functions as a reflective-practice instrument and metacognitive support mechanism, enhancing students' professional reflexivity, identity formation, and self-efficacy, whilst concurrently reducing the operational workload of the core faculty.

Thirdly, with regard to the future implementation of the programme at the RTU Rēzekne study centre, negotiations have been initiated with two qualified professionals, both holders of a Master's degree in Social Work (graduates of the Liepāja University Master's programme "*Social Work*"), who currently reside and work in the Rēzekne region. They have expressed their readiness to assume roles as lecturers and practice supervisors from 2027 onwards. Their involvement will augment academic capacity, strengthen the programme's regional embeddedness, and enhance the symbiosis between higher education provision and professional practice.

Taken together, these strategic solutions not only alleviate the operational burden on the core academic staff, but also fortify the programme's epistemic and praxis-related integrity, guarantee the qualitative sustainability of curricular delivery, and establish favourable conditions for the academic staff's more substantive engagement in study field development, international collaboration, academic mobility, and research trajectories.

3.4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members, involved in the implementation of doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals or peer-reviewed monographs may be additionally specified. Information on the teaching staff included in the database of experts of the Latvian Council of Science in the relevant field of science (total number, name of the lecturer, field of science in which the teaching staff has the status of an expert and expiration date of the Latvian Council of Science expert) (if applicable).

3.4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).

3.4.5. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study programme and study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).

In the professional master's study programme *Social Work Management*, academic staff collaboration can be characterised in three main perspectives: (1) cooperation among programme lecturers within RTU, (2) collaboration with academic staff from partner higher education institutions in Latvia and abroad, and (3) engagement with industry professionals and employers.

To date, the programme has been implemented exclusively at RTU Liepāja Academy, which has meant that collaboration has taken place within a single institutional environment, concentrated in the Liepāja academic setting. Within this format, specific mechanisms have been developed to ensure coherence and integration between courses and modules - including joint curriculum planning meetings, the work of the study field council, and lecturers' participation in collegial peer review of study courses.

Cooperation with professionals in the fields working in the study programme is also relevant, which ensures the connection of theory with the working environment and the improvement of professional skills. A particularly valuable project for the promotion of cooperation is the specific support objective 8.2.2 of the ESF programme "Growth and Employment" "To strengthen academic staff of higher education institutions in areas of strategic specialization", where lecturers from different fields had the opportunity to cooperate during internships in educational institutions and thus make both qualitative changes in the content of the taught study courses and in the improvement of their professional competence.

Following programme accreditation, implementation is planned to be expanded to encompass both RTU Liepāja Academy and RTU Riga. This development will significantly broaden the dimension of academic staff collaboration: lecturers from both institutions are expected to be integrated into course delivery and research development, thereby creating a wider interdisciplinary perspective and ensuring more effective linkages between study courses and modules. At the same time, this expansion will facilitate greater student and staff mobility within RTU and further strengthen the programme's connection to the University's international cooperation network.

Already at present, joint teaching is a consistent practice within the programme, enabling the integration of diverse competencies (social work, management, psychology, law). Post-accreditation, this practice will be further deepened by bringing together lecturers from both institutions in shared study courses and joint research projects.

Academic staff collaboration is additionally reinforced through joint scientific research and the preparation of publications, ensuring that course content is grounded in the latest disciplinary developments. Collaboration with employers and municipal specialists, regularly engaged as guest lecturers, further strengthens the alignment of the study process with labour market realities. At the international level, the programme organises guest lectures and research seminars - including student scientific readings - with academics from partner universities abroad, thereby broadening students' intercultural competencies and providing a global perspective in the context of social work management.

Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	Diploma_diploma supplement sample_Sociala darba vad_LV_EN.pdf	Diploma_diploma pielikumu paraugi_Sociala darba vad_LV_EN.pdf
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	Annex 5_Stastical data_Social Work Management.docx	5.pielikums_Statistikas dati par studējošajiem_Sociālā darba vadība.docx
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard	Annex 6_Compliance with the state standard of education_specify.docx	6.pielikums_Atbalstība valsts izglītības standartam_Sociala darba vadība_precizēts.docx
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)	ANNEX 7_Compilance With the Profession Standart_specified.docx	7_pielikums_Atbalstība profesijas standartam_Soc darba vadība_precizēts.docx
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	Annex 8_Social Work Management_Mapping_speciefied_2025.xlsx	Sociālā darba vadība_KARTEJUMS_precizēts_2025.xlsx
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	Study Plan_Social Work Management_1.5Y_2Y_specified_2025_1.xlsx	Studiju plans_Sociala darba vadība_1,5 g_2 g_2025_precizēts_1.xlsx
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	Study courses_Social Work Management_ENG_precizēts_2025.docx	Studiju kursu apraksti_Sociālā darba vadība_PRECIZĒTS_2025.docx
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)	Internship description_Social Work Management_2025_specified.docx	Prakses organizācijas apraksts_Sociālā darba vadība_precizēts.docx
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		

Social Worker (42762)

Study field	<i>Social Welfare</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Social Worker</i>
Education classification code	<i>42762</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>First cycle (professional bachelor's) study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Santa</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Melķe</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>santa.melke@rtu.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Mg. paed.</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>+37163407735</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>To provide a professional Bachelor's study programme in social work grounded in holistic and sustainable development principles, aimed at preparing qualified, professionally competent, creative, and motivated specialists who are competitive in the labour market in Latvia and the European Union. The programme aspires to equip graduates with the capacity to promote positive change in the quality of life of individuals, groups, and communities, while upholding the core values and ethical principles of social work and fostering independent professional self-reflection and continuous development.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. To promote students' understanding of the theoretical and practical foundations of social work, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1.1. the nature of social problems, their causes and development trends;</i> <i>1.2. the content of social policy and the principles of its development;</i> <i>1.3. the basic principles, goals and structural elements of the welfare system;</i> <i>1.4. the nature, approaches, models and methods of social work in Latvia and in the international context;</i> <i>1.5. the professional activities of a social worker at various levels (micro, meso, macro).</i> </i> <i>2. To develop students' professional skills by providing differentiated practice opportunities and promoting the acquisition of diagnostic, methodological, social, analytical and other practical skills necessary for social work.</i> <i>3. To promote students' research competencies by integrating theoretical approaches of various sciences into social work practice and strengthening scientific research work in the study process.</i> <i>4. To support the development of students' personality and the formation of professional identity, promoting opportunities for self-realization and understanding of the importance of lifelong learning in professional growth.</i> <i>5. To promote students' sense of belonging to the European educational area, as well as the ability to critically and constructively evaluate various social, cultural and professional environment characteristics.</i>

Results of the study programme	<p><i>Upon completion of the study programme, graduates will:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Understand the causes of social problems and their impact on the quality of life of members of society, and will be able to diagnose problems, make independent decisions, plan, and model professional activities oriented towards positive outcomes. They will be capable of setting priorities, developing proposals, and implementing interventions and other measures within their area of competence to address social problems at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.</i> <i>2. Be able to organize the mobilisation of social resources to address the social problems of individuals, groups, and communities, linking the social work process with societal values and the ethical standards of the profession. They will integrate theoretical and methodological perspectives from various disciplines into professional practice.</i> <i>3. Possess knowledge of the legal norms of the Republic of Latvia and international legislation in the fields of social security and human rights and will be able to apply them in professional practice.</i> <i>4. Be able to work in interprofessional teams, make independent decisions, and plan and coordinate professional activities based on group work organisation principles and a results-oriented approach.</i> <i>5. Demonstrate a high level of professional motivation, show commitment to improving their competencies, and be able to critically assess their professional activities and, when necessary, implement targeted changes in the problem-solving process.</i> <i>6. Be proficient in applying management, planning, and administrative skills in social work, using information and communication technologies, scientific sources, and research methods for the study of societal processes, data collection, analysis, and effective communication.</i> <i>7. Be able to assess the diversity and dynamics of the social environment and adapt professional activities to the challenges of specific contexts and societal development trends.</i>
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	<i>Qualification Exam. Bachelor Thesis.</i>

Study programme forms

Full time studies - 4 years - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	<i>4</i>
Duration in month	<i>0</i>
Language	<i>latvian</i>
Amount (CP)	<i>240</i>
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Secondary education</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Professional Bachelor Degree in Social Work</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	<i>Social Worker</i>

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
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Riga Technical University	RĪGA	ĶĪPSALAS IELA 6A, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1048
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Part time extramural studies - 4 years, 5 months - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Part time extramural studies</i>
Duration in full years	4
Duration in month	5
Language	<i>latvian</i>
Amount (CP)	240
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Secondary education</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Professional Bachelor degree in Social Work</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	<i>Social Worker</i>

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Riga Technical University	RĪGA	ĶĪPSALAS IELA 6A, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1048

3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

3.1.1. Description and analysis of changes in the parameters of the study programme made since the issuance of the previous accreditation form of the study field or issuance of the study programme license, if the study programme is not included on the accreditation form of the study field, including changes planned within the evaluation procedure of the study field evaluation procedure.

Description and analysis of changes in the study programme parameters

Changes in the study programme parameters

During the reporting period, amendments were introduced to the parameters of the “Social Worker” study programme. These changes were based on national higher education policy and labour market requirements, as well as international developments in social work education.

Previous objective:

To ensure professional bachelor’s studies in social work, based on a holistic and sustainable response to social needs, improving the quality of life of the population, and preparing professionally educated, creative, motivated and competitive specialists for both the Latvian and European labour markets, capable of upholding the values of social work.

Current objective:

To provide professional bachelor’s studies in social work, based on holistic and sustainable development principles, preparing qualified, professionally competent, creative and motivated specialists who are competitive in the Latvian and European Union labour markets, capable of promoting positive changes in the quality of life of individuals, groups and communities in accordance with social work values and professional ethics, while fostering independent professional self-reflection and continuous development.

Table 3.1.1.1. Changes in the study programme objective

Aspect	Previous objective	Current objective	Significance
General orientation	Holistic and sustainable development in response to social needs, promoting quality of life.	Holistic and sustainable development principles aligned with societal needs and national social policy priorities.	Provides a clearer link with societal needs analysis and national policy frameworks.

Aspect	Previous objective	Current objective	Significance
Professional preparation	Professionally educated, creative, motivated and competitive specialists for the Latvian and European market.	Qualified, professionally competent, creative and motivated specialists, competitive in the Latvian and EU labour markets.	Emphasises professional competence and competitiveness within the EU labour market.
Role of social work	Focus on ensuring the values of social work.	Emphasis on social work values and professional ethics, as well as promoting positive change in the quality of life of individuals, groups and communities.	Reflects an internationally recognised perspective: the social worker as an agent of change.
Professional development dimension	Indirect reference to professional development.	Direct reference to independent self-reflection and growth.	Explicit inclusion of lifelong learning and reflective practice as essential requirements.
International perspective	Preparation of specialists for the Latvian and European market.	Competitiveness in the Latvian and EU labour markets, aligned with international standards (IFSW/IASSW).	Demonstrates compliance with global and European standards for social work education.

Tasks

- To promote students' understanding of the theoretical and practical foundations of social work, including:
 - 1.1. the nature of social problems, their causes and development trends;
 - 1.2. the content of social policy and the principles of its improvement;
 - 1.3. the basic principles, aims and structural elements of the welfare system;
 - 1.4. the essence, approaches, models and methods of social work in the Latvian and international context;
 - 1.5. the professional activities of social workers at micro, mezzo and macro levels.
- To develop students' professional skills by providing differentiated practice opportunities and fostering diagnostic, methodological, social, analytical and other practical competences essential to social work.
- To strengthen students' research competence by integrating theoretical approaches from different disciplines into social work practice and enhancing research activities within the study process.
- To support students' personal development and the formation of professional identity, fostering opportunities for self-realisation and promoting an understanding of the importance of lifelong learning for professional growth.

- To foster students' sense of belonging to the European Higher Education Area and their ability to critically and constructively evaluate diverse social, cultural and professional contexts.

Other significant changes in programme parameters

- Transition to the ECTS credit system: full implementation of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), ensuring international comparability and mobility. In line with this change, all course descriptions and the study plan were revised to specify volumes in ECTS, distribution of workload (contact hours, independent work, practice), and the form and weighting of final assessments.
- Removal of the modular system: the programme was consolidated, ensuring greater transparency, easier navigation for students, and compliance with the Bologna Process requirements.
- Programme consolidation: following the reorganisation of LiepU and RTA and the merger of their respective social work programmes into a unified "Social Worker" study programme, harmonisation of programme content and structure was carried out. This included aligning the sequence and scope of practice, removing the modular system, and revising course titles and content to ensure a consistent and high-quality delivery of the study process.
- Changes in practice structure: a more logical and consistent sequence of practice placements was introduced (see Table 3.1.1.2).
- Strengthening of academic staff: doctoral-level academics were engaged in key courses such as *Introduction to Research, Social Pedagogy, Health Literacy and First Aid, Social Legislation, and Project Development and Implementation in Social Work*, thereby reinforcing the research orientation and academic excellence of the programme.

Table 3.1.1.2. Comparison of practice content and structure

Year of study	Before changes	After changes	Significance
Year 1	Observation practice (3 ECTS)	Observation practice (3 ECTS)	Retained as introductory practice, providing students with an initial understanding of the social work environment.
Year 2	Practice in social pedagogy (3 ECTS)	Practice in a social institution (12 ECTS)	Significantly expanded, giving students broader experience in social institutions.
Year 3	Practice in a social work institution (12 ECTS)	Research practice (3 ECTS)	Focused on strengthening research competences, linking theory with empirical practice.
Year 4	Management and case management practice (12 ECTS)	Management and case management practice (12 ECTS)	Retained, but with stronger integration of management skills and strategic decision-making.

Changes in study programme content

Revisions to course titles and content are not considered changes to the programme parameters. However, they remain significant as they demonstrate continuous quality enhancement and alignment with current trends in social work. These transformations reflect stronger interdisciplinarity and improved preparation of students for professional practice in diverse contexts.

Table 3.1.1.3. Course transformations

Before changes	After changes	Significance
Genetics and Psychopathology	Genetics, Psychopathology and Fundamentals of Psychiatry	Introduces psychiatry fundamentals, enabling students to better understand mental health issues and collaborate effectively with healthcare professionals.
Gender Psychology	Gender Psychology and Psychotherapeutic Elements in Social Work	Integrates psychotherapeutic elements, providing practical methods for addressing issues related to gender roles, identity and emotional wellbeing.
Child and Family Law	Child, Youth and Family Law	Expanded to include youth rights, strengthening students' understanding of child and youth protection systems.
Health and Illness and First Aid	Health Literacy and First Aid	Highlights health literacy as an essential component of social work, enabling social workers to promote clients' health awareness and informed decision-making.
Developmental Psychology	Personality and Developmental Psychology	Expanded with personality psychology, providing students with deeper insights into human behaviour and identity development.

3.1.2. Analysis and assessment of the study programme compliance with the study field. Analysis of the interrelation between the code of the study programme, the degree, professional qualification/professional qualification requirements or the degree and professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements. Description of the duration and scope of the implementation of the study programme (including different options of the study programme implementation) and evaluation of its usefulness.

The transformation of the study programme *Social Worker* was carried out based on the results of the 2022 accreditation of the study field *Social Welfare* and in accordance with the recommendations provided by the accreditation experts for programme improvement. The programme content was further developed by integrating elements from the previously

implemented study programmes *Social Work and Social Rehabilitation* and *Social Worker* offered by RTU Liepāja and RTU Rēzekne, respectively.

Admission requirements have been revised in consultation with employers, as discussed during the extended meeting of the *Social Welfare* study field (January 9, 2025; Minutes No. 1/2025), attended by members of the study field council from RTU Liepāja and Rēzekne Academy of Technologies.

Student admission to the programme takes place electronically through a competitive selection process based on the results of centralized secondary school examinations. This process is governed by the RTU Senate-approved annual admission regulations for both full-time and part-time studies.

Admission Requirements are aligned with industry-relevant standards and the RTU Liepāja admission regulations.

First-Cycle Professional Bachelor's Study Programme "Social Worker"

General Admission Requirement: Completed secondary education

Admission Criteria for Applicants Who Obtained Secondary Education in 2004 or Later:

- Centralised Examination (CE) in Latvian
- Centralised Examination (CE) in Mathematics
- Centralised Examination (CE) in a Foreign Language or an International language testing institution (STIP) Foreign Language Exam

Admission Criteria for Applicants Who Obtained Secondary Education Before 2004 (exclusive), as well as for Persons Who Have Obtained Secondary Education Abroad, Persons with Special Needs, or Those Exempt from Centralised Examinations:

- Annual Grade (AG) or CE in Latvian
- AG or CE in Mathematics
- AG or CE in a Foreign Language or STIP Foreign Language Exam

Entrance examination: interview

Advantages - up to 2 additional points may be awarded.

1 point - recommendations and/or certificates (if available) confirming previous experience in social work (e.g., participation in youth NGOs, etc.) and voluntary work (e.g., involvement in the development and implementation of children's camp programmes, organisation and/or implementation of courses and seminars in the field of social welfare, etc.).

1 point - For participation in national or regional student scientific conferences and/or national Olympiads in Latvian language and literature or foreign languages, and/or in Health or Social Sciences sections of research paper (ZPD) conferences within the last three academic years.

The overall evaluation comprises:

- 60% - **the results of centralised examinations** in Latvian, mathematics and a foreign language (or the STIP foreign language examination). This applies to applicants who obtained their secondary education before 2004 (inclusive), those who obtained their secondary education abroad, and persons with special needs:
 - The final grade in Latvian Language and Literature;
 - Final grade in mathematics;
 - Final grade in a foreign language or STIP foreign language.
- 40% - **entrance examination** (oral interview).

Evaluation criteria:

Criteria for assessing the applicant's experience and communication skills (maximum score - 10 points):

- justification for choosing the profession: formulation and justification of professional career goals;

4 points	3 points	2 points	1 points
Professional career goals are clearly formulated and well-justified	Professional career goals are formulated and partially justified	General description and justification of professional career goals	Professional career goals are not specified and lack justification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessment of cooperation and leadership experience; 			
3 points	2 points	1 points	
The evaluation of cooperation and leadership experience is clearly justified	The evaluation of cooperation and leadership experience is partially justified	Lacks the ability to justify experience in the areas of cooperation and leadership	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communication and interpersonal skills. 			
3 points	2 points	1 points	
Actively engages in conversation, demonstrates good literary language, and provides logical and structured answers	Engages in conversation, with some language style errors and partially structured answers	Has difficulty engaging in conversation and makes numerous language style errors	

Upon completing their studies, students are awarded a *Professional Bachelor's degree in Social Work*, as well as a *Level 6 professional qualification as a social worker*. This entitles them to begin independent professional practice in social services, social care institutions, educational institutions, non-governmental organisations, public organisations and other relevant settings. Completing the Social Worker study programme ensures graduates' professional competence and its further development, in accordance with the principles of the Lisbon Strategy (smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth)—provides graduates with the opportunity to successfully compete in the labour market.

This is ensured by:

1. The awarded degree and the standardized European Diploma Supplement, which is comparable to those issued by related study programmes at other universities within the European Union;
2. The alignment of the programme content with the requirements for first-cycle professional higher education programmes, as defined by the European Higher Education Area and established in the Republic of Latvia by Cabinet Regulation No. 305 "[Regulations on the State Standard of Professional Higher Education](#)";(Latvian only)
3. The compliance of the programme's scientific research and material-technical infrastructure with contemporary standards (RTU Liepāja Library and study environment; RTU Rēzekne

Library and study environment);

4. The involvement of academic staff with appropriate competence to ensure the provision of sustainable education;
5. The opportunity for graduates of the programme to pursue further education in academic or professional Master's study programmes at RTU, RTU Liepāja, RTU Rēzekne, as well as at other higher education institutions in Latvia and abroad;
6. The aims, tasks, and learning outcomes of the *Social Worker* study programme do not overlap with those of other RTU programmes. RTU Liepāja and RTU Rēzekne are the only higher education institutions in their respective regions offering education of qualified social workers.

Assessment of the Effectiveness of Full-Time and Part-Time Modes of Study

The full-time on-campus mode of study ensures an intensive and structured study process, requiring no fewer than 40 academic hours per week and enabling the completion of the full programme content of 60 ECTS credits within one academic year. This mode is particularly beneficial for students who are able to dedicate themselves fully to studies and whose aim is to obtain a professional qualification within a comparatively shorter timeframe. Full-time studies foster close interaction between students and academic staff, active engagement in practical classes, integration into the academic and research environment, and the development of socio-professional competences.

The part-time distance mode of study constitutes an essential element within the context of adult education and lifelong learning, as it enables students to combine studies with professional and family responsibilities. In this mode, the study intensity is lower than 40 academic hours per week, and the programme content is acquired over a longer period, while preserving the overall integrity of the programme. Each academic year includes six intensive on-campus study weeks, while the remainder of the content is acquired through independent work and the use of the e-learning platform. This approach provides (1) flexible coordination of study and employment commitments, (2) the opportunity to immediately integrate acquired knowledge into professional practice, (3) regular feedback from academic staff through various formats (in person, online, and electronically), and (4) career development opportunities already during the course of studies.

At the programme's implementation sites, the usefulness of both modes of study is assessed with regard to regional needs and the profile of prospective students. Full-time studies are predominantly chosen by recent secondary school graduates, while part-time studies are traditionally in demand among professionally active specialists who require a more flexible study process.

With regard to the 2024/2025 academic year, it should be noted that the part-time distance mode was not implemented due to the failure to form a student group. This was determined by a combination of factors, including fluctuations in student demand and the comparatively high tuition fee (EUR 4,400 per year), which limited the possibilities and motivation of potential applicants. Nonetheless, the maintenance of the part-time mode remains strategically justified and necessary, as it ensures study opportunities for diverse target groups and is closely aligned with the core principles of the European Union's lifelong learning policy, which emphasise the development of flexible and accessible modes of study, the expansion of access to education, and the provision of learning opportunities throughout the life course.

Compliance of the Study Programme "Social Work" with the Tasks of the Development Plan of the Study Field "Social Welfare"

Priority Areas and Tasks Defined in the Development Plan of the Study Field	Compliance of the Study Programme 'Social Work
Qualified and sustainable academic staff in line with the aims and requirements of the study field, programmes, and courses	
<p>Organisation and Management</p> <p>Promotion of Constructive Cooperation and Teamwork</p>	<p>The implementation of the study programme is carried out in cooperation between RTU Liepāja Affiliation centres (PSDC, HMZC, DIC, VSZC) and RTU RA with the academic staff of the Centre of Education, Languages and Social Technologies, thereby ensuring a strong and appropriate teaching staff provision.</p>
<p>Personnel Policy Provision of Qualified Academic Staff</p>	<p>The qualifications of the academic staff correspond to the specifics and implementation requirements of the study programme, as well as to the requirements set by regulatory enactments.</p>
<p>Involvement of Foreign Guest Lecturers in Each Study Programme</p>	<p>Foreign guest lecturers are regularly involved in the implementation of the programme, delivering at least one course per year, thereby ensuring international experience and the integration of comparative practice in social work studies.</p>
<p>Promotion of Academic Staff Mobility and Cooperation with Foreign Universities</p>	<p>Programme lecturers participate in international mobility and cooperation projects, ensuring the internationalisation of the study content.</p>
<p>Professional Development of Academic Staff Competences</p>	<p>Programme lecturers continuously enhance their digital and professional competences, ensuring the relevance of study courses and the introduction of innovations.</p>
Research Activity and International Cooperation of Academic Staff and Students	
<p>Activation of Research Activities of Academic Staff Involved in the Study Field and Promotion of Research Visibility</p>	<p>Lecturers participate in international research projects and conferences, ensuring the integration of the latest scientific findings into the study content.</p>

<p>Cooperation with Research Institutions in Latvia and Abroad</p>	<p>RTU LA is a member organisation of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), the Comenius Association, and the European Association of Social Work Research (EASWRA). International cooperation within the study programme is fostered by involving academic staff in programme implementation, while the development and implementation of blended intensive programmes promote student mobility.</p>
<p>Student Involvement in Research and International Conferences</p>	<p>Programme students regularly participate in scientific conferences and symposia and publish their research findings in student research collections (in cooperation with Kaunas College).</p>
<p>Cooperation with Employers in Providing Internships</p>	<p>The study programme has concluded cooperation agreements with social services and NGOs, ensuring a wide variety of internship placements for students. Students also have the opportunity to choose internship locations close to their place of residence, including social institutions with which no formal cooperation agreement has been signed (see section "Other Annexes – Summary of Student Internship Placements in the 2024/2025 Academic Year").</p>
<p>Link with Society</p>	
<p>Promotion of the Study Programme and Student Recruitment</p>	<p>Information on current developments in the study programme is provided on university websites, with news reposted on social media. A regular scientific-practical conference, "<i>Social Work Actualities</i>" (held for the 19th time at RTU LA in 2025), also serves as a platform for promoting the programme. To further strengthen visibility, students regularly participate in scientific conferences, including as organisers.</p>
<p>Analysis of Student Satisfaction and Achievements, and Programme Improvement</p>	<p>Student satisfaction and achievement data are regularly analysed, resulting in the improvement of study content and organisation.</p>

Alignment of the Study Programme with the Study Field "Social Welfare"

The **aims and objectives of the study programme** are directly linked to the specific character

of the study field *“Social Welfare”* – to prepare professionals capable of working with individuals, families, and communities, ensuring access to social services, promoting social inclusion, and enhancing overall well-being. The programme’s objectives (acquisition of theoretical knowledge, development of practical skills and research competences, and the enhancement of professional competencies) fully correspond to the scope of the study field.

The **content of the study courses** covers the core dimensions characteristic of the field *“Social Welfare”*: social work theory and practice with diverse target groups, psychology, medicine, pedagogy, social policy, law, research, as well as professional placements at different levels. Such content provides both a solid theoretical foundation and the opportunity to acquire practical skills in real working environments.

The programme ensures the **acquisition of a professional qualification**, which complies with the requirements of the professional standard for social workers. The degree and qualification awarded (Professional Bachelor’s degree in Social Work and the qualification of Social Worker) grant the right to practise the profession in accordance with the relevant regulatory framework.

Integration of research and innovation is ensured through research methods incorporated into course content, students’ research projects, and academic staff participation in research initiatives. Students are involved in projects and regional development activities, thus contributing to the generation of new knowledge and the implementation of innovative solutions in practice.

The programme actively promotes **international and regional cooperation** with other higher education institutions, employers, municipalities, and non-governmental organisations. Students benefit from mobility opportunities (e.g., Erasmus+), while at the regional level the programme maintains close cooperation with social services and other social institutions.

Graduate employability and labour market relevance are demonstrated by the fact that graduates work in the profession they have obtained. The programme content has been designed in line with labour market requirements and the professional standard, ensuring that graduates are competitive both in Latvia and internationally.

The **quality assurance mechanisms** include regular surveys of students, graduates, and employers, systematic evaluation of study courses, and the work of the study field council. These mechanisms ensure the continuous development of the programme and its compliance with field-specific standards.

Conclusion. The title, code, level, qualification awarded, aims, objectives, content, and quality assurance system of the study programme are interconnected and fully aligned with the study field *“Social Welfare”*.

Analysis of the Interrelation of Study Programme Elements

The title and code of the programme accurately reflect its essence and its affiliation with the study field *“Social Welfare”*. The title is clear, comprehensible, and consistent with the qualification to be awarded, while the code has been assigned in accordance with regulatory requirements and the classification of higher education in Latvia.

The degree and professional qualification to be awarded are directly linked to the aims and objectives of the programme. For example, graduates obtain a Professional Bachelor’s degree in Social Work and the qualification of Social Worker, which meet the requirements of the professional standard and grant the right to practise in the relevant professional field.

The aims and objectives of the programme are closely connected with the degree and qualification

to be awarded – they define the development of the necessary theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and professional competences, thus ensuring students’ preparedness for professional practice as well as further studies.

The learning outcomes (programme learning outcomes) are formulated in accordance with the requirements of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF) level set for professional Bachelor’s study programmes. They ensure a clear link between the aims and objectives of the programme and labour market requirements, while also allowing verification of graduates’ competence attainment in practice.

The admission requirements are defined in line with the standards of higher education and ensure that applicants admitted to the programme possess adequate prior knowledge and skills. They are logically connected with the intended learning outcomes and the aims of the programme, as they guarantee that students can achieve the expected outcomes within the standard duration of studies.

Conclusion. The title, code, degree, and professional qualification to be awarded, together with the programme aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements, are logically interrelated and consistent. They form a coherent system that complies with regulatory requirements, the specific nature of the study field “*Social Welfare*”, and the needs of the labour market.

3.1.3. Economic and/ or social substantiation of the study programme, analysis of graduates' employment.

Economic and social justification of the study programme

In developing the economic and social justification of the professional bachelor’s study programme “*Social Worker*”, the demand for the profession has been analysed both in Latvia and in the global context.

At the national level, based on the short- and long-term labour market forecasts provided by the State Employment Agency (available at: <https://www.nva.gov.lv/lv/darba-tirgus-prognozes>), it can be concluded that social welfare and social care belong to the most demanded sectors. Short-term forecast data confirm that social welfare is ranked fifth among the “Top 15 thematic groups by employment level”, with a 92% employment-to-graduate ratio. Moreover, social care and health care are also listed among sectors with competitive remuneration levels in Latvia.

In the global context, similar trends are evident. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) in the United States predicts that by 2028 the demand for social workers will increase by 11% (available at: <https://socialwork.columbia.edu/news/bridging-gap-urgent-need-social-workers?utm>), and the profession is recognised as one of the fastest-growing worldwide. The role of social workers is emphasised in addressing global challenges, such as poverty reduction, combating social exclusion, managing issues of migration and integration, responding to natural disasters and other crises, as well as strengthening public health systems. In the Latvian context, this highlights the need for highly qualified professionals who are capable of diagnosing the causes of social problems, applying contemporary intervention methods, and ensuring an interdisciplinary approach in working with diverse target groups.

Graduate employment analysis

The dynamics of graduate employability clearly demonstrate the relevance of the “*Social Worker*”

study programme to the labour market. Data for graduates of 2022, 2023, and 2024 indicate that, on average, 85–90% commence professional employment in the field of social work immediately after graduation. This figure reveals a strong correlation between the programme content, the competencies acquired by graduates, and labour market demand, while also evidencing the high competitiveness of graduates.

The structure of graduate employment illustrates the broad institutional spectrum within which professional activity is carried out: municipal social services and their units (e.g., Liepāja City Council Social Service, the Day Centre for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities, the Children’s Development Centre *Dzintari*, the Residential Home for the Elderly, Social Housing Units), state social care centres (e.g., State Social Care Centre *Kurzeme*), healthcare institutions (e.g., Liepāja Regional Hospital), non-governmental organisations, as well as educational institutions where graduates pursue careers in the profession of social pedagogue (e.g., Liepāja Pre-school Educational Institution *Saulīte*, Vērgale Primary School of South Kurzeme Municipality, Durbes Pre-school Educational Institution *Ābolītis*).

A regional analysis shows that approximately 50% of graduates are employed in Liepāja and the neighbouring South Kurzeme Municipality, while the other 50% are employed in different regions of Latvia. This proportion demonstrates the programme’s adaptability and the graduates’ ability to integrate into various regional labour markets, while simultaneously contributing to the expansion of social service accessibility beyond major urban centres. It also highlights graduates’ mobility, adaptability, and capacity to participate in interdisciplinary and inter-institutional problem-solving.

Conclusions

In summary, graduate employability indicators serve as a strategic measure of the programme’s sustainability and quality. They confirm not only the validity of the programme and its close alignment with labour market demand, but also its contribution to the implementation of national and regional social policy objectives. The high level of graduate employment provides clear evidence that the study outcomes equip graduates with sufficient professional competence to integrate effectively into employment, as well as to play an active role in strengthening the social protection and welfare system of society.

3.1.4. Statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down into different study forms, types, and languages.

In analysing the quantitative indicators of the RTU Liepāja Academy (RTU LA) first-cycle Professional Bachelor’s study programme “*Social Work*” during the reporting period from the spring semester of the 2021/2022 academic year to the autumn semester of the 2024/2025 academic year, a positive trend in student recruitment is observed. The increase in the number of students is particularly noteworthy in the autumn semester of the 2024/2025 academic year, when more than 40 students were admitted, including 42 former students of the Baltic International Academy who continued their studies in later years according to individually designed study plans. This trend demonstrates the growing adaptability of programme organisation, which corresponds to the contemporary higher education paradigm requirements of flexibility and personalisation.

Until the 2024/2025 academic year, the programme was implemented in both full-time and part-time study modes, thereby ensuring broader access for different target groups. Second-, third- and

fourth-year students often represent so-called vertical mobility – they continue their studies after having obtained a first-level professional higher education diploma (for example, graduates of the University of Latvia P. Stradiņš Medical College). This reflects systemic openness and a commitment to lifelong learning.

However, changes in tuition fees for part-time programmes in 2024 created significant barriers for socio-economically disadvantaged groups, and as a result, no applications were received for this mode. This highlights the challenges of accessibility in higher education and the need to seek balanced solutions in the funding model (cost-sharing models), particularly in the field of social welfare, where prospective students themselves often represent groups with lower income levels.

During the reporting period from 2022 to 2024, a total of 56 students graduated from the programme – 22 in full-time and 34 in part-time studies. In 2025, a further increase of 33 graduates is expected. Despite this positive trend, an analysis of drop-out rates identifies several dominant factors – health problems, family circumstances, incompatibility of work and study commitments. These factors correspond to risk indicators identified in European studies on student attrition and point to the need to strengthen support mechanisms (mentoring programmes, psychological support, flexible study schedules).

In line with the expert recommendation *“To increase the number of students (better advertising; less drop-out)”*, several measures have been implemented. Since 2022, programme promotion has been intensified through social media, the RTU website, and regional information channels, as well as by organising career days and information events in schools and municipalities, with the active involvement of current students as ambassadors. Cooperation has been expanded with social services and non-governmental organisations to encourage prospective students to choose studies in social work. At the same time, several student support mechanisms have been introduced to reduce drop-out: psychological support is available in cooperation with RTU psychologists, flexible study schedules and, where necessary, individual study plans allow students to balance work and study commitments, and regular interim monitoring of academic performance has been established. As a result, an increase in applications has been observed, while premature drop-out related to academic failure or insufficient time management skills has decreased.

In a comparative analysis, the number of students and graduates in the RTU Rezekne Academy of Technologies first-cycle Professional Bachelor’s programme *“Social Work and Social Rehabilitation”* has been lower (6 graduates in 2022, 3 in 2023, and 5 in 2024). This trend can be explained by regional demographic and socio-economic factors, including the limited availability of study places, the relative prestige perception of the social work profession, as well as the overall population decline in the Latgale region.

The experience of RTU LA and RTU RA in introducing flexible, individualised study solutions and simultaneously responding to expert recommendations on strengthening student recruitment and retention provides a significant contribution to the preparation of social work professionals. It promotes the development of the social welfare field at regional and national levels, consolidating the role of higher education as a driver of social mobility, inclusive society, and societal sustainability.

Student dynamics for this programme during the reporting period are presented in Annex 5.

3.1.5. Substantiation of the development of the joint study programme and description and evaluation of the choice of partner universities, including information on the

development and implementation of the joint study programme (if applicable).

3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

3.2.1. Analysis of the content of the study programme. Assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators with the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study courses/ modules and compliance with the needs of the relevant industry, labour market and with the trends in science on how and whether the content of the study courses/ modules is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science.

To ensure consistently high quality in both the study process and its content, the following aspects are defined as the main quality assurance criteria:

1. the alignment of study content with the defined objectives of the programme, professional qualification requirements, and current labour market trends;
2. an interdisciplinary and inter-institutional orientation in research, promoting academic integration and knowledge transfer.

This approach forms the foundation of a competence-based study process and simultaneously establishes the necessity for regular compliance analysis at all levels of study quality. To implement this, a multi-level data triangulation is applied, based on the following sources:

- annual reports on the academic and pedagogical performance of teaching staff;
- analysis of student satisfaction survey results;
- evaluation of feedback from employer surveys and internship supervisors;
- assessment of academic performance and achieved learning outcomes.

These activities are integrated into the study programme's quality management cycle, promoting evidence-based decision-making and ensuring the implementation of appropriate programme enhancement mechanisms. Special attention is given to the integration of research outcomes into the curriculum, reinforcing the synthesis of academic knowledge and professional practice, and highlighting the resolution of challenges in the field of social welfare within an interdisciplinary and inter-institutional context.

The adopted quality assurance approach is fully aligned with the principles of the Bologna Process and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). This alignment strengthens the international comparability, transferability, and credibility of the study programme both nationally and at the European level.

The monitoring of study quality is grounded in the continuous evaluation of pedagogical and methodological activities, including: annual academic activity reports from teaching staff, student satisfaction surveys, and evaluations by employers and internship supervisors. The collected data

are analysed in correlation with the objectives of the study programme, thus forming an evidence-informed quality enhancement cycle.

The aim and objectives of the programme are formulated in accordance with the [professional standard for the occupation *Social Worker*](#), ensuring the development of professional competences that encompass theoretical knowledge, practical skills, as well as normative, ethical, and critically analytical thinking necessary for professional practice across various sectors of social welfare.

The achievement of these objectives is supported by a structured curriculum that includes theoretical and profession-oriented study courses, four internships, a qualification examination, and the development and defence of a bachelor's thesis. Students are actively encouraged to engage beyond the formal study process—in scientific research, interdisciplinary projects, and creative activities—thus laying the foundation for the development of professional identity and lifelong learning.

The content of study courses is regularly updated in response to transformations in the sector, labour market dynamics, and the latest scientific insights. Students have opportunities to collaborate in both theoretical and practical contexts—through seminars, internship presentations, course conferences, and involvement in applied research projects. Creative and social engagement activities are also supported, including student science and creativity days, cultural initiatives, and social campaigns to support various societal groups. These activities foster civic engagement and social empathy among students.

Graduates of the programme are expected to independently carry out the professional functions of a social worker, drawing on interdisciplinary knowledge, the ability to analyse social processes, and the competence to plan, coordinate, and evaluate professional services for diverse target groups. They should also be prepared to promote the prestige and development of the social work profession by contributing to the design and implementation of new programmes, while upholding ethical standards and acting with social responsibility.

The attainability of the intended learning outcomes is aligned with the structure of the study programme and is presented in detail in the course mapping table (see Annex 8), which serves as an internal quality control instrument.

The content of the study programme has been developed in close collaboration with field experts and employers and is regularly subjected to conceptual evaluation during extended meetings of the Council of the Study Field *Social Welfare*. This collegial and multi-voiced approach aligns with the principle of stakeholder involvement, as emphasised in European education policy documents.

In continuing the integration of research into the study content, particular emphasis is placed on the utilisation of current research findings. For example:

- **The FLPP project (2021-2023)** *“The Transformation of Educational Values for the Cultural and Economic Development of the Social Community”* (IzVeTSKKEI) has made a significant contribution to the development of the course content in *“Diversity of the Pedagogical Process in Educational Institutions from the Perspective of Social Work”* and *“Spirituality, Religion, and Worldview”* ;
- **The Erasmus+ project** *“Landscape and Society - Characterised by Water. Our Lives”* (2022-1-DE03-KA210-SCH-000080773) strengthens the connection to environmental and community sustainability issues within the course *“State, Civil and Environmental Protection”*;
- **The Erasmus+ project** *“GEgen COvid - Soziale Distanz überwinden”* (2022-1-DE02-KA210-ADU-000080898) offers solutions to reduce social isolation, and its findings have been integrated into the course *“Diversity of the Pedagogical Process in Educational Institutions*

from the Perspective of Social Work” ;

- **The Erasmus+ project** of RTU Rēzekne Academy “*Empowering Foster Parents*” (2021-1-LT01-KA220-ADU-000028356) provides a contemporary perspective on social work methodology with families, and its results will be incorporated into the course “*Social Work with Individuals and Families*”.

This approach strengthens the relevance of the study programme, reinforces its alignment with the priorities of the European Higher Education Area, and enhances students’ understanding of the role of social work in contemporary society. It promotes research-informed teaching, the development of professional competences, and critical reflection skills that are essential for the social work profession at both national and international levels.

In line with the accreditation experts’ recommendation “*Update study course descriptions in order to reflect needed knowledge and skills which are mapped in relation to a professional standard; avoid overlapping of topics; avoid situations where topics from a social worker’s professional standard are mapped but are not included in the study course*”, a number of changes have been introduced to ensure full compliance with the professional standard of a social worker.

The course descriptions within the *Social Worker* study programme have been systematically revised. Particular attention has been paid to:

- aligning the intended learning outcomes of study courses with the knowledge, skills and competences defined in the professional standard of a social worker;
- eliminating overlaps by refining course content and ensuring coherence across the curriculum;
- ensuring that all topics corresponding to the professional standard are fully integrated into the relevant study courses.

As a result, the revised course descriptions provide a clearer structure and a more transparent alignment between learning outcomes, course content and the requirements of the professional standard. This approach strengthens the internal consistency of the study programme and significantly enhances its relevance to professional practice.

To supplement the criterion description, a study programme content analysis has been included, assessing the programme’s compliance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 305 of 13 June 2023 “*Regulations on the State Standard of Professional Higher Education*” (available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/342818>)

The analysis covers the alignment of the programme’s intended learning outcomes with the knowledge, skills and competences defined in the Regulation, as well as the evaluation of the compliance of study courses, professional practice and the final thesis with the requirements of this normative act. This approach ensures the transparency of the study content and confirms its compliance with the State Standard of Professional Higher Education.

3.2.2. In the case of master’s and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation. In the case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels (if applicable).

3.2.3. Assessment of the study programme including the study course/ module implementation methods by indicating what the methods are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. In the case of a joint study programme, or in case the study programme is implemented in a foreign language or in the form of distance learning, describe in detail the methods used to deliver such a study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.

In the study process, approaches based on collaboration and co-creation dominate, where a crucial role is played by students' mutual cooperation, dialogue, and the process of knowledge co-creation. Particular emphasis is placed on practice- and project-based learning methods, which ensure the integration of theoretical knowledge with the professional context and real-life problem situations.

A wide range of teaching methods is applied across all study courses, including both traditional academic forms – lectures, introductory lectures, review lectures, and problem-oriented lectures – and interactive, student-centred learning forms, such as pair and group work, thematic discussions, role play, case analysis and simulations, applied games, practical sessions, and project-based assignments. These methods correspond to the principles of contemporary higher education didactics, which are rooted in a constructivist approach where the student actively constructs knowledge through interaction with the environment, peers, and lecturers.

The purpose of these teaching methods is to foster students' critical and analytical thinking, problem-solving, argumentation, and reflection skills. At the same time, students acquire methodological examples of how to apply various approaches in professional practice, thus strengthening their methodological readiness for work in the context of social work.

Interactive problem-oriented lectures with active student involvement occupy a particularly significant place in the study process, fostering discursive learning – the ability to formulate, justify and defend one's opinion, as well as to obtain reciprocal feedback on the quality, content, and dynamics of the study process.

Students are also provided with opportunities to engage in practical research, both individually and in small research groups, thereby developing collaboration competences, empirical research skills, and the ability to interpret data in the context of professional practice. Such an approach contributes to the development of a reflective professional who is capable of self-directed learning and prepared for active participation in the sustainable development of society.

Multimedia technologies are widely used in lectures, and study materials are made available in the e-learning environment Moodle, where lecturers upload materials, tests, and other assignments, thereby enabling the individualisation of the study process according to students' needs. Video-based materials are also used in lectures to purposefully bridge theory and practice and to encourage students' involvement in discussions.

At the beginning of each study course, students are introduced to the requirements for credit acquisition and the list of tasks to be completed during the course. Course descriptions with assessment criteria are available in the e-learning environment and in personal profiles within the

ORTUS system. Each practical assignment carries a specific weight in the final grade. A variety of forms of monitoring and assessment are applied, including seminars, independent assignments, tests, portfolios, applied games, and defence of practice projects. At the end of each course, examinations or tests are organised.

Part-time studies. In part-time studies, a specially designed study plan combines intensive face-to-face sessions with the e-learning environment and online lectures. Face-to-face sessions are held three times per semester (each lasting one week) and include both lectures and practical sessions. The acquisition of practical skills is ensured through placements in social services, non-governmental organisations, health and educational institutions, as well as in simulated learning environments. For informative purposes, the part-time study plan is attached in the section “*Other Annexes*”.

Unified approach at RTU LA and RTU RA. The programme is implemented with identical content, intended learning outcomes, and assessment criteria in both locations. Unity is ensured through centralised management (the programme director and administrators supervise implementation, regular meetings are held with academic staff, and a unified Study Field Committee operates), unified documentation (programme description, objectives, study plan, and course descriptions are identical in both locations), unified academic staff qualification criteria and methodological work (joint seminars, development of teaching materials, sharing of good practices), as well as a unified assessment and monitoring system (identical examination content, comparative analysis of student achievements, regular self-assessment, and feedback analysis). A unified Moodle e-learning environment and online lectures further ensure content consistency.

The only differences between RTU LA and RTU RA lie in the organisation of practical sessions and placements, which are adapted to the needs of the regional labour market and local communities. RTU LA students complete their placements in Liepāja and South Kurzeme, while RTU RA students complete theirs in Rēzekne and Latgale. This ensures a unified approach whilst simultaneously providing students with the opportunity to gain practical experience in line with the specific regional context.

3.2.4. If the study programme envisages an internship, describe the internship opportunities offered to students, provision and work organization, including whether the higher education institution/ college helps students to find an internship place. If the study programme is implemented in a foreign language, provide information on how internship opportunities are provided in a foreign language, including for foreign students. To provide analysis and evaluation of the connection of the tasks set for students during the internship included in the study programme with the learning outcomes of the study programme (if applicable).

In the professional bachelor’s study programme *Social Worker*, significant emphasis is placed on professional practice, which amounts to a total of 30 ECTS credits. Practice is implemented across all four years of study, forming a logically structured and progressive trajectory for the development of professional competences. Each stage of practice is closely linked to the theoretical content acquired during the corresponding study period, thus reinforcing the integration of theory and practice throughout the study process.

Year 1 - Observational Practice (3 ECTS):

During the first year, students acquire foundational knowledge about the nature of the social work

profession, professional identity, ethical principles, and the human life cycle. These topics are reinforced through observational practice, which is aimed at developing students' ability to analyse typical social situations and identify case-specific problems across different stages of life. Observational practice fosters the development of empathy, professional attitude, and the ability to reflect on observations within the context of the social environment.

Year 2 - Professional Practice in Social Work Institutions (12 ECTS):

In the second year, students take in-depth courses in social pedagogy, group and family social work, and community work. At this stage, students undertake an 8-week professional placement in social work institutions, with the aim of developing skills in face-to-face work with clients, planning and implementing intervention strategies, cooperating with colleagues, and understanding the structure and functioning of social service systems. Practice placements are organised in cooperation with a wide range of institutions—municipal social services, non-governmental organisations, educational establishments, and others.

Year 3 - Research Practice (3 ECTS):

In the third year, students complete a two-week research placement, during which they carry out an applied study on a selected issue within a practice institution or social context. This practice develops empirical research skills, including data analysis, the use of theoretical frameworks, and reflective interpretation of findings. Research practice often serves as a foundation for the selection and formulation of the bachelor's thesis topic.

Year 4 - Pre-Graduation Practice (12 ECTS):

In the final year, students undertake an 8-week pre-graduation placement focusing on the development of complex professional skills, particularly in case management and institutional coordination. The aim is to enhance students' ability to independently analyse client situations, assess available resources, plan interventions, make professionally justified decisions, and collaborate in interdisciplinary environments. The tasks and objectives of this practice have been revised and refined based on recommendations from sectoral professionals and employers presented during meetings of the Study Field Council for *Social Welfare*, with an emphasis on the in-depth acquisition of case management approaches.

Support for Practice Implementation and Quality Assurance

The selection and provision of practice placements are carried out through purposeful cooperation with employers and institutions in the field of social work. Academic staff involved in the programme regularly update cooperation agreements and support the development of new practice opportunities, thereby ensuring that students have access to high-quality, development-oriented professional environments. Practice coordinators assist students in finding suitable placements based on their prior experience and professional interests.

Throughout each practice period, students participate in **interim seminars** where they receive professional support from the academic staff of RTU Liepāja or RTU Rēzekne. These seminars provide a structured space to discuss observations, challenges, reflections, and achieved outcomes, thus ensuring constructive feedback and a professional dialogue focused on learning.

All practice placements are assessed based on pre-defined learning outcomes and evaluation criteria, which are made available in the e-learning environment. Student performance is evaluated considering the assessment provided by the on-site practice supervisor, the academic mentor's feedback, and the student's own self-reflection.

The study programme *Social Worker* integrates professional practice as a core component, covering all key areas in which graduates may be employed after completing the programme. Practice placements must align with the theoretical knowledge acquired during the corresponding semester,

as outlined in the introductory materials provided before each practice period. During their studies, students are encouraged to evaluate their own strengths and professional suitability for different fields of social work. This reflective approach helps to reduce the risk that a new specialist, upon entering the profession, may discover a mismatch between their chosen field and their professional interests or psychological readiness. Student surveys and discussions during practice conferences confirm that the majority of students have already determined their preferred area of professional activity during their studies—often directly influenced by the experience gained during practice.

The introductory briefing for internship (held no less than three months prior to its start) provides students with detailed information on the purpose, objectives, and intended learning outcomes of the placement. Each student receives briefing materials in printed or electronic form. These materials are also shared with the practice consultant before the signing of the placement agreement, which is only formalised after the consultant's approval and the agreement of the institution's head. If necessary, students receive support in finding an appropriate placement.

During the internship, under the guidance of both the institutional internship consultant and the assigned university lecturer, students explore the organisation of work within the institution, plan and manage tasks, and analyse gathered information in line with the internship objectives. In some cases, data collection is also conducted for the purposes of academic research, including course papers and bachelor's theses. Internship progress is documented in a designated portfolio. Throughout the placement, students must adhere to the Code of Ethics for social work professionals, along with all applicable legal and regulatory frameworks governing the field.

The university-assigned internship supervisor (a lecturer from RTU Liepāja or RTU Rēzekne) maintains communication with both the student and the institutional consultant to monitor progress and provide consultative support when needed. Both students and internship consultants are invited to provide feedback and suggestions regarding the content of the internship and the relevance of theoretical knowledge acquired during studies. Wherever possible, internships consultants are also invited to participate in final practice conferences.

A valuable component of student professional development is the provision of group supervision sessions—organised twice during each 12-ECTS placement (in the 2nd and 4th years). These sessions provide a structured space for reflection and professional support.

At the final placement conference (planned to be held either in person or in a hybrid format, depending on the group size and the location of the selected placement sites, to enable the participation of placement professionals), students reflect on the work carried out during the placement, share their experiences, and present the professional skills and competences acquired. The placement is assessed on a cumulative basis, which incorporates the evaluation of the public defence of the placement, the assessment of the placement portfolio, and the appraisal and evaluation provided by the institutional placement supervisor.

Lecturers primarily use teaching methods that promote student engagement, critical thinking, and reflective practice. The study process is designed with attention to the diverse learning needs of students by incorporating a variety of pedagogical approaches that foster learning motivation, autonomy, and interest in addressing current social welfare issues through research.

The alignment between practice tasks and the intended learning outcomes of the study programme is clearly outlined in the curriculum mapping (Annex 8), in course descriptions for each practice module, and in the overall programme plan.

Employers are actively involved in the implementation and ongoing improvement of study courses and practice modules. They are regularly invited to lead seminars, participate in experiential visits, and facilitate on-site learning through job-shadowing and guided practical tasks. Several practical

course components are delivered directly in the workplace environment.

Long-term partnerships have been established with numerous employers for the provision of placement opportunities. In many cases, students begin their first professional employment within the very institutions where they completed their practice.

One of the development priorities successfully implemented in the first-cycle professional bachelor's programme *Social Worker* at RTU LA is to promote and support student participation in the ERASMUS+ mobility scheme. Students are encouraged to undertake internship in foreign institutions either during their studies or after graduation.

The implementation of international practice placements within the study programme is progressing successfully and with increasing dynamism. With the support of the programme director, students are encouraged to independently select host institutions abroad that align with their professional interests. They are given the opportunity to choose the most appropriate period for the placement, coordinating it with their academic schedule and personal readiness.

When necessary, the programme director actively participates in establishing a supportive dialogue with the internship supervisor at the host institution, ensuring mutual understanding of the placement's goals, expected outcomes, and professional context. This approach fosters a positive and purposeful mobility experience and strengthens students' international competencies.

Annex "Description of the organisation of the traineeship of the students" provides the Senate resolution on the Internship management procedure at RTU, which was revised in 2019. It states that the internship coordinator at an organizational unit helps students find the internship place. If additional assistance is required, students can contact the Career Support and Services Unit, where a career consultant assists students in finding and addressing companies where to undergo internship, as well as promote the development of career management skills through a variety of activities that can ensure the achievement of successful results during the internship. Once a year, the Career Support and Services Unit organizes RTU Career Day, where students also have the opportunity to meet face-to-face or remotely with company representatives and discuss future opportunities. In 2022, due to the pandemic, the event happened in a virtual setting.

An additional resource developed in 2015 is a website that invites companies to post vacancies that are relevant to RTU students (<https://ekarjera.rtu.lv/>) (in Latvian). Students have the opportunity to log in with the University username and keep abreast of current internships and job opportunities in their field.

RTU Development Fund provides additional support for promotion of practical skills (<https://www.rtu.lv/en/developmentfund>). Hundreds of practical skills competitions are offered during the year, which are organized in cooperation with companies.

Each year, the University concludes cooperation agreements with companies and organizations (template in English is in the file of Annex 37 of the List of Internal regulations), where the parties agree on provision of internship places to students.

3.2.5. Evaluation and description of the promotion opportunities and the promotion process provided to the students of the doctoral study programme (if applicable).

3.2.6. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the marks of the final theses.

The first-cycle professional bachelor's study programme "Social Worker" prepares students for professional work in the field of social work. According to Cabinet Regulation No. 569 "*Regulations Regarding the Education and Professional Qualification Required for Teachers and the Procedure for the Improvement of Teachers' Professional Competence*", paragraph 10, graduates of this programme are also eligible to work as social pedagogues, as the curriculum includes at least 6 ECTS credits (equivalent to 160 hours) of pedagogy courses. Students can be admitted to the "Social Worker" programme after obtaining a secondary education and passing entrance examinations.

Over the course of four years (full-time studies) or four years and five months (part-time studies), students complete both general and specialized study courses in accordance with the professional standard. During their studies, students undertake four internships, allowing them to apply theoretical knowledge in practice and to successfully develop their final theses on selected topics, providing professional recommendations for solving problems in the field of social work. The topics of the bachelor's theses are developed in alignment with the awarded qualification, meaning that students focus on various aspects of social welfare and social work, their development, and they are required to justify their proposals with empirical evidence. The bachelor's theses must define the topicality of the issue and analyze the research problem. The completion of the study programme concludes with a state final examination, which includes the development and defense of the bachelor's thesis and a qualification examination. Both are conducted during a session of the State Examination Commission (SEC). The bachelor's thesis can only be defended if the student has successfully demonstrated knowledge and skills in both theoretical and specialized areas, fulfilled all programme requirements, and settled academic and financial obligations.

The state examination demonstrates the student's ability to:

- find, systematize, and analyze relevant legislation, as well as academic and professional literature in the field (including in English);
- use appropriate methodologies and information processing technologies to analyze the social welfare system and conduct research on specific, relevant problems faced by a social institution;
- develop well-reasoned conclusions and formulate appropriate recommendations;
- present their proposals and defend their professional and personal viewpoints.

The SEC consists of at least five members. The chairperson and at least half of the commission members are representatives from professional organizations or employers. Student knowledge, skills, and competence are evaluated collegially by the commission on a 10-point grading scale. By participating in thesis defense commissions, industry representatives are able to offer suggestions for future student research topics that are relevant to the labour market. These suggestions are taken into account, and future thesis topics are developed in line with the current labour market and industry needs. This approach is positively received by employers and often results in job offers for students in social services and their subdivisions.

Analysing the final thesis assessment results, the average grade per academic year is as follows:

- Spring semester of the 2021/2022 academic year: average grade - 9.0 (Liepāja), 7.2 (Rēzekne);

- Autumn semester of the 2022/2023 academic year: average grade – 8.25 (Liepāja, part-time programme);
- Spring semester of the 2022/2023 academic year: average grade – 8.21 (Liepāja), 8.3 (Rēzekne);
- Autumn semester of the 2023/2024 academic year: average grade – 8.44 (Liepāja, part-time programme);
- Spring semester of the 2023/2024 academic year: average grade – 8.5 (Liepāja), 8.3 (Rēzekne);
- Autumn semester of the 2024/2025 academic year: average grade – 7.25 (Liepāja, part-time programme).

The compiled data indicate that bachelor's theses are developed with a high level of quality and relevance to current professional practice.

From the spring semester of the 2021/2022 academic year to the autumn semester of the 2024/2025 academic year, the programme “*Social Work and Social Rehabilitation*” (implemented at RTA) was completed by 14 students, while the programme “*Social Worker*” (implemented at LiepU and RTU Liepāja) was completed by 67 students, with an average final thesis grade of 8.18.

The process of writing, reviewing, and defending final theses involves not only university academic staff but also professionals from the field—typically, qualified social workers or sectoral experts. The involvement of practitioners ensures that thesis topics reflect current industry challenges and that the evaluation of the work is guided by professional standards. Most students choose to write their theses on issues directly related to the professional fields in which they are personally involved. This approach not only deepens their understanding of the chosen problem but also leads to the development of practical solutions for further improvement of the field. Given the actual links between students and the region, this practice ensures a continuous contribution of the programme to the development of the region, especially in terms of social welfare and sustainable development, and fosters connections with local professionals, as well as national and municipal employees. This regional focus is also reflected in the titles of students’ final theses.

An analysis of bachelor's thesis topics shows that they are chosen in line with the core principles of social work, current labour market demands, and relevant commissioned topics. For example: in the 2022/2023 academic year, student developed a thesis titled “*Opportunities for Improving Social Services in the Development of a Child Protection Programme*”, commissioned by the Liepāja City Council Social Service and Liepāja Orphan’s Court. In the 2023/2024 academic year, student developed a thesis commissioned by the Liepāja City Council Social Service to study the topic “*Effectiveness of Social Services in Preventing Family Dysfunction.*”

Table 3.2.6.1. Thematic Scope of Bachelor’s Theses of Students in the First-Cycle Professional Bachelor’s Study Programme “*Social Work*” in the Context of Micro, Mezzo and Macro Levels

Level	Bachelor's thesis titles
Micro level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Promoting Interpersonal Communication Competence in Social Work with Persons with Intellectual Disabilities</i> - <i>Social Worker Involvement in the Employment Process of Adults with Mental Disabilities</i> - <i>Promoting Independent Living Skills for Persons with Mental Disabilities at a Day Care Center in Madona Municipality: A Person-Centered Approach</i> - <i>Social Work Approaches to Preparing Persons with Mental Disabilities for Independent Living</i> - <i>12-Step Self-Help Groups as a Means of Enhancing the Social Functioning of People with Codependency</i> - <i>Social Rehabilitation for Improving the Quality of Life of Women After Domestic Violence</i> - <i>Social Rehabilitation in Work with Men to Reduce Violent Behavior in the Family</i> - <i>Social Work with Clients with Alzheimer's Disease in Long-Term Social Care Institutions</i>
Mezzo level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Prevention of Violence Against Seniors in Social Service Institutions</i> - <i>Social Work with Seniors to Promote Adaptation in Long-Term Social Care Centers</i> - <i>Enhancing the Quality of Life of Older People in Nīca Parish, Dienvidkurzeme Municipality</i> - <i>Interinstitutional Cooperation in the Protection of Children's Rights in Cēsis Municipality</i> - <i>Possibilities of Social Work in Reducing Adolescent Mobbing in the Educational Environment</i> - <i>Social Workers' Professional Involvement in Addressing the Consequences of Cyberbullying Among Children and Young People</i> - <i>Ensuring Social Support for the Long-Term Reintegration of Human Trafficking Victims</i> - <i>Methods and Approaches for Preventing Social Worker Burnout in Latvia</i> - <i>Factors Contributing to Burnout Syndrome in Social Work in South Kurzeme Municipality</i>
Macro level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Social Work Response to Clients' Needs During Economic Decline in Daugavpils</i>

Each academic year, the results of state final examinations (qualification exam and bachelor's thesis) are compiled and analysed in meetings of the academic staff involved in the "Social Welfare" study field. The chairperson of the State Examination Commission is invited to these meetings to share insights and suggestions for improving students' professional competence in the future. Since 2020, the programme has included a pre-defense process for bachelor's theses. Starting in 2021, students in their final year are also required to present their research at the Student Science and Creativity Days, where they report on interim research results and develop the skill to formulate defensible theses.

3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

3.3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples.

Study programme material and technical resources

The study programme “*Social Worker*” is implemented at Riga Technical University Liepāja Academy (RTU LA) and Riga Technical University Rēzekne Academy (RTU RA). The programme is delivered at the RTU LA building at 14 Lielā Street, Liepāja, and the RTU RA building at 115 Atbrīvošanas Avenue, Rēzekne, where appropriate and modern material and technical resources are available to support programme implementation at both locations.

Classrooms and technical equipment. At both implementation sites, the classrooms used for the study process are equipped with ergonomic furniture and modern multimedia equipment. Selected classrooms at RTU LA and RTU RA are fitted with conference video systems with movable 360-degree cameras and audio/video tracking of the lecturer, ensuring high-quality hybrid and online learning opportunities. Both sites provide modern computer laboratories with workstation virtualisation solutions, enabling students to use personalised virtual desktops independently of their physical classroom location. Free wireless internet access is available in all study premises and student residence halls at RTU LA and RTU RA.

Software and e-learning environment. Students and academic staff at RTU LA and RTU RA have equal access to the Moodle e-learning platform, as well as to data analysis software – *IBM SPSS Statistics* for quantitative research and *NVivo* for qualitative data analysis (*NVivo* software is available to students at RTU LA). In cases where resources are located at only one site, students at the other site are provided with remote access or the opportunity to use these resources within the framework of practice and research.

Specialised study environment. A particularly important role in programme delivery is played by the RTU LA Centre for Pedagogy and Social Work (PSDC), where an authentic learning environment has been created with mobile furniture, digital whiteboards (*ODIN*), and modular working solutions (*OneTwenty, Signs*) (see section “Other Appendices” – *OneTwenty un Signs pufu sistēmas foto.pdf*). This environment allows students, through practice-based seminars, to model real social work situations, engage in group discussions, and develop communication skills. It is also used for the production of educational videos, the integration of teaching approaches, and the development of professional reflection. At both sites, the study environment is organised to ensure equally high-quality skills acquisition and professional competence development.

Libraries and information resources. The RTU LA and RTU RA libraries provide students and academic staff with access to the resources necessary for programme implementation. The RTU LA library collection (more than 61,000 information resources) is specifically supplemented with literature on social work and social welfare, while the RTU RA library provides broad access to e-resources and traditional publications.

Students at both implementation sites have equal access to international databases (*EBSCOHOST*,

ScienceDirect, SCOPUS, Web of Science, SpringerLink, Wiley Online Library, Cambridge Journals Online, Letonika) and Latvian professional publications, including:

- the journal *Sociālais darbs Latvijā (Social Work in Latvia)*;
- *Sociālā darba vārdnīca (Dictionary of Social Work)*;
- *Sociālais darbs ar gadījumu: prakse teorijā (Social Work with Cases: Practice in Theory)*;
- *Sociālais darbs ar gadījumu: teorija praksē (Social Work with Cases: Theory in Practice)*;
- methodological materials issued by the Ministry of Welfare, which provide practical and normative support for the professional practice and quality assurance of social work.

These resources ensure the integration of the study process with the latest scientific findings, international trends, and Latvian social policy documents, thereby strengthening students' research and professional competences.

Conclusion. The implementation of the study programme “*Social Worker*” at both RTU LA and RTU RA is based on equivalently provided resources, ensuring equal study quality regardless of the place of delivery. Overall, the material and technical resources available for the programme and their accessibility to students and academic staff are assessed as adequate.

3.3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific base support, including the resources provided within the framework of cooperation with other science institutes and higher education institutions (applicable to doctoral study programmes) (if applicable).

3.3.3. Indicate data on the available funding for the corresponding study programme, its funding sources and their use for the development of the study programme. Provide information on the costs per one student within this study programme, indicating the items included in the cost calculation and the percentage distribution of funding between the specified items. The minimum number of students in the study programme in order to ensure the profitability of the study programme (indicating separately the information on each language, type and form of the study programme implementation).

State budget funding for studies is allocated annually in accordance with Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 994 of 12 December 2006 “Procedures for Financing Higher Education Institutions and Colleges from the State Budget” and the agreement between the Ministry of Education and Science and Liepāja University regarding the training of a specified number of specialists.

The cost calculations for the full-time study programme “*Social Worker*” for the academic year 2025–2026 are based on the base cost set for 2025 (EUR 1,867.60 per study place), the thematic field coefficient established by the Ministry of Education and Science for the field of *Social Welfare* (3.0), and the cost coefficient for first-level professional higher education programmes (1.0). The cost per study place in 2025 is EUR 5,602.80, and the total cost of completing the study programme over four years is EUR 22,411.20 and the total cost of completing the study programme over 4.5 years is EUR 25,212.60 In the academic year 2025/2026, 20 study places are funded from the state

budget.

The tuition fee for the full-time programme, as approved by the RTU Senate, for first-year students in the academic year 2025/2026 is EUR 5,600 per year. This amount remains unchanged throughout the duration of the studies, bringing the total cost for four years to EUR 22,400.

The tuition fee for the part-time programme, as approved by the RTU Senate, for first-year students in the academic year 2025/2026 is also EUR 5,600 per year. This amount remains unchanged throughout the duration of the studies, bringing the total cost for 4.5 years to EUR 25,200.

The allocated funding for the *Social Work* programme in the academic year 2025/2026 is EUR 364,182. The number of students in the four-year programme is 65.

The minimum number of students required for the implementation of the programme is 10.

A detailed breakdown of costs per student cannot be provided at this stage, as the remaining financial data of the accounting centre for the 2025/2026 academic year is still being consolidated.

3.4. Teaching Staff

3.4.1. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members (academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

The implementation of the first-cycle professional bachelor's study programme "Social Worker" involves a total of 47 academic staff members from RTU Liepaja and RTU Rezekne. Among them, 41 (i.e., 87%) are elected academic staff, and of these, 29 (65%) hold doctoral degrees. The academic composition includes 7 full professors, 6 associate professors, 3 leading researchers, 4 researchers, 15 assistant professors, 12 lecturers, and 7 teaching staff members (industry professionals). (see Tables 3.4.1.1. and 3.4.1.2.)

Table 3.4.1.1. Academic staff involvement in the professional bachelor's study programme "Social Worker"

Indicator	Number
Total academic staff involved	47
Elected academic staff	41 (87%)
Of these, with a doctoral degree	29 (65%)
Field professionals (practitioners)	7

Table 3.4.1.2. Structure of elected academic staff

Position	Number
Professors	7
Associate Professors	6
Senior Researchers	3
Researchers	4
Assistant Professors	15
Lecturers	12

A comprehensive evaluation of academic staff is presented in Section 2.3.7 of the Study Field Report and its annexes, including staff CVs. The emphasis is placed on the alignment of academic qualifications and competences with the specific requirements of the courses delivered within the programme.

During the reporting period from the spring semester of the 2021/2022 academic year to the autumn semester of the 2024/2025 academic year, elected academic staff involved in the programme participated in numerous academic conferences and seminars. The quantitative indicators for the reporting period are as follows:

- participation in 143 academic conferences with presentations delivered;
- participation in 94 international academic conferences.

Academic staff members have published 196 articles in international scientific journals and conference proceedings, and have undertaken 89 mobility visits. Over 16,300 academic hours have been spent in professional development and training seminars, and approximately 390 final theses in social work and related disciplines have been supervised.

Dina Bethere, Dr.paed., Professor, is a leading researcher at the Pedagogy and Social Work Centre of RTU Liepaja Academy. Her fields of activity include leading the doctoral study programme "Educational Sciences," publishing research results in peer-reviewed scientific journals, participating in international academic conferences in Latvia and abroad, supervising master's and doctoral theses, delivering lectures and seminars, designing and implementing study programmes in special and inclusive education, developing and publishing textbooks and learning materials, participating in internationally funded research projects, and serving on organizing committees of international conferences.

Pavels Jurs, Professor and Leading Researcher, holds a doctoral degree in pedagogy (subfield: school pedagogy) and is recognised as an expert in Social Sciences by the Latvian Council of Science. He has held administrative positions, including Chair of the Senate, Director of a Master's Study Programme, and leader and expert in scientific projects. He has developed and taught courses at bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels, both in Latvia and abroad. Under his supervision, numerous bachelor's and master's theses as well as one doctoral dissertation have been defended. In the past six years, he has authored multiple publications, teaching aids, and scientific monographs, and has developed and led several professional development courses for educators. His research interests include civic engagement, civic competence, teaching and learning, and educational leadership.

In addition to his academic work, Pavels Jurs serves as the principal of Dzintars Secondary School in Liepaja and has extensive experience in leadership and change management. His professional qualifications include history and social science teaching.

Lasma Latsone, Ph.D., Associate Professor at the RTU Liepaja Academy's Pedagogy and Social Work Centre, has been working at the university (formerly Liepaja University) since 2004 after obtaining her PhD from Fordham University (New York, USA). From 2007 to 2010, she served as Head of the Department of Pedagogy. Prof. Latsone has significant international cooperation experience. Between 2012 and 2016, she was a visiting researcher at St. John University (York, UK), and since 2020 has annually delivered guest lectures at the School of Public Health, University College Cork (Ireland). She has collaborated on projects with colleagues from the USA, South Africa, and Scandinavian countries. She led a fundamental and applied research project titled "Transformation of Educational Values for the Growth of the Social Community's Culture and Economy" in cooperation with three Latvian universities, resulting in a monograph. Latsone has authored more than 20 peer-reviewed articles, some published in collective monographs. Her research interests include adult education, education for diversity, spirituality in education, and socio-emotional interaction.

Tamara Pigozne, Dr.paed., Assistant Professor, holds a doctoral degree in pedagogy (social pedagogy) and a master's degree in clinical and health psychology. For five years, she has served as an expert in Social Sciences for the Latvian Council of Science. She has extensive experience in administration, research, adult education, clinical psychology, and volunteering. She has led, coordinated, or served as principal researcher in 15 international projects and worked in public and private, general, vocational, special, formal, and non-formal education institutions. Over her 43-year teaching career, she has developed and taught more than 29 study courses, supervised 15 and reviewed 11 final theses. She has participated in over 25 international academic conferences, delivering presentations, and published 59 scientific articles, 27 of which are indexed in internationally cited databases (WoS and Scopus). She is proficient in qualitative and quantitative research methods and data analysis software. Her scientific interests include social pedagogy, teaching and learning, social work and rehabilitation theories and methods, and social inclusion of various population groups.

Lecturer Undine Vevere holds two master's degrees - one in social work and another in public administration. She works as a senior social worker at the Family Support Department of the Saldus Municipality Social Service Agency. Her practical work in social services and the implementation of various social work projects enables her to provide students with insights into real-life casework and client engagement. As a sector expert, she has contributed to the development of new social work methodologies and is a co-author of the methodological material "Methodology for Social Work with Youth" (2024), developed by the Ministry of Welfare. She has specialized in the family-focused case management model for families with children and co-authored several scientific publications. She has presented her research at academic conferences in Latvia and Lithuania, highlighting various social work studies.

Lecturer Madara Lapsa holds four master's degrees in pedagogy, educational science, social work, and management science, as well as professional qualifications as a general education English teacher and career counsellor. She lectures at RTU Liepaja Academy, the University of Latvia, and Riga Stradins University, contributing to fields such as social work, violence prevention, and youth engagement. She has participated in numerous academic and interdisciplinary conferences with presentations on technology-based violence, survival strategies of victims of violence, addiction, and youth mental health. She has authored several materials, including methodological guidelines and self-help resources, published on international platforms such as UNDP and ICLEL. Madara Lapsa is an expert in social work with individuals affected by addiction and

violence, and works as a project coordinator and expert in various national and international projects, including those funded by the European Commission and UN Development Programmes. Her academic and professional expertise is actively applied in the development and implementation of study courses and supervision of master's theses.

The selection of academic staff is based on their scientific and pedagogical experience, research areas, and achievements, in alignment with the specific requirements of the study programme and courses.

To ensure the quality of programme content and the competitiveness of graduates in the labour market, academic staff members continuously update their professional and academic knowledge through various seminars, national and international conferences, scientific and research activities (see annex "Annex_Science_Staff Achievements"), and participation in projects and contract-based activities. Information about academic staff involved in the programme and their alignment with the courses taught is provided in Annex 2.3 "Basic Information about the Academic Staff Involved in the Implementation of the Study Field" and "Academic Staff CVs."

Academic staff actively utilise international cooperation and mobility programmes, including Erasmus+ (see annexes "Outgoing mobility Erasmus Staff" and "Outgoing mobility Staff OTHER"). The knowledge and practical experience gained through international cooperation and mobility are used to update and enhance study courses and better achieve the programme's goals and objectives. The involvement of academic staff in various projects and collaborations with international partners and educational institutions (see Annex 2.3 "Academic Staff CVs") allows the programme to attract foreign guest lecturers and to offer practical international intensive training programmes for students. These training activities involve professionals and experts from other countries who share their experience and knowledge. Such cooperation also promotes student mobility and opportunities for acquiring new knowledge through exchange programmes or internships abroad. During mobility visits, academic staff often adopt new teaching methods and techniques, which they later integrate into the study process. In turn, students incorporate the knowledge gained from exchange and training activities into their jointly developed scientific publications with academic staff and present them at conferences. This helps students develop scientific research skills and competences. As academic staff have extensive practical experience and serve as experts not only for the Latvian Council of Science but also for various sectoral organisations, they are often invited to participate in contract-based projects within their fields. The knowledge gained through such projects is integrated into scientific articles and used by students as sources of information on current developments in the field.

Staff members also contribute to working groups developing legal norms and standards for the field, enabling them to provide students with up-to-date and high-quality information on the legal framework relevant to their future professional activities. In conclusion, the competence, knowledge, and practical experience of academic staff involved in the implementation of the study programme ensure the achievement of the programme's goals, successful execution of assigned tasks, and attainment of the defined learning outcomes

3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.

To ensure consistently high quality in the study process and content, the main quality assurance criteria are defined as follows: the alignment of study content with the programme's stated objectives, labour market requirements, and an interdisciplinary and inter-institutional focus in research. This, in turn, prompts a regular evaluation of the academic staff involved in the study programme (based on annual academic staff reports, the analysis of student satisfaction surveys, employer surveys, and the evaluations of placement supervisors).

Taking into account labour market dynamics and the need to strengthen the link between theoretical knowledge and professional practice, adjustments are introduced each academic year to the practical components of certain courses. Field professionals as well as visiting lecturers within the framework of Erasmus+ mobility are engaged in the study process. For example, at RTU LA the course *Palliative Care* is delivered by a professional from a healthcare institution, *Social Work with Individuals* and related courses are taught by a municipal social services specialist, while the course *Deviant Behaviour of the Individual* is led by a representative of the municipal police. From the 2024/2025 academic year, the course *Social Pedagogy* has been delivered by a graduate holding a Master's degree in social work and a professional qualification as a social pedagogue.

At RTU RA, the experience gained in the previously implemented study programme *Social Work and Social Rehabilitation* has been transferred to the *Social Worker* programme, with field professionals included in course delivery. This ensures continuity of the study process, knowledge of the local context, and closer links between students and practice in the region.

The inclusion of field professionals and graduates in the teaching team has significantly contributed to the enhancement of course content, the introduction of innovative teaching and learning methods, and the integration of theoretical knowledge with practical skills. Moreover, it has allowed for a more balanced distribution of workload among the academic staff, enabling them to dedicate more time to programme development, international mobility, and research activities. In this way, the international experts' recommendation "*Attract more field professionals and graduates to balance the workload of the academic staff and therefore allow the academic staff to be more involved in the development of the SF, get more involved in the international mobilities, research etc.*" has been fully implemented, and was marked as accomplished in the review of 28 February 2025.

During the reporting period, the qualifications of the academic staff have continued to strengthen, with one member of staff attaining a doctoral degree in social sciences, thereby reinforcing the programme's scientific capacity and research base.

The programme also regularly involves international guest lecturers, for instance in the delivery of the course *Community Social Work* (in 2022, 2023 and 2024), as well as lecturers participating through the Erasmus+ programme, thus providing students with international perspectives and a comparative outlook on social work education and practice.

The information on the academic staff involved in the study programme can be found in Section II of this report – Description of the Study Field (3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field).

3.4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members, involved in the implementation of doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals or peer-reviewed monographs may be additionally specified. Information on the teaching staff

included in the database of experts of the Latvian Council of Science in the relevant field of science (total number, name of the lecturer, field of science in which the teaching staff has the status of an expert and expiration date of the Latvian Council of Science expert) (if applicable).

3.4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).

3.4.5. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study programme and study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).

Collaboration among academic staff within the study programme takes place both during the semester when teaching courses and during the planning and development of changes necessary to update and improve the study programme. To ensure the coherence of course content, an annual audit of the programme's study courses is conducted, along with an informational seminar where academic staff involved in programme implementation are introduced to course topics and teaching methods and engage in discussions about potential improvements.

Daily communication among academic staff occurs in both formal settings (monthly centre meetings, weekly operational meetings, etc.) and informal settings (individual face-to-face meetings, phone calls, etc.). The content of study courses is regularly updated and improved based on student feedback as well as developments and trends in the field. Academic staff involved in the programme collaborate within individual courses to ensure alignment with the programme's learning outcomes and professional qualification requirements. For example, through mutual collaboration, academic staff have developed several methodological guidelines for study projects and internships.

Throughout the academic semester, meetings and methodological sessions are held during course implementation, where discussions focus on course topics and necessary content improvements. These meetings aim to reach agreement on topics, directions, responsibilities, and compliance with regulatory requirements. The course alignment process involves all academic staff associated with the respective course to ensure that the topics covered in the programme do not overlap and are continuously updated and improved in collaboration with industry professionals.

For example, in the process of reviewing and updating the study programme content to integrate graduates of the short-cycle programme "*Social Rehabilitator*" into the first-cycle professional

bachelor's programme, and to align the programme content with the occupational standard, the programme directors from both RTU Liepāja and RTU Rēzekne (S. Melke (ex. Striguna) and R. Orska) in collaboration with RTU Associate Professor A. Šteinberga developed the course *"Introduction to Research. Study Project I"*. This course is implemented in the first semester of the programme, thereby fostering students' research competencies from the start. Additionally, one of the leading lecturers from RTU Rēzekne, T. Pīgozne, together with the responsible lecturer and field professional who also serves as the Head of the Latvian Association of Social Workers, U. Lapskalna-Alksne, developed a new course titled *"Methodology of Quality Assessment in Social Work."*

In the compulsory and restricted elective parts of the programme, the courses are aligned to avoid content overlap. Collaboration mechanisms among academic staff include meetings, individual face-to-face discussions, remote meetings, or hybrid formats, where some participants meet in person while others join virtually via Zoom or MS Teams. This approach ensures timely discussions on study process improvements, despite different work schedules and workloads. It also guarantees that course topics align with the programme's objectives and that course learning outcomes are integrated into the overall programme outcomes.

The study programme director's participation in regular meetings of the Centre for Pedagogy and Social Work ensures up-to-date information sharing and maintains alignment between the programme content and outcomes with the strategic goals of the faculty and RTU. Collaboration among academic staff occurs both within specific study courses — between course coordinators and industry professionals — and across courses with related topics, where thematic alignment at different levels of understanding is necessary. Such collaboration also takes place during the development of final theses.

Analysis of the ratio between students and academic staff in the programme reveals the following:

- In the 2022/2023 academic year, the ratio of elected academic staff to students was approximately 1:3, and the ratio of industry professionals to students was approximately 1:5;
- In the 2023/2024 academic year, the same ratios remained: 1:3 for elected staff and 1:5 for industry professionals;
- In the 2024/2025 academic year, the ratio changed slightly to 1:4 for elected academic staff and remained at 1:5 for industry professionals.

Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	Diploma_diploma supplement sample_Soc work_LV_EN.pdf	Diploma_diploma pielikumu paraugi_Soc darbinieks_LV_EN.pdf
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	Annex 5_Statistical data_Social Worker_RTU LA RTU RA.docx	5.pielikums_Studējošo statistika_Sociālais darbinieks_LA un RA (2).docx
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard	Annex 6_Compliance of the study programme Social Worker with the State professional higher education standard.docx	6. pielikums_Atbalstība valsts izglītības standartam_Sociālais darbinieks.docx
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)	Annex 7_Compliance with the Profession Standart_Social Worker_specified_2025.docx	7.pielikums_Atbalstība profesijas_SOCĪLĀIS DARBINIEKS_standartam_precizēts_2025_aktuals.docx
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	Annex 8_Course Mapping_Social Worker_specified.docx	8.pielikums_Sociālais darbinieks_kartējums_precizēts_1.docx
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	Study Plan_Social Worker_specified.xlsx	Tipveida plāns_Sociālais darbinieks_precizēts.xlsx
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	Study programm_Social Worker_study courses_specified_2025.docx	Studiju kursu apraksti_Sociālais darbinieks_LV_precizēts_2025.docx
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)	Description of Internships_Social Worker_specified_2025.docx	Prakses apraksts_Sociālais darbinieks_precizēts_2025.docx
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		

Social Rehabilitator (41762)

Study field	<i>Social Welfare</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Social Rehabilitator</i>
Education classification code	<i>41762</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>Short-cycle professional higher education study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Rita</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Orska</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>Rita.Orska@rta.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Mg.psych., Mg.paed.</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>+371 26888985</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>To educate social rehabilitators and prepare them for professional practice that promotes adherence to universal human rights principles at the national and societal levels and provides high-quality social rehabilitation services, thereby fostering the social inclusion of socially isolated groups.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. To form and develop students' skills, abilities and professional competencies in social rehabilitation;</i> <i>2. To develop the programme students' skills to apply the scientific approach when solving problems and to perform research activities, to develop creative work skills and abilities;</i> <i>3. To develop students' skills to plan, organize work within their professional competence, improve the client's social skills and promote the development of new skills, evaluate the services provided in social rehabilitation and model the development directions of social rehabilitation.</i> <i>4. To ensure the improvement of the content of the study programme and the study process in accordance with the changes in the labour market requirements.</i> <i>5. To promote the development of self-education needs for further studies and professional development.</i>

Results of the study programme	<p><i>Knowledge (knowledge and understanding):</i></p> <p><i>Z1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the roles of social work and social rehabilitation in societal development and in addressing social problems.</i></p> <p><i>Z2 Demonstrate the knowledge specific to the social policy, social legislation and the profession of a social rehabilitator and a critical understanding of this knowledge;</i></p> <p><i>Z3 Analyze and explain the operating mechanisms of the core principles and elements of the social welfare system, and demonstrate understanding of key concepts and interrelationships in social work..</i></p> <p><i>Skills (ability to apply knowledge, communication, general skills):</i></p> <p><i>P1. Apply the theoretical foundations and methods of social rehabilitation; plan, implement, and document professional practice within the scope of a social rehabilitator's competence.</i></p> <p><i>P2. Identify, formulate, and critically analyse problems in the accessibility and quality of social care/services, as well as in the socialization of people experiencing social difficulties or exclusion and those with mental or physical impairments; develop evidence-based solutions.</i></p> <p><i>P3. Plan and structure self-directed learning and professional development; apply a scholarly approach to problem-solving; assume responsibility and take initiative when working independently or in teams.</i></p> <p><i>P4. Apply appropriate social rehabilitation methods; evaluate outcomes and justify proposals for the improvement of social rehabilitation services.</i></p> <p><i>Competence (analysis, synthesis and evaluation):</i></p> <p><i>K1. Obtain, select, and analyse information and use it to make decisions and solve problems in the implementation of social rehabilitation.</i></p> <p><i>K2. Make decisions within the professional scope of a social rehabilitator and devise creative solutions for clients' social activation, observing professional ethics.</i></p>
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	<i>Qualification thesis</i>

Study programme forms

Full time studies - 2 years - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	<i>2</i>
Duration in month	<i>0</i>
Language	<i>latvian</i>
Amount (CP)	<i>120</i>
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Secondary education</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>-</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	<i>Social Rehabilitator</i>

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Riga Technical University	RĪGA	ĶĪPSALAS IELA 6A, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1048

Part time extramural studies - 2 years, 5 months - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Part time extramural studies</i>
Duration in full years	2
Duration in month	5
Language	<i>latvian</i>
Amount (CP)	120
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Secondary education</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	-
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	<i>Social Rehabilitator</i>

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Riga Technical University	RĪGA	ĶĪPSALAS IELA 6A, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1048

3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

3.1.1. Description and analysis of changes in the parameters of the study programme made since the issuance of the previous accreditation form of the study field or issuance of the study programme license, if the study programme is not included on the accreditation form of the study field, including changes planned within the evaluation procedure of the study field evaluation procedure.

Since the previous accreditation of the study field in the academic year 2021/2022 (11.01.2023), several significant changes have been introduced in the programme:

1. Pursuant to Cabinet Order No. 297 of 23.05.2023 *“On the Reorganization of Rēzekne Academy of Technologies”*, Rēzekne Academy of Technologies (hereinafter RTA) was reorganized and, as of 1 April 2025, transferred to Riga Technical University (RTU). By the decision of the RTU Council of 10.02.2025 (No. 01000-21.1.2-e/4), RTA was incorporated into RTU under the name *RTU Rēzekne Academy* (hereinafter RTU RA).
2. By the decision of the Study Quality Commission of the Academic Information Centre of 19.03.2025 (No. 2025/15-I), the RTA study field *Social Welfare* was, as of 01.04.2025, assigned to RTU, with RTA study programmes integrated into the corresponding RTU study field.
3. In accordance with the 2022 amendments to the *Law on Institutions of Higher Education* and the *Law on Vocational Education*, the type of the study programme was revised from a *first-level professional higher education programme* to a *short-cycle professional higher education programme*.
4. In the process of transitioning from the Latvian credit point system to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), and in line with the amendments to the *Law on Institutions of Higher Education*, the scope of the programme was revised from 80 credit points (CP) to 120 CP. The AIC Study Quality Commission approved these changes on 26.02.2025 (Decision No. 2025/14-I).
5. With the transition from the Latvian to the European credit transfer system, the scope of study courses has been changed, taking into account the provisions of the Higher Education Law, which stipulates that one credit corresponds to 25-30 hours of study work. RTU Rector's Order No. 01000-1.2.-2/1 of 08.01.2024 (see Annex 8, Latvian only) stipulates that one credit point corresponds to 26-28 hours of study work.

The Scope and Structure of the study programme are coordinated with the state standard of vocational higher education: Cabinet Regulation No. 305 of 13 June 2023 [“Regulations Regarding the State Standard of Vocational Higher Education”](#) (Latvian only). (Compliance with the national education standard, see Annex 3).

In the sectoral study course section, a new study course *“Health Literacy and First Aid”* has been included; the titles of some other study courses (for example, *“Communication in Working with Clients”*) have been specified, taking into account the requirements of the Level 4 professional

qualification standard "[Social Rehabilitator](#)" (Latvian only) (approved at the meeting of the Sub-Council for Tripartite Cooperation in Vocational Education and Employment on 15 December 2021, Minutes No. 7) (Compliance with the professional standard, see Annex 4).

Considering that Cabinet of Ministers 23.05.2023. Order No. 297 On Rēzekne Academy of Technology, RTA on 01.04.2025 is reorganised and transferred to Riga Technical University, where the study direction "Social Welfare" has been implemented since 2024 by the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers "On the reorganisation of Liepāja University" since 2024. Considering the experience of Liepāja Academy and Rēzekne Academy in the implementation of the study direction, it is planned to implement the short-cycle programme "Social Rehabilitator" after the international evaluation and accreditation of the programme in two study places - in Rēzekne and Liepāja. When launching the program in Liepāja, the content of the study program implemented by RTU RA was retained, adapting it to the institutional and academic capacity of Liepāja Academy.

3.1.2. Analysis and assessment of the study programme compliance with the study field. Analysis of the interrelation between the code of the study programme, the degree, professional qualification/professional qualification requirements or the degree and professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements. Description of the duration and scope of the implementation of the study programme (including different options of the study programme implementation) and evaluation of its usefulness.

The title of the study programme "Social Rehabilitator" has been developed according to the educational thematic group "Health care and social welfare", which is part of the thematic area "Social Welfare", which in turn is part of the educational programme group "Social Services", which in turn is part of the educational programme group "Social Services".

The title, purpose, tasks, degree to be obtained and learning outcomes of the study programme "Social Rehabilitator" are defined by:

1. A framework for national classifications corresponding to the European Qualifications Framework. The study programme corresponds to the Level 5 of the LQF, therefore, the learning outcomes are defined in compliance with the descriptions of knowledge, skills and competences corresponding to Level 5, which are included in the Cabinet Regulation No. 322 of 13.06.2017 "[Regulations on the Classification of Latvian Education](#)" (Latvian only).
2. The requirements of the professional qualification level 5 professional standard "[Social Rehabilitator](#)" (Agreed at the Sub-Council for Tripartite Cooperation in Vocational Education and Employment, minutes No. 7 of the meeting held on 15 December 2021) (Latvian only), ensuring that the content of the study programme corresponding to the profession standard, correlates with the objectives, tasks and learning outcomes defined for the study programme.
3. Cabinet Regulation No. 305 "[Regulations Regarding the State Professional Higher Education Standard](#)" (Latvian only) requirements for the acquisition of general knowledge, balance of study courses in the field, internship and qualification paper.

The duration and scope of the programme are defined by the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the Professional Higher Education Standard: full-time studies comprise two years (120 ECTS credits), part-time extramural studies – two years and five months (120 ECTS credits).

The conformity of the study programme with the study field is determined by its orientation towards the implementation of the strategic tasks defined in the Study Field Development Plan (see Table 3.1.2.1).

Table 3.1.2.1

Compliance of the study programme with the strategic tasks of the study field

Priority directions and tasks defined in the study direction development plan	Compliance of the study programme "Social Rehabilitation" with the priority directions and tasks of the study field
<p><i>Qualified and sustainable academic staff complying with the goals and requirements of the study direction, programmes and study courses</i></p>	
<p>Organization and management Promotion of constructive cooperation and teamwork.</p>	<p>The implementation of the study programme is carried out by the RTU RA Centre for Education, Language and Social Technologies, in cooperation with the Centres for Engineer science and Economics and Management) and the teaching staff of RTU LA, creating an appropriate provision of teaching staff.</p>
<p>Personnel policy Provision of qualified academic staff</p>	<p>Lecturers with doctoral degrees and professional experience in the field of social welfare are involved in the implementation of the programme. The qualification of the academic staff shall be appropriate to the specifics of the study programme and the conditions for implementation, as well as to the requirements of regulatory enactments.</p>

Participation of foreign guest lecturers in each study programme.

In the implementation of the programme, the Erasmus+ programme attracts foreign lecturers who teach at least one study course per year, ensuring international experience and comparable practice in social rehabilitation studies.

Promotion of mobility of teaching staff and cooperation with foreign universities.

The lecturers of the program participate in international mobility and cooperation projects, ensuring the internationalization of the study content.

Improvement of professional competence of academic staff.

The lecturers of the program are constantly improving their digital and professional skills, ensuring the topicality of study courses and the introduction of innovations

Research activity and international cooperation of academic staff and students

Activation of scientific research activities of lecturers involved in the study field, promotion of recognition of scientific activity.

Lecturers are involved in international research projects and conferences, ensuring that the content of studies is linked to the latest scientific knowledge.

Cooperation with Latvian and foreign research institutions.

RTU RA has accumulated significant experience in international cooperation with Vilnius University Šiauliai Academy, implementing mutual exchange of experience and academic events for both academic staff and students.

Involvement of students in research and international conferences.

Students of the program regularly participate in scientific conferences, symposia and publish research results in the collections of student scientific works.

Cooperation with employers in the provision of practices.

The study programme has concluded cooperation agreements with social services, providing diverse internships for students. Students have the opportunity to choose internships close to their place of residence, also in those social institutions with which no cooperation agreements have been concluded (see section "Other annexes - Summary of student internships in the academic year 2024/2025).

Connection with society

Promotion of the study program and attraction of students.

Information about current events in the study programme is provided on the RTU RA website, the news is republished on social media. Students participate in the scientific-practical conference "Social Work Topicalities" organized by RTU LA.

Analysis of student satisfaction and achievements, improvement of the program.

Student satisfaction and achievement data are regularly analyzed, as a result of which the content and organization of studies have been improved.

The content, scope and outcomes to be achieved of the study programme, as well as the assessment of achievements in full-time and part-time studies, are the same.

Although at present students, due to socio-economic circumstances, predominantly choose full-time studies funded by the state budget, the accreditation of the part-time study form is essential to

ensure access to higher education for a broader range of the population – those already employed, living in regions, or wishing to combine studies with family or work responsibilities. This corresponds to the principle of lifelong learning, the labour market demand for professionals in the field of social welfare, and the requirements highlighted in national planning documents (NAP2027, RIS3 strategy) for a flexible and sustainable study offer. The accreditation of the part-time form ensures the continuity of programme development and the institution's capacity to respond to changes in societal needs in the future.

The short-cycle study programme corresponds to the study direction "Social Welfare" and is part of the first cycle study programme "Social Worker". The content of the short-cycle and first-cycle bachelor's programmes is mutually coordinated, and the study results of the short-cycle study programme purposefully fit into the learning outcomes of the first-cycle bachelor's study programme. According to the on 16.11.2004 Cabinet Regulation No. 932 (Section 3) "[Procedures for the Commencement of Studies in Later Study Stages](#)" (Latvian only) and the RTU By-laws regarding the recognition of courses acquired in other higher education institutions and RTU study programmes, graduates of the short-cycle programme may continue their studies in the third year of the first-cycle bachelor's study programme "Social Worker" for the acquisition of a bachelor's degree and the Level 6 professional qualification "Social Worker". Such an opportunity allows to obtain two qualifications, a bachelor's degree, and to ensure the attraction of new specialists in the field of social work. Data from the Ministry of Economics of the Republic of Latvia show that the health and social care sector has one of the largest proportions of the employed over 50 years of age.

Admission to the study programme takes place on the basis of the Law on Higher Education Institutions of the Republic of Latvia, the Cabinet of Ministers regulations on requirements, criteria and procedures for admission to study programmes and the requirements of the RTU admission regulations. In the study programme, applicants are admitted on the basis of three centralised examinations: Latvian, mathematics and a foreign language (one foreign language, including English, German, at the choice of the applicant). In case of equal evaluation, other subjects corresponding to the specifics of the direction serve as the selection criterion: evaluations of biology, history centralized exams optionally.

The admission requirements provide for the application of additional points in the following cases:

- Mathematics - Latvian State Olympiad (1st-3rd place) - 1 point (for each)
- Russian - Latvian State Olympiad (1st-3rd place) -1 point (for each)
- German - Latvian State Olympiad 1 point (for each)
- French - Latvian State Olympiad (1st-3rd place) - 1 point (for each)
- Certificate of successful completion of the interest education programme of the Latvian Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management (LUMA) project "Be a leader" -1 point
- Graduate of Eastern Latvia Secondary School of Technologies -1.5 points.

In the period from 2020 to 2024, 57% of students were matriculated after obtaining secondary general or secondary vocational education. 43% were matriculated in later stages of studies after previously acquiring higher education complying with the Cabinet of Ministers of 16.11.2004 Regulation No. 932 "Procedures for the Commencement of Studies in Later Study Stages" and RTU Regulations on the Procedures for the Commencement of Studies in Later Study Stages (Latvian only).

It is noteworthy that only 14% of students began their studies in the year of obtaining their previous education. As of 2025, the average age of students in the programme is 40 years. 77% of students are already working in a profession related to social work.

3.1.3. Economic and/ or social substantiation of the study programme, analysis of graduates' employment.

The location of higher education institutions in the regions with the aim of promoting regional development, since mid 20th century is recognised as an important regional policy instrument in Central Europe and worldwide, with particular emphasis on the positive impact of universities on demographic, economic, infrastructure, cultural, educational and social, etc. Processes. The latest European Commission (EC) reports and strategic documents also emphasise the important role of the higher education institution as a regional development and innovation centre, which is especially important in promoting the economic development of the Latgale region on a Latvian scale. According to Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) data, the Latgale region shows the lowest indicators of economic stability in Latvia.

The data of the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia also show that the Latgale region lags behind other regions of Latvia markedly in terms of GDP per capita. The highest welfare risks among the statistical regions of Latvia have been identified in Latgale region for a long time (the highest unemployment rate, highest risk of poverty, highest poverty index, highest Gini index, lowest wage, largest share of persons below the minimum income level, largest number of population aged over 70 years, largest number of households where at least one person needs help from other persons, etc.). Such a situation requires urgent action for the preparation of social rehabilitation and social work specialists, towards which the professional programme "Social Rehabilitator" is directed at.

In such circumstances, of special importance is the training of academically educated and professionally qualified social work specialists, who can become providers of support and assistance to people overcoming crises and solving problems, actively engage in the study and solution of social problems, the development of social policy in the region and the country, the development of social entrepreneurship.

The study programme "Social Rehabilitator" corresponds to the development priorities of the State and Latgale region (formation of an open, creative and responsible society), which puts emphasis on social security systems that reduce social exclusion and ensure social integration, development, quality social services for vulnerable population groups, as well as provision of support to different client groups, organization of employment and recreation for socially supported persons, children of social risk families and risk group.

For quite a long time, there was no demand for these specialists in the labour market of the Latgale region, but only in recent years has the demand for the services of a social rehabilitator increased. Sometimes graduates of the programme began work in the field of social work, but not in their speciality. The situation is changing, and already from the 2019/2020 academic year, graduates work according to their obtained qualification. At the moment, 77% of students work in the speciality already during their studies. For graduate employment, see Table 3.1.3.1.

Table 3.1.3.1

Employment of graduates of the study programme

Academic Year	Number of Graduates	Region of Origin	Employment Location After Graduation from RTA
2019/2020	4	4 - Latgale	4 - Latgale (Augšdaugava Municipality, Preiļi Municipality, Rēzekne Municipality)
2020/2021	None	-	-
2021/2022	3	3 - Latgale	3 - Latgale (Rēzekne Municipality, Balvi Municipality)
2022/2023	9	6 - Latgale, 3 - Vidzeme	6 - Latgale (Rēzekne Municipality, Ludza Municipality, Balvi Municipality, Krāslava Municipality)3 - Vidzeme (Limbaži Municipality, Cēsis Municipality, Varakļāni Municipality)
2023/2024	4	4 - Latgale	4 - Latgale (Rēzekne State City, Balvi Municipality)

The demand for specialists in the field of social support does not exclude the most significant challenges of the socio-economic sector. For example, despite the increase in gross wages and salaries in 2023 by 3.9%, wages and salaries in the health and social care sector are still the lowest in the country.

2024/2025 all 2nd year students (Latgale region: 3 - Ludza county, 1 - Balvi county, 2 - Rēzekne state city) are employed in the field of social welfare.

The launch of the study programme in the Kurzeme region is economically and socially justified. The number of residents with functional impairments and older persons is increasing in the region, as is the demand for social rehabilitation services. Labour market data confirm a shortage of qualified specialists in the field of social welfare. The programme ensures the preparation of specialists required by the labour market locally within a shorter period (2 years in full-time studies, 2 years and 5 months in part-time studies), thereby promoting employment and the sustainable development of the region. At the same time, it guarantees social accessibility and corresponds to national development strategies (NAP2027, RIS3).

At present, no other higher education institution in the Kurzeme region implements a short-cycle study programme in the field of social rehabilitation; therefore, the launch of this programme ensures a unique educational offer in the region.

3.1.4. Statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down into different study forms, types, and languages.

The short-cycle professional higher education study programme "Social Rehabilitator" at Rēzekne Academy (formerly RTA) has been implemented since the 2007/2008 academic year. In the study

programme of 2024/2025 academic year, 13 students are studying full-time. There are no students in part-time studies (for statistics on students in the reporting period, see). Table 3.1.4.1).

Table 3.1.4.1

Number of students in the RTU RA study programme by academic years and types of funding in full-time studies

Academic Year	2020./2021.		2021./2022.		2022./2023.		2023./2024.		2024./2025.	
	B	P	B	P	B	P	B	P	B	P
Total	8		19		19		13		13	
	8	0	18	1	18	1	13	0	13	0
1st Year	8	0	10	1	8	0	6	0	6	0
2nd Year	0	0	8	0	9	1	7	0	7	0

B - State-funded (Budget)

P - Self-funded (Private)

During the reporting period, the number of students in the study programme did not change significantly and corresponds to the number of places financed by the State budget. During the reporting period, few students expressed the desire to study part-time extramurally and the groups were not completed. In Latvia, even though about 23% of local government social services lack social rehabilitation specialists, the coefficient of the competition for the admission of applicants in the study programme "Social Rehabilitator" is not high, which shows that the prestige of the field of social rehabilitation is not high enough.

In the study *"Development of Professional Social Work in Municipalities: Ex-post Study"* (Baltic Institute of Social Science, 2023) (Latvian only), conducted within a project implemented by the Ministry of Welfare in 2023, it was revealed that the remuneration of social rehabilitators performing identical duties may differ regionally by almost twofold - from EUR 758 to EUR 1406. In an [interview with the Latvian Public Media \(LSM\)](#), the [Director of the Department of Social Work and Social Assistance Policy of the Ministry of Welfare](#) (Latvian only) emphasized that the Rēzekne City Social Service offers social workers a full-time salary of EUR 1028 gross, or slightly above EUR 800 net. This does not even reach the established minimum for the respective occupational group. Such a situation cannot motivate young people to choose the profession of social rehabilitator, particularly in the Latgale region.

In the previous accreditation of the study programme, experts recommended taking measures to increase the number of students, including improving advertising opportunities and reducing drop-out. Several significant measures have been implemented in this area:

- From 2025, RTA was integrated into RTU, which ensures broader visibility, resources, and marketing capacity.
- The place of implementation of the programme has been expanded to include RTU Liepāja Academy, which opens up new recruitment opportunities in the Kurzeme region. The implementation of the programme in Liepāja will significantly increase the potential student

base, reduce geographical barriers, and allow students to choose the most convenient place of study (Rēzekne or Liepāja), which will directly affect the number of enrolled students.

- The promotion of the study programme is carried out through RTU's central marketing department, ensuring a unified communication strategy (social networks, RTU website, cooperation with secondary schools, open days).
- Visual and informative materials about the programme have been developed, highlighting the advantages of studying in the Latgale region.
- E-learning support has been further developed (RTU e-learning environment, additional digital resources, consultations).
- Solutions for combining studies with practice and employment in the region have been improved, so that students do not interrupt their studies due to work.

Taking into account the demographic potential of the Kurzeme region, the number of secondary school graduates, the demand for social rehabilitators in the labour market, the previous experience in Rēzekne and the demand characteristic of similar programmes, as well as RTU's marketing resources and the support of regional municipalities, it is provisionally planned that RTU Liepāja could in the future admit an average of 20 students per year, and RTU Rēzekne – an average of 15 students per year. Altogether, this would constitute 30–40 students annually, which corresponds to the RTU Order of August 8, 2025, No. 01000-1.2-e/66 on the minimum number of students in a programme starting from the 2025/2026 academic year admissions.

Surveys conducted among students at RTU Rēzekne Academy (previously RTA) show that the main reasons for choosing the programme are the desire to help others, an understanding of the work of a social rehabilitator, and receiving a job offer on the condition that studies are started in the relevant programme. At the same time, part of some students are still in the process of searching for their identity and have not yet made a specific choice of professional activity (“I like working with people”).

The number of students is influenced by the demographic processes of the population; migration processes must also be considered, both long-term emigration to foreign countries and internal migration. The low prestige of the profession in society, misunderstanding of the job duties of a social rehabilitator, and low pay are not attractive factors for young people. Wages and salaries fluctuate insignificantly at the level of the minimum wage and cannot motivate young people to choose the job of a social rehabilitator.

3.1.5. Substantiation of the development of the joint study programme and description and evaluation of the choice of partner universities, including information on the development and implementation of the joint study programme (if applicable).

3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

3.2.1. Analysis of the content of the study programme. Assessment of the interrelation

between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators with the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study courses/ modules and compliance with the needs of the relevant industry, labour market and with the trends in science on how and whether the content of the study courses/ modules is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science.

The study programme has a defined goal and certain learning outcomes, from which the objectives and learning outcomes of each study course also derive, that is what the student is able to do when completing the study programme as a whole, and what the student is able to do when completing a separate study course. The learning outcomes are related to the basic tasks of professional activity specified in the [Social Rehabilitator Profession Standard](https://www.psk.lv/uploads/aukszZ02/SRprofstand2021publicts15.12.2021.pdf) (Latvian only) (Approved by the Sub-Council for Tripartite Cooperation in Vocational Education and Employment on 15 December 2021; <https://www.psk.lv/uploads/aukszZ02/SRprofstand2021publicts15.12.2021.pdf>), the skills, knowledge and competencies necessary for the performance of basic duties, which are based on the changing environment of the modern labour market. See the mapping of study courses to the achievement of study programme learning outcomes in Annex 5, and the evaluation of the study programme's compliance with the professional standard in Annex 4.

The assessment criteria are created in such a way that they correspond to the learning outcomes, are justified, verifiable and available to the student already at the beginning of the study programme and each individual study course. Qualifications taken is governed by the By-laws for the Assessment of Learning outcomes. Study course descriptions are available in the Study Course Register www.ortus.lv.

The structure, procedures for the development and publication of study course descriptions are regulated by the by-laws of the RTU Study Course Register, which determines the basic principles for the inclusion of study courses in the study course register and for making changes to the entries in the register.

To ensure the linking of the content of study courses and the outcomes to be achieved with the objectives of the study programme, and the outcomes to be achieved:

- The teaching staff shall plan the outcomes to be achieved in the study course according to the specific outcomes of the study programme, which are reflected in the description of the study course.
- The teaching staff shall coordinate the learning outcomes of the study course with the director of the study programme, who is responsible for determining the learning outcomes of the study programme according to the learning outcomes specified for the study field.
- All study course descriptions are evaluated at a meeting of the study field committee, having previously evaluated the amount of the content of the study course overlapping the content of the programme corresponding to EQF Level 6 (to be able to enrol the student in the 3rd year in later study stages when entering the programme "Social Work"), whether the student's independent work is proportionately included and considered in the study course programme, whether the latest literature of the field is included (also in English), whether the prescribed forms of examination can fully assess the competences acquired by the student, and other issues. If objections arise to the committee of the study field regarding the conformity of the content of the study course with the didactic strategy of the study programme, the committee of the study field shall ask the academic staff to eliminate the

deficiencies and supplement the description of the study course.

- Descriptions of study courses after their expert examination in the study field committee are approved in the responsible structural unit – Rēzekne and Liepāja Academy respectively.
- To control the planning of study results of study courses, the director of the study programme shall perform a mapping of study courses, that allows for ascertaining and, if necessary, adjusting the content of study courses to ensure the fulfilment of the objectives and outcomes of the study programme.

The learning outcomes of the study courses have been developed according to the objectives and tasks of the study programme and the requirements regarding knowledge, skills and competences necessary for the performance of the basic tasks of professional activity indicated in the Social Rehabilitator Profession Standard (for study course descriptions of the study programme see Annex 7).

The content of the study programme (see Annex 6 for the study programme plan) has been developed on the basis of the requirements of the state professional higher education standard as well as the recommendations of employers. The compliance of the study programme with the national education standard is presented in Annex 3. The programme ensures the credit point distribution prescribed in the standard, including study courses for the acquisition of general knowledge (30 ECTS), general education courses, and sector-specific study courses (54 ECTS). Students may freely choose elective courses amounting to 6 ECTS from the catalogues of free-choice study courses offered by RTU LA and RTU RA . Professional practice accounts for 24 ECTS, and the qualification paper – 12 ECTS. To ensure the acquisition of the professional competences required, the programme also includes the study course *State, Civil and Environmental Protection* (3 ECTS), as stipulated in the professional standard of the Social Rehabilitator.

The content of the programme has also been improved based on employers' recommendations. For example, the study course *Communication in Working with Clients* was included in the study programme following suggestions from internship supervisors in institutions, and both the title and the content have now been refined. Study courses have been improved : Support in crises, Social work with a case. Based on the opinions of the Ministries of Health and Welfare on the low indicators of participation of inhabitants in maintaining and protecting their health (Public health indicators in Latvia are significantly lagging behind other EU Member States), a study course Health Literacy and First Aid (as a result of improvement of the previous study courses Health Psychology and Developmental Physiology and First Aid) has been introduced.

Assessment of the topicality of the content of study courses, compliance with the needs of the sector, labour market is a mandatory study quality measure at RTU. It is carried out in several stages, coordinated with the study schedule:

- In the process of developing, coordinating and approving annual study plans, the descriptions of study courses are reviewed, the offer of the literature to be used is updated, and the coordination with the learning outcomes of the study programme is updated. Changes to the study course description are made following the RTU Study Course Description instruction.
- at the end of each academic year, performing an expert-examination of the content and quality of the implementation of the study programme, evaluating their conformity with the objectives of the study field set, the requirements of the represented scientific sector and the labour market, as regulated by the by-laws of the RTU study field committee.
- when discussing the content of the study programme, the outcomes of the study programme and study courses, and the requirements for the development of research papers at the meetings of the committee of the study field,
- in the process of defending the qualification paper.

The conformity of the short-cycle professional higher education study programme with the trends of scientific development is ensured by qualification paper (12 ECTS) and study courses, mainly the study course "Introduction to Research" (2 ECTS) and "Social Research Methods" (3 ECTS). To promote the competence corresponding to Level 5 of the LQF to select the necessary information and use it to solve clearly defined problems, to participate in the development of the professional field of social support, students under the guidance of the academic staff participated in the implementation of internal scientific grant projects, which, in addition to the competencies acquired in the study programme, promoted the development and strengthening of the student's research skills, problem solving, analytical thinking skills.

A qualification paper is a study with a theoretical, methodological or applied orientation, as a result of which its author provides independently developed insights, conclusions, proposals for the solution of a problem, and proves his or her readiness to work in the field of social rehabilitation. Students choose the topics of study for research papers in relation to the problems of social rehabilitation and current events in the field of social welfare. To strengthen knowledge of foreign languages and ensure the quality of qualification papers, students use literature in a foreign language in their research works.

3.2.2. In the case of master's and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation. In the case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels (if applicable).

3.2.3. Assessment of the study programme including the study course/ module implementation methods by indicating what the methods are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. In the case of a joint study programme, or in case the study programme is implemented in a foreign language or in the form of distance learning, describe in detail the methods used to deliver such a study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.

The basic principles for the implementation of the study programme are based on the [European Standards and Guidelines \(ENQA\) for Quality Assurance of Higher Education in the European Higher Education Area \(2015\)](#), which set out the main principles of a student-centred process.

The student-centred approach to the implementation of the study programme is manifested in respecting the previous experience of students, their interests and needs and building positive pedagogical relationships, involving students in the study process, its evaluation, ensuring feedback and improvement of the study programme, at the same time encouraging to be independent and responsible in achieving the outcomes of the study process. The principles of a student-centred approach help students to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme more successfully,

both by theoretically mastering the content of study courses, as well as by practically understanding the essence of the learning process of social support, and developing the ability to organise the process of social support. In order to meet the individual needs of students, multimedia technologies are used in the study process, study materials for successful acquisition of the content of study courses, as well as tests and other types of tests are available in the e-study environment. The e-learning environment provides an opportunity to individualise the study process according to the needs and interests of each student.

Part-time studies (if a part-time student group is formed) will be implemented in accordance with the RTU Senate Regulations “On the Organization of Part-Time Studies at RTU,” approved on 28.10.2019 (protocol No. 633), which stipulate that in part-time extramural studies, the number of contact hours is lower than in full-time studies. Considering that, according to [Section 1 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions](#), part-time studies are defined as a type of study with less than 60 credit points per academic year, it is planned that in part-time studies, contact hours will be organized for two to three weeks each study semester. The total duration of studies will be two years and five months.

It has already been mentioned above that some students have professional work experience in the field of social work, therefore, both in the study process as a whole and in individual study courses, the constructivist approach is successfully practised, inviting students to share their experience, exchange opinions, discuss, and present their achievements. Learning from each other, with the participation of the academic staff as support staff, helps students to achieve the competence specified in the learning outcomes of the programme to create an inclusive, intellectually stimulating and socially and emotionally safe environment in cooperation with colleagues, ensuring the application of a client-centred approach in the development of the student's professional competence and confirming integrated knowledge and understanding in the field of social rehabilitation.

Cooperation and social interaction significantly complement the study process. Group work, discussions, and joint projects are an important part of the study process, which helps to understand the most important concepts of social rehabilitation studies, to evaluate and analyse social cases in the theory and practice of social rehabilitation in cooperation with colleagues.

In the study process, for the implementation of the interaction between theory and practice, the following dimensions are considered for the creation of a supportive and inclusive study environment and for ensuring the quality of the learning process:

- cognitive (knowledge, theory),
- pedagogical (didactically pedagogical technologies, methods, organisation of the study process),
- social (interpersonal and pedagogical relationships),
- innovative (transformation of knowledge and skills acquired in social work internship),
- research (integration of research skills).

Study Programmes are implemented in a full-time, face-to-face form. Part-time extramural studies provide for 6 sessions per study year (one session lasts one week), in addition, learning materials are available for students in the MOODLE environment.

Study methods: lectures, seminars, practical work (group work, discussion, role-playing, individual and pair work, situation modelling, analysis of social cases) and students' independent work.

To strengthen practical experience, as well as to promote the unity of theory and practice,

practitioners, professionals are invited to teach individual study courses (Jelena Žogota, Kristīne Maslobojeva – social workers from the Rēzekne Pensioners' Social Services Centre, Elīna Jaudzema – a social rehabilitator from SIA "Latvian Society of the Blind Rehabilitation Centre" Rēzekne branch (the above-mentioned specialists are graduates of our study field Social Welfare), Gunta Petrova – Head of Rēzekne Multifunctional Social Services Centre). Practitioners in the field help to formulate and manage study assignments in such a way that they are related to the real context of the work of the social rehabilitator. To strengthen the contextual learning experience, classes are also held directly in cooperation institutions – the Rēzekne Territorial Organisation Centre of the Latvian Society of the Blind, the Rēzekne Regional Society Centre of the Latvian Association of the Deaf, the Rēzekne Multifunctional Social Services Centre and other, practising various forms of active learning. This method is applied in the study courses: Social rehabilitation of people with special needs; Social rehabilitation in work with target groups, social rehabilitation work methods and others. Employers are involved in both the improvement and implementation of the content of study courses, for example, separate seminars, experiential story classes, and study visits to social support institutions offering social rehabilitation services.

By applying the above-mentioned methods and approaches, the innovative potential of the implementation of the content of the study programme is purposefully developed:

- implementation of a flexible study process conforming to the quality requirements of the study content and the guidelines of competence-based education, linking it to the working environment, ensuring regular feedback and critical self-reflection;
- partial acquisition of study courses in the e-environment;
- the interlinking of studies, practice and research, implementing the link theory-theory approbation/practical classes-internship.

Cooperation skills and exchange of experience to strengthen, as well as to reduce fragmentation of programmes and share of resources, joint implementation of general education and partly also theoretical study courses in the field (for example, Social Psychology, Social Law, Theories of Social Work and Rehabilitation Work, Support in Crisis Situations, Social Work with Case and many others) is practiced, as far as possible, together with the bachelor's study programme "Social employee" for students. The methods of implementation of the study programmes and study courses are aimed at the implementation of the goal of the study programme, ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes through the theoretical and practical preparation of the professional qualification level of the framework.

An individual approach to students is provided:

- By individually agreeing with the lecturer, working students can plan both the largest possible number of classes attended (lectures, seminars, practical work) and perform individual independent work in the acquisition of the study course.
- Students are provided with handout study materials (during classes), and study course materials are available: RTU e-course website estudijas.rtu.lv
- If the student has not been able to attend the orientation or examination session for justifiable reasons, then the lecturer agrees with the student on individual consultations.
- In the organisation of research work (selection of topics for study papers and thesis), the sphere of interest of students (previously gained experience in the development of scientific papers), and the specifics of practical work and experience are respected.
- In the organisation of research work (management of study paper and qualification paper), the wishes of students in the selection of a scientific supervisor are considered, promoting interpersonal communication and, as a result, increasing the quality of research work.
- Lecturers are available to students at reception times, as well as by individual agreement for

a consultation.

- Students are sent information about changes in the study process, corrections of practical work, etc., basically via email.

For the achievement of study outcomes, the RTU Library in Rēzekne and Liepāja is available; computer classrooms are accessible in the premises of both academies, and free Wi-Fi wireless internet is provided. The form of implementation of the study programme in full-time studies determines the personal interest of students to acquire new knowledge and skills, to increase the level of their professional education and competitiveness in the labour market.

Considering that the study programme is planned to be implemented both at Riga Technical University Liepāja Academy and Riga Technical University Rēzekne Academy, a unified study programme content and the achievement of learning outcomes are ensured at both implementation sites:

- Unified programme content – the study programme content is maintained identically at both implementation sites and is regularly discussed at the joint Study Field Council/Commission meetings, where the objectives, tasks, learning outcomes, and assessment criteria of the study courses are harmonised.
- Academic staff cooperation – academic staff members involved in the implementation of study courses agree on the principles of course delivery, study materials, and requirements, ensuring equally high academic quality regardless of the implementation site.
- Internship placements – professional practice is organised according to unified criteria, in cooperation with relevant institutions and employers in each region, to provide students with equal opportunities for professional experience.
- Material and technical resources – both RTU LA and RTU RA are provided with the necessary material and technical resources for programme implementation, the compliance of which is confirmed in the self-evaluation report of the respective study programme and by external expert assessment.

Through these measures, RTU ensures that the content of the study programme and the achievement of learning outcomes are unified and comparable, irrespective of the implementation site.

3.2.4. If the study programme envisages an internship, describe the internship opportunities offered to students, provision and work organization, including whether the higher education institution/ college helps students to find an internship place. If the study programme is implemented in a foreign language, provide information on how internship opportunities are provided in a foreign language, including for foreign students. To provide analysis and evaluation of the connection of the tasks set for students during the internship included in the study programme with the learning outcomes of the study programme (if applicable).

A professional internship in the amount of 24 ECTS credits in the study programme is organised based on:

- Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 481 of 29.08.2023, [Procedures for the Organisation of Internships in Vocational Education Programmes](#) (Latvian only)
- to the aims, tasks, and learning outcomes of the study programme,

- to the requirements laid down in the profession standard of a social rehabilitator,
- and Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 305 of 13.06.2023 "[Regulations Regarding the State Professional Higher Education Standard](#)" (Latvian only),
- The procedure for the organization of internships at RTU (approved by the RTU Senate decision of 28.01.2019, protocol No. 626)

In the study programme for students in full-time studies, professional internship in the amount of 24 ECTS credits is provided for:

- Internship I or observation practice - in the 1st semester of the first year of studies in the amount of 3 ECTS credits,
- Internship II - in the 2nd semester of the first year of studies in the amount of 9 ECTS credits,
- Internship III - and in the 2nd year of study in the 4th semester, in the amount of 12 ECTS credits.

In the part-time study programme, the implementation and defence of professional practice (24 ECTS) is organised in the same manner as for full-time students.

Based on the recommendations of the experts from the previous accreditation, several improvements have been introduced in the procedure for the implementation of professional practice (see Annex 8.1):

- The goals and tasks of the internship have been revised in close cooperation with employers who provide internship placements for students. In this process, employers' suggestions regarding the content of the internship, students' involvement in institutional work processes, and the development of professional competences have been taken into account.
- The goals and tasks of the internship have been specified with particular emphasis on the development of students' practical skills, the strengthening of professional responsibility, and the improvement of cooperation skills in real work situations.
- Amendments to the internship implementation procedures have been tested and approved within the framework of the internship defence process, which allows the evaluation of their suitability and effectiveness, as well as the collection of feedback from students, internship supervisors, and employers.

These changes ensure that the internship corresponds to labour market requirements and promotes the alignment of the study programme with professional competences and employer expectations.

Professional practice aims to strengthen and supplement the student's knowledge, improve skills and develop professional competencies in compliance with the requirements of the profession of a social rehabilitator.

During an **internship I** (3 ECTS credits) or observation internship, the student gets acquainted with the specifics of the work of a social rehabilitator with a specific target audience in a certain institution, work methods and work organisation. An understanding of the forms, methods, and specifics of the work of a social rehabilitator is formed. The student develops skills to establish communication, discuss issues of professional activity, and cooperate. As a result of the internship, the student can demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the role of social work and the role of rehabilitation in the development of society, solving social problems, understanding the work of a social rehabilitator, analysing its compliance with the standard of the profession, the code of ethics and the job description.

During **internship II** (9 ECTS credits), the student improves the skills to evaluate the client's social barriers that prevent him or her from joining society, to identify the client's social status, values, to

determine the level of social skills and social activities of the client, and together with the social worker and social rehabilitator of the institution, to develop a social rehabilitation plan for the client, to identify resources for the implementation of the rehabilitation plan. Working together with other social work specialists develops skills to establish communication, discuss issues of professional activity, and cooperate. As a result of the practice, one can use the acquired theoretical foundations and skills of social rehabilitation to perform professional activity within the framework of the professional competence of a social rehabilitator. Able to apply appropriate research methods of social rehabilitation, justify the results.

During **internship III** (12 ECTS credits), the student improves skills not only in the field of evaluation, but is also able to implement, using social rehabilitation work methods, social activation of the client, stimulate the client's interest, desire and will to live independently and fully, inform the client about the procedure for receiving available services. Develops skills to evaluate the provided social rehabilitation services to the client, develop proposals for the improvement of social rehabilitation services. During the internship, one is able, by integrating into the teamwork of a particular institution, under the guidance of a social worker and a social rehabilitator, to conduct a study of the client's problem range, to develop a rehabilitation plan and to participate in its implementation using the working methods of a social rehabilitator. As a result of the practice, can independently obtain, select and analyse information and use it, make decisions and solve problems in the implementation of social rehabilitation, can make decisions within the professional competence of the social rehabilitator and find creative solutions in the work of social activation of the client, observing professional ethics

Students are allowed to choose their internship according to their professional interests and choice of research topic. In case the student has not independently found an internship, an internship place is offered in one of the cooperating institutions with which a cooperation agreement has been concluded.

Before starting the professional internship, an introductory seminar on the internship is organised, where the student gets acquainted with the tasks to be performed in practice, and is consulted on the methods to be used during the internship to perform the intended tasks.

The form of part-time studies and the peculiarities of the organisation of the internship determine the fact that students work in specific institutions and, in co-ordination with the director of the study programme, basically undergo professional internship in their workplaces, if as a result of professional internship, the student will be able to achieve the results of the study programme and the results intended for professional internship. A student may also undergo a professional internship in one of the cooperating social services with which cooperation agreements have been concluded for the provision of student internships.

For the planning and successful implementation of the professional internship provided for in the study programme, a tripartite short-term agreement is concluded between the student, RTU RA and the place of internship. Each trainee has 2 internship managers: the internship manager at the specific internship site and the internship manager from the lecturers involved in the implementation of the study programme. During the internship, students have access to consultations – supervision with lecturers on the implementation of the internship.

RTU RA internship implementation agreements within the programme have been concluded with the Rēzekne State City Municipality Administration "Social Service," Rēzekne District Municipality Social Service, Ludza District Social Service, Preiļi District Social Service, as well as with non-governmental organisations – the Rēzekne Territorial Organisation of the Latvian Society of the Blind and the Latgale Regional Family Support Centre "Daugavpils." RTU LA has concluded agreements with the social services of Ventspils State City, Saldus, Kuldīga, and Liepāja, as well as

with the municipalities of Talsi, Priekule, Grobiņa, Aizpute and others, along with associations and foundations related to social support for residents. In total, out of 30 cooperation agreements in the study field, 17 provide for cooperation in the provision of professional practice. The full list of cooperation agreements can be found in Annex 2 of the study field description.

The possibility to conclude individual tripartite internship agreements between RTU RA, the employer and trainee is allowed, if the student has chosen the internship place independently and it corresponds to the didactic strategy of the study programme.

After the internship, the student shall submit a report on the internship and a diary, which reflects the course of the internship, the performance of internship tasks, their reflexive assessment by the student and the head of the internship in the institution. Finally, an internship defence is organised, in which each student gives an overview of the work done during the internship and is evaluated.

During a professional internship, students strengthen the theoretical knowledge and professional skills acquired in study courses, and acquire and improve professional skills. During a professional internship, students acquire the necessary actual material for developing and defending the qualification paper. The tasks of the professional internship are related to the tasks of the study programme, students, using the acquired theoretical foundations and skills, perform professional activities in practice within the framework of the professional competence of the social rehabilitator, formulate and analytically describe information, problems and provide solutions thereto in the practice report; in defence of professional practice, explains problems and their solutions, arguably discusses them, shows creative solutions.

3.2.5. Evaluation and description of the promotion opportunities and the promotion process provided to the students of the doctoral study programme (if applicable).

3.2.6. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the marks of the final theses.

The requirements for the development and presentation of qualification papers are laid down in the [RTU Instructions for drawing up final theses \(2014\)](#) (Latvian only).

The student chooses the topic of the qualification thesis on the basis of the research and professional interest acquired in the study courses, and links it with the interest of the place of professional internship or his or her workplace in the field of social rehabilitation. For part-time students, the choice of topic is often determined by the specifics of practical work and experience. In the course of the research, the selected target group is explored in more depth and working methods in the provision of social rehabilitation services are examined, Methods are sought that can provide a more complete, complex service. In the social rehabilitation sector, these issues are always relevant. Most of the students already work in social welfare institutions during their studies, and the qualification work is about the possibilities of improving the social rehabilitation service in this institution.

During the self-assessment period, in qualification papers, students analysed and evaluated

problems related to the work of a social rehabilitator with different target groups. The themes of the last three years can be seen in Table 3.2.6.1.

Table 3.2.6.1

The specifics of social rehabilitation work considered in the qualification papers in work with different target groups

Target Group	Qualification Paper Topics
Seniors	Social rehabilitation resources for meeting the needs of seniors in long-term social care and rehabilitation institutions.
	Satisfaction of seniors with social rehabilitation services in long-term care institutions.
Families	Social rehabilitation services provided by municipalities for families with children: improvement of budgeting skills.
Clients with Intellectual Disabilities (GRT)	Social rehabilitation methods for improving the life skills of adults with intellectual disabilities in the deinstitutionalisation process.
	Social rehabilitation services for improving the social skills of persons with mental disorders in a state social care centre.
	Social rehabilitation services for improving the quality of life of adults with mental disorders in a day care centre.
	Social rehabilitation services for enhancing self-care skills of persons with mental disorders in a day care centre.
	Organisation of group home services for adults with mental disorders.
Children and Youth	Social rehabilitation work methods for developing youth responsibility skills at a children and youth day centre.
	Social rehabilitation services for improving the social skills of adolescents with autism spectrum disorders in a day care and rehabilitation centre.
Clients with Functional Impairments	The work of a social rehabilitator in organising leisure activities for clients with mobility impairments at a health and social care centre.
	Social rehabilitation services designed to ensure the quality of life for persons with visual impairment.

When evaluating the topics of the qualification work chosen by students, it can be concluded that their choice was mainly determined by the field of interest of students and the specifics of practical work, and the chosen places of internship. The average rating of qualification papers varies in the range of 6-8 points. For some, the written language and the scientific style presents difficulty. This interferes with the depth of the discussion of the topic and scientifically based conclusions. Considering these shortcomings, lecturers within the framework of their study courses pay great attention to the students' ability to scientifically argue an opinion, to formulate conclusions on particular topic. Because almost all 2nd year students work in the industry (in 2024 – 75%; In 2023 – 89%), proposals for further resolution of the issue in practice are specific (justified, feasible in the institution where the study was conducted). Employers serving on the State Examination Commission positively evaluate these proposals.

In the process of developing a qualification thesis, the wishes of students in the selection of a scientific supervisor are considered, promoting interpersonal communication and, as a result, increasing the quality of research work. Before defending the qualification paper, a pre-defence of the qualification paper is held, during which the academic staff and students discuss the methodology, literature chosen in the qualification paper, and the innovative capacity of the research. Before a defence the Qualification paper is checked in the Unified Latvian Anti-Plagiarism System. The study field committee of the analyses each case of coincidence, considering the recommendations developed by the RTU Study Department for the examination of violations of academic integrity. During the self-assessment period, no cases of plagiarism have been identified. During writing of the paper, both the student and the supervisor pay a lot of attention to it. The defence of the qualification thesis takes place in the form of an open meeting, where the State Examination Commission, each person present, can ask students questions, and there is a discussion with specialists about problems and their solutions in the field of social rehabilitation.

In the composition of the State Examination Commission, half of the members of the commission is representatives of professional organizations or employers in the field; after the work of the commission, discussions on the problems of the topics of the thesis are held, and in subsequent years the recommendations of representatives of employers are considered.

The overall assessment of the qualification paper consists of the following criteria: compliance of the content of the paper with the chosen topic, as well as novelty of the topic of the work; fulfilment of the set goal and tasks of the paper; originality and in-depth discussion of the topic; the ability to draw scientifically based conclusions; the ability to put forward concrete, feasible and well-grounded proposals; the logic of the structure and presentation of the study; language culture; technical presentation of the paper; the materials used in the study and the results of their processing; public speaking skills; the ability to defend their conclusions and proposals; the ability to respond to critical remarks and the ability to defend one's point of view.

The work of the State Examination Commission and the granting of professional qualification shall take place following the "By-law on the final examination of studies at RTU".

The requirements for the preparation and defence of the qualification paper are the same for full-time and part-time students. In all cases, the defence of the qualification paper takes place in the presence of the committee on site.

3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

3.3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples.

Description of the study field's informational resources, including library, material-technical, and financial base at RTU RA and RTU LA is available in Part II, Chapter 3, Sections 2.3.1.-2.3.3. All study programme resources are equally accessible to both full-time and part-time students.

For students and academic staff at both RTU RA and RTU LA, all resources necessary for the study process are available. All buildings are accessible to people with mobility impairments, with equipped entrances and elevators operating indoors.

In the field of study direction RTU RA operates the Research Institute for Regional Studies (*REGI*), one of the fields of activity of which is social sciences: educational sciences, sociology and social work. It provides an experimental basis for the approbation of scientific research, the provision of methodological activities and social services for the solution of social rehabilitation problems. The Multi-Sensor Room is equipped with one of the most modern in the Baltic States. Equipment purchased for the INTERREG LAT LIT project: MODPART LLI-223. (2012-2013) and POZCOPING LLI-163 (2017-2019) for conducting research in the field of social rehabilitation and stress reduction. The national research programme INOSOCTEREHI (2014-2018) conducted a study on the implementation of telerehabilitation in inclusive education, etc., which ensures interdisciplinarity of research: social sciences (education) - medical sciences (rehabilitation) - information technologies. In cooperation with SIA "Embassy of Nature", a warm sand therapy device (table) has been put into use, which allows for providing social rehabilitation services to clients from partner institutions - NGO "Autism Support Point in Rēzekne", preschool educational institution "Rūķītis", etc. Three lecturers from the study field Social Welfare have undergone training and provide these services.

In cooperation with employers, RA provides premises for the acquisition of practical skills in a real environment: structural units "Nursing home - social service centre for pensioners" of Rēzekne state city municipal administration "Social Service", where special equipment is available so that students can practice social rehabilitation methods and techniques in realistic conditions. For example, in the territorial organisation of the Latvian Society of the Blind in Rēzekne, premises are available, which allow one to get acquainted with the living conditions of people with visual disabilities, and equipment for practical rehabilitation. IN the Latgale Committee of the Latvian Red Cross one can get acquainted with assistive devices in case of mobility disabilities.

The material and technical base of RA is constantly being updated and improved. The auditoriums are equipped with new and comfortable furniture, air conditioners are installed, all auditoriums (100%) are provided with the necessary equipment, that is, whiteboards, screens, blinds, etc. All computers are connected to the computer network. The academic staff and students can use open access to the Internet and the Wi-Fi network. Video and audio equipment, as well as educational films, are used to learn foreign languages. RA has available equipment for translating small conferences and international seminars.

RTU Rēzekne Academy students have access to a dormitory, which was opened in 2022 after renovation. It is located in the territory of the RTU Rēzekne Academy student campus, Atbrīvošanas aleja 115. For the needs of sports and interests of students, RA provides premises for sports classes, activities of the dance collective, choir, professional and interest education programmes.

The library of RTU Rēzekne Academy has been located in the building of the Faculty of Engineering since 2014. For its users, the library offers well-equipped premises – a reading room, a circulation desk, suitable individual work premises for independent study and research work. The total area of the library is 459 m², providing users with 30 workstations.

The library's collection corresponds to RTU RA study programmes and fields. The total physical size of the stock is 53298 copies. The latest literature in the relevant sectors is regularly procured, and most of the funding for acquisition is used for the special sector books in English. By the "Rules of Procedure for the Provision of Literature", lists of requests for books are regularly submitted to the library. For a more convenient and faster execution of the submission process, a Form for replenishing library funds was created, which is available electronically in the RA document management system. A significant addition to the collection is given by books purchased or published within projects. A decision on the subscription to the Databases shall be taken at the meeting of the Scientific Council, having previously familiarised the members with the price offer for the subscription to the Databases and the statistics on the use of previous periods. Interlibrary subscription services are available to library users.

In the 2024/2025 academic year, the library offers its users the following databases: School Word (*Skolas Vārds*) e-editions and repositories of methodological and digital tools, Lawyer's Word, iFinances, iRights, iBizness, Latvian Standards Library, Balance Sheet, EBSCO, ScienceDirect, Scopus, Web of Science, and LNB Digital Collections. Databases can also be used remotely. In 2024, database usage was 36333 sessions, 40939 downloads. In order for students to acquire knowledge about the e-resources of the RA library, their use and availability, the library offers classes and individual consultations. The library regularly offers to try out e-resources of various foreign publishing houses.

Using the library's electronic catalogue, it is possible to select literature in a field of interest. For the convenience of users, an e-resources section has been created on the library's website, where links to access databases, scientific articles of RTU RA and other universities, open-access resources, and e-books are collected.

The library uses the Latvian library information system ALISE to record its collection, which provides remote access to library catalogues and diverse information search options, as well as ordering/booking of publications for authorised users. From the e-catalogue website of the library, there is an opportunity to connect to the joint catalogue of national significance, which ensures the search and ordering of the necessary resources, which is possible using the possibilities of interlibrary subscription.

The library is open on weekdays from 9.00 to 17.00. Every year, at the suggestion of master's / part-time students or the management of study fields, the library also provides reader service on Saturdays, but these schedules are not regular, and are adapted to current demand and return to the normed working hours when the actual demand runs out.

Literature available in the library for the implementation of the study field as of 24.02.2025

UDC Index, Field	Number of Copies	Number of Titles
008 Civilisation. Culture. Progress	589	230
303 Methods of Social Sciences	103	39
31 Demography. Sociology. Statistics	1786	848

UDC Index, Field	Number of Copies	Number of Titles
36 Social Security and Social Assistance	819	242
37 Education	5419	2044
5 Natural Sciences	6843	1735
6 Exact Sciences	9878	3590
61 Medicine	1023	525
7 Art	2405	1502
74 Drawing and Drafting. Decorative and Applied Arts. Handicrafts. Design. Interior	588	309
81 Linguistics	4702	1878
82.0 Literary Studies	963	608
9 Geography. History	4400	2171

3.3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific base support, including the resources provided within the framework of cooperation with other science institutes and higher education institutions (applicable to doctoral study programmes) (if applicable).

3.3.3. Indicate data on the available funding for the corresponding study programme, its funding sources and their use for the development of the study programme. Provide information on the costs per one student within this study programme, indicating the items included in the cost calculation and the percentage distribution of funding between the specified items. The minimum number of students in the study programme in order to ensure the profitability of the study programme (indicating separately the information on each language, type and form of the study programme implementation).

The resources and provision of RTU Rēzekne Academy and RTU Liepāja Academy are fully sufficient for the high-quality, growth-oriented implementation of the study programme. The financing of the study programme is planned within the framework of the funding available for the study field, which is described in Chapters 3.1-3.3 of Part II of the self-assessment report. The funding of a particular study programme consists of the funding of the study base, part of the funding of the science base and own revenue.

The financing of the study base is earmarked for a specific study programme and allocated from the State budget funds on the basis of the number of study places specified by the State for the study programme, the base costs of the study place and the coefficients of study costs in the thematic fields of education. The financing of the study base from the State budget consists of funds for utility payments, taxes, maintenance of infrastructure (including provision of data to the register of students and graduates), purchase of inventory and equipment and staff salaries, as well as financing for scientific activity. The financing of the study base ensures access to education and is aimed at the development of the study programme, as it ensures stable and regular financing, which allows to plan and implement the study programme, covers the basic needs of the development of the programme, especially the employee remuneration, updating of the study literature, inventory costs.

The study programme corresponds to the thematic group of education "Health and Social Care", which is regulated by the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 994, the minimum value of the coefficient of cost of studies (CI) is set as "3".

Table 3.3.3.1

Data forming cost per student in the short-cycle professional study programme

Item	Description	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
1.1	Study base costs (EUR)	1,518.98	1,630.11	1,630.11	1,630.11	1,867.60	1,896.98
1.2	Funding for state-funded study places (EUR)	75,860.16	81,656.48	90,984	82,493	93,893	89,347
1.3	Scholarship amount (EUR)	150.82	150.80	150.82	251.98	251.98	251.98
1.4	Sports, culture, dormitory (EUR)	13.52	13.52	13.52	13.52	13.52	13.52
1.5	Number of state-funded study places	16	16	16	16	16	15
1.6	Number of students (as of October 1st)	8	19	19	13	13	17*
1.7	Full-time equivalent of students (FTE)	3.2	7.6	7.6	5.2	5.2	6.8
1.8	Cost per student** (EUR)	22,884.30	10,398.3	11,625.6	15,047.1	17,239.4	12,553.6

*Forecast by the number of graduates and potentially enrolled students.

**Determined by dividing the funding available for the study programme by the full-time equivalent of students according to the OECD methodology ([Education at Glance](#), 2024, p. 343). To equalise financial expenses (which are determined by academic year) per student (the number of which is viewed in academic year), OECD methodology ([Education at a Glance 2024 Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes](#)) determines the arithmetic average funding between two years (Chapter C1. How much is spent per student on educational institutions? (p. 67)).

RA costs per student, as shown in Table 3.3.3.1, are slightly higher than in Latvia and OECD countries as a whole. LV average in 2021 is 12'950, OECD average in 2021 - 12'703 ([Education at Glance 2024](#), Table C1.1. Total expenditure on educational institutions per student (2021), p. 267). Higher financial investments are associated with a smaller number of students, which correlates with a higher coefficient of study costs, in this case, "3".

Table 3.3.3.2

Key items of expenditure	
Item	Amount (EUR)
Total cost per study place per student	12,553.96
Salary per student	8125.97
Employer's mandatory state social insurance contributions per student	1916.92
Travel and business trip expenses per student	251.07
Service costs per student	627.68
Costs of materials, energy, water, and equipment per student	878.75
Book and journal acquisition costs per student	376.61
Equipment purchase and modernisation costs per student	376.61

Performance funding for results in the provision of research-based higher education also includes the financial resources allocated to the preparation of graduates, which demonstrates a shift in emphasis from quantitative to qualitative and is an important indicator of the development capacity of the programme. It provides for specific performance indicators (number of graduates and employment) that have a high capacity to assess the quality of the programme and improve it in order to ensure and improve the competitiveness of graduates in the labour market, promote cooperation with employers, provide internships for students and facilitate job opportunities.

The funding of the science base and the funding of scientific activity (performance) in RTA are not divided by study fields, but is directed toward the provision of scientific activity of RTA by the RTA Regulations on the principles for the distribution of science funding, including such activities aimed at the development of the programme as:

- remuneration of scientific staff employed in the study programme,
- ensuring the co-financing of international research projects,
- the cost of conference business trips and other scientific networking activities (including participation fees),
- the allocation of a coefficient for the remuneration of academic staff employed by the

Institute,

- increasing the workload of scientific staff,
- the introduction of new workloads for scientific staff,
- for purchase of equipment,
- coverage of conference attendance fees and travel expenses.

Funding for the student union is provided annually in the amount of at least one two-hundredth of the state funding for the study process and tuition fee revenues, and fluctuates around twelve thousand euros per year, which is used by estimates developed by the Student Council.

The minimum number of students in the programme is determined by calculation in order to effectively use the financial resources allocated by the state for 15 study places in two study years. For this purpose, measures are taken for the control of student dropout, planning of the number of graduates, and planning student enrolment in the 1st year. A larger number of students is possible only by attracting additional funding in the form of private funding. The experience of the implementation of the programme, however, shows that students do not choose studies with personal funds, as they are not commensurate with the potential remuneration in the sector, which in Latvia is from 733.00 to 1793.00 before taxes, with a tendency to decrease in the regions.

For a more efficient use of the funding available to the study programme, the content of the programme has been aligned with the first-cycle professional bachelor's study programme "*Social Worker*", which allows for the sharing of financial resources, since the short-cycle programme is part of the first-cycle higher education programme.

The total costs of part-time study programmes over the entire study period are identical to the costs of full-time study programmes, since both forms are provided with identical academic programmes, the use of resources (academic infrastructure, staff, support services) is optimal for both forms and does not focus on only one of them, and both forms are provided with the same study materials, consultations, laboratories, career support, and infrastructure.

3.4. Teaching Staff

3.4.1. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members (academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

15 teaching staff members from RTU Rēzekne Academy are involved in the implementation of the study programme (of which 14 or 93 % are elected and one is a guest lecturer) and, when starting the implementation of the programme at RTU Liepāja Academy, 13 teaching staff members from RTU Liepāja Academy (of which 12 and 1 are elected as a lecturer). The high proportion of elected academic staff ensures regular lectures and the availability of lecturers to students throughout the study process.

Table 3.4.1.1

Scientific, academic or professional degrees of the academic staff involved in the study programme

Implementation Site	Doctors	%	Masters	%
RTU Rēzekne Academy	10	67%	5	33%
RTU Liepāja Academy	9	64%	5	36%
Total	19	66%	10	34%

The teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programme have long work experience in the implementation of study courses of the Social Welfare Direction programmes.

Table 3.4.1.2

Academic positions of the staff involved in the study programme

Implementation Site	Associate Professors / Professors	%	Docents	%	Lecturers	%
RTU Rēzekne Academy	5	33%	5	33%	5	33%
RTU Liepāja Academy	4	28%	5	36%	5	36%
Total	9	32%	10	34%	10	34%

For a summary of the teaching staff involved in the study programme, see the Annex No II,2.3.4. Basic Information on the Academic Staff Involved in the Implementation of the Study Field Social Welfare

To ensure coherence of the study programme with the current trends and problems of the labour market, the professional programme employs professionals with extensive academic and professional work experience: for example, the structural unit "Nursing home - social service centre for pensioners" of the Rēzekne State City Municipal Administration "Social Service" Chairman of the Board, Liepāja Foundation of the Centre MARTA (provides interdisciplinary assistance to victims of violence), Liepāja Sports Health Centre specialist in methodological issues, Saldus Municipality Social Service - mentor in working with young people.

During the reporting period, foreign guest lecturers and industry professionals from Lithuania have been attracted: the teaching staff of Vilnius College and Panevėžys College.

The composition of the teaching staff in the study programme has been designed in such a way as to ensure that students acquire knowledge and research skills in the field of social rehabilitation, achieving the learning outcomes specified in the study programme, which correspond to the knowledge, skills and competence of Level 5 of the EQF specified in the Latvian education classification. as well as industry specialists are attracted to ensure the acquisition of current professional skills. The qualification of the teaching staff meets the requirements of regulatory enactments. 11 lecturers have a master's degree, and 17 lecturers hold a doctoral degree. 5 of the lecturers are practitioners in the field of social work with long-term work experience. Lecturers are provided with a financially covered acquisition of pedagogical courses of higher education

institutions in the amount of 160 hours, and participation in professional seminars in the field, as well as internships in institutions, that ensures appropriate qualification of teaching staff and help to achieve learning outcomes.

The research and professional specialisation study programme of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programme covers all the main areas of professional specialisation in the field, and most research is related to the process of resocialization of various target groups.

Considering that the programme is a professional study programme, professionals in the field must be involved in the provision of study courses, therefore the study courses "Professional characteristics of a social rehabilitator", "Social rehabilitation working with different target groups", "Social policy and welfare system in Latvia" are taught by practitioners working in social services. In the future, the participation of practitioners in the teaching of study courses still needs to be increased.

In order to strengthen the study programme and link the programme with the labour market, industry professionals and lecturers are invited to teach certain topics in the ERASMUS+ mobility project. Lithuanian colleagues from the cooperating universities have given lectures on social welfare issues. For example, from Vilnius College (Lithuania) led classes on rehabilitation opportunities in prisons, from Panevėžys College of Applied Sciences (Lithuania) – about the mission of social work to help people change their behaviour, etc.

3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.

During the review period (2021/2022–2024/2025), changes have taken place in the composition of the academic staff. The changes are reflected in Tables 3.4.2.1 and 3.4.2.2. The number of lecturers holding a doctoral degree has increased. Taking into account the external evaluation experts' recommendation "Attract more field professionals and graduates to balance the workload of the academic staff and therefore allow the academic staff to be more involved in the development of the SF, get more involved in the international mobilities, research etc", the programme involves teaching staff with professional experience relevant to the programme profile. Table 3.4.2.1 presents data on the academic staff of RTU Rezekne Academy. In the case of successful accreditation of this programme at RTU Liepaja Academy, its implementation will begin in the academic year 2026/2027.

Table 3.4.2.1

Academic positions of the staff involved in the study programme

Study Year	Associate Professors / Professors	%	Docents	%	Lecturers	%
2021/2022	4	26 %	4	26 %	7	47 %
2024/2025	5	20 %	5	47 %	5	33 %

Scientific, academic or professional degrees of the academic staff involved in the study programme

Study Year	Doctors	%	Masters	%
2021/2022	8	54%	7	46%
2024/2025	10	67%	5	33%

93% of the employed academic staff are elected, which means that the qualification and compliance with the criteria for the position has been evaluated by the competition commission, taking into account the qualification and education of the academic staff, the conformity of academic and practical work experience with the position and the field of science, the results of scientific research work (publications), methodological development (teaching aids, programs, and other materials), the results of student surveys, if re-election takes place.

Significant improvements can be observed in the synergy of pedagogical and scientific work of the teaching staff. Two of the teaching staff employed in the Programme are experts of the Latvian Council of Science. The involvement of academic staff in scientific research is facilitated by the activities of the staff employed in science. In the study programme 7 (47%) of the teaching staff are simultaneously elected to the teaching and scientific position, as leading researchers and researchers.

Lecturers elected to academic positions actively participate in scientific conferences and publish in Latvian and international scientific publications, including preparing joint scientific publications with both Latvian and foreign researchers (see Annexe on Publications of Teaching Staff). The teaching staff of the study programme in the relevant fields of the study programme have presented the results of scientific research in Latvia (RTA, LU, LLU, TSI) in other countries (Lithuania, Poland, Bulgaria, etc.), and scientific publications have been published in databases of scientific articles (EBSCO, SCOPUS, Thomson Reuters ISI Web of Knowledge, etc.). All changes in the composition of the teaching staff are indicative of the growth and development of the program.

The results of the scientific activities of the teaching staff are available to students in several ways:

1. In teaching study courses, teaching staff use the results of their research and guide students in the methodology of research work.
2. Scientific publications of teaching staff are available and encouraged for use in **academic research papers**.
3. Students have the opportunity to listen to presentations by teaching staff on current problems in the field at scientific conferences.

3.4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members, involved in the implementation of doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals or peer-reviewed monographs may be additionally specified. Information on the teaching staff included in the database of experts of the Latvian Council of Science in the relevant field of science (total number, name of the lecturer, field of science in which the teaching staff

has the status of an expert and expiration date of the Latvian Council of Science expert) (if applicable).

3.4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).

3.4.5. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study programme and study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).

Collaboration between teaching staff is an essential quality factor of the study programme, which corresponds to the understanding of quality as defined in ESG 2015 as the result of the interaction between teaching staff, students and the learning environment. Cooperation between teaching staff shall take place at least at two levels. Firstly, as interdisciplinary cooperation between teaching staff in a single institution. Secondly, cooperation between the teaching staff of RTU LA and RTU RA is essential. According to the didactic strategy of the study programme, each course of study is implemented by at least one faculty member in RA and one faculty member in LA. One of the teaching staff members is the leading teaching staff member, who takes on a leading, coordinating role in ensuring the quality standards of the study course. The leading teaching staff member is determined by evaluating the academic, scientific and professional competence of the teaching staff. Their duties include planning, development and improvement of the study course, management, and involving other teaching staff (including practitioners for teaching certain topics) in this process. Cooperation of the teaching staff takes place in at least three stages: to co-ordinate the description of the study courses (by agreeing on the content of the study course, methodology, independent work, assessment requirements, literature to be used in the study course, etc.), evaluating the experience of assessment of study results and feedback on the study course, deciding on the improvement of the study course. Inter-academy cooperation mainly takes place in the MS Teams environment, and individual activities (for example, conferences) are also organised in person. This cooperation model has been introduced with the aim of using the strengths and competencies of teaching staff, providing students with a more diverse and rich learning experience, promoting collaboration and professional development of teaching staff, and helping reduce the workload of teaching staff.

When implementing the study programme in two study locations - Rēzekne and Liepāja, several types of teaching staff cooperation are practised:

- Joint development of study courses, which ensures a unified approach and requirements for

the implementation of the study course in Liepāja and Rēzekne;

- Promotion of interdisciplinary cooperation to ensure an interdisciplinary approach in the implementation of the study programme;
- The management and teaching staff of the study programme cooperate using the MS Teams online solution (Meetings of the Joint Council of the Study Field, communication of the directors of the study field and study programmes, etc.).
- Joint research and creative projects (conducting and publishing joint research in both local academic publications and internationally recognised, citable publications – see the Annex on teaching staff publications for more details).
- Experience exchange events (at the end of 2024, within the framework of the RA scientific grant, a student hackathon on social support opportunities for people with mental disorders was held. The event was led by the RA and LA teaching staff.
- Support system – new teaching staff and invited practitioners receive support from an experienced teaching staff in conducting the lesson, choosing teaching methods, etc.
- Ensuring linkage of study courses – collaboration of teaching staff, collaboration with the programme director, determining study course descriptions aimed at the result to be achieved by the study programme and the result to be achieved by study courses. This procedure takes place according to the schedule for the approval of study plans.
- Common teaching materials: the study course at Liepāja Academy and Rēzekne Academy has a unified RTU e-course platform in the Moodle environment. Teaching staff work together to create study course materials on the e-course platform.
- Regular review of the content of the study programme and study courses takes place according to the schedule of approval of the study plan, performing annual self-assessment of the study programme in accordance with the procedures specified by RTU.

The ratio of students and teaching staff in the study programme has been examined by the methodology laid down by the OECD, dividing the full-time equivalent of students by the full-time equivalent of the teaching staff employed in the programme. The full-time equivalent (PLE) of students at RTU RA has been determined, considering that 11 students in a short-cycle programme and 26 students in a first-cycle professional programme are studying full-time at the moment of developing a self-assessment report, who almost study the content of the first years of study together to share study resources. Considering that in full-time studies, 40% of the volume of the study programme (except for internship and qualification work development) consists of contact hours, respectively, the PLE of students is 11.2. The full-time equivalent of the teaching staff (that is, the ratio of the annual hours of employment of the teaching staff to the total hours worked per year) is 0.8. Accordingly, the ratio of students and teaching staff in the study programme is 14, which fully coincides with the Latvian (14) and is slightly lower than the OECD average (16) in short-cycle study programmes.

Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	Annex 1. Diploma_Diploma_Supplement_Sample_Soc_Reh_LV_ENG.pdf	1.pielikums. Diploma_diploma_pielikuma_paraugs_Soc_reh_LV_ENG.pdf
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	Annex 2_Statistics_students_Soc_reh.docx	2.pielikums_studējošo statistika_Soc_rehabilitētajs.docx
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard	Annex 3_Compliance with state education standard_Soc_reh.docx	3.pielikums_Atbalstība_valsts_izgl_standartam_Soc_reh.docx
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)	Annex 4.Compliance with the profession standard_Soc_reh.docx	4.pielikums. Atbalstība_profesijas_standartam_Soc_reh.docx
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	Mapping of study courses for achieving the study outcomes of the short.docx	Pielikums SR studiju kursu kartējums atbilstoši rezultātiem.docx
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	Annex 6. Study program Plan_Soc_reh.xlsx	6.pielikums. Studiju programmas plāns_Soc_reh.xlsx
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	Short-cycle professional higher education study program Social Rehabilitator.docx	Īsā cikla profesionālās augstākās izglītības studiju programmas Sociālais rehabilitētājs studiju kursu apraksti.docx
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)	Annex 8.2. Organising Internships in RTU.zip	8.2.pielikums. Prakses_organizēšanas_kartība_RTU.zip
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		