

Expert group joint opinion

Evaluation Procedure: Assessment of Study Field

Higher Education Institution: Baltic International Academy

Study field: Law

Experts:

1. Jānis Grasis (Chair of the Experts Group)
2. Dovile Gailiute-Janusone (Secretary of the Experts Group)
3. Dominika Harasimiuk
4. Jānis Pumpiņš (Employers' Confederation of Latvia)
5. Marta Viļuma (Student Union of Latvia)

Summary Assessment of the Study Field

Summary Assessment of the Study Field

Baltic International Academy (BIA) was established in 1992 as the Baltic Russian Institute; since 2006 it was renamed to the BIA. The BIA within the study field "Law" provide comprehensive offer, covering all levels of higher education from 1st level - college programme, through bachelor studies, two master programmes (professional and academic) and PhD programme. BIA has significant experience in study process of law study courses; now the main accent must be done towards internationalisation of the study process, research and mobility, and this relates to all study programmes. If we compare study programmes, then the 1st level and academic bachelor programmes are more developed than master level and doctoral programmes. It should be mentioned that majority of master level courses are identical in Academic and Professional master study programme. Knowledge, skills and competences acquired during studies are the same as for the professional master study programme "Law science". Therefore there is need to make clear distinction between academic and professional Master programme. It is not clear either from self-assessment report or meeting with academic staff, how BIA will prepare students for state uniform exam; therefore more attention must be paid also to professional masters programme in connection with the uniform state qualification exam. Within the Doctoral programme there must be acceleration of the number of defended doctoral dissertations; academic staff must do research works in connection with their academic role in the implementation of the study programme.

The experts have to admit that in the self-assessment there are translation mistakes and also Annexes prepared non-systematically. The expert team did not get on time additional information asked from the BIA.

1. Management of the Study Field

Analysis

The BIA distinguishes strategic goals of the study field "Law" from strategic aim. The latter focuses on providing students with a high-level professional education in law, which shall be competitive at the national (Latvian), European and international levels. The study field "Law" also aims at the improvement of research skills and competencies and the development of the relationship with the employers. Such formulated strategic aim is coherent and corresponds to the goals which relate to: the cooperation with the Latvian law enforcement institutions and other state institutions and organizations aimed at the improvement of their activities by training highly qualified legal specialists; the provision of a higher level education model which is harmonized with the requirements specified in the standards of lawyer's profession and is aimed to its permanent improvement in cooperation with employers and other Latvian and foreign higher legal education institutions. Indicated aim and goals seem attainable and are compliant with the general BIA's Long-term strategy of activities and development for 2016-2021, approved by the BIA Senate meeting on January 12, 2016, Protocol no. 124. Also, the goals of the study field "Law" correspond to the overall priorities for higher education and socio-economic development of Latvia (eg. National Development Plan 2021-2027, National Development Plan 2020, Latvian Sustainable Development Strategy - Latvia 2030 and Latvian Higher Education and Higher Education Development Conception 2013-2020).

It shall be noted that the self-assessment report points at the strategic objectives of the study field which focus on: the provision of the study programmes fit for the needs of the current employment market; incentives for students to participate in the research (both together with academic staff and independent students' research); the provision of theoretical and practical skills to graduates who will be able to run researches, solve problems and develop soft skills; continuous academic,

research, professional and pedagogical development of academic staff and the provision of modern study methods and forms of teaching.

Apart from the general objectives of the study field, each study programme has its own specificity and own objectives. There are five study programmes: the 1st level professional study programme Law Science, the academic Bachelor programme Law Science, the academic Master programme Law Science, the professional Master programme Law Science and the doctoral programme Legal Science. Their objectives are properly defined and correspond to their respective levels.

The management of the study field in Law Science falls under the competence of two vice-rectors: PhD programme falls under the competence of the vice-rector for scientific work, who is responsible for Doctoral department in which the Doctoral study programme "Legal Science" operates. The vice-rector for study work manages the Department of Studies, under which study field part Jurisprudence operates with 4 programmes (1-3 levels). Such a distinction is acceptable, since the PhD programme is by definition intended to develop research and scientific work. PhD programme has its own programme director, while the remaining programmes offered in Riga have 1 programme director responsible for all levels, who at the same time is the director of the study field. Such a solution may raise questions about the overload of the single person with too many duties relating to the management of 4 different programmes (1st level, BA program and two Master programs) and being responsible for the whole study field. However during the meeting with study field and 4 study programmes director, experts were ascertained that overall there are no managerial issues and the operation of programmes runs smooth. The programmes director is supported by administrative staff in an effective way. Branches in Liepaja and in Daugavpils have their own management structure. In Liepaja BA and Professional Master programs are offered. In Daugavpils 1st level, BA, Professional Master and Academic Master programmes are offered.

BIA has clear terms and procedures of admission and matriculation, which has been approved by the BIA Senate meeting and is compliant with the relevant Latvian law on Higher Education institutions. The document provides clear admission procedures for Latvian (EU/EEA/Swiss) candidates as well as for foreign candidates. The mentioned document provides conditions for linguistic requirements to be met by candidates. Admission conditions differ according to the level of study. Also, in the mentioned document in pt. 37 there are rules regarding candidates who have previously obtained their education outside the study programmes provided by higher education institutions and or practical activity in a particular field. Their learning outcomes, upon the request made by the candidate and based on the documents provided by him/her, can be recognized by the Admissions Commission of the BIA. In terms of the evaluation methods used in the course of the study programs, students' performance is evaluated through different methods - tests, exams (written and/or oral), course work - papers, projects. BA and MA thesis are evaluated by a commission. Students finishing their studies need to pass the pre-defense and defense of their graduation papers (thesis). As is indicated in the self-assessment report, exams, including the final thesis defenses are conducted remotely using electronic communication tools (Skype, Skype for Business, or BigBlue Button). However, at the student's request exams may be conducted in person.

According to the self-assessment report, the BIA has developed the "Code of Academic Integrity and Ethics", which shall support the principles of academic integrity like: objectivity, responsibility, mutual respect and trust, exclusion of deception, and fraud. Students and academic staff are acquainted with the above-mentioned rules and obliged to follow them in full. However, there are some concerns about the plagiarism policy, which have drawn experts' attention during the on-site visit. Based on the meetings with the director of the study field in Riga and academic staff it turned out that the plagiarism policy is rather soft, with quite elevated accepted thresholds of similarity and no clear indication of what is considered a plagiarism and plagiarized work. Course works (like papers and essays) are not checked against plagiarism through appropriate software. During an on-site visit, it was demonstrated that the BIA uses a national (state) anti-plagiarism software, which according to the self-assessment report "is recognized as ineffective and economically inefficient

due to the limited number of professionals and students as well as due to the specificity of research and high level of expertise, which can be provided by BIA experts in collaboration with their colleagues in other universities and countries." Such a statement raises doubts about the anti-plagiarism policy efficiency at the BIA.

The website of the BIA provides very general information about the university, its offer and academic staff. Each of the programmes in the study field "Law" has its own description, with very general information provided (general programmes content, skills acquired, type of degree, course length, course credits, study mode, language of instruction and place of implementation). The information about the academic staff involved in the given program is not provided. Overall, the BIA website is lacking a lot of information (like any notion on academic staff, detailed outline of the study programmes).

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

Overall, the BIA provides sound management structure of the study field. The chosen approach does not consist in the establishment of the Faculty of Law, but the study field is managed through the Department of Studies and the Doctoral department. The BIA within the study field "Law" is providing comprehensive offer, covering all levels of higher education from 1st level - college programme, through BA, two master programmes (professional and academic) and PhD programme. The Riga site is managed separately from Liepaia and Daugavpils branches, which have their own management structure.

The BIA provides transparent admission procedures for all programmes. There are mechanisms, which allow for the recognition of formal and non-formal education acquired prior the admission to the BIA.

Strengths:

1. Comprehensive higher education offer in law, covering all levels - from 1st to PhD;
2. Programmes correspond to the market needs, offering among others specialization in the fields of criminal and penitentiary law, as well as anti-money laundering (PhD);
3. Decentralization of the implementation of the programmes - Liepaia and Daugavpils branches - give more opportunities for the candidates living outside of the capital to pursue their academic studies.

Weaknesses:

1. In Riga site - one person is responsible for the management of the whole study field, together with 4 programmes (1st level, BA, two Master programmes);
2. Soft and possibly inefficient approach to the problem of plagiarism. Lack of comprehensive policy, which would cover all not only thesis papers, but all students' coursework;
3. Website, which does not provide comprehensive information about the content of the study programmes and academic staff involved;
4. Thesis defenses by default are conducted on-line. For the sake of academic quality such a for shall mostly be reserved for the situations related to the difficult pandemic situation.

2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System

Analysis

BIA has established a quality policy, however, from the information provided in self-evaluation report the established system is not clear and unified. Quality assurance policy also presented in several internal documents (BIA long-term strategy of activities and development for 2016-2021; BIA study quality management system), however, the provisions of these documents are not commented in

detail.

Study field council plays the most important role in the internal quality assurance procedure, by carrying out evaluation and implementation analysis of the study programme, analyzing the students' learning achievements, analyzing the quality / performance of the academic staff involved in the study field. Process of development and revision of the study programmes is regulated by the Rules "Development, approval and amendment of the study programmes at the Baltic International Academy". New study programmes and their amendments are approved by the BIA Senate. Programmes are reviewed on the basis of recommendations from the parties involved: students, graduates, practice supervisors, international and national experts and auditors, as well as employers and professional organizations always in consideration of the current industry needs.

In the self-evaluation report BIA claims that amendments and improvement of the study programmes is carried out taking into account the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers, which are organized once or twice a year, depending on the participants of the surveys. During on-site visit representatives of all these groups were asked about the surveys and their participation, however, provided information was ambiguous: some students remembered receiving emails with general questions about study procedure, some claimed that participated in the surveys about some study courses, but none could confirm that surveys are organized for each study course. Moreover, graduates and representatives of employers did not participate in any survey at all, even though in self-evaluation report it is claimed that such surveys are organized once a year. During on-site visit members of the group of preparation of self-evaluation report explained that new platform for surveys is prepared and developed, therefore, currently it is a transitional period.

Self-evaluation report provides the list of issues on which complaints by the students may be submitted, as well as the list of matters on which complaints will not be considered, including the assessment of the final examination. However, during the on-site visit it was explained that internal rules allow dispute the assessment of the final examination and that it was inaccuracy of translation in the self-evaluation report. Complaints may be submitted to various persons/units, depending on the issue of the complaint. Detailed information about the procedure of complaint solving is also explained in the self-evaluation report.

In the self-evaluation report BIA claims that statistical data collected by the BIA are regularly summarized according to the needs of the study process (development and compilation of self-assessment of study directions and study programmes, compilation of the rector's report, preparation of financial documents, etc.) and prepared for submission to the external institutions and internal departments. BIA claims that directors of the study direction and study programmes analyze the information provided, prepare the study year self-assessment reports and take the other measures to improve the study quality, however, it is not clear how statistical data are used for the improvement of the study field and programmes.

BIA has identified the standards set forth in Part 1 of the ESG, which require special attention and identified the procedure for internal quality assurance.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

Internal quality assurance system in the self-evaluation report has been presented quite generally, besides the surveys and feedback from various groups (students, graduates, employers), as well as complaints procedure, and functions of the study field council, it is not entirely clear how the internal quality assurance system functions in practice.

Strengths:

1. Detailed procedure for complaints, clear scheme of responsible persons/units, to whom complaints should be submitted depending on the raised issue;
2. Opinion of the students is taken into account, for instance, on the learning mode during the

Covid-19 pandemic.

Weaknesses:

1. Unclear internal quality assurance system and its functioning in practice;
2. Organization of surveys is on paper, but not in practice (ambiguous information from various groups during the on-site visit);
3. Anonymous suggestions and complaints are not considered, which could limit the options for the students to express themselves without any fear;
4. Unclear scheme how collected statistical data is used to improve study field and programmes.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field

Analysis

Regarding financial resources, BIA is mostly concentrating on the tuition fees paid by the students in order to study in the relevant study programmes. Overall, according to the SAR p. 58 and information gathered during onsite visit meeting the BIA management, the tuition fee revenue gathers 85.17% - 90.57% of the financial resource base. From that it can be concluded that the financial resource base is mostly dependent on the number of students enrolled in the study year. In fact, it has been identified that the numbers of students enrolled has decreased in the last few years which also has made an impact on the BIA. However, despite the decreased number of enrolled students, the university has not increased its tuition fees. During an onsite visit in the BIA the management of the Academy identified that the reasons for the decrease of enrolled students were due to a general trend in Latvia as the overall number of private universities has decreased and that not a lot of them managed to survive during the crisis. Taking into account also that 10 years ago during the fat years and before the economic crisis the overall number of students in Latvia was two times larger than now.

During this time period of decreased number of students BIA still have managed to maintain the discount system that they have established. BIA offers reduced payments for excellent students and active participants of the extra curricular activities. The types and system of discounts are set out in the "Regulations on Studies at the Baltic International Academy". The main goal is to develop a student support and motivation system. The BIA offers an opportunity to apply for study and student loans. (SAR p. 58.)

In regards to financing scientific research it is being done through own resources and from EU structural funds to the extent possible. They try to pay attention to the involvement of academic staff in the research, although, it has to be pointed out that the involvement currently reflects rather low numbers of such activity. There are a few professors/lecturers who are active in publishing articles or participating in researching activities but they take place outside their work related to BIA. Of course, it has to be taken into consideration that the received funding is limited and the expenditure of such kind activities include various costs as the remuneration of research staff, professors and associate professors, costs associated with the organization of conferences, travel expenses and international conference participation fees, publishing but it would be highly advisable to increase the activity of the academic staff in this direction.

The SAR BIA outlines that they contribute a part of their expenditure and artistic creation to development and production of journals named "Administratīvā un kriminālā justīcija"//Administrative and Criminal Justice" and "Juridiskais//Legal" (SAR p.58.). During the onsite visit experts found out that these journals are not produced anymore but instead a new journal is started to be published in 2021, named "Juridisko un Sociālo Zinātņu Baltijas Žurnāls" //" Baltic Journal of Law and Social Sciences ". It is also provided in the website of the BIA that they still publish "Administratīvā un kriminālā justīcija"//Administrative and Criminal Justice" available at: <https://bsa.edu.lv/zurnali/> which is misleading information that is advised to be taken out or updated

stating that they used to do publish it but not anymore.

Regarding infrastructure resources, BIA has managed to establish and develop facilities necessary for students to provide the studies. During onsite visit days experts were shown both of the buildings located in Rīga - Lomonosova street 4 and Lomonosova street 1/4 as well as in Liepāja Liedaga street 3 where the premises are shared with RTU. Daugavpils branch was visited remotely and all the necessary resources for study implementation were identified.

The material and technical provision for students and academic staff were seen during onsite visits. Overall, BIA has stated in the SAR p. 59 that in total they have 501 computers in all the cities from which 256 of them are located in the buildings in Rīga, 43 in Liepāja and according to SAR, 64 of the computers are located in Daugavpils. All together the computer numbers in all cities do not match the number of separately each of the cities. If the SAR states that the total number of computers is 501 while calculating the number is equal to 363. So it is unclear what is the right number of the computers they have. The same thing has been identified regarding other information. For example, the number of students enrolled. It has been stated in SAR p.59 that together in all of the cities BIA provides studies for 376 students according to information gathered in 01.05.2021 from which 173 are students in Rīga, 55 in Daugavpils and 36 in Liepāja. While calculating separately the number is different - not 376 but less - 264. The same regards to the number of administration, printers, copying equipment, scanners and multimedia projectors, TV. It is advised to review the numbers and provide precise distribution of the numbers of equipment, employed staff, students, etc.

During onsite visits experts learned that students and academic staff are happy with the library and databases provided. They are seen as substantial for a successful study process for both sides. On the BIA premises students and staff are provided with Wi-Fi internet access and e-mail. In case of need, BSA is forthcoming in buying new literature or materials for study course development. Students identified that the librarians in Liepāja and Rīga are very helpful and try to provide you with all the necessary materials asked. The Baltic International Academy Scientific Library (as of January 15, 2004 in the Register of Libraries of the Ministry of Culture No. BLB0530, the BIA Library Registration Certificate annexed) is a member of the Association of Latvian Academic Libraries (LATABA), which provides access to all LATABA Association member library funds. As well as BIA provides access for students to EBSCO, HeinOnline + FILR, SCOPUS, ScienceDirect and other substantial databases.

Within the framework of various study programmes, the TV-bridge system of the Baltic International Academy is actively used. Media Bridge is additionally equipped with multimedia equipment (projectors, camcorders, etc.) This system allows lectures to be broadcast in Riga to BIA branches in Daugavpils and Liepāja. The system has been created with the aim of expanding the possibilities of the lecturers to reach the widest possible audience and to secure communication during the classes. It is possible to organize seminars, scientific conferences, councils, video and audio broadcasting. The TV-bridge is also often used by foreign visiting professors during their lectures. The students may set individual tutorials with teachers from Riga branch offices via the Internet BigBlueButton.

Online meetings/lectures during Covid time have been seen as the most substantial tools for successful study process provision together with the Moodle system. Students and lecturers were provided access to both in order to continue the study process remotely. During onsite visits students and staff pointed out that it was a successful transition and it did not leave a bad impact on the study process because everything was accessible and lectures were made interactive.

BIA is working on its development plan regarding implementation of new technical equipment. At present, the study process in the programmes is implemented in technically equipped classrooms. There is free access by the academic staff to various equipment such as copying equipment, visual presentation equipment (multimedia video projectors; DVD / VHS equipment), computer hardware and TV equipment providing for teleconferencing.

There is a system established at BIA to attract skilled teaching staff for the relevant study programmes. According to SAR p. 65, for the election of the academic staff, unified, special

approach criteria are set out, which are reflected in the Regulations on BIA Academic Positions (BIA Senate Protocol No. 131 of 23.10.2017). The election into academic positions is based on an open competition taking into account the requirements set for the applicant's academic qualifications and professional competence. In the election of the academic staff, uniform criteria are set, the most important of which are the achievements in scientific and pedagogical activity, as well as the coherence of the respective direction with the mission of the BIA study field. The BIA Rector enters into an employment contract with the elected person. An open competition is announced for vacant positions in accordance with regulatory enactments. The documents submitted by the Applicants are evaluated according to the Regulations on Academic Positions. Qualitative and quantitative criteria for the selection of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programme are set in the selection process in accordance with the Regulations on Academic Positions. The Senate (academic staff, administrative staff, students), the Council of Professors, the Study Council and the students participate in the election process.

During onsite visits, students pointed out that they highly value the academic staff who are specialists of different branches of law. They provide students with all the necessary instruments for good quality studies. In cases of any conflicts they have been resolved.

Taking into account the percentage distribution of the teaching staff, it is concluded that the teaching staff qualification complies with the Law on Higher Education Institutions, which states that "at least 50% of the persons elected in academic positions must have a doctoral degree". In the given case 50.0% of lecturers with doctoral degrees are involved in the implementation of the BIA study field "Law". Likewise, the requirement targeting the is fulfilled - 57.9% of lecturers are full-time employees at the BIA. The salary of BIA teaching staff depends on the types of pedagogical load: classroom load (lectures, seminars, tutorials, semester and final tests) and extra-classroom load (participation in various events, conference organization and management; publications; writing of scientific, teaching and methodological materials, editing and reviewing). The duties to be included in the workload of the academic staff are specified in the Regulations. Volume (hours per year) depends on the academic position.

BIA teaching staff qualifications are monitored based on the academy's teaching staff policy. It involves careful staff selection, regular training and up-skilling. On the experts visit, academic staff provided that they actively participate in various conferences at least once a year that help them to develop themselves and up-skill their knowledge of specific questions of the field. According to SAR p. 68., foreign language certification is provided by the BSA Centre for Foreign Language Learning and ECL Certification, which is part of the European Consortium for Advanced Language Proficiency Certification. Likewise, every faculty member working in the field "Law" has the opportunity to promote their international organizational competence by attending conferences, giving lectures at foreign universities within the framework of the Erasmus international mobility programme. During onsite visit, it has been identified that although such opportunities exist, the engagement is rather low so it can be recommended for the academic staff to use these international experiences and self-development courses for their academic and personal growth of skills.

There has been established a system that supports students providing the necessary resources regarding the needs of the students. First one is the Study Information Centre, which aims at providing counseling to students on all matters related to the organization of the study process, communication with the administration and formation of the teaching staff.

For first-year students, the BIA study process begins in September with the Freshman Week, which includes meetings with the BIA and programme administration, testing in Latvian, foreign languages, and informatics in order to clarify the level of students' knowledge and then to offer studies in a variety of groups, introduction of the BIA library resources, cultural centres, etc. The head of study direction and directors of programmes consider the formation of a common understanding of students about career development issues as one of the most important tasks, and therefore, during the Freshman Week, new students are introduced to the opportunities and topicalities of their

chosen profession and career.

There is also a career guidance system which is one of the tools that can help individuals develop their skills by supporting the transition from one level of education to the next, starting a career, helping make mature decisions about their employment, and addressing social inclusion.

A good support tool for students is the Student Council which decides and assists in organizing student activities, makes proposals for improvement of study work and environment, assists in implementation of various activities, performs other activities related to the BIA work and environment improvement or carries out various activities in the Academy. Extra-curricular activities are organized on a regular basis, strengthening the students' sense of nationhood, promoting civic participation and initiative, loyalty and patriotism.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

Overall, BIA has complied on most of the aspects regarding resource question. BIA has developed a system to determine the financial resources required for the implementation of the study field and the relevant study programmes. The students and the teaching staff have access to the necessary resources. BIA has identified the support necessary for the students and established a well-functioning support system, based on the needs of the students. Students have pointed out that the staff is open and helpful as well as the transition to online studies was smooth but there are also a few shortcomings that have to be taken into account and improved in the future as lack of participation in scientific research as well as mobility and international conferences.

Strengths:

1. Good transition to online studies during Covid-19;
2. Helpful staff;
3. Access to all the necessary materials, databases;
4. Provided internet at the premises of BSA;
5. Moodle system and BigBlueButton;
6. Student support system.

Weaknesses:

1. Lack of participation in scientific research;
2. Limited amount of funding regarding provision of resources due to decreased number of students;
3. Not updated information regarding journals published;
4. Imprecise information regarding the number of students, equipment and staff;
5. Lack of participation of the academic staff in mobility and international conferences.

4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation

Analysis

The directions of scientific research at BIA (Riga, Liepaia and Daugavpils) were not clearly defined in the self-assessment report. They were broadly indicated by the academic staff and director of the study field. However on the BIA website, there 5 areas of research interest indicated, which cover topics falling under civil law (Modern trends in the development and transformation of private law), criminal law (Transformation of Criminal Procedure and its differentiation in Latvia), EU law (Trends in European Union law and influencing it to the legal framework of Latvia), social law (Legal culture of multicultural society) and constitutional law (Vote of the People and the Legislative Initiative of the electorate). Doctoral study programme as the major direction of the in-depth study indicates criminal law, civil law, and international law. As it results from the content of the doctoral programme, there is one specialization that covers issues of criminal, private, and international law,

namely Prevention of money laundering and terrorism. The above-mentioned research areas correspond to the programme offer and are compliant with the general aims, goals and objectives of study field as defined by the BIA general strategy. They are also relevant for the socio-economic environment.

The self-assessment report does not provide comprehensive information about the research activities of particular members of academic staff. It merely indicates that 45 members of teaching staff were involved in the implementation of the study course (17 professors and associate professors - 37,78%, 7 senior researchers - 14,9%, 8 docents - 17,78% and 15 lecturers - 31,91% - self-assessment report, p. 71). Data provided in such a general way does not clarify the number of academic staff involved in Riga site and Liepaia and Daugavpils branches. It also does not provide information about the number of academics being involved in the provision of the study programs and research at the BIA in a given academic year. It is however indicated that out of total number of 45, 30 members of academic staff are elected by the BIA.

The relation between scientific research and the study process is not precisely determined. Again, the self-assessment report provides just general information on the BIA Science Council's general and detailed objectives (p. 72-73). The self-assessment report does not however clearly indicate which research works of the academic staff contribute to the development of the study programmes. The attached list of publications covering the years 2013-2020 is helpful in determining the research work important for the implementation of the study programmes. In particular the research in the field of criminal law and criminology is strongly present at the BIA (examples - teaching staff publications). Research on the topics relating to current developments of the financial law is conducted by study field director. The majority of publications are published in Latvian or Russian languages in Latvian journals, conference proceedings materials in Latvia and abroad (Poland, Ukraine, Russia). It is worth noting that professors of BIA also publish teaching materials and monographs (15 works altogether, published by 4 authors).

International cooperation in the field of law at the BIA seems rather modest. The self-assessment report in this aspect provides information about the Erasmus+ programs which intend for students' and academic and administrative staff mobilities, rather than being true international research projects. As indicated in the self-assessment the BIA participated in projects financed by Polish partners (Katowice School of Economics, Malopolska Agency of Regional Development in Poland, Kraków) - yet none of them were true research international projects in the field of law. Overall, the international cooperation at the BIA in the field of law is developed with the Siedlce University of Natural Science and Humanities in Poland and some Universities in Ukraine (Banking University), International University MITSO (Belarus), Sting Academy (Czech Republic), Šiauliai State College (Lithuania), St Petersburg State University of Economics (Russia) however the latter universities are involved in the organisation of the annual international scientific and practical conference for young researchers "The time of challenges and opportunities: problem solutions, prospects". Due to the lack of precise information about these events, it is hard to determine if it is purely legal topics conference.

Also, the self-assessment report does not provide a comprehensive list of international conferences in which members of BIA academic staff (in the field of law) had taken part. The self-assessment report redirects to the BIA website, where the list of planned and organised conferences for the years 2019-2021 is published. Law related international conferences, which were co-organised by the BIA and international partners included: XI International, scientific and practical conference "Time of challenges and opportunities: problems, solutions and prospects" (V 2021), X International research-to-practice conference "Society transformations in social and human sciences" (XII 2021), VIII International scientific and practical conference Transformational processes in the field of law, regional economy and economic policy: the relevant economic and political and legal issues (2019), X The International scientific and practical conference of young scientists and students "Time of challenges and possibilities: problems, development and perspectives" (2020)

During the onsite visit and the meeting with academic staff one of the visiting professors pointed at the attempt to apply for the HORIZON 2020 project with Norwegian partner

In regards to the BIA's development of methods for promoting of teaching staff's involvement in scientific research, the self-assessment report very vaguely refers to the overall publication activities and conferences in which BIA's academic staff is engaged. There is no mention of real support from the side of the institution - both financial and organisational. There are no internal transparent procedures relating to the financing schemes of the research (like micro-grants, financial support for the publication processes in international journals or publishing houses). During meetings with academic staff, it was confirmed that no such opportunities are established in a systemic way at the BIA in the field of law. However academic staff corroborated that based on their individual request there is support provided in connection to the organisation of conferences. Also, during the meeting with the director of the study field, among scientific strengths of BIA, the possibility to publish in two journals managed by the BIA, was mentioned. Those two journals are: Administrative and Criminal Justice (on the BIA website there are issues from 2015 to 2019, without indication if it is still published) and Baltic Journal of Legal and Social Sciences, renamed in 2021 for previous Baltic Journal of Law.

During an onsite meeting with academic staff it was mentioned that there is a system of bonuses for academic staff who publish extensively. There is no mention on such an incentive in the self-assessment report, however at the BIA website there is information about the BIA system of promotion of scientific activity: <https://bsa.edu.lv/en/system-of-promotion-of-scientific-activity/> The fact that only few researchers were aware of such system raises questions on how it operates in practice and how efficient it truly is.

5. Students of master levels and PhD levels are involved in the research not only through their final thesis, but also they are obliged to prepare academic papers, which are presented at the scientific conferences and published in journals. At the BIA there is a yearly students' conference, which is open to participate to all students. PhD students may not complete their studies without publishing their research. Supervisors help them with finding appropriate journals. PhD students are also provided with the financial support to participate in conferences. There is however a problem with collecting information about the students' research activities. There is no record of students' scientific publications, nor the conference active participation.

6. in terms of innovations, the self-assessment report indicates the Neurocognitive Implicit Laboratory of a multidisciplinary profile, where also lawyers can conduct their research. Yet no data on actual use of this facility was provided.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

Overall the research activities at the BIA in the field of law correspond to the offered programmes. Academic staff as well as students are involved in the research process and receive some degree of support from the side of the BIA. Students involvement is the strongest in Master and PhD programmes. The international cooperation is mostly oriented towards neighboring countries (Poland, Belarus, Russia, Lithuania, Ukraine). The same applies to publications in foreign journals.

Strengths:

1. Strong research position in criminal law and criminology;
2. Students' active involvement in research;
3. Support from the side of academic staff to students research activities.

Weaknesses:

1. Weak internationalization of research activities;
2. Little participation in research projects funded by external sources (national and international);

3. Small number of publications published in Scopus (Web of Science) indexed journals;
4. Little knowledge on the side of academic staff on the the BIA system of promotion of scientific activity.

5. Cooperation and Internationalisation

Analysis

Regular cooperation at various levels with employers is of particular importance for BIA, especially in the implementation of professional higher education study programmes in the field of Law. Exploring a list of cooperation agreements it looks that BIA mostly cooperates with public sector employers (municipalities, prisons, courts, prosecutor's offices), however, employers from the private sector are minimally involved, also employers' organizations are not mentioned. Therefore, it would be useful, as it was also mentioned during the meeting with study program director, that more industry experts would be involved in BIA study process to share more practical aspects and give students latest information of industry trends.

During the on-site visit employers positively assessed cooperation with BIA. Employers highlighted good cooperation with academic staff and that BIA graduates have all necessary skills to perform their job duties. Employers in regions highlighted importance of BIA branches in Liepaja and in Daugavpils for educating qualified workforce, for example, in the following working places: court, police, prosecutor's office. Employers highlighted that students, graduates are able to apply theoretical knowledge in practice very well, so they are satisfied with the preparation of BIA.

BIA has created internship rules (https://bsa.edu.lv/wp-content/docs/2020/BSA_Praksēs_nolikums_lv.pdf), but there is no system developed which allows students to apply for specific places of internship - students have to find a place of internship themselves.

Although in the self-evaluation report BIA indicates surveys of the employers, however, during the on-site visit representatives of the employers could not confirm participation in such surveys and mentioned individual communication with representatives from BIA. Moreover, employers, who offer BIA students places for the internships confirmed that they are filling in the feedback forms. However, these feedback forms are specifically focused on the interns, but not employees. Therefore, feedback forms are not the same as surveys. The need for surveys from employer side is important to improve the study process and to enable improvements to study programmes.

BIA claims that international cooperation should be one of the key elements of the institutional strategy. The

international cooperation activities of the BIA mainly focus on the EU, the Baltic Sea region and Eastern Europe. The main goal of BIA in internationalization is to increase the international competitiveness of the

Academy by promoting international mobility of students and lecturers, strengthening international cooperation and ensuring its sustainability, attracting foreign lecturers and supporting the integration of foreign students in higher education.

Even though BIA acknowledges the importance of international mobility, however, the numbers of incoming and outgoing students are very low, according to the provided statistics in the period of accreditation only 3 students came to BIA for studies, 1 BIA student used Erasmus+ program for studies (only in the academic year 2017/2018) and 11 BIA students used Erasmus+ program for the internships. During on-site visit students of various levels, as well as graduates admitted that they have received information about international mobility options and were aware of the Erasmus+ program, however, did not used it. Majority as a main obstacle indicated their work, as well as family reasons. However, meetings with students and graduates also revealed that many of them are not capable to communicate in English, which also could be one of the reasons not to chose international mobility during studies. Since many students in the field of law already work during

their studies, the option of short-term internships could be more attractive to them, which is also evident by the provided statistics.

Regarding staff mobility the numbers are quite low as well, except for the academic year 2013/2014 during which 11 BIA academic staff members in the field of Law used Erasmus+ program and visited foreign HEI. During later academic years only 1 (or even none) academic staff member in the field of law has used Erasmus+ program. Provided statistics show the tendency that Erasmus+ program for outgoing visits is more used by the administrative staff and not academic staff (at least in the field of Law). During accreditation period 10 academic staff from partner institutions came to BIA under Erasmus+ program.

In the self-evaluation report BIA claims that it promotes the attraction of foreign students by increasing the proportion of courses taught in foreign languages. However, during on-site visit it was confirmed by the management of BIA that currently BIA does not offer courses in the field of Law in English, but incoming students might choose courses in related fields, for instance, European studies. It should be underlined that majority of information provided in the self-evaluation report on the aspects of internationalization is focused on general internationalization of BIA and not in the field of Law. Moreover, no analysis of obstacles for low numbers of international mobilities or options to increase the numbers both for students and academic staff are discussed in the self-evaluation report.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

BIA mostly cooperates with public sector employers (municipalities, prisons, courts, prosecutor's offices), however, employers from the private sector are minimally involved. Cooperation with employers is quite efficient and covers not only provided work places for the graduates, internship places for the students, but employers also take part in the final paper defence commissions. Moreover, employers positively assessed the level of knowledge obtained by the BIA students during their studies. Although BIA acknowledges the importance of internationalization, however, the results in this field are not very positive. Moreover, no deeper analysis is done regarding obstacles for low numbers of international mobilities both for students and academic staff, as well as ways how to improve the results of internationalization.

Strengths:

1. Employers are satisfied with the level of knowledge of BIA students and graduates and their ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practice;
2. BIA provides opportunities for students under Erasmus + programme.

Weaknesses:

1. Low numbers of incoming and outgoing students under Erasmus+ program;
2. Low numbers of incoming and outgoing academic staff under Erasmus+ program;
3. Limited number of academic staff, who would be able to teach in English;
4. No courses in English in the field of Law;
5. Low cooperation with employers from the private sector.

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

Analysis

In order to comply with the recommendation "To support the development of English language skills by students and academic staff", the BIA has introduced several activities for BIA students and academic staff to improve their English language skills, for example: students with a low level of

English proficiency are offered opportunities to improve their knowledge by taking additional English language courses; academic staff with insufficient English language skills are offered opportunities to supplement their knowledge by organizing additional English language courses at BIA premises, etc. However, from the on-site meetings with students and academic staff it became clear that English language level for many of them is still insufficient and should be improved.

In order to fulfill the recommendation "it is advisable to review the comprehensively formulated study objective, tasks and study results" as well as "clearly define the programme niche in the Latvian education market", the strategic goal of the study field has been revised and updated. In comparison with similar study programmes in other higher educational institutions of Latvia, the niches of doctoral study programmes in the Latvian education market and their uniqueness have been identified.

In order to implement the recommendation "to strengthen cooperation with other study programmes in Latvia and abroad (program internalization)", the development plan of the study field has been developed, also the number of cooperation agreements with Latvian and foreign higher education institutions have been significantly increased. However, internationalization of programmes in the field of Law is still insufficient; low number of students and academic staff participates in the international mobility; courses in English in the field of Law are not offered.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

BIA has tried to implement recommendations in the study field "Law" provided during the previous accreditation procedures, however, it could be concluded that recommendations have been implemented only partly.

Strengths:

1. Opportunities for students and staff to improve their English skills;
2. Strategic goal of the study field has been revised;
3. Number of cooperation agreements with Latvian and foreign higher education institutions have significantly increased.

Weaknesses:

1. English proficiency of students and the academic staff is still insufficient;
2. Internationalization of the study programmes has not reached significant level;
3. Low number of the students and the academic staff participating in international mobility activities.

7. Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field

- 1 R1 - Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 21 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction whilst implementing their internal quality assurance systems:

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Internal quality assurance system in the self-evaluation report has been presented quite generally; it is not entirely clear how the internal quality assurance system functions in practice.

- 2 1.1. The higher education institution/ college has established a policy and procedures for assuring the quality of higher education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The BIA Study quality assurance system has been developed and updated in accordance with the requirements of EFQM Excellence Model and the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) document "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" Part 1: Standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance in Higher Education (ESG-2015).

- 3 1.2. A mechanism for the development 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.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Rules of development, approval and amendment of the study programmes at the BIA have been worked out and approved at the meeting of the BIA Senate.

https://bsa.edu.lv/wp-content/docs/nolikums/Development_approval_new_study_programme_09072020.pdf

- 4 1.3. 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.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Rules of assessment of the study results of the BIA have been developed and approved at the BIA Senate meeting.

- 5 1.4. Internal procedures and mechanisms for assuring the qualifications of the academic staff and the work quality have been developed.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

To promote the enhancement of the qualification of the teaching staff, the BIA holds elections in academic positions of the teaching staff, when the results of scientific research work, pedagogical and organizational achievements of the teaching staff are assessed in accordance with the requirements of regulatory enactments. From self-report it is unclear how internal quality assurance system functions in practice; also organization of surveys is well done on paper, but not in practice (ambiguous information from various groups during the on-site visit). Anonymous suggestions and complaints are not considered, which could limit the options for the students to express them-selves without any fear.

- 6 1.5. 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.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

In the self-evaluation report BIA claims that amendments and improvement of the study programmes is carried out taking into account the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers, which are organized once or twice a year, depending on the participants of the surveys. During on-site visit representatives of all these groups were asked about the surveys and their participation, however, provided information was ambiguous: some students remembered receiving emails with general questions about study procedure, some claimed that participated in the surveys about some study courses, but none could confirm that surveys are organized for each study course.

- 7 1.6. The higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction whilst implementing their quality assurance systems.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Study direction council plays the most important role in the internal quality assurance procedure, by carrying out evaluation and implementation analysis of the study programme, analyzing the students' learning achievements, analyzing the quality / performance of the academic staff involved in the study direction. In the self-evaluation report BIA claims that amendments and improvement of the study programmes is carried out taking into account the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers, which are organized once or twice a year, depending on the participants of the surveys. During on-site visit representatives of all these groups were asked about the surveys and their participation, however, provided information was ambiguous: some students remembered receiving emails with general questions about study procedure, some claimed that participated in the surveys about some study courses, but none could confirm that surveys are organized for each study course. Moreover, graduates and representatives of employers did not participate in any survey at all, even though in self-evaluation report it is claimed that such surveys are organized once a year.

- 8 R2 - The cooperation with different organisations from Latvia and abroad implemented within the study direction ensures the achievement of the aims of the study direction.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

BIA mostly cooperates with public sector employers (municipalities, prisons, courts, etc.), however, employers from the private sector are minimally involved. There are low numbers of incoming and outgoing students under Erasmus+ program; the same relates to incoming and outgoing academic staff under Erasmus+ program. The cooperation with different organisations/institutions from abroad must be improved.

- 9 R3 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the development level thereof (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

There are weak internationalization of research activities; little participation in research projects funded by external sources (national and international); and also comparatively small number of publications published in Scopus (Web of Science) indexed journals.

- 10 R4 - Elimination of the shortcomings and deficiencies identified during the previous assessment of the study direction, if it has been conducted, or the implementation of the provided recommendations.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Elimination of shortcomings identified during the previous assessment has been done partly.

8. Recommendations for the Study Field

Short-term recommendations

- | |
|---|
| 1. To update website must with more comprehensive information about the content of the study programmes and academic staff involved |
| 2. To improve procedure regarding prevention of plagiarism and sanctions in cases of plagiarism. |

- | |
|---|
| 3. To involve more staff in the management of the study field and study programmes, since currently one person is responsible for the management of the whole study field, together with 4 programmess |
| 4. To improve SWOT analysis, avoiding contradictions (for instance, regarding international mobility) and focusing on specific aspects in the field of law, not only general ones. |
| 5. To improve constant critical self-evaluation and feedback mechanisms, in particular, conduct of surveys (amount of surveys should be adequate and representative), which should be a useful tool for the development of the study programmes |
| 6. To clarify and make publicly available BIA system of promotion of scientific activities of academic staff (including, system of bonuses, possible funding of publication and conference fees, etc.). |

Long-term recommendations

- | |
|--|
| 1. To introduce procedures for consideration of anonymous suggestions and complaints. |
| 2. To increase participation of academic staff in international mobility, including participation in scientific research, projects, lecturing, etc. |
| 3. To purchase more recent books in foreign languages (especially in English) for the library |
| 4. To improve English skills of the students and academic staff. |
| 5. To increase number of incoming and outgoing students as well as academic staff under Erasmus+ program. |
| 6. To introduce study courses in English in the study field of Law science |
| 7. To evaluate obstacles for the more efficient internationalization and to consider other tools for the improvement of internationalization (for instance, internationalization at home). |
| 8. To expand the cooperation with employers from the private sector |

II. "Law Science" ASSESSMENT

II. "Law Science" ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

First level professional higher education study programme "Law science" is developed on the basis of Regulations of Cabinet of Ministers No 141 "Regulations on the First Level Professional Higher Education National Standard" from 20.03.2001 and Profession standard of the Legal assistant (approved at the meeting of the Tripartite Cooperation Sub-Councils for Vocational Education and Employment on April 15, 2009, protocol No 4, profession code – 3411 02). The programme is implemented in latvian language in Riga and Daugavpils branch. The professional qualification obtained upon the completion of the programme is qualification of a legal assistant. The programme lasts 2 years and 3 months of full-time studies and 2 years and 5 moths of part-time studies form and encompassing 92 CP (138 ECTS).

The aims of the study programme are to prepare qualified specialists for professional activity in the

perspective profession of the legal assistant, able to orient in the laws and bylaws of Latvia, and able to apply them in their work, using the acquired knowledge, skills and competences in their professional work and creating motivation for professional development and continued education in the field of Law Science, as well as continued studies in the academic or professional higher education programmes to acquire the qualification of a lawyer.

The title of the study programme, the professional qualification to be acquired, the goals and tasks, as well as the admission requirements are interrelated and conforming, as it is a professional study program that is implemented in obtaining the qualification of a legal assistant, with the possibility to continue studies in the academic Bachelor study programme.

The experts have to admit also that some parts of self-evaluation report are prepared carelessly with different fonts in the same text, mixture of the texts for different part (for example, text in the 1st level programme self report: "The academic bachelor's education programme "Law Science" of BIA is developed in order to allow attainment of the specified goals of the education program, which is achieved by means of achieving the results of separate study courses in observance of student-centered education principles".

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated.

Strengths:

1. 1st level law education study programme is available in Riga and in branches of BIA;
2. Possibility to continue studies at the bachelor level.

Weaknesses:

1. It is not clear the difference between full time (2 years and 3 months) and part time studies (2 years and 5 months) - what is the benefit for students, when the difference is only 2 months.

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

The first level education programme "Law Science" is logical and student-centred, providing students with practical skills. As it is seen from the Annex, the study courses are of high quality and comply with the provisions set forth in the regulatory enactments. The content of the study courses is relevant and complementary, and it complies with the aims of the study programme, ensures the achievement of the learning outcomes, and meets the needs of the professional qualification of legal assistant.

The study implementation methods, including the evaluation methods, contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study courses and the study programme. The following methods are used: lectures – theoretical classes with elements of active education methods; seminar classes – discussions of current issues in the scientific domain of economics and business (theory and research); unsupervised studies – reference papers, essays, analysis of scientific publications, presentations, observations and analysis thereof, interviews with subsequent analysis; hands-on seminars that give students an opportunity to try out their newly acquired knowledge in a practical application; tests are used for testing students' knowledge on an ongoing basis and allow determining their skills of analysing the studies materials.; business games – simulated court proceedings, role playing exercises in mediation allow students to shape their practical skills; subject-specific case solving exercises, which are to be completed using lecture

materials, regulatory acts and suggested literature.

There is not provided clear information about traineeship (Self-assessment report describes only traineeship starting from bachelor level). Students mostly prefer to do their qualification papers on the legal aspects in different fields – administrative law, civil law, criminal law, international law.

Annex 7 of the study programme show that is in compliance with Legal assistant professional standard requirements.

From study programme planning is not clearly inferred the Cabinet Regulation Nr.141 "Regulations on the State Standard for First-Level Professional Higher Education" the topic about a module for the development of business professional competencies (organization and establishment of companies, management methods, basics of project development and management, record keeping and financial accounting system, knowledge of social dialogue in society and labour law) in the amount of not less than 6 KP in the compulsory content of the study programme. In addition experts paid attention that Civil protection and Environment protection study course is 1 CP, but in accordance with Law requirements for single civil protection must be 1 CP.

The self-evaluation report BIA claims that amendments and improvement of the study programmes is carried out taking into account the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers, which are organized once or twice a year, depending on the participants of the surveys. During on-site visit representatives of all these groups were asked about the surveys and their participation, however, provided information was ambiguous: some students remembered receiving emails with general questions about study procedure, some claimed that participated in the surveys about some study courses, but none could confirm that surveys are organized for each study course.

Students know about mobility possibilities, but unfortunately the students did not participate in international mobility. Also there are no foreign students as incoming exchange students.

The programme is also implemented in Daugavpils branch, and in experts view, from virtual tour of Daugavpils branch, there is no difference between implementation and organisation of studies in Riga and Daugavpils.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The content of the first level education programme "Law Science" is logical and student-centred, providing students with practical skills. The study implementation methods, including the evaluation methods, contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study courses and the study programme.

Strengths:

1. The content of the study courses is relevant and complementary;
2. The different study implementation methods are used.

Weaknesses:

1. Students are not active in the international mobility;
2. The module for the development of business professional competencies not clearly identified;
3. Attention must be paid to the study course Civil protection and Environment protection (1 CP), as in accordance with Law requirements for single civil protection must be 1 CP.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

Methodological and informative resources provided by the BIA are sufficient to ensure the qualitative study process in the study programme through Moodle study e-environment. All study programme lecturers have created the Moodle study courses in which the students can access the study

materials, study course description and study course requirements. In several study courses the students take exams, submit homework and communicate with the lecturer in the Moodle environment. The lecturers provide feedback on the students' work. Information system NEXUS of the BIA plays an important role in informing students and teachers who can receive information about the planned lectures and intended audiences as well as the job and practice opportunities. NEXUS has a section in which the BIA students can get acquainted with the internal regulations, study programmes, practice programmes, news of the BIA. Complete information on the study programmes, study courses, their volume and content is available on the BIA websites as an important source of information for the students and potential students. These tools and systems were highly valued during Covid-19 remote learning period when it was of high importance to continue providing good quality of studies.

The BIA library is aimed to provide the students of the study programme with the qualitative study process and scientific work and to render the bibliographic and information services to the students, lecturers and other visitors. Library provides the access to the electronic databases is provided to the students and academic staff. It is also rendering the copying, printing and scanning services.

Study process in the study programme the takes place in the premises of the BIA buildings in Riga at Lomonosova Street 4 and Lomonosova Street 1/4. These buildings have classrooms equipped with technical equipment for the study process including whiteboards, TV sets, VCRs, camcorders, multimedia projectors. Some of the classrooms are equipped with a stationary multimedia projector, screen, computer with internet connection and other technical means. Library provides the access to the electronic databases is provided to the students and academic staff.

Programme is also organized in Daugavpils branch, which has been visited remotely. Daugavpils branch provides the necessary resources for the programme implementation, however, more modern and recent books have to be added to the library.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The study provision, informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme.

Strengths:

1. Methodological and informative resources provided by the BIA are sufficient to ensure the qualitative study process;
2. Library provides the access to the electronic databases is provided to the students and academic staff;
3. Free WiFi is provided in all buildings;
4. Branch in Daugavpils provide students with all the necessary resources.

Weaknesses:

1. The number of modern books in foreign language should be more in library.

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

There is a system established at BIA to attract skilled teaching staff for the relevant study programmes. For the election of the academic staff, unified, special approach criteria are set out, which are reflected in the Regulations on BIA Academic Positions (BIA Senate Protocol No. 131 of 23.10.2017). The election into academic positions is based on an open competition taking into account the requirements set for the applicant's academic qualifications and professional

competence. In the election of the academic staff, uniform criteria are set, the most important of which are the achievements in scientific and pedagogical activity, as well as the coherence of the respective direction with the mission of the BIA study direction.

Taking into account the percentage distribution of the teaching staff, it is concluded that the teaching staff qualification complies with the Law on Higher Education Institutions, which states that "at least 50% of the persons elected in academic positions must have a doctoral degree". In the given case 50.0% of lecturers with doctoral degrees are involved in the implementation of the BIA study field "Law Science". Likewise, the requirement targeting the is fulfilled - 57.9% of lecturers are full-time employees at the BIA.

BIA teaching staff qualifications are monitored based on the academy's teaching staff policy. It involves careful staff selection, regular training and up-skilling. On the experts visit, academic staff provided that they actively participate in various conferences at least once a year that help them to develop themselves and up-skill their knowledge of specific questions of the field.

The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments.

The academic staff is involved in scientific research in the fields related to the content of the study programme mainly at national and level, but it is enough for the 1st level programme.

The teaching staff use the following forms of cooperation in order to improve the quality of academic and scientific activities in the implementation of the study programme: attendance of lectures/classes, practical sessions/examinations of the another professors; participation in scientific research and scientific conferences; etc.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements. There is a mechanism for mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members.

Strengths:

1. The election into academic positions is based on an open competition;
2. The academic staff consists of specialists practicing in the some particular field of law;
3. Academic staff collaborates in order to achieve goals of the study programme.

Weaknesses:

1. Academic staff participates not enough in international projects and mobility.

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Law Science"

Requirements

1. The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme (see Annex of the study programme) complies with the regulation by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued.

- 2 2. Documents confirming that the higher education institution/ college will provide the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in another study programme or at another higher education institution/ college (a contract with another accredited higher education institution/ college), in case the implementation of the study programme is discontinued.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Alberta College (see contract in Annex from December 10, 2019), is the higher education institution, in which students can continue education in the case of closing of the study program in BIA (First level professional higher education study program “Legal framework of the commercial transactions”)

- 3 3. Document confirming that the higher education institution/ college guarantees to the students a compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the licence of the study programme is revoked due to the actions of the higher education institution/ college (actions or failure to act) and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

See document in Annex No 31-3670 from August 10, 2021

- 4 4. The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

According to the information provided in Annex staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language

- 5 5. The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 6 6. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 7 7. The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 8 8. The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions.

- 9 9. The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 56.1, Paragraph two and Section 56.2, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared according to prescriptions of the law.

- 10 10. The study programme complies with the valid professional standard or the requirements for the professional qualification (if there is no professional standard required for the relevant occupation) provided that the completion of the study programme leads to a professional qualification.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

First level professional study programme "Law Science" comply with a professional standard (Annex No.7 of the programme)

- 11 11. Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 12 12. The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

First level professional higher education study programme "Law science" in general complies with Regulations of Cabinet of Ministers No 141 "Regulations on the First Level Professional Higher Education National Standard" from 20.03.2001 and Profession standard of the Legal assistant (approved at the meeting of the Tripartite Cooperation Sub-Councils for Vocational Education and Employment on April 15, 2009, protocol No 4, profession code – 3411 02).

However there are the unclarity with business courses module, and attention must be paid to the study course Civil protection and Environment protection, as probably it must be least 2 CP.

- 13 13. The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 551, Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 14 14. Each member of the academic staff has either publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years, including international editions (if they have worked for a shorter period of time, the number of publications shall be in proportion to the work period), or artistic creation achievements (for instance, exhibitions, films, theatre performances, and concert activity), or a five-year practical work experience (except for the experience in the implementation of the study programme) in accordance with the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Academic staff complies with legal regulation.

- 15 R5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

In general study programme complies to law requirements.

Requirements (R6-R8)

- 1 R6 - The compliance of the 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 ensuring the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Study provisions, informative provisions and technical provisions complies with conditions for the implementation of study programme.

- 2 R7 - The compliance of the qualification of the academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualification of the academic staff complies with 1st level study programme.

- 3 R8 - The study programme leading to the master or doctoral degree is based on the advances and findings in the relevant field of science or artistic creation.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

In general study programme complies with requirements of the law. The professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated.

Strengths:

- 1.1st level law education available in Riga and in branches of BIA.
- 2.Possibility to continue studies at the bachelor level.

Weaknesses:

- 1.It is not clear the difference between full time (2 years and 3 months) and part time studies (2 years and 5 months) - what is the benefit for students, when they have this option with difference of 2 months.
- 2.There is no active international mobility.

Evaluation of the study programme "Law Science"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Law Science"

Short-term recommendations

- 1.to purchase more modern books in English language.

Long-term recommendations

to think about necessity to have full time (2 years and 3 months) and part time studies (2 years and 5 months) - as difference is only 2 months.
--

to promote international mobility of students

to improve english knowledge of students and the staff
--

II. "Law Science" ASSESSMENT

II. "Law Science" ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

Academic bachelor study programme "Law science" (code of the study programme 43380) is fully integrated into the perspective structure of the study field "Law", ensuring the succession of study programmes and opportunities for growth in the academic or professional master's study programme. It is implemented in Riga, Daugavpils and Liepaja. The academic title obtained upon the completion of the programme is bachelor. The programme lasts 3 years and of full-time studies and 3 years and 6 months of part-time studies form. Amount of credit points is 120 CP (180 ECTS). The title of the study programme, the degree to be awarded, the aims and objectives, as well as the admission requirements are interrelated and eligible, and after obtaining an academic bachelor's degree in Law Science, the students have possibility to continue studies in the professional or academic master's study programme "Law Science". The academic bachelor's study programme gives an opportunity for the 1st level graduates to continue their professional development in the academic bachelor's studies. The title of the study programme, the degree to be awarded, the aims and objectives, as well as the admission requirements are interrelated and eligible.

The experts have to admit also that some parts of self-evaluation report are prepared carelessly with different fonts in the same text, mixture of the texts for different part, for example: citation from academic bachelor programme: "The title of the study programme, the degree to be awarded, the aims and objectives, as well as the admission requirements are interrelated and eligible, as it is a professional study programme that is realized within 3 years in full-time studies and 3.5 years in part-time studies, obtaining an academic bachelor's degree in Law Science, with the possibility to continue studies in the professional or academic master's study programme "Law Science".

Students know about mobility possibilities, but the number of students who participate is still low. Usually only one student participates in Erasmus + programme; the most successful year was 2017./2018. academic year when 3 bachelor students participated in Erasmus + mobility.

Previously this programme was professional, but from meetings with students it is clear that students are informed that programme has been changed to academic.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The academic degree to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated.

Strengths:

- 1.to provide successive studies in Law Science;
- 2.opportunities for further studies in the academic or professional master's study programme.

Weaknesses:

- 1.Students are not active in participating at international mobility.

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

After reviewing the documents and information received during the visit, the experts consider that the descriptions of the study courses are of high quality and comply with the provisions set forth in the regulatory enactments. The programme is implemented in Latvian language in Riga and in branches of Liepaja and Daugavpils. After the visit of Liepaja branch and virtual visit of Daugavpils branch the experts team agree that organisation of the programme is similar in Riga and in branches.

Every year the content of the study courses of the Bachelor's study programme "Law Science" is updated in accordance with the requirements of the relevant industry and the labour market, and science development trends. The existing study courses of the Bachelor's study programme "Law Science" have been updated, including the latest literature, as well as defining clear assessment criteria. The programme is supplemented with such new and current study courses as: Protection of Children's Rights, Combating Corruption and Preventing Conflicts of Interest, Insolvency Law, Drafting of Normative Legal Enactments, Social Rights, Consumer Protection Law. It must be concluded that the structure of the programme is logical and student-centered, promoting independent research activity and purposeful development of practical skills.

Teaching methods are chosen according to the goals, specifics and planned study results of each study course. The lecturers of the study courses use a lecture not only as a passive presentation of material, but also integrate active study methods into it, stimulating discussions and organizing work in small groups, presenting their independent work.

In the self-evaluation report BIA claims that amendments and improvement of the study programmes is carried out taking into account the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers, which are organized once or twice a year, depending on the participants of the surveys. During on-site visit representatives of all these groups were asked about the surveys and their participation, however, provided information was ambiguous: some students remembered receiving emails with general questions about study procedure, some claimed that participated in the surveys about some study courses, but none could confirm that surveys are organized for each study course. Students know about mobility possibilities, but the number of students who participate is still low. Usually only one student participates in Erasmus + programme; the most successful year was 2017./2018. academic year when 3 bachelor students participated in Erasmus + mobility.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The content of the academic bachelor study program "Law Science" is logical and student-centred, providing students also with practical skills. The study implementation methods, including the evaluation methods, contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study courses and the study programme.

Strengths:

- 1.The content of the study courses is relevant and complementary;
- 2.The different study implementation methods are used.

Weaknesses:

- 1.Students are not active in the international mobility.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

Main source of financing of the study process of the study programme is the tuition fees. Amount of the tuition fee and payment procedure for each study year are set and approved by the BIA Senate. Best of the students are provided with some discounts according to the established discount system. Methodological and informative resources provided by the BIA are sufficient to ensure the qualitative study process in the study programme through Moodle study e-environment. All study programme lecturers have created the Moodle study courses in which the students can access the study materials, study course description and study course requirements. In several study courses the students take exams, submit homework and communicate with the lecturer in the Moodle environment. The lecturers provide feedback on the students' work. Information system NEXUS of the BIA plays an important role in informing students and teachers who can receive information about the planned lectures and intended audiences as well as the job and practice opportunities. NEXUS has a section in which the BIA students can get acquainted with the internal regulations, study programmes, practice programmes, news of the BIA. Complete information on the study programmes, study courses, their volume and content is available on the BIA websites as an important source of information for the students and potential students. These tools and systems were highly valued during Covid -19 remote learning period when it was of high importance to continue providing good quality of studies.

The BIA library is aimed to provide the students of the study programme with the qualitative study process and scientific work and to render the bibliographic and information services to the students, lecturers and other visitors. Library provides the access to the electronic databases is provided to the students and academic staff. It is also rendering the copying, printing and scanning services.

Study process in the study programme takes place in the premises of the BIA buildings in Riga at Lomonosova Street 4 and Lomonosova Street 1/4. These buildings have classrooms equipped with technical equipment for the study process including whiteboards, TV sets, VCRs, camcorders, multimedia projectors. Some of the classrooms are equipped with a stationary multimedia projector, screen, computer with internet connection and other technical means. Free Wi-Fi is available in all buildings.

This programme is also realized in Liepāja branch Liedaga Street 3 which the experts visited during the experts visit as well as Daugavpils branch in Dzelzceļu Street 3 which the expert group visited remotely. In Liepāja students are provided with all the necessary resources. The branch has its own library as well as they have their own local budget (200 euros per month) for technical equipment while other resources are centralized from Riga's BIA which provides the newest materials. Students of the programme pointed out during the visit that all the materials needed are provided in the Moodle platform, internet resources, EU directives, laws are available online. Information is available and some professors advise literature to be used, special books sometimes are organized through lecturers and give them to read from personally bought by them and write, copy them out. Students stated that they are well aware of Erasmus opportunity but only one of the current students is planning to go as others have jobs and family they are not willing to leave for mobility period. Although, it would be advisable that students do participate more actively in mobility programmes. What regards to teaching staff, most of the lecturers are coming from Riga to Liepāja for lectures of Fridays and Saturdays. If someone comes here to Liepāja they stay there in hostels/flats and the lectures take place during Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. During experts visit, expert group identified that the quality of studying in Liepāja does not change and is on the same level as in Rīga due to the fact that lecturers expect the same result from Rīga's students as from Liepāja. It can be concluded that if the quality was bad the graduates would not work in well-known institutions in high level positions.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The study provision, informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme.

Strengths:

1. Methodological and informative resources provided by the BIA are sufficient to ensure the qualitative study process;
2. Library provides the access to the electronic databases is provided to the students and academic staff;
3. Free WIFI is provided in all buildings;
4. Branches in Liepāja and Daugavpils provide students with all the necessary resources.

Weaknesses:

1. The number of modern books in foreign language should be more in library.

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

There is a system established at BIA to attract skilled teaching staff for the relevant study programmes. For the election of the academic staff, unified, special approach criteria are set out, which are reflected in the Regulations on BIA Academic Positions (BIA Senate Protocol No. 131 of 23.10.2017). The election into academic positions is based on an open competition taking into account the requirements set for the applicant's academic qualifications and professional competence. In the election of the academic staff, uniform criteria are set, the most important of which are the achievements in scientific and pedagogical activity, as well as the coherence of the respective direction with the mission of the BIA study direction.

The academic staff has knowledge and professional experience on the subject, which is taught in the relevant field of Law Science. The study program ensures proportionality of the academic staff of the professional and academic environment, therefore, creating a balanced team, which is represented both by practitioners in the field of law and academic staff, which helps in achieving the planned goals of the study program and ensure both academic and practical knowledge.

BIA teaching staff qualifications are monitored based on the academy's teaching staff policy. It involves careful staff selection, regular training and up-skilling. On the experts visit, academic staff provided that they actively participate in various conferences at least once a year that help them to develop themselves and up-skill their knowledge of specific questions of the field.

The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments

The academic staff is involved in individual scientific research in the fields related to the content of the study programme mainly at national level; but there is a lack of international research activities, research projects, publications etc. The majority of publications are published in Latvian or Russian languages in Latvian journals, conference proceedings materials in Latvia and abroad (Poland, Ukraine, Russia).

The teaching staff use the following forms of cooperation in order to improve the quality of academic and scientific activities in the implementation of the study programme: attendance of lectures/classes, practical sessions/examinations of the another professors; participation in scientific research and scientific conferences; etc.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements. There is a mechanism for mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members.

Strengths:

- 1.The election into academic positions is based on an open competition;
- 2.The academic staff consists of specialists practising in the some particular field of law;
- 3.Academic staff collaborates in order to achieve goals of the study programme.

Weaknesses:

- 1.Academic staff participates not enough in international projects and mobility.

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Law Science"

Requirements

1. The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with law requirements.

2. Documents confirming that the higher education institution/ college will provide the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in another study programme or at another higher education institution/ college (a contract with another accredited higher education institution/ college), in case the implementation of the study programme is discontinued.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Agreement with Ekonomikas un kulturas augstskola from January 27, 2020

3. Document confirming that the higher education institution/ college guarantees to the students a compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the licence of the study programme is revoked due to the actions of the higher education institution/ college (actions or failure to act) and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The letter from August10, 2021

4. The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

According to the document provided in Annex (dated 01.05.2021; without No).

5. The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 6 6. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 7 7. The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The academic staff complies with law requirements.

- 8 8. The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the contract provided complies with mandatory law requirements

- 9 9. The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 56.1, Paragraph two and Section 56.2, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Descriptions of the study courses are in Latvian and complies with regulatory requirements.

- 10 10. The study programme complies with the valid professional standard or the requirements for the professional qualification (if there is no professional standard required for the relevant occupation) provided that the completion of the study programme leads to a professional qualification.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 11 11. Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Letter from Council of Higher Education from February 24, 2020.

- 12 12. The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

According to the Annex No 6 the programme complies with State Academic Education Standard. Attention must to the study course Civil protection and Environment protection course (1 CP), but in accordance with Law requirements for only civil protection must be 1 CP.

- 13 13. The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 551, Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 14 14. Each member of the academic staff has either publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years, including international editions (if they have worked for a shorter period of time, the number of publications shall be in proportion to the work period), or artistic creation achievements (for instance, exhibitions, films, theatre performances, and concert activity), or a five-year practical work experience (except for the experience in the implementation of the study programme) in accordance with the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Academic staff participate in scientific research. However, the majority of publications are published in Latvian or Russian languages in Latvian journals, conference proceedings materials in Latvia and abroad (Poland, Ukraine, Russia).

- 15 R5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

In general study programme corresponds to the requirements of the law.

Requirements (R6-R8)

- 1 R6 - The compliance of the 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 ensuring the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Study provisions, informative provisions and technical provisions complies with conditions for the implementation of study programme.

- 2 R7 - The compliance of the qualification of the academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualification of the academic staff complies with demands to bachelor level study programme.

- 3 R8 - The study programme leading to the master or doctoral degree is based on the advances and findings in the relevant field of science or artistic creation.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

In general study programme corresponds to the requirements prescribed by law. The academic degree to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated.

Strengths:

1. Possibility to provide successive studies in Law Science;
2. Opportunities for further studies in the academic or professional master's study programme.

Weaknesses:

1.Students are not active in participating at international mobility.

Evaluation of the study programme "Law Science"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Law Science"

Short-term recommendations

1.to purchase more modern books in foreign language (especially in english) for library.

Long-term recommendations

1.International mobility of the students must be promoted.

2.to stimulate academic staff to participate in international projects and mobility.

II. "Law science" ASSESSMENT

II. "Law science" ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

Academic master study programme "Law science" (code of the study programme 45380) will be offered in Riga and in branch of Daugavpils. Degree and academic qualification to be awarded is Master's degree in social sciences in Law Science. The programme lasts 2 years of full-time studies, and it is presumed that language of instruction will be Latvian or English. Amount of credit points is 80 CP (120 ECTS).

The aim of study programme is to provide students with knowledge and competences of such a quality and at such level that after the acquisition of the programme they can continue the studies in doctoral programmes or to improve their knowledge by specializing in practical activities.

Persons who have obtained higher education in law (professional or academic bachelor's degree), provided that the total duration of full-time studies is at least 3 years might be admitted to the programme.

The Council of the BIA study field "Law" had performed elimination of the shortcomings indicated within the Joint expert opinion for obtaining the study programme license within the field, also to the existing three specializations of the study programme ("Civil Law", "Criminal Law" and "International Law"), added innovative field of Law Science - "Mediation".

The title of the academic master's study programme, the degree to be awarded, the aims and objectives, as well as the admission requirements are interrelated and eligible. However, knowledge, skills and competences acquired during studies are the same as for the professional master study programme "Law science".

Although the programme has been licensed quite recently (in 2018), however, the numbers of students in this programme are very low, respectively in the academic year 2019/2020 - 6 students, in the academic year 2020/2021 - 5 students, who were enrolled in Riga and Daugavpils branches. All these students have studied in the programme organized in Latvian. During on-site visit the director of the study field reassured that all courses according to the study plan are taught even for such a small number of students.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The degree to be awarded, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements of the academic master study programme "Law science" are interrelated. Programme has been licensed only in 2019, therefore, the numbers of students are very low. Even though the programme is offered in Latvian and English, but until the accreditation procedure it was implemented only in Latvian.

Strengths:

1. Opportunity to continue studies in Law Science after bachelor level;
2. Opportunities for further studies in the doctoral study programme;
3. Option to study in English.

Weaknesses:

1. Knowledge, skills and competences acquired during studies are the same as for the professional master study programme "Law science";
2. Dynamic of students is very low in the study programme.

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

Programme offers research deviation in four directions of law - Civil Law, Criminal Law, International Law and Mediation, providing students with the opportunity to acquire fundamental and in-depth academic knowledge and develop law.

The descriptions of the study courses are of high quality and comply with the provisions set forth in the regulatory enactments. A number of courses in the study programme is focused at the ability to use research-related skills to perform analytical research in the respective domain of legal science with proper methods, analyse the required data with appropriate data processing software, as well as interpret results and draw up reports on the results of a study in the form of a scientific publication, as well as to present the results of one's research; the ability to obtain, sort and analyse information from both traditional and modern literary sources and use it for scientific research (for example, in the study courses: European human rights, Current problems of legal theory, Protection of the Rights of the Child in Mediation, Cross-border disputes and their resolution mechanism, Comparative Constitutional law, Current Problems of Criminal law). However, it should be mentioned that majority of courses are identical to the courses offered in professional master study programme. Moreover, the titles of some courses are very general, for instance, Current Issues of Civil Procedure, Current Issues of Criminal law, Current Issues of Criminal Procedure, etc. Also, some doubts could be raised if some courses are relevant for the master level study program, for instance, Comparative Constitutional Law, which is even compulsory course for all specializations. Mandatory part of the study programme is the publication of a scientific research article in a scientific journal.

Study programme is offered in Latvian in Riga and in Daugavpils branch. The planning of the study programme does not reflect the possibility of acquiring the Latvian language for foreign students. The note about requirement about attending Civil protection and Environmental protection courses not found.

BIA has chosen to compare the academic master programme "Law Science" with the study programmes at Tartu University and Mykolas Romeris University, however, the attention was not paid that BIA programme has four specializations in very different fields of law, whereas, chosen programmes in foreign universities are focused only on one field - International Law. Therefore, provided comparison is inaccurate and conclusions could not be draw out of it.

Academic staff uses the most appropriate implementation methods:

Lectures – theoretical classes with elements of active education methods; workshop classes with discussions of current issues in the legal science (theory and research); unsupervised studies–reference papers, essays, project development, analysis of scientific publications, presentations.

Practical classes focus both at the improvement of a student's practical and analytical capabilities and the personal, social, interpersonal and intercultural skills. Knowledge obtained through lectures and seminars and the ability to use it are tested by means of review work, tests, practical tests, unsupervised studies, reports and reference papers, which allow evaluation of the knowledge learned during the study process.

In the self-evaluation report BIA claims that amendments and improvement of the study programmes is carried out taking into account the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers, which are organized once or twice a year, depending on the participants of the surveys. During on-site visit representatives of all these groups were asked about the surveys and their participation, however, provided information was ambiguous: some students remembered receiving emails with general questions about study procedure, some claimed that participated in the surveys about some study courses, but none could confirm that surveys are organized for each study course. General numbers of the students in the programme are very low and until the accreditation procedure none of them have used Erasmus+ program for international mobility. Although during on-site visit students confirmed that they are aware of such possibility.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The content of the academic master study programme “Law Science” is logical and student-centred, providing students also with research skills. However, inclusion of some courses raise doubts, because many courses are also offered in the Professional master study programme, some courses are of a very general nature, some are more bachelor level. The study implementation methods, including the evaluation methods, contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study courses and the study programme.

Strengths:

1. New trending specialization "Mediation" is offered;
2. Different study implementation methods are used.

Weaknesses:

1. Lack of differentiation in courses offered for Academic master study programme and Professional master study programme;
2. Students are not active in the international mobility.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

Main source of financing of the study process of the study programme is the tuition fees. Amount of the tuition fee and payment procedure for each study year are set and approved by the BIA Senate. Best of the students are provided with some discounts according to the established discount system. Methodological and informative resources provided by the BIA are sufficient to ensure the qualitative study process in the study programme through Moodle study e-environment All study programme lecturers have created the Moodle study courses in which the students can access the study materials, study course description and study course requirements. In several study courses the students take exams, submit homework and communicate with the lecturer in the Moodle environment. The lecturers provide feedback on the students' work. Information system NEXUS of the BIA plays an important role in informing students and teachers who can receive information

about the planned lectures and intended audiences as well as the job and practice opportunities. NEXUS has a section in which the BIA students can get acquainted with the internal regulations, study programmes, practice programmes, news of the BIA. Complete information on the study programmes, study courses, their volume and content is available on the BIA websites as an important source of information for the students and potential students. These tools and systems were highly valued during Covid-19 remote learning period when it was of high importance to continue providing good quality of studies.

The BIA library is aimed to provide the students of the study programme with the qualitative study process and scientific work and to render the bibliographic and information services to the students, lecturers and other visitors. Library provides the access to the electronic databases is provided to the students and academic staff. It is also rendering the copying, printing and scanning services.

Study process in the study programme the takes place in the premises of the BIA buildings in Riga at Lomonosova Street 4 and Lomonosova Street 1/4. These buildings have classrooms equipped with technical equipment for the study process including whiteboards, TV sets, VCRs, camcorders, multimedia projectors. Some of the classrooms are equipped with a stationary multimedia projector, screen, computer with internet connection and other technical means. Free Wi-Fi is available in all buildings.

This programme is also realized in Daugavpils branch in Dzelzceļu Street 3 which the expert group visited remotely.

This programme in BIA is planned to be implemented in English as well. The accessible study resources as academic literature, articles and scientific papers are in the minimum capacity and amount as the databases that BIA provides to its students are international and provides resources in English language. Experts group concern is more related to the question of whether all members of the academic staff has the necessary level of English language to provide the programme in English. It is of no doubt that some of the professors and lecturers have the necessary skills and knowledge who have also indicated their skills in their CVs and communicated in the onsite visit in English, however, not all of them have the same level of English skills. During onsite visit, the majority of the lecturers used the help of interpreter so it raises a concern of the ability to provide study course content as well. It is advised then to provide English language courses that will teach the academic staff to the necessary level (at least B2) of English language in order to provide the programme in this language too.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The study provision, informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme. During onsite visit, the majority of the lecturers used the help of interpreter so it raises a concern of the ability to provide study course content in english. It is advised then to provide English language courses that will teach the academic staff to the necessary level (at least B2) of English language in order to provide the programme in this language too.

Strengths:

1. Methodological and informative resources provided by the BIA are sufficient to ensure the qualitative study process;
2. Library provides the access to the electronic databases is provided to the students and academic staff;
3. Free WIFI is provided in all buildings;
4. Branch in Daugavpils provide students with all the necessary resources.

Weaknesses:

- 1.The number of modern books in foreign language should be more in library;
- 2.Lack of English skills of the academic staff.

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

There is a system established at BIA to attract skilled teaching staff for the relevant study programmes. For the election of the academic staff, unified, special approach criteria are set out, which are reflected in the Regulations on BIA Academic Positions (BIA Senate Protocol No. 131 of 23.10.2017). The election into academic positions is based on an open competition taking into account the requirements set for the applicant's academic qualifications and professional competence. In the election of the academic staff, uniform criteria are set, the most important of which are the achievements in scientific and pedagogical activity, as well as the coherence of the respective direction with the mission of the BIA study field. As it follows from the table in the self-evaluation report, at the moment 23 lecturers have been engaged for the implementation of the study programme. For 70 % of the lecturers BIA is the principal work place. From the total number of the lecturers 70% of the academic staff consists of 16 lecturers with PhD degree. 7 have Master's degree (1 has been elected in BIA, 6 are not elected), lecturers have Master's degree (30%), one of them has graduated from doctoral studies, and is a candidate of PhD in Law.

The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme. Academic staff: must to develop and publish methodological materials for study courses, to supplement and update Moodle platform, to prepare PowerPoint presentations, distribution materials (summaries, assignments), authentic illustrative material (video and audio), and other materials that optimize the educational process, etc.

The academic staff is involved in scientific research in the fields related to the content of the study programme mainly at national and also at international level. There is not evidence that academic staff have a minimum of B2 level of english knowledge, as english knowledge is indicated by self-evaluation of staff. During onsite visit, the majority of the lecturers used the help of interpreter so it raises a concern of the ability to provide study course content in english.

The teaching staff use the following forms of cooperation in order to improve the quality of academic and scientific activities in the implementation of the study programme: attendance of lectures/classes, practical sessions/examinations of the another professors; participation in scientific research and scientific conferences; etc.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme in Latvian language complies with the requirements. There is a mechanism for mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members.

Strengths:

1. The election into academic positions is based on an open competition;
2. The academic staff consists of specialists practicing in the some particular field of law;
3. Academic staff collaborates in order to achieve goals of the study programme.

Weaknesses:

1. Academic staff does not participates enough in international projects and mobility;
2. No clear evidence that academic staff have a minimum B2 English level for teaching in the programme in English.

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Law science"

Requirements

1. The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the diploma provided in Annex complies with law requirements.

2. Documents confirming that the higher education institution/ college will provide the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in another study programme or at another higher education institution/ college (a contract with another accredited higher education institution/ college), in case the implementation of the study programme is discontinued.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Contract with RSU from february 7, 2018

3. Document confirming that the higher education institution/ college guarantees to the students a compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the licence of the study programme is revoked due to the actions of the higher education institution/ college (actions or failure to act) and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Letter from August 10, 2021

4. The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

According to the table provided in Annex (dated 01.05.2021; without No.).

5. The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language.

Assessment of compliance: Non-compliant

There is no evidence that all teaching staff have B2 level of English. Knowledge of English confirmed by self-declaration. Currently programme in English has not been implemented

6. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

7. The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Academic staff complies with law requirements.

- 8 8. The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the study agreement in Annex complies with the mandatory provisions

- 9 9. The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 56.1, Paragraph two and Section 56.2, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The descriptions of the study courses complies with law.

- 10 10. The study programme complies with the valid professional standard or the requirements for the professional qualification (if there is no professional standard required for the relevant occupation) provided that the completion of the study programme leads to a professional qualification.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 11 11. Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Conclusion of Council of Higher education from August 10, 2021

- 12 12. The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Document in Annex that study programme complies with State Academic Education Standard

- 13 13. The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 551, Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 14 14. Each member of the academic staff has either publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years, including international editions (if they have worked for a shorter period of time, the number of publications shall be in proportion to the work period), or artistic creation achievements (for instance, exhibitions, films, theatre performances, and concert activity), or a five-year practical work experience (except for the experience in the implementation of the study programme) in accordance with the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

According to the information provided in Annex the academic staff is involved in scientific research. However, the majority of publications are published in Latvian or Russian languages in Latvian journals, conference proceedings materials in Latvia and abroad (Poland, Ukraine, Russia).

- 15 R5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

In general the study programme correspond to the minimal law requirements.

Requirements (R6-R8)

- 1 R6 - The compliance of the 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 ensuring the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Study provisions, informative provisions and technical provisions complies with conditions for the implementation of study programme.

- 2 R7 - The compliance of the qualification of the academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

There is no clear evidence that academic staff has enough knowledge of english (minimum B2 level)

- 3 R8 - The study programme leading to the master or doctoral degree is based on the advances and findings in the relevant field of science or artistic creation.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The programme is based on the advances and findings in the relevant field of science, however, there is not enough participation of the academic staff in international research projects. The majority of publications of academic staff are published in Latvian or Russian languages in Latvian journals, conference proceedings materials in Latvia and abroad (Poland, Ukraine, Russia).

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

In general study programme is ready for conducting it in Latvian language. Just now the total number of students are comparative low. There is not clear evidence that academic staff has enough English knowledge in order to provide this programme in English. The academic qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated.

Strengths:

1. Possibility to provide successive studies in Law Science after bachelor level;
2. Opportunities for further studies in the doctoral study programme.

Weaknesses:

1. Dynamic of students are very low in the study programme;
2. No clear evidences about English knowledge of the academic staff;
3. Knowledge, skills and competences acquired during studies are the same as for the professional master study programme "Law science";
4. The number of modern books in foreign language (especially in English) should be more in library.

Evaluation of the study programme "Law science"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Average

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Law science"

Short-term recommendations

1.to purchase more the modern books in foreign language (especially in english) for library.
--

Long-term recommendations

1.to improve english language of the academic staff.
--

2.to make clear distinction between academic and professional Master programme.

II. "Law Science" ASSESSMENT

II. "Law Science" ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

Professional master study programme "Law science" (code of the study programme 47380) lasts 2 years or 1,5 years of full-time studies (depending on the previous education in bachelor level), amounting respectively 60 or 80 credit points. The language of instruction in the programme is Latvian and it is organized in Riga. Degree and professional qualification to be awarded is Professional master's degree in Law Science and qualification of Lawyer. According to the Regulation No. 46 of the Cabinet of Ministers "Procedures for the National Uniform Professional Legal Qualification Examination" from 15.01.2019, the students at the end of studies must pass the National Uniform exam.

BIA council of the study field "Law" made changes in the study programmes of the study field "Law", creating a unified professional master's study programme "Law Science" instead of two previous master's study programmes "Private Law" and "Criminal Law". It should be mentioned that majority of courses are identical to the courses offered in Academic master study programme. It is not clear either from self-assessment report or meeting with academic staff, how BIA will prepare students for state uniform exam.

The title of the professional master's study programme, the degree to be awarded, the aims and objectives, as well as the admission requirements are interrelated and eligible. The aim of study programme is to provide students with knowledge and competences of such a quality and at such level that after the acquisition of the programme they can continue the studies in doctoral programmes or to improve their knowledge by specializing in particular field of law.

Analysing the tendencies of student dropouts of both previous study programmes, it can be seen that in the period from 2013/2014 until the autumn of the academic year 2019/2020, the number of students dropping out of the professional master's study programme "Law Science" is 91.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated.

Strengths:

1. Possibility to provide successive studies in Law Science after bachelor level;
2. Possibility to get the professional master degree and qualification of Lawyer;
3. Opportunities for further studies in the doctoral study programme.

Weaknesses:

1. A very high number of drop-out of the students;
2. Risks of students to pass state uniform exam.

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

The descriptions of the study courses are of high quality and comply with the provisions set forth in the regulatory enactments. Most study courses provide the ability to independently use theory, methods and problem-solving skills to carry out research activities or highly qualified professional functions; the ability to reasonably explain and discuss complex or systemic aspects of the relevant branch or professional field of law with specialists. In the study programme plans (all variants) as state examination mentioned master`s thesis (16 KP) and state exam (4 KP), but Cabinet Regulation No. 512 "Regulations on the State Standard for Second-Level Professional Higher Education" provides that elaboration and defense of a master's thesis or diploma thesis (diploma project) has to be at least 20 CP. It is not clear from Self-assessment report and description of the programme (also from meetings with academic staff) how will be organized internship for students (both - long and short duration). On the one hand the content of the programme corresponds to the requirements for Lawyer professional standard (Annex No7) of the self-evaluation of the study programme; on other hand it is not clear how the students will be prepared and trained for uniform qualification exam (Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No.46 from January 15, 2019). The mentioned exam is complicated enough and ask from students interdisciplinary knowledges of different law fields (for example, international public law, international private law and EU law). So, a special interdisciplinary training must be provided before the mentioned exam.

It should be mentioned that majority of courses are identical to the courses offered in Academic master study programme.

Academic staff uses the most appropriate implementation methods:

Lectures – theoretical classes with elements of active education methods; workshop classes with discussions of current issues in the legal science (theory and research); unsupervised studies–reference papers, essays, project development, analysis of scientific publications, presentations.

Practical classes focus both at the improvement of a student's practical and analytical capabilities and the personal, social, interpersonal and intercultural skills. Knowledge obtained through lectures and seminars and the ability to use it are tested by means of review work, tests, practical tests, unsupervised studies, reports and reference papers, which allow evaluation of the knowledge learned during the study process.

In the self-evaluation report BIA claims that amendments and improvement of the study programmes is carried out taking into account the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers, which are organized once or twice a year, depending on the participants of the surveys. During on-site visit representatives of all these groups were asked about the surveys and their participation, however, provided information was ambiguous: some students remembered receiving emails with general questions about study procedure, some claimed that participated in the surveys about some study courses, but none could confirm that surveys are organized for each study course. Students know about mobility possibilities, but the number of students who participate is still low: maximum one master level student participates in mobility; the last two academic years no one participated in the mobility.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The content of the professional master study programme “Law Science” is logical and student-centred, providing students also with research skills. The study implementation methods, including the evaluation methods, contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study courses and the study programme. It should be mentioned that majority of courses are identical to the courses offered in Academic master study programme. Interdisciplinary training must be provided before uniform qualification exam.

Strengths:

- 1.The content of the study courses is relevant and complementary;
- 2.The different study implementation methods are used.

Weaknesses:

- 1.Lack of differentiation in courses offered for Academic master study programme and Professional master study programme;
2. Final examination Master`s thesis 16 KP;
3. Internship organization differences between long and short study programme variants;
4. Students are not active in the international mobility;
5. It is not clear how students will be prepared for uniform qualification exam.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

Main source of financing of the study process of the study programme is the tuition fees. Amount of the tuition fee and payment procedure for each study year are set and approved by the BIA Senate. Best of the students are provided with some discounts according to the established discount system. Methodological and informative resources provided by the BIA are sufficient to ensure the qualitative study process in the study programme through Moodle study e-environment All study programme lecturers have created the Moodle study courses in which the students can access the study materials, study course description and study course requirements. In several study courses the students take exams, submit homework and communicate with the lecturer in the Moodle environment. The lecturers provide feedback on the students' work. Information system NEXUS of the BIA plays an important role in informing students and teachers who can receive information about the planned lectures and intended audiences as well as the job and practice opportunities. NEXUS has a section in which the BIA students can get acquainted with the internal regulations, study programmes, practice programmes, news of the BIA. Complete information on the study programmes, study courses, their volume and content is available on the BIA websites as an important source of information for the students and potential students. These tools and systems were highly valued during Covid -19 remote learning period when it was of high importance to continue providing good quality of studies.

The BIA library is aimed to provide the students of the study programme with the qualitative study process and scientific work and to render the bibliographic and information services to the students, lecturers and other visitors. Library provides the access to the electronic databases is provided to the students and academic staff. It is also rendering the copying, printing and scanning services.

Study process in the study programme the takes place in the premises of the BIA buildings in Riga at Lomonosova Street 4 and Lomonosova Street 1/4. These buildings have classrooms equipped with technical equipment for the study process including whiteboards, TV sets, VCRs, camcorders, multimedia projectors. Some of the classrooms are equipped with a stationary multimedia projector, screen, computer with internet connection and other technical means. Free Wi-Fi is available in all

buildings.

As there are not huge difference between academic and master programme then resources and provisions of the study programme are very similar.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The study provision, informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme.

Strengths:

1. Methodological and informative resources provided by the BIA are sufficient to ensure the qualitative study process;
2. Library provides the access to the electronic databases is provided to the students and academic staff;
3. Free WIFI is provided in all buildings.

Weaknesses:

1. The number of modern books in foreign language should be more in library.

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

There is a system established at BIA to attract skilled teaching staff for the relevant study programmes. For the election of the academic staff, unified, special approach criteria are set out, which are reflected in the Regulations on BIA Academic Positions (BIA Senate Protocol No. 131 of 23.10.2017). The election into academic positions is based on an open competition taking into account the requirements set for the applicant's academic qualifications and professional competence. In the election of the academic staff, uniform criteria are set, the most important of which are the achievements in scientific and pedagogical activity, as well as the coherence of the respective direction with the mission of the BIA study field. As it follows from the table in the self report, at the moment 25 lecturers have been engaged for the implementation of the study programme "Law Science". For 71 % of the lecturers BIA is the principal work place. From the total number of the lecturers 68 % of the academic staff consists of 17 lecturers with PhD degree. 8 have Master's degree (2 are elected in BIA, 6 are not elected), lecturers have Master's degree (32 %), one of them has graduated from doctoral studies, and is a candidate of PhD in Law.

The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme. Academic staff: must to develop and publish methodological materials for study courses, to supplement and update MOODLE platform, to prepare PowerPoint presentations, distribution materials (summaries, assignments), authentic illustrative material (video and audio), and other materials that optimize the educational process, etc.

The academic staff is involved in scientific research in the fields related to the content of the study programme mainly at national and also at international level. There is not enough participation of the academic staff in international research projects: there are individual scientific publications, but lack of participation in the international research projects.

The teaching staff use the following forms of cooperation in order to improve the quality of academic and scientific activities in the implementation of the study programme: attendance of lectures/classes, practical sessions/examinations of the another professors; participation in scientific

research and scientific conferences; etc.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements. There is a mechanism for mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members.

Strengths:

- 1.The election into academic positions is based on an open competition;
- 2.The academic staff consists of specialists practising in the some particular field of law;
- 3.Academic staff collaborates in order to achieve goals of the study programme.

Weaknesses:

- 1.Academic staff participates not enough in international projects and mobility; there are individual scientific research, but no participation in the international research projects.

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Law Science"

Requirements

- 1 1. The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of diploma in Annex corresponds to the legal requirements.

- 2 2. Documents confirming that the higher education institution/ college will provide the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in another study programme or at another higher education institution/ college (a contract with another accredited higher education institution/ college), in case the implementation of the study programme is discontinued.

Assessment of compliance: Non-compliant

Contract with RSU apply only to academic master students.

- 3 3. Document confirming that the higher education institution/ college guarantees to the students a compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the licence of the study programme is revoked due to the actions of the higher education institution/ college (actions or failure to act) and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Letter from August 10, 2021

- 4 4. The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The teaching staff is proficient in the latvian language.

- 5 5. The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 6 6. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 7 7. The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 8 8. The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The provided study agreement in Annex complies with mandatory provisions.

- 9 9. The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 56.1, Paragraph two and Section 56.2, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The descriptions of the study courses complies with law requirements.

- 10 10. The study programme complies with the valid professional standard or the requirements for the professional qualification (if there is no professional standard required for the relevant occupation) provided that the completion of the study programme leads to a professional qualification.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

According to the Annex No 7. However, it is not clear how the students will be prepared and trained for uniform qualification exam (Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No.46 from January 15, 2019).

- 11 11. Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 12 12. The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study programme complies with Professional Higher Education Standard

- 13 13. The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 551, Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 14 14. Each member of the academic staff has either publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years, including international editions (if they have worked for a shorter period of time, the number of publications shall be in proportion to the work period), or artistic creation achievements (for instance, exhibitions, films, theatre performances, and concert activity), or a five-year practical work experience (except for the experience in the implementation of the study programme) in accordance with the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Members of the academic staff participates in scientific activities. However, the majority of publications are published in Latvian or Russian languages in Latvian journals, conference proceedings materials in Latvia and abroad (Poland, Ukraine, Russia).

- 15 R5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

In general the study programme is in conformity with Regulation Nr.512 of the Cabinet of ministers) "Regulations on the State Standard for Second-Level Professional Higher Education".

Requirements (R6-R8)

- 1 R6 - The compliance of the 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 ensuring the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Study provisions, informative provisions and technical provisions complies with conditions for the implementation of study programme.

- 2 R7 - The compliance of the qualification of the academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The academic staff comply with regulatory enactments.

- 3 R8 - The study programme leading to the master or doctoral degree is based on the advances and findings in the relevant field of science or artistic creation.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The programme is based on the advances and findings in the relevant field of science, however, there is not enough participation of the academic staff in international research projects. The majority of publications of academic staff are published in Latvian or Russian languages in Latvian journals, conference proceedings materials in Latvia and abroad (Poland, Ukraine, Russia).

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated. On the one hand the content of the programme corresponds to the requirements for Lawyer professional standard (Annex No7) of the self-evaluation

of the study programme; on other hand it is not clear how the students will be prepared and trained for uniform qualification exam (Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No.46 from January 15, 2019). The mentioned exam is complicated enough and ask from students interdisciplinary knowledges of different law fields (for example, international public law, international private law and EU law). So, a special interdisciplinary training must be provided before the mentioned exam.

Strengths:

1. Possibility to provide successive studies in Law Science after bachelor level;
2. Possibility to get professional master qualification;
3. Opportunities for further studies in the doctoral study programme.

Weaknesses:

1. Majority of courses are identical to the courses offered in Academic master study programme;
2. A very high number of drop-out of the students;
2. Risks of students to pass state uniform exam.

Evaluation of the study programme "Law Science"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Average

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Law Science"

Short-term recommendations

- | |
|---|
| 1.to purchase more modern books in foreign language(especially in english) for library. |
|---|

Long-term recommendations

- | |
|--|
| 1.Attention must be paid to the process of preparation of students for uniform state qualification exam. |
| 2.International mobility by students must be promoted; the same relates to the international mobility of academic staff. |
| 3.To make a clear distinction between academic and professional master study programme. |

II. "Legal Science" ASSESSMENT

II. "Legal Science" ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

Doctoral study programme at the BIA is implemented at Riga BIA site. The degree to be acquired upon the completion of the programme is Scientific doctoral degree Doctor of Science (PhD) in Law Science.

The programme is offered as a full-time studies. The programme lasts 3 years and encompassing 120 credit points (180 ECTS).

The programme is offered in English or Latvian. The programme's aims are defined as follows: provision of the high-level study in law, which intends to prepare highly qualified law scientists

recognized in Latvia and internationally. The programme aims at: deepening the knowledge and research skills in law at the theoretical level, especially in chosen sub-branch of law; improving research competencies; preparing for the independent research, which would lead towards the doctoral dissertation; developing pedagogical skills. The above-mentioned aims are defined appropriately to the 8th level of qualification (NKI/EKI). The aim of the study properly translates into the study programme objectives, which are: acquisition of modern theoretical concepts necessary to identify modern theoretical and practical tendencies in law; development of skills to independently run scientific research, publish and present reports on research results in Latvia and internationally; ensurance of the acquisition of proper research methodological skills; participation in research projects and promotion of scientific research at the doctoral level in Latvia and abroad; development of pedagogical skills.

Learning outcomes are properly divided into knowledge, skills and competencies and are formulated in a clear way and correspond to the aims and objectives of the programme.

The programme final examination leading to the completion of the study programme consists in a doctoral examination and approval of the doctoral thesis project. The programme does not end with the PhD thesis defense, which is a separate procedure leading to the acquisition of the PhD degree. Even if the programme itself does not end with the defense of the thesis, it shall effectively prepare candidate to obtain the PhD degree in the future. Against this background it shall be stated that the number of the PhD degree holders who have had completed the Doctoral study programme at the BIA is very low.

Admission requirements comply with the aims and objectives of the programme. It is thus rightly required that the candidate has master's degree in law or equivalent with the education in law; each candidate must also provide appropriate evidence of scientific, pedagogical and / or professional activity.

According to the self-evaluation report, due to stricter rules of admission concerning the scrutiny of the English language knowledge together with the appropriate quality level of prior education, the number of enrolled students and matriculated students to the program is slowly decreasing, with only 8 students being matriculated in 2020/2021.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The general indicators of the programme are appropriate and coherent. Aims translate into objectives. Learning outcomes correspond to the aims and objectives. Admission requirements are defined properly in a way that corresponds to the 8th level of the competence.

Strengths:

1. Well defined aims and objectives;
2. Properly defined learning outcomes which correspond to the 8th level of competence.

Weaknesses:

1. Low number of students;
2. Low number of graduates completing PhD degree.

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

The Doctoral study programme "Legal science" consists in four parts: Obligatory part (part A) with four courses (Legal theory and legal methodology, Scientific activities and research methodology, University pedagogy and development of higher education systems, Legal foreign language); Pedagogical work (part A) with three courses; Partly Optional Part (part B) with 9 courses (Criminal

law, Criminal Law Procedure, Prevention of money laundering and terrorism - I (criminal law aspects), II (private law aspects), III (international aspects), Civil law, Civil procedure law, Public international law, Private international law; Optional part (part C) with 14 courses.

The programme contains general courses in civil law, criminal law, public international law and private international law as partly optional ones. These are the courses that are normally offered at the BA and Master level in law. The course descriptions should stress the more advanced level of those courses offered at the PhD level in comparison with lower levels of academic competencies.

The programme offered by the BIA emphasizes the training of specialists in civil law, criminal law, international law, (students are choosing their field of specialization) paying attention to the development of these fields in Latvia and in other European Union countries and in the world. In addition, the PhD programme emphasizes special attention to a globally important aspect - the issue of fighting money laundering in several dimension (criminal, private and international).

Overall the content of the PhD programme is relevant and complementary, and it complies with the aims of the study programme, ensures the achievement of the learning outcomes, and meets the needs of the relevant industry and the scientific trends. But not mentioned the possibility to attend the courses on Civil defense and Environmental protection. Topics of doctoral students research correspond to the BIA research aims and objectives.

The courses are implemented in Latvian. During the onsite visit experts were ascertained that even with one foreign English-speaking student courses can also be offered in English. Such a situation, however proving the student centered-approach, seems rather doubtful in terms of its economic viability. It may also raise doubts as to the quality of student's experience at the BIA doctoral programme for foreign students. Documentation provided to experts proves that the doctoral programme is capable of being implemented in English - programme documents, learning outcomes, course descriptions are all prepared in English and Latvian. Yet in practical terms it is difficult to assess the quality of the programme offered in English, since just one English-speaking student is enrolled. No reference is made to the acquisition of the Latvian language for foreign students.

Courses are implemented through lectures, seminars and practical lessons. Important part of the implementation of the courses is each student's independent work. The evaluation methods which are used cover: attendance and participation, independent report, tasks and final test. Course descriptions do not provide detailed information regarding the type of tests which are used by professors. However, during onsite visit experts were informed that professors assess PhD students through open essay-like questions and case studies which seem the most appropriate at the 8th level programme. An important part of students work is research - PhD student in order to complete the programme need to collect all credit points, which is summarized by the submission and approval of the developed doctoral thesis at the programme council meeting. It is also mandatory to provide information on publications of scientific articles (min. 3) and confirmations on presentations at international conferences (min. 2) (p. 112 of the self-assessment report).

The programme is implemented with the respect of the student-centered learning and teaching principles.

Students surveys are not obligatory and have rather general scope. Students usually do not evaluate individual professors and courses.

In terms of the international mobilities is shall be concluded that PhD students do not take part in such mobilities. Also, there were no incoming students at the PhD level during the reporting period.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

Implementation of the programme overall in general corresponds to the aims, objectives of the programme and is intended to contribute to the achievements of learning outcomes by students, however, as mentioned before some courses are more for bachelor or master level. The content of the programme provides advanced courses, which allow students to specialize in chosen disciplines.

Strengths:

1. Properly defined learning outcomes;
2. Good structure of the programme;
3. Involvement of students into research;
4. PhD students' research topics which comply with the BIA research areas.

Weaknesses:

1. Low level of internationalization (1 foreign student);
2. Overall decreasing number of students;
3. Course descriptions, which do not stress the advanced level of taught content (in particular in case of civil law, criminal law, international public law, International private law);
4. Course descriptions, which do not clearly indicate the exact type of assessment methods (course descriptions operate with the same general types of assessment - exam test, task, without mentioning which kind of task, and which kind of tests);
5. No reference about the acquisition of the Latvian language for foreign students and to attend the courses on Civil defense and Environmental protection.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

The BIA's provision of the doctoral study programme is ensured through sound scientific support for the side of the involved teaching staff. Students during the onsite meeting were stressing good cooperation between students and supervisors/professors. Only highly qualified lecturers are mainly involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme: professors, associate professors, as well as senior lecturers with a doctoral degree and relevant publications. Four professors, three associate professors, one associate visiting professor, one visiting professor, four assistant professors, 3 visiting associate professors and three leading researchers were involved in the implementation of the programme.

The BIA's site in Riga has its own Library, with sufficient resources (also available in electronic versions, accessible through legal databases). Regarding the methodological support of the study programme, BIA has established scientific library fund. During an onsite meeting with graduates it was stressed that if necessary, the orders to purchase books and materials necessary for the research can be placed at the library. The same applies to the inter-library book loans. Academic staff and students have the opportunity to receive passwords for EBSCO, ScienceDirect and Scopus databases in the library, which can be used remotely.

In terms of infrastructure, the study process for the doctoral students takes place in two buildings in Riga, Lomonosova Street 4 and Lomonosova Street 1/4. The premises have auditoriums, which are equipped with appropriate study technical aids - whiteboards, television set, video recorder, video camera, multimedia projector. Many auditoriums are equipped with a stationary multimedia projector, screen, computer with Internet connection and other technical means that meet modern requirements. Free Wi-Fi is available in all buildings.

In terms of information technology - BIA uses various forms of modern technologies to support studies: use of computers in the study process and professional development, internal information system NEXUS, Internet, standard and special computer programs, audio / video tools, office equipment, auditorium technical equipment (stationary and portable multimedia projectors). During the pandemic students were provided with online classes via BlueButton and Moodle platform, which is used as the basic students' resources platform. Regular maintenance work is done to improve the functionality of the internal information system. Work is continuing on the modernization for more efficient study process. In order to ensure better quality electronic communication, the staff and students of the Academy use the e-mail system offered by BIA.

The BIA study e-environment Moodle is of high significance and has been used to streamline the study process and to modernize student-lecturer communication. The lecturers of the doctoral study programme in the Moodle study e-environment have created websites for the respective study courses, where students have access to descriptions of study courses, lecturer's requirements for study course acquisition and separate study materials, as well as forms of communication with lecturers, for example, in several study courses students are provided with the opportunity to take examinations, submit individual assignments and communicate with the lecturer in the Moodle environment. Lecturers provide feedback on students' achievements. The e-learning environment gained special significance in the circumstances of the state of emergency declared in the country due to the COVID-19 disease control and to implement the study process remotely in accordance with the relevant requirements of regulatory enactments.

Regarding the financial supply of the doctoral study programme, the financing of the programme relies on the tuition fee. The amount of the tuition fee and the procedure for payment for each academic year is determined and approved by the Senate of the Academy. Students may pay for the entire programme as a whole; -for one study year; - for one semester; - for one month, in accordance with the payment schedule provided for in the study agreement, strictly observing the payment terms and amounts to be paid.

BIA doctoral programme develops in accordance with Latvia objectives in the implementation of common strategies of the European Union since the study programme offers study courses that are in line with the main elements of this strategy, which makes this doctoral study programme competitive in Latvia if we look at the resources provided for the students in according to achieve the aims of the doctoral study programme.

The programme is also planned to be implemented in the English to attract the students from abroad to this programme.

The BIA cooperates with other universities in Latvia, which offer doctoral programmes (Daugavpils University and Riga Stradins University). The result of such a cooperation is the organisation of the annual conference "Transformation Process in Law, Regional Economy and Economic Policy: Current Problems of Economic-Political and Legal Relations". BIA PhD students take actively part in the academic life across Latvia - they participate in conferences, publish articles at other universities like Daugavpils University, TURĪBA Business School, Stradiņš University. It should be noted that BIA welcomes visiting professors from foreign partner universities, who give lectures which are open also for PhD students. According to self-assessment report 7 such mobilities took place (p. 156). International cooperation is ensured with foreign lecturers, although, it has to be noted that the last foreign lecturer was visiting in 2019 that is 2 years ago. The foreign lecturers are mostly from Poland. However, the Self-assessment report does not clarify if indicated mobilities were dedicated solely to PhD students, or generally to BIA law students of all levels. In terms of outgoing mobilities - members of teaching staff at the PhD programme participated in 9 mobilities mostly at Polish and Lithuanian universities.

The doctoral programme actively cooperates with scientific institutions and structures in Latvia and other countries. First, cooperation with Latvia higher education institutions, where analogous doctoral programmes are implemented. BIA doctoral students and lecturers participate in conferences of the University of Latvia, Daugavpils University, TURĪBA Business School, Stradiņš University, where the Latvia scientific community and participants from other countries are introduced to the research results. Cooperation between universities is also implemented in the defense of doctoral theses. The members of the BIA Promotion Council are professors and leading researchers from DU, RSU, BA TURĪBA. Secondly, international cooperation is ensured with foreign lecturers, although, it has to be noted that the last foreign lecturer was visiting in 2019 that is 2 years ago. The foreign lecturers are mostly from Poland. Thirdly, lecturers of the programme go abroad and participate as guest lecturers in other universities and participate also in various conferences organized by different universities here and abroad. Lecturers of the university are

active practitioners in the organizing committee of the annual international scientific-practical conference "Transformation Process in Law, Regional Economics and Economic Policy: Current Problems of Economic-Political and Legal Relations" organized by the Academy, as well as teachers involved in the implementation of the programme.

This programme in BIA is planned to be implemented in English as well. The accessible study resources as academic literature, articles and scientific papers are in the minimum necessary capacity and amount as the databases that BIA provides to its students are international and provides resources in English language.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

In terms of existing resources and provision of the programme, the BIA has a good capacity to offer PhD programme at the appropriate level. Library resources provide necessary support to the research work. Existing technical infrastructure is modern and allows to teach with the use of different technological solutions and tools. The cooperation with other institutions of higher education allows for building of research networks useful in the work on PhD dissertations' topic.

In terms of financing - reliance solely on the students' fees. With the decreasing number of students, this may put the development of the programme at risk in the future (especially program offered in English). Overall, the informative provision, material and technical provision, and financial provision comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme. Students and academic staff are provided with the necessary resources for implementation of the study programme. International and national cooperation among universities regarding scientific activities.

We would raise doubts here about the effectiveness of the plagiarism system, as "Course works (like papers and essays) are not checked against plagiarism through appropriate software. During an on-site visit, it was demonstrated that the BIA uses a national (state) anti-plagiarism software, which according to the self-assessment report "is recognized as ineffective and economically inefficient due to the limited number of professionals and students as well as due to the specificity of research and high level of expertise, which can be provided by BIA experts in collaboration with their colleagues in other universities and countries." This statement raises doubts about the anti-plagiarism policy efficiency.

Strengths:

1. Moodle environment;
2. Access to library and various databases for study purposes;
3. Lecturers provide feedback on students work;
4. Various tools of equipment for study programme implementation;
5. Access to WiFi in all of the buildings;
6. International cooperation among universities regarding scientific activities;
7. Cooperation of other universities in Latvia in scientific conferences of doctoral students.

Weaknesses:

1. Not enough foreign guest lecturers are attracted especially taking into consideration that this programme is wanted to be implemented in English too;
2. Doubts about the effectiveness of the plagiarism system.

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

In the reporting period, overall there were 22 members of teaching staff involved in the provision of the PhD programme in law (15 - elected by the BIA and 7 non-elected by the BIA). The quality of studies in the reporting period is ensured by four professors (21.05%), three associate professors (15.79%), one associate visiting professor (5.26%) , one visiting professor (5.26%), four assistant professors (21.05%), 3 visiting senior lecturers (15.79%) and three leading researchers (15.79%), but only about half of them have a doctoral degree in a field.

As was confirmed during an onsite meeting the the PhD programme director, all members of academic staff have appropriate qualifications and the programme is implemented solely by academic staff holding PhD degree (from the academic year 2019-2020 onwards). It is expected that academic staff involved in the provision of the programme have relevant teaching qualifications, actively take part in international and scientific activities. Based on the information provided in the self-evaluation report and during an on-site visit, it is assumed that there is just one group of teaching staff responsible for implementation of the doctoral programme both in English and in Latvian. According to the documents provided to experts, out of 15 members of academic staff, 13 have B2-level knowledge, one member of academic staff has A1-level knowledge and one has B1-level knowledge of English. However, there is no clear evidence that the teaching staff members have at least B2 level of English; knowledge of English is evaluated by self-declaration.

As indicated in the self-evaluation report, the total number of publications of academic staff involved in the provision of the doctoral programme in the reporting period breaks down in the following way: 28 publications indexed in the Thomson Reuters, WoS, Elsevier, Scopus, ERIH+, 12 publication included in other international publications, 36 scientific publication published in Latvia publications, 35 textbooks and methodological literature. Research topics of published works correspond to the content of the study programme (mostly in criminal law and criminology, civil law, international law). Academic staff at the PhD level have taken part in national (47) and international conferences (28) and research projects. However active participation in research project took place mostly in the years 2012-2015, with very limited numbers between 2016-2020 (1 project between 2017-2018). As indicated above the topics of research works correspond to the content of the study programme. However there is no clear evidence of the wide use of the obtained information in the study process. After analysing the course descriptions' parts relating to obligatory literature, additional literature and other sources, only courses taught by the two professors provide the proof of the use of their research outcomes in the study process.

In terms of cooperation between the teaching staff members - the onsite visit confirmed the spirit of collegiality among teaching staff. The self-assessment report indicates that academic staff members evaluate each other through mutual attendance of lectures. The presence of visiting professors provides examples of good academic practice in the implementation of the programme.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The PhD programme is supported by the research conducted by the academic staff. Overall the research topics correspond to the content of the programme. Academic staff involved in the provision of the programme possesses necessary skills and qualifications.

Strengths:

1. Strong research in the field of criminal law and criminology;
2. Involvement of academic staff in the scientific activities (international and national conferences, publications);
3. Cooperation with other Latvian universities offering comparable programmes;
4. PhD degree hold by all academic staff involved in the provision of the programme.

Weakness:

1. Only about half of the in the implementation of study programme involved teaching staff have a doctoral degree in a field;
2. Modest number of research projects in which academic staff is involved;
3. Modest number of international publications indexed in the Scopus /WoS/ERIH+;
4. Modest number of international mobilities;
5. Weak evidence of the use of the research works in the implementation of the study programme;
6. Knowledge of English among academic staff is based solely on the self-evaluation. There is no evidence on possession of linguistic certificates by the academic staff members.

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Legal Science"

Requirements

- 1 1. The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of diploma provided in Annex comply with law prescriptions.

- 2 2. Documents confirming that the higher education institution/ college will provide the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in another study programme or at another higher education institution/ college (a contract with another accredited higher education institution/ college), in case the implementation of the study programme is discontinued.

Assessment of compliance: Non-compliant

Contract with Turība from January 30, 2020 do not provide this opportunity

- 3 3. Document confirming that the higher education institution/ college guarantees to the students a compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the licence of the study programme is revoked due to the actions of the higher education institution/ college (actions or failure to act) and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Letter from August 10, 2021

- 4 4. The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The teaching staff members are proficient in the latvian language.

- 5 5. The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

There is not clear evidences that teaching staff members have at least B2 level english knowledge; knowledge of english is evaluated by self-declaration.

- 6 6. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The document submitted during the accreditation process confirms it.

- 7 7. The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The academic staff complies with requirements of the law.

- 8 8. The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the study agreement complies with mandatory provisions.

- 9 9. The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 56.1, Paragraph two and Section 56.2, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The descriptions of the study courses comply with law requirements.

- 10 10. The study programme complies with the valid professional standard or the requirements for the professional qualification (if there is no professional standard required for the relevant occupation) provided that the completion of the study programme leads to a professional qualification.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 11 11. Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Conclusion of council of Higher Education from 13 August, 2021

- 12 12. The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 13 13. The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 551, Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 14 14. Each member of the academic staff has either publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years, including international editions (if they have worked for a shorter period of time, the number of publications shall be in proportion to the work period), or artistic creation achievements (for instance, exhibitions, films, theatre performances, and concert activity), or a five-year practical work experience (except for the experience in the implementation of the study programme) in accordance with the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Academic staff complies with legal regulation. However, the majority of publications are published in Latvian or Russian languages in Latvian journals, conference proceedings materials in Latvia and abroad (Poland, Ukraine, Russia).

15 R5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

According to clause 4.2. of the agreement in Annex BAT takes over the BIA obligations for continuing studies in the respective level program in relation to the students of the BIA program.

Requirements (R6-R8)

- 1 R6 - The compliance of the 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 ensuring the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Study provisions, informative provisions and technical provisions complies with conditions for the implementation of study programme.

- 2 R7 - The compliance of the qualification of the academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

22 lecturers are involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme. All persons (100%) have a doctoral degree in a relevant field of science. There is no clear evidence that academic staff members have at least B2 english proficiency certificate.

- 3 R8 - The study programme leading to the master or doctoral degree is based on the advances and findings in the relevant field of science or artistic creation.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The programme is based on the advances and findings in the relevant field of science, however, there is not enough participation of the academic staff in international research projects. The majority of publications of academic staff are published in Latvian or Russian languages in Latvian journals, conference proceedings materials in Latvia and abroad (Poland, Ukraine, Russia).

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The programme offered by the BIA emphasizes the training of specialists in civil law, criminal law, international law, (students are choosing their field of specialization) paying attention to the development of these fields in Latvia and in other European Union countries and in the world, that tend to be more professional than research work. The general indicators of the programme are appropriate and coherent. Learning outcomes correspond to the aims and objectives. Admission requirements are defined properly in a way that corresponds to the 8th level of the competence. The programme contains general courses in civil law, criminal law, public international law and private international law that normally offered at the BA and Master level in law. and should stress more advanced level of study courses offered at the PhD level in comparison with lower levels of

academic competencies. No reference is made to the acquisition of the Latvian language for foreign students, not mentioned the possibility to attend the courses on Civil defense and Environmental protection. Study programme is well provided with teaching staff, but the number of involved teaching staff with doctoral degree in a field is questionable, as well the publications, research work and English level.

Strengths:

1. Well defined aims and objectives;
2. Properly defined learning outcomes which correspond to the 8th level of competence;
3. Good level of technical provision of the study programme.

Weakness:

1. Low number of students;
2. Low number of graduates completing PhD degree;
3. Non differentiated methods of assessment;
4. The study programme content and course descriptions should stress the more advanced level of study courses offered at the PhD level;
4. There is no evidence on possession of linguistic certificates of english knowledges by the academic staff members;
5. Weak evidence of the use of the research works in the implementation of the study programme.

Evaluation of the study programme "Legal Science"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Average

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Legal Science"

Short-term recommendations

- | |
|---|
| 1.BIA shall conclude the contract with other academic institution/university in order to assure that students may continue their studies in case the implementation of the study programme is discontinued. |
| 2.Course descriptions shall clearly indicate the exact type of assessment methods used in order to evaluate the achievement of given learning outcomes |
| 3.to improve the information concerning the doctoral programme which are available on the BIA website |

Long-term recommendations

- | |
|---|
| 1.Academic staff members must participate more active in international research projects. |
| 2.it is recommended to more visibly include more visibly the research works of the academic staff in the implementation of the program; |
| 3.to provide strong evidence (language certificates) of English language skills at least at B2 level among academic staff |

III. Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field and the

Relevant Study Programmes

III. Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field and the Relevant Study Programmes

Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation		Comment
R1 - Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 21 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction whilst implementing their internal quality assurance systems:		Partially compliant	Internal quality assurance system in the self-evaluation report has been presented quite generally; it is not entirely clear how the internal quality assurance system functions in practice.
R2 - The cooperation with different organisations from Latvia and abroad implemented within the study direction ensures the achievement of the aims of the study direction.		Partially compliant	BIA mostly cooperates with public sector employers (municipalities, prisons, courts, etc.), however, employers from the private sector are minimally involved. There are low numbers of incoming and outgoing students under Erasmus+ program; the same relates to incoming and outgoing academic staff under Erasmus+ program. The cooperation with different organisations/institutions from abroad must be improved.
R3 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the development level thereof (if applicable).		Partially compliant	There are weak internationalization of research activities; little participation in research projects funded by external sources (national and international); and also comparatively small number of publications published in Scopus (Web of Science) indexed journals.
R4 - Elimination of the shortcomings and deficiencies identified during the previous assessment of the study direction, if it has been conducted, or the implementation of the provided recommendations.		Partially compliant	Elimination of shortcomings identified during the previous assessment has been done partly.

Assessment of the Requirements for the Relevant Study Programmes of the Study Field

No.	Study programme	R5	R6	R7	R8	Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)
1	Law Science (41380)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Not relevant	Good
2	Law Science (43380)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Not relevant	Good
3	Law science (45380)	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Partially compliant	Average
4	Law Science (47380)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Average
5	Legal Science (51380)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Partially compliant	Average

The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts

There is no dissenting opinions of the experts.