

APPLICATION

Study field "Psychology" for assessment

Study field	<i>Psychology</i>
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Self-evaluation report

Study field "Psychology"

Rīga Stradiņš University

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I - Information on the Higher Education Institution/College

1.1. Basic information on the higher education institution/ college and its strategic development directions, including the following information:

Rīga Stradiņš University (RSU) is a state-established higher education and science institution under the supervision of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia and has been closely integrated into the national healthcare system already since 1950. On 15 April 2002, RSU was registered with the Register of Higher Education Institutions, registration No. 3341702042. On 13 December 2001, RSU was accredited. RSU is the third largest university in Latvia with a pronounced international orientation - about 25% of all RSU students are international students.

For three consecutive years, RSU has been acknowledged as the higher education institution of the highest quality with the best reputation in Latvia with the highest rating among nine largest higher education institutions in Latvia. Such a conclusion resulted from the research on reputation of Latvian higher education institutions conducted by research company *Kantar TNS* at the beginning of 2019.

The **vision** of RSU is to be a modern and prestigious university recognised in Europe and across the world, with human as the main value and which provides high-quality and exportable research-based higher education. The **mission** of RSU is to prepare specialists of high quality in the field of healthcare and social sciences for Europe and the world, so that the knowledge, skills, competence and attitude obtained during the studies correspond to the highest EU requirements and humanistic traditions and the studies create a stable basis for life-long education.

RSU implements 10 study directions (StD) (data as of 1 March 2021):

- "Healthcare" (30 study programmes (StP));
- "Life Sciences" (2 StP);
- "Information and Communication Science" (8 StP);
- "Education, Pedagogy and Sport" (2 StP);
- "Social Welfare" (3 StP);
- "Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology" (10 StP);
- "Law" (4 StP);
- "Management, Administration and Management of Real Estate" (6 StP);
- "Psychology" (3 StP)
- "Internal Security and Civil Protection" (1 StP).

31 study programmes are implemented in the study directions of health care and life sciences, 37 study programmes are implemented in eight study directions of social sciences, including the "Internal Security and Civil Protection" study direction (1 StP) established in 2016, which, like the StD "Law", is implemented by RSU Faculty of Law and which was accredited for 6 years in 2019.

RSU has one branch in Liepāja. The Liepāja Branch has auditoriums and study premises with the total area of 2,816 m², set out in two buildings at 24/26 Rīņķu iela, Liepāja, and are fully suitable for the work of the university. Lecture auditoriums and rooms are equipped with modern equipment, ensuring high-quality study process, online lectures. (See more in Annex 2)

The StP management approach implemented by RSU has promoted the provision of StP offer that is

of high quality and relevant to the fields as shown by the growing number of applicants and students in the study directions implemented by RSU (see Table 1, Figure 1 and Figure 2), especially considering the circumstances of the demographic crisis and the decrease in the total number of applicants in Latvia. On 1 October 2020, the total number of RSU students was 9248.

Table 1. Number of students in the study directions implemented by RSU over the last six academic years

Study direction	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Health Care	5285	5652	6043	6222	6306	6707
Law	1139	1105	1084	993	847	704
Management, Administration and Real Estate Management	207	225	2026	243	218	261
Education, Pedagogy and Sport	236	232	228	235	266	285
Sociology, Politics and Anthropology	234	227	230	252	285	311
Social Welfare	138	146	126	143	150	125
Information and Communication Sciences	428	396	369	397	365	425
Psychology	66	111	121	143	167	279
Life sciences	6	6	6	6	6	5
Internal Security and Civil Protection	0	0	45	82	101	146
Total	7739	8100	8478	8716	8711	9248

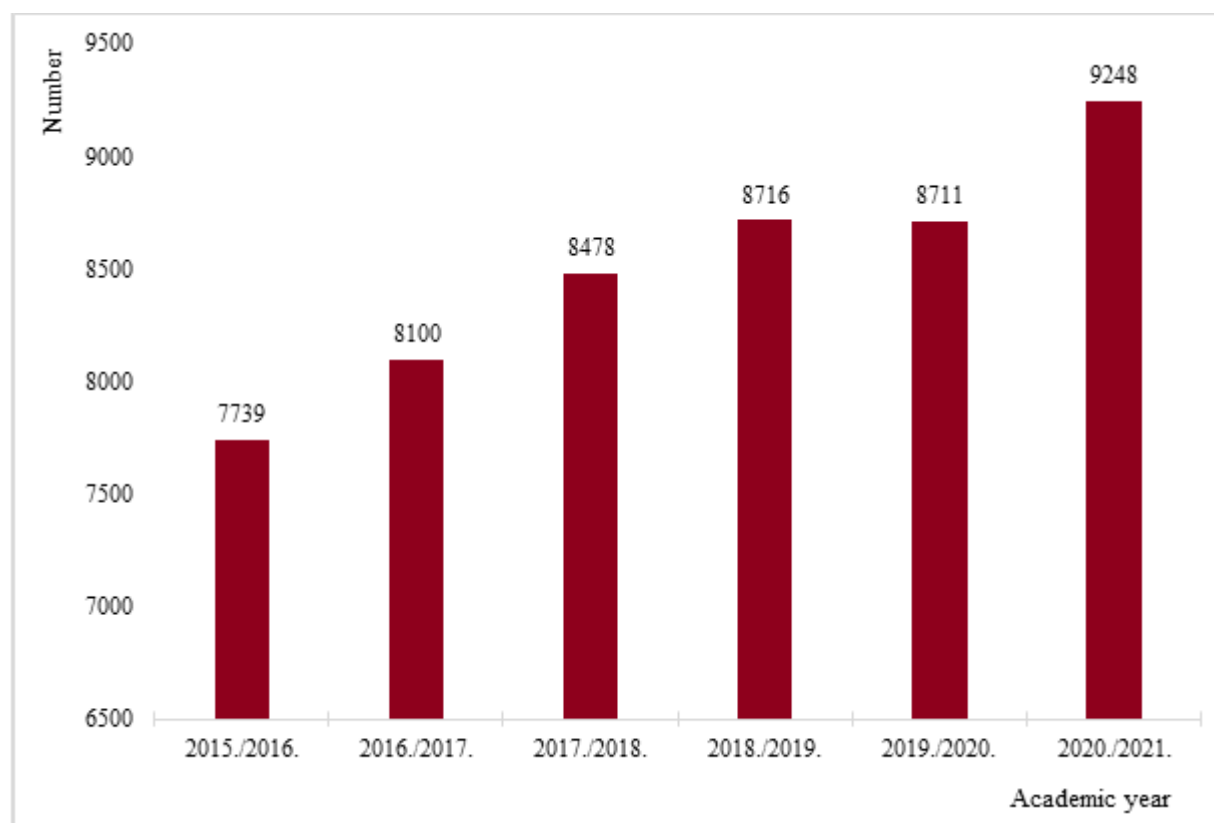


Figure 1 Total number of students in the study directions implemented by RSU over the last six academic years

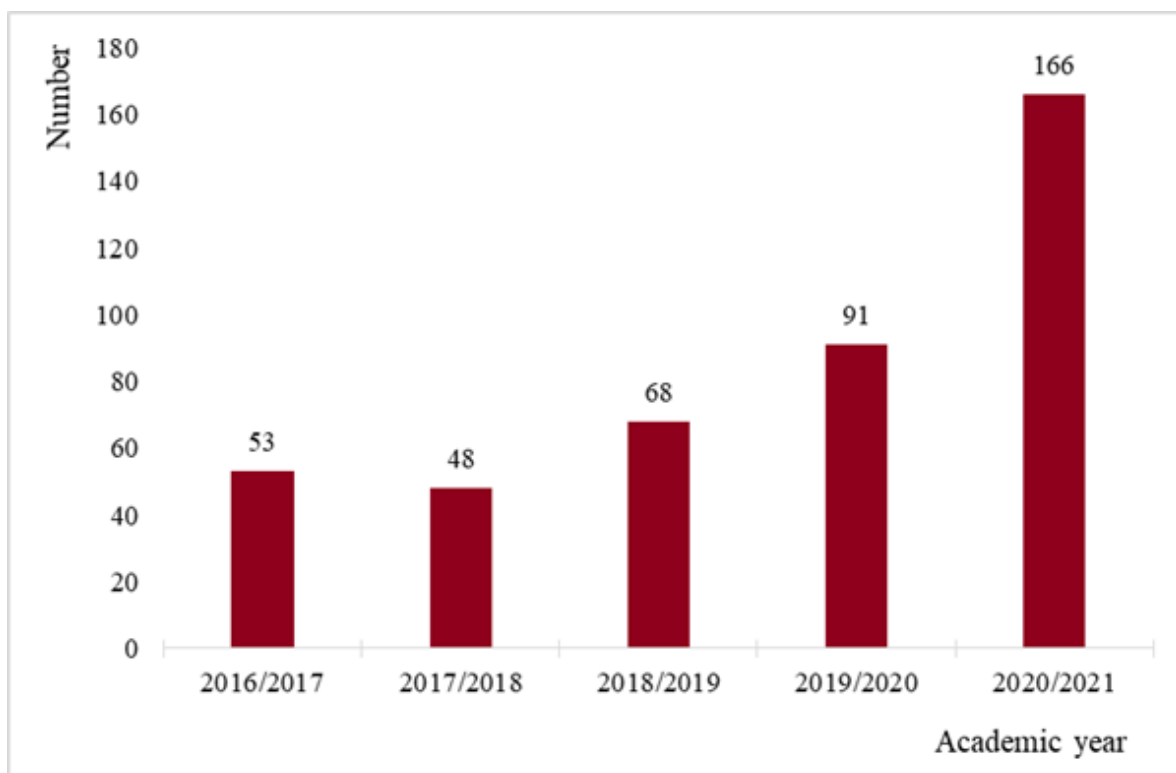


Figure 2 Dynamics of the number of students in the StD "Psychology" over the last five academic years.

RSU Development Strategy 2017–2021 is available on RSU website in [Latvian](#) (and) [English](#) (.). The main development objectives of RSU are innovative studies in a modern environment and research into health, life and human sciences, including social responsibility for sustainable development of the university and society, twinning for integration in the labour market and internationalisation and

reputation for international recognition. RSU strategy provides for progress towards a modern education system compliant with the requirements of future labour market.

The development of RSU StPs is based on the following principles:

- integrity of research and placement;
- modernisation of the study process (digitisation, introduction of innovations, simulation-based learning approach, etc.) for effective achievement of learning outcomes;
- promotion of academic integrity;
- cooperation and sharing of resources with local and foreign higher education institutions (HEIs);
- development of interdisciplinary cooperation of industries with professional organisations;
- compliance of StPs with the development of the national economy and industries;
- promotion of the export capability of higher education and science;
- cooperation between higher education institutions in the implementation of StP, combining resources for extending the study, research and innovation potential;
- monitoring of the quality of studies and activities for targeted improvement.

See Annex No. 13 for the awards, collaboration with schools, and marketing activities of RSU.

As the Bachelor and Master's degree study programmes of the StD can also be implemented in the Liepāja branch, see Annex 2 for the information about the branch.

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

Activity of RSU is regulated by the Law on the Constitution of Rīga Stradiņš University, Law on Higher Education Institutions, as well as other external and internal laws and regulations. Decision-making at RSU is ensured by the Constitutional Assembly, Senate, Rector and Academic Arbitration Court. The said laws and regulations define the powers and duties of each institution.

RSU Constitutional Assembly consists of 130 employees, 78 (60%) of whom are academic staff, 26 (20%) – general staff, and 26 (20%) – student representatives.

RSU Senate has 24 members, including 12 from the group of professors and associate professors, six from the rest of the academic staff, five student representatives and one member of the administrative staff.

Efficient management and supervision of operational tasks are carried out by RSU four Vice-Rectors: Vice-Rector for Health Studies, Vice-Rector for Studies, Vice-Rector for Administration and Development, Vice-Rector for Science, and their subordinate structural units of studies, science, administration and management.

RĪGA STRADIŅŠ UNIVERSITY ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

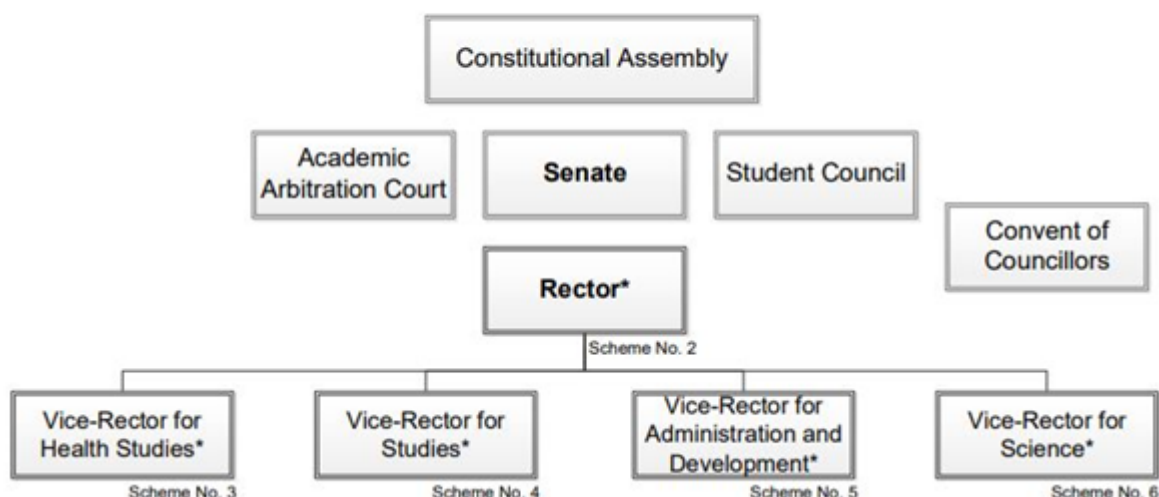


Figure 3 **Structural subordination of Rīga Stradiņš University.**

Participation of external partners in decision-making

External partners participate in the meetings of RSU Convent of Councillors, Alumni Association, Study Quality Councils (SQC) and the meetings of faculties and departments.

Foreign and local specialists of various industries take part in RSU Convent of Councillors as external partners. The Convent of Councillors consults the Senate and the Rector on the matters of RSU development strategy in order to promote development of RSU by determining strategic directions of its activity in accordance with the needs of the national economy. The Convent of Councillors meets approximately four times a year and deals with current issues of RSU. Current issues for consideration may be raised by any [member of the Convent](#) during the meetings. For example, at the June 2019 meeting, the issue of the RSU plans for the development and improvement of social study programmes was considered, with emphasis on improving interdisciplinary studies and research. During the meeting, the views of faculty leaders on the research potential of study programmes were presented, as well as the views and recommendations of the participants of the Convent of Councillors on the improvement and adaptation of study programmes were discussed.

Employers are among the members of the SQC. The Council evaluates the compliance of the content of the study programme with the requirements of the legislation of Latvia and the EU, public interests and the requirements of the labour market, as well as the long-term development of the respective study direction. For more information on the activities of the SQC, see the sub-section 1.4 below.

Employers are involved in some Faculty Councils. The composition of the Faculty Council is approved by the Senate on the basis of the proposal from the Dean of the Faculty.

The Alumni Association unites former graduates of Riga Medical Institute, Medical Academy of Latvia and RSU. The Alumni Association is a contact point between graduates, students, academic staff and industry representatives. Mutual cooperation of the involved parties is essential for the improvement of study quality and research, development of the sector and purposeful orientation of students' professional activity. The Association promotes the involvement of RSU graduates in lifelong learning activities.

Participation of students in the management process

The Student Union (SU) represents the interests of students in the Constitutional Assembly, Academic Arbitration Court, Senate, Faculty Councils, Ethics Committee, Loan Granting Committee, Scholarship Awarding Committee, Library Council, Museum Council, Rectorate, Dean's Council, Study Quality Council and the Committee for Recognition of Learning Outcomes Achieved in Prior Learning or Professional Experience. Student representatives have the right of veto in Faculty Councils, the right of suspended veto in matters affecting students' interests in the Senate.

International student interests at RSU are represented by the *International Students' Association*.

The Student Union cooperates with the International Students' Association, ensuring that interests of both the Latvian and international students are represented in the management process.

RSU Student Union (RSU SU) was established in 1993, and it has been operating for more than 25 years already in order to represent the interests of students in the matters of academic, material and cultural life at the university and other state institutions; it represents the students of the higher education institution in Latvia and abroad, lays down the procedure for students to be elected in collegial institutions of the higher education institution.

The Student Union is financed from the budget of the higher education institution to such amount that is not less than one two-hundredth from the annual budget of the higher education institution. At the end of each calendar year, RSU SU presents to RSU management the budget use of the current year and the budget estimate for the following calendar year, which is accepted by the Rector. See Annex No. 5 for more information on the content of the SU activity.

Participation of structural units in decision-making

Based on the developed medium-term strategy, the management of RSU annually approves the action plan and delegates specific aims to the structural units. In order to achieve these aims, each RSU structural unit has to plan its own resources during the annual budget planning session, requesting the funds necessary to achieve the delegated aims. Along with the development of a detailed budget, responsibilities are clearly separated because the structural units have to operate within the framework of the approved budgets. Working groups, discussions, and brainstorming sessions are being set up to implement new projects, processes, and innovations, thus maximizing the involvement of employees and direct managers in decision-making.

See Annex No. 1. List of internal laws and regulations in accordance with the primary activity processes of RSU.

See Annex No. 3. RSU structural scheme (available also on the website in the [Latvian](#) and [English](#) languages).

See Annex No. 23. "Compliance of the study programme with Part I of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)".

The management structure of the study direction and the corresponding study programmes is geared towards development of the study direction (see sub-section 4.1 Development plan for the study direction and the sub-section 4.2 Management Structure of the study direction); the decision-

making is efficient; the support provided by administrative and technical staff ensures that all the needs of the study programmes corresponding to the study direction are met.

Information about the structural units involved in the implementation of the study programmes and the required support staff

In order to ensure academic activity and study quality, study support staff is employed by academic structural units who ensure servicing of students, circulation of documents, providing support to academic staff. Depending on the type of the structural unit and the study courses taught, training support staff positions are planned by the head of the structural unit, but the general principles at RSU are developed and maintained by the Human Resources Department. Responsibility areas of the support staff in accordance with the respective position are support to study process and methodological work, support to research and clinical work, support to the department office work etc., as needed.

Heads of the Departments within the structural unit ensure involvement of qualified academic and scientific staff for the implementation of the study process. They promote the growth and renewal of the academic and research staff. Ensure the functioning of the internal quality control system of the study process within the structural unit. Participate in the development of study programmes and study courses and quality assessment. Ensure the development and updating of study course descriptions, development of the necessary documentation, coordinating the cooperation and exchange of ideas between the heads of study programmes belonging to the department and lecturers involved in the study programmes for the development of the study process, study programmes and content and ensuring continuous topicality. Heads of departments also ensure the connection of the study direction and study programme work with higher-level RSU management and support structures.

Heads of the study programmes ensure the quality of the study programme. In cooperation with the lecturers involved in the study programmes, they develop the content of the study programmes, study courses and other activities of the study process, following the development of the sector, for example, guest lectures on current topics, study visits to companies. Ensure the implementation of the quality indicators of the study programme. Attract visiting lecturers, participate in attracting and implementing international projects. Analyse assessment questionnaires completed by students and graduates, provide feedback, and implement changes in study programme plans. Prepare the description of study programmes for accreditation and annual reviews. Promote scientific research activities of students. Take part in semester examinations. Facilitate performance indicators in the study programme management. Contribute to the succession of study courses.

Office managers in the departments organise and supervise the work of study support staff in order to ensure effective support both in the work processes of the department and in the activities of inter-structural units. Provide information about the students, academic progress, study programmes, academic staff in electronic systems and databases, prepare various reports on the study process in the department, provide technical support to study auditoriums, perform other tasks of the immediate manager, including entering lecturers' CVs in the system, preparing applications for recruitment. Preparation of a semester report (twice a year) on the workload plan of full-time lecturers and visiting lecturers. Preparation of a workload plan for full-time lecturers at the beginning of the academic year, a monthly report on the actual workload of full-time and visiting lecturers. Preparation of diploma supplements twice a year. Analysis of students' academic success once a semester and submission to the head of the department and dean. Taking minutes of department meetings. Coordination of the work of the committees for defence of semester

papers, Bachelor's theses and Master's theses, schedule planning and coordination of premises. Creating student lists for defence committees and informing students. Arrangement of student study plans in the SIS (Student Information System) once a semester for all Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes of the department. Coordinating examination schedules with lecturers, informing planners and students. Compilation and preparation of scientific reports of the department.

Office administrators at the departments work with the provision of information, prepare various reports as commissioned by the managers. Provide information about students, their academic achievements, study programmes, teaching staff in electronic systems and databases. Organise the flow of visitors at the structural unit. Ensure the training rooms with the visual aids and technical equipment necessary for the work process.

The support provided by the administrative and technical staff of the higher education institution within the study direction is appropriate. The most advanced new generation IT facilities are technically available. From the first day of study, the student knows where to turn if questions arise.

Systems technical issues are addressed by the IT Department, the matters of the study process are supported by the Study Department and the Faculty Office, which also provides feedback in communication with students.

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

RSU Quality Policy is based on the strategy and values of the university and includes three basic principles: student-centred approach, partnership, and quality.

The Quality Policy is available on RSU website in [Latvian](#) and [English](#). Both the staff and students of RSU are involved in the implementation of the Quality Policy. In general, study quality assurance is a multi-level system (see Figure 4).

The duty of RSU senior management is to set strategic and quality goals and quality policy, to make a decision on quality approach, to manage resources, and determine the internal procedures. Supervision of the implemented system in RSU is carried out both by internal system and quality auditors, and independent external experts. At the university level, one of the indicators of study quality is the public attitude and opinion, as well as the popularity of RSU. Evaluating the level of RSU staff satisfaction and engagement as well as the results of the university reputation survey, guidelines are set to strengthen the image of RSU.

At the study programme level, the duty of the head of the study programme is to ensure compliance of the content of the study programme with internal and external laws and regulations, requirements of the labour market, sectoral development trends and needs of students, to analyse data that might provide information about factors affecting results and quality of the study programmes and to implement necessary improvements to the study programmes. Quality indicators of study programmes that are directly linked to the remuneration of the heads of the study programmes are measured annually. This aspect promotes taking responsibility and motivates the heads of the study programmes to achieve higher quality standards defined.

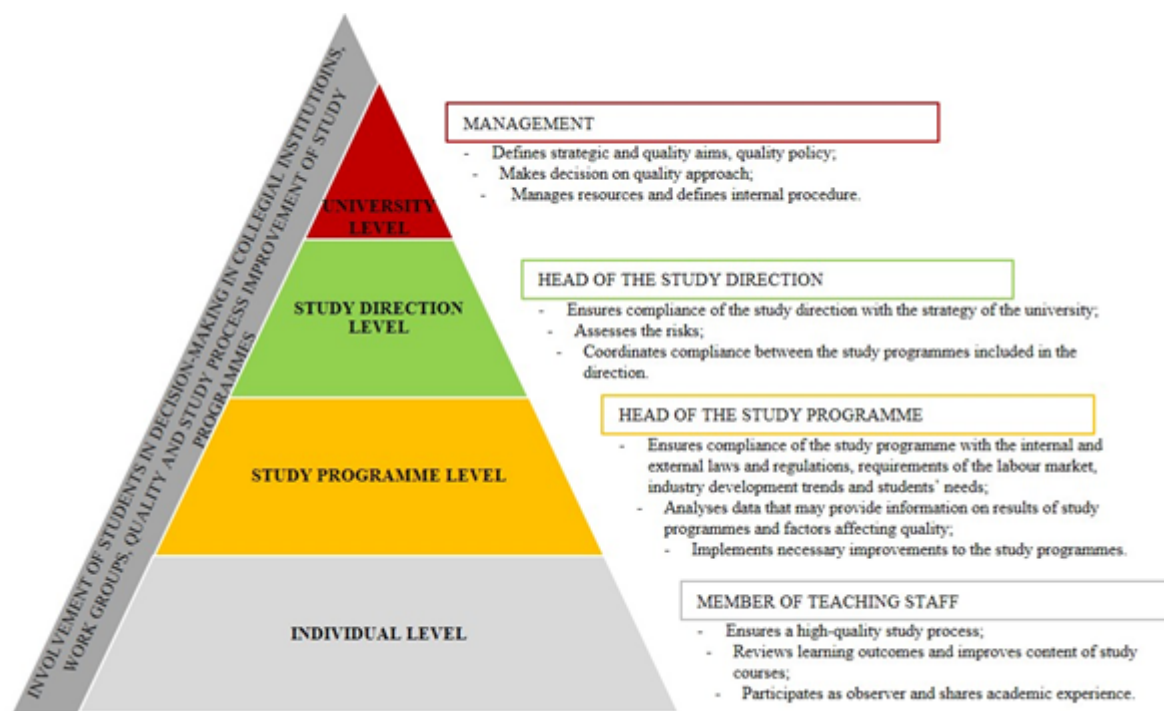


Figure 4 Quality assurance of RSU study process and outcomes.

Supervision of the implemented system in RSU is carried out both by internal system and quality auditors, and independent external experts.

External and internal laws and regulations governing student achievements and evaluation of learning outcomes (available at <https://www.rsu.lv/en/students/documents>):

- Law on Higher Education Institutions;
- Education Law;
- Academic Regulations I – regulations for undergraduate and Master's studies (available in [Latvian](#) and [English](#), (available in Latvian at <https://www.rsu.lv/studentiem/dokumenti>, and in English at <https://www.rsu.lv/en/students/documents>);
- Academic Regulations III – regulations for doctoral studies (available in [Latvian](#) at <https://www.rsu.lv/studentiem/dokumenti>, in [English](#) at <https://www.rsu.lv/en/students/documents>);
- Regulations on the development and presentation of the qualification paper, student's research paper, Bachelor's thesis and Master's thesis (available in Latvian at <https://www.rsu.lv/studentiem/dokumenti>, and in English at <https://www.rsu.lv/en/students/documents>);
- Process Description No. 6 "Assessment and Submission of Learning Outcomes" etc., see Annex No.1.
- Student academic performance is analysed twice per academic year after the end of the study semester. As a result of monitoring academic success, risks to successful study process and reasons for exclusion are identified, on the basis of which it is possible to take preventive actions.

In 2016, RSU performed an international external assessment of the implementation of student-centred learning approach performed by the group of assessment experts of the project "Peer Assessment of Student-Centred Learning" (PASCL). Report of PASCL experts on the implementation of student-centred approach at RSU is available both in [English](#) and in [Latvian](#). It was an EU-level project promoted by the European Students' Union in cooperation with other European higher education organisations, whereas the visit of experts in Riga was initiated by RSU Student Union.

RSU is one of the few higher education institutions in Europe that took an institutional decision to be involved and was chosen within the framework of the *PASCL* project.

A condition of the project was to include some structural units of the higher education institution in the assessment. Prior to the visit, RSU prepared a self-assessment report describing the structure of the University, statistical data of operation, decision-making institutions and involved representatives, involvement of students in the implementation and improvement of the content and processes. During the visit in Riga, experts met with the representatives of RSU management, administrative structural units, and Student Union, as well as with students, deans, and lecturers.

The expert opinion described RSU as a student-centred higher education institution that actively involves students in the improvement of the study process. The report also includes recommendations for further facilitation of student involvement in the study process and general institutional improvement of the understanding and implementation of a student-centred approach at all levels. Taking into consideration the recommendations of *PASCL* experts, RSU has:

- implemented quality monitoring processes and has taken into consideration its development activities, such as promotion of quantitative and qualitative student feedback, identification and evaluation of study programme quality indicators;
- improved functionality of the e-study environment;
- updated assessment approach to learning outcomes, types of examinations and content thereof;
- promoted the efficiency of internal communication and strengthened cooperation with external partners, employers, etc.

Based on the positive assessment of RSU in the project, examples of good practice, and attitude aimed at cooperation, RSU was selected as a partner in the development of a successive project application.

The procedures for evaluating the achievements of students and the learning outcomes is incorporated in the description of each study course. The course teacher is the one who decides on the evaluation system of their course. The criteria for completing a course include attendance, participation in seminars, accomplishment of individual assignments, active participation in discussions, etc. The student is informed of all assessment parameters before starting the course. Operating in RSU e-learning environment, the office employees prepare assessment sheets for examinations that are presented to lecturers in the final part of the study course. After the examination, full-time lecturers personally, using access to e-studies, or visiting lecturers with the help of the faculty office staff enter final assessments in the e-learning environment, which is linked to students' personal accounts where each student sees information on studies and their assessments.

1.4. Fill in the table on the compliance of the internal quality assurance system of the higher education institution/ college with the provisions of Section 5, Paragraph 21 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education by providing a justification for the given statement. In addition, it is also possible to refer to the respective chapter of the Self-Assessment Report, where the provided information serves as evidence for the full compliance, partial compliance or non-compliance.

1.	The higher education institution/ college has established a policy and procedures for assuring the quality of higher education.	<p>Complies</p> <p>RSU has an established policy and procedures for assuring the quality of higher education which is prescribed by the internal regulatory documents. These documents are described in Section I, Paragraph 1.3 and Section II, Paragraph 2 of the Description and they determine the quality mechanisms of the study process for RSU and are applicable to completely all study programmes.</p>
2.	A mechanism for the creation and internal approval of the study programmes of the higher education institution/ college, as well as the supervision of their performance and periodic inspection thereof has been developed.	<p>Complies</p> <p>RSU has a developed mechanism for the creation and internal approval of the study programmes of the higher education institution, as well as the supervision of their performance and periodic inspection thereof. The mechanism is described in detail in Section II, Paragraph 2.2 and is applicable to completely all study programmes. It is supervised by the Centre for Educational Growth (CEG), and at the same time it also conducts improvements of the system, provides support to the heads of the study programmes and directions in this process taking into consideration its experience within the framework of its competence. The example is the study programmes which have been developed within the framework of SAM and have been described in Latvian (https://www.rsu.lv/projekts/studiju-programmu-fragmentacijas-mazinasana-un-studiju-internationalizacijas-veicinasana), and in English (https://www.rsu.lv/en/project/reduction-fragmentation-study-programmes-and-promotion-internationalisation-studies). Upgrading and development of the study programmes have been implemented upon drafting the development plan for the StD. The actual process is discussed at the meetings of the Study Direction Quality Council, meetings of the department that implements the programme and the meetings of the Faculty of Public Health and Social Welfare Council. The process of the development of study programmes has been constantly monitored by analysing students' academic performance, number of students, drop-out rate, technical facilities, assessment, work quality of the academic staff and other essential indicators.</p>
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.	<p>Complies</p> <p>See Section II, Paragraph 1.6 for the criteria, conditions, and procedures for the evaluation of students' academic performance, which enable reassurance of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.</p>
4.	Internal procedures and mechanisms for assuring the qualifications of the academic staff and the work quality have been developed.	<p>Complies</p> <p>Internal procedures and mechanisms for assuring the qualifications of the academic staff and the work quality have been described in Section II, Paragraph 3.5. Each year compliance assessment is conducted, and the mechanisms are reviewed.</p>

5.	The higher education institution/ college ensures the collection and analysis of the information on the study achievements of the students, employment of the graduates, satisfaction of the students with the study programme, efficiency of the work of the academic staff, the study funds available, and the disbursements thereof, as well as the key performance indicators of the higher education institution/ college.	<p>Complies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ See the information on student academic achievements in Paragraph 1.3. ☐ See the information on graduate employment in Annex 10 and Section I, Paragraph 1.2, Section II, Paragraphs 1.1., 2.2., 3.7., 4.1. of the description of the study direction. ☐ More information on graduate feedback mechanisms can be found in Section II Paragraph 2.2. and the StP description in Paragraph 2.6. ☐ See the information on student and graduate satisfaction with the study programme in Section 2.2 and Annexes 21.1 and 21.2. ☐ See the information on the efficiency of the academic staff in Section 3.5. ☐ See the information on available study aids and their costs in Section 3.1. ☐ See the information on the essential indicators of the higher education institution's activities in Paragraphs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3.
6.	The higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction whilst implementing their quality assurance systems.	<p>Complies</p> <p>While implementing the quality assurance systems, the higher education institution guarantees continuous improvement, development and efficient performance of the study direction, as described in Section I, Paragraph 1.4, Section II, Paragraph 2. See the development plan of the study direction in Annex 4.1, and structural flowchart of the management of the study direction in Annex 4.2.</p>

II - Description of the Study Direction (1. Management of the Study Direction)

1.1. Economic and/or social grounds for the creation of the study direction and the relevant study programmes, the assessment of the interrelation among the study programmes, as well as the analysis of the significance (singularity) of the study programmes in comparison with other similar study programmes in Latvia and abroad.

Predicted employment trends in the European Union (Cedefop^[1]) show that the number of psychologists per capita varies between Western and Eastern European countries. There are 150 psychologists per 100,000 inhabitants in Western European countries, while in Eastern European EU Member States there are far fewer than 50 psychologists per 100,000 inhabitants, which indicates that the number of psychologists currently working in Eastern European countries, including Latvia,

is more than three times lower than in Western Europe. Although psychologists are trained every year, there is still a lack of them, because many study psychology and go to work in other sectors where they also work with people. Besides, working psychologists experience burnout and move to emotionally less-affecting areas of activity.

According to the research conducted by *Dynamic University* on labour market and development trends in the sector[2], labour market demand for highly qualified professionals in the group of education programmes “Social and Behavioural Sciences” **will decrease by 12%** by 2030, and the labour market supply in highly qualified specialists’ sector **will decrease by 5%** (labour market forecasts by the Ministry of Economics. According to the labour market forecasts by the Ministry of Economics, there will be a surplus of highly qualified professionals, which means that the quality of education and the skills and knowledge of graduates will be crucial for the competitiveness of graduates in the labour market. At the same time, it should be noted that the group of education programmes “Social and Behavioural Sciences” is broad and includes professionals from different areas, so it only partly applies to the psychology sector. Employers identified in the research indicate that the demand for highly qualified professionals will remain and might increase slightly, as it is already difficult to find highly qualified employees. Basic professional knowledge, the ability to plan the development of their own competencies and continuing professional education, and the development of customer-oriented attitudes and approaches were identified by employers as topical and in demand skills within the sector. Cooperation with other sectors of the economy (in particular information and communication technologies (ICT)) in the development of new services and approaches, the digitisation of certain areas of services and the use of e-environment and digital tools for data capture and the development of new research directions were identified as topical sectoral trends in research and secondary data sources.

The labour market research showed that there is an increasing demand for more and more highly qualified professionals, even for such having a doctoral degree, who can carry out not only their job responsibilities professionally, but also develop projects effectively and conduct scientifically correct research. This trend also applies to the field of psychology. Education in psychology can also serve as a good basis for other education, as currently, professionals with two, three and more backgrounds, who are able to solve various problems that affect several areas at the same time and carry out interdisciplinary research are more highly valued in many sectors.

Study programmes in psychology have been developed at RSU for ten years (see. rsu.lv for the information, only in [Latvian](#)) The study direction “Psychology” was developed and improved in accordance with RSU strategy and goals, focusing on research, practice and cooperation in the context of health care. RSU psychology study programmes are united by their focusing on the preservation and restoration of the health of an individual and a group. Ideologically, study programmes are rooted in the multidimensional understanding of health as defined by the World Health Organisation (which describes health as a state of complete physical, psychological and social well-being) and in a biopsychosocial approach or paradigm, where disease and health are defined as the interaction between biological, psychological and social factors. At all levels of study, the educational process focuses on the impact of mental (cognitive, emotional), behavioural, social and cultural factors on the maintenance of health of an individual, group and public, the causes of diseases and response to the disease, disease perception, behaviour during illness, etc., in order to promote maintenance of health, disease prevention and treatment, and to identify psychological and socio-psychological and behavioural factors associated with different diseases[3].

The study direction “Psychology” developed gradually, starting with the Bachelor's study programme in 2007 and ending with the doctoral programme, which was established in 2016. Originally, the Bachelor's study programme was developed as the basis for the professional Master's study programme “Art Therapy”, so originally there were a large number of medical study

course that have been reduced to 6 CP over time. Gradually, with the advent of health psychology in Latvia, there was a demand from healthcare professionals for a study programme preparing health psychologists. As a result, the professional Master's study programme "Health Psychology" was created. Later, when the first people with a Master's degree appeared, who wanted to work in the university, there was a need to create a doctoral study programme. At the moment, upon completion of the Master's degree programme, students can obtain the qualification of a psychologist and specialise in two areas during their studies: health psychology and counselling psychology, but from next year in cooperation with the National Armed Forces students will have the opportunity to specialise in military psychology.

As of 1 January 2018, the Law on Psychologists, adopted on 30.03.2017, came into force, which provides for the right to undertake professional activity of a psychologist following the completion of an accredited Bachelor's study programme and an accredited Master's study programme in psychology in the amount of at least 200 credit points (at least one of these programmes must be a professional study programme). The existing regulation regarding the activity of psychologists provided for the total education in the amount of 240 CP, according to which the Bachelor and Master's study programmes were developed in higher education institutions of Latvia.

After the entry into force of the Law on Psychologists, the Bachelor and Master's study programmes of RSU study direction "Psychology" were adapted to the requirements of this law, by appropriately restructuring and optimizing the content of study programmes and switching from a four-year professional Bachelor's programme (160 CP) to a three-year academic Bachelor's programme (by the decision of the Study Quality Committee No. 2019/15-1). At the same time, the students matriculated in these study programmes were provided with the opportunity to complete their studies in the started study programmes by 2021 (the end of the accreditation period). At present, knowledge, skills and competencies required for the qualification of a psychologist can be acquired in RSU study programmes by graduating from a three-year academic Bachelor's study programme and a professional Master's study programme (80 CP). Those who have graduated from a 4-year Bachelor's study programme and obtained a psychologist's qualification can study for a Master's degree for 1.5 years (60 CP). The study programme was restructured, the courses were combined and optimized and the content duplication was avoided, so that these changes could be introduced. After graduation from the Master's degree programme, graduates can continue their studies in a three-year doctoral programme (120 CP). As a result, RSU study direction "Psychology" is composed of a successive academic Bachelor's study programme (120 CP), a professional Master's study programme in psychology (60 or 80 CP), and a doctoral study programme (120 CP).

The aim of the Bachelor's study programme is to create an opportunity for students to obtain academic education in psychology as a basis for further studies in a Master's degree programme, where theoretical knowledge and skills in psychology and research skills are acquired, independent problem-solving and decision-making skills are improved and analytical and critical thinking skills are developed.

The aim of the professional Master's study programme is to provide an opportunity to master the theoretical and empirically justified principles of psychology, to develop and increase awareness, practical skills and competence in order to obtain a professional master's degree in psychology and the qualification of a psychologist in one of the following professional fields: clinical and health psychology, military psychology, counselling psychology. Graduates of the professional master's study programme may, in accordance with the requirements of the Law on Psychologists, perform the professional duties of a psychologist under the supervision of a certified psychologist-supervisor, as well as may continue studies in doctoral study programmes in Latvia or abroad.

The aim of the doctoral study programme in psychology is to prepare highly qualified

scientists and lecturers in psychology (with a specialisation in health psychology) by developing the students' competence in organisation, conduct and management of research work, as well as academic competence based on in-depth understanding of psychology theory and methodology and competence to develop and implement innovative research projects and to cooperate with professionals in Latvia and internationally.

The learning outcomes to be achieved in all the aforementioned study programmes are mutually harmonised, as demonstrated by the mapping of the courses included in the study programmes (see Annex 18.1) and are in accordance with all regulatory documents and the professional standard of the psychologist (see Annexes 17.2 and 18.2).

Compared to similar study programmes in Latvia, it can be concluded that RSU offers studies with an in-depth emphasis on activities in the context of health care and with the opportunities to have placement in the clinical environment. RSU professional Master's study programme offers three different specialisations. One of these, in military psychology is offered only at RSU, but the specialisation in clinical and health psychology can be obtained in the University of Latvia and the specialisation in counselling psychology can be obtained in the Master's study programme of Daugavpils University. Whereas, RSU doctoral study programme in psychology similarly to other higher education institutions offers psychology and interdisciplinary research, but the essentially different feature is its focus on research related to psychological support in the context of health.

In a comparative analysis of the programmes of RSU and the study programmes of the University of Latvia and the University of Innsbruck, it was found that there are study courses unique to each study programme, but there are also some common features:

- placements have a significant role in all the programmes, constituting up to 36 ECTS;
- although the study content is thematically similar and contains elements of various sub-sectors of psychology, study programmes implemented by other higher education institutions (HEIs) in comparison to RSU study programmes, offer a number of clearly defined specialisation directions in bachelor's, master's and doctoral study programmes;
- in both Latvian and foreign study programmes, there is a relatively small proportion of general education courses, as well as a small proportion of elective study courses – most of the study courses being mastered are directly related to the mastering of the speciality or research skills;
- tuition fees and matriculation conditions at RSU are similar to those in other study programmes considered. Additional entrance examinations are required for the applicants in the programmes implemented in HEIs of Latvia more often than in other study directions;
- trends in the number of students in all study programmes of the study direction “Psychology” indicate stability or a slight increase in the number of students.

Research on the prospects of higher education shows that in the future professional environment, social and so-called “soft” skills – communication skills, skills to gather and understand information, creativity in content creation, critical thinking skills, collaborative and networking skills, teamwork skills, skills to work in multicultural environment and others (for example, *Human Resources* or *Forbes*) are highly valued and developed in addition to science knowledge. Taking into consideration these and other changes in the social environment, technological development and transformation of higher education, content and process updates for development of various *soft* skills have been consistently introduced to the study programmes of the study direction. This is possible because students, lecturers, representatives of psychology and other fields are regularly involved in the improvement of study programmes.

In all psychology study programmes, the content has been developed and improved in cooperation with employers (placement providers), as well as with representatives of the Direction Quality

Council. Placement reports and discussions with employers show that employers highly value the knowledge, skills, competence and motivation of students and graduates of the study programmes within the study direction.

The future placement providers and employers regularly participate in the implementation of the study programmes included in the study direction; the existing employers study in the Master's degree study programmes with the aim to expand their knowledge. The number of students who are obtaining their second or third degree has been increasing in these study programmes because they want to acquire new knowledge and receive more up-to-date education.

Analyses and forecasts of the development of the labour market show that, despite the popularity of study programmes in social sciences and the possible surplus to the number of employees with such education, graduates of RSU study direction "Psychology" have their own stable niche in the future labour market in Latvia and Europe.

The uniqueness of the study programmes included in the study direction is characterised by the following indicators:

- study programmes offer full high-quality, mutually coordinated education in psychology in accordance with all the regulatory documents, by offering study courses that are not available in other similar study programmes (e.g. social neuroscience, application of digital technologies in psychology (telepsychology) or the development of methodological materials and psychoeducation during the placement in psychology). In addition, the content of the programmes includes courses in health and clinical, military or counselling psychology, providing graduates with in-depth knowledge and skills in these areas;
- employers and graduates participate in the development of the content of study programmes by offering innovation and recommendations for the improvement of the content;
- lecturers and students have the opportunity to participate in various psychology and interdisciplinary research programmes at local and international level, as well as collective monographs. By participating in the National Research Programmes (including other projects), students in various stages of research carry out innovative research of an interdisciplinary nature, using the latest generation of technologies/tools, which include, for example, electroencephalogram equipment and the digitised test;
- a variety of forms of learning, including regular participation in conferences or simulation practice are provided to students during the study process, enabling them to study without risks to the health of the client/patient, as well as to develop new competencies in a safe environment (specially equipped room). Students are provided with placement facilities, both at the university and in the clinical environment;
- students have a publicly available survey and test register regarding psychological instruments developed and adapted in Latvia by RSU, as well as the possibility to learn how to operate those instruments (e.g. Latvian Clinical Personality Test) within study courses;
- study courses are designed to develop the students' ability to self-reflect on their work and its impact on clients, groups and society as a whole;
- study programmes have a widely developed cooperation network with Latvian and international professional associations, different institutions and higher education institutions of other countries, which facilitates international exchange and research;
- students are provided with psychologists-supervisors while doing their placement not only in healthcare and rehabilitation, education and social care institutions, but also in the university, including remotely in the e-environment;
- the study organisation partially in a module format determines a concentrated and dynamic

study process in which a student learns only a few study courses at the same time and where there is no overload at the end of the semester during the examination periods.

[1] Vocational education and training in Europe: Latvia 2018

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/vocational-education-and-training-europe-latvia-2018>

[2] Research on the competitiveness of Rīga Stradiņš University and RSU Red Cross Medical College study programmes and their compliance with medium and long-term development trends in labour market and the sector. - Rīga: SIA "Dynamic University", 2020.

[3] Mārtinsone, K., Mihailova, S., Koļesņikova, J., Mihailovs I. J., Ļevina, J., Freimane, G., Šneidere, K. *Psiholoģijas izglītības desmit gadi Rīgas Stradiņa universitātē*. Mārtinsone, K. (sast.). Rīga: Rīgas Stradiņa universitāte, 2017. 18 lpp.

1.2. Aims of the study direction and their compliance with the scope of activities of the higher education institution/ college, the strategic development directions, as well as the needs and the development trends of the society and the national economy.

In accordance with the RSU Development Strategy 2017-2021, one of the indicators is the development of an offer of locally and internationally competitive study programmes in accordance with the labour market demand in Latvia and Europe for special, integrated specialist competences, including increasing the number of state-funded study places for studies in the areas of social sciences. In the field of social sciences, state-funded budget places are limited to doctoral study programmes, however, not all (there are no state-funded budget places in the StD Psychology). Each year, RSU participates in official correspondence with sectoral ministries on the allocation of state-funded study places to study programmes in social sciences. These negotiations have not been successful.

Conformity of the Study Direction "Psychology" to the scope of activity of the university, strategic development directions, needs of the socio-economic development and development trends:

- relevance to the directions of strategic development, needs of socio-economic development and development trends;
- study programmes are designed in such a way that graduates of programmes are competitive in both the Latvian and European labour markets, even if students do not continue to work as professional psychologists. Students are offered a number of general study courses that allow them to easily acquire and integrate their knowledge in other areas of activity and to work in professions where knowledge of psychology is needed;
- conformity to the scope of activity of the higher education institution;
- according to RSU Strategy, the Study Direction provides research-based higher education in social sciences, as the research-based content is provided in the study process, research in the field of psychology and interdisciplinary research in social and medical sciences is developed, integrating research results, new research and development of research methods and tools into the study content;

RSU overall strategy is at the basis of the strategy of RSU study direction "Psychology" that was

accredited for a period of 6 years in 2015. That is, to create a favourable and competitive education and research environment at EU level, allocating resources for the needs of the society and excellent scientific research in medicine and social sciences that would improve the overall life quality and well-being of the society and its members. **Common goals of the study direction “Psychology”** are derived from RSU overall strategy:

- to provide and ensure up-to-date education in Bachelor and Master's and doctoral study programmes that is qualitative and highly valued on the labour market corresponding to all the regulatory documents;
- to develop research and expertise in the field of psychology by offering innovative research , with the help of which it is possible to evaluate, tackle and predict the processes and problems of modern psychology; to enable lecturers and students to participate in various psychology and interdisciplinary research programmes on local and international scale;
- to develop all levels of study programmes in the direction “Psychology” in cooperation with other universities in Latvia and the EU, as well as to improve the offer of psychology study courses in other RSU faculties, thereby ensuring the integration of study programmes in psychology;
- to provide students with a wide variety of forms of study, including participation in conferences of various scales;
- to expand the cooperation network between employers, professional organisations in improving the quality of studies and the content of study courses;
- to enable students to master the tools developed and adapted by RSU lecturers, which would facilitate the use of these instruments both during the placement and in professional work after studies;
- to continue updating teaching methodological materials, writing textbooks and other informative resources, and supplementing e-study materials;
- to offer students a placement both in the university and in the clinical environment;
- to develop students' ability to self-reflect on their work and its impact on clients, groups and society as a whole;
- to continue to promote study programmes by organising events for the general public in order to promote the popularity of study programmes.

The aim of the study direction, as well as the activities for the implementation and achievement of the aim are fully coordinated with the activity area of RSU, RSU strategic documents and the needs and trends of the development of the society and national economy. See the descriptions of the study programmes included within the study direction for a more detailed description and practical examples of the goal of the study direction and the activities used to ensure the implementation of modern, prestigious and research-based higher education study programmes, as well as the activities raising international awareness, including higher education export, which clearly demonstrate the relevance of the goal of the study direction and its fulfilment to both the vision and directions of RSU strategic development and the needs and trends of society and economic development.

1.3. SWOT analysis of the study direction with regard to the set aims by providing explanations on how the higher education institution/ college expects to eliminate/ improve weaknesses, prevent threats, and avail themselves of the given opportunities, etc. The assessment of the plan for the development of the study direction for the next six years and the procedure of the elaboration thereof. In case there is no development plan

elaborated or the aims/ objectives are set for a shorter period of time, information on the elaboration of the plan for the development of the study direction for the next assessment period shall be provided.

Internal factors

Strengths

Weaknesses

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Correspondence of the study programmes within the study direction to the goal and strategy of RSU. · RSU reputation, quality management system and internal culture contributing to the recruitment of students to all study programmes. · Qualified teaching staff: good scientific and pedagogical qualification of the teaching staff (9 PsyD within the full-time staff, including 6 experts in psychology of the Latvian Council of Science (LCS) having work experience in research projects). Lecturers from several fields of science are involved in the study programmes, that provide an interdisciplinary and modern view. · Teaching staff involved in the study programmes are involved in high research activities and regularly participate in local and international scientific conferences, research projects or continue post-graduate education with foreign specialists. · RSU traditions and capacity contribute to the development of interdisciplinary research and to position the progress of the StP towards the development of scientific research and dissemination of knowledge in psychology in the context of health care. · Students develop research skills throughout their studies (including in the projects of the National Research Programme (NRP) by participating in conferences and preparing publications. A promotion council in psychology has been established. · High-quality cooperation has been established with professional associations and employers that are involved in providing placements thereby increasing the supply of placement locations. · Cooperation with foreign universities and colleagues has been established to promote the mobility of academic staff and visiting lecturers. · Adequate resources (including infrastructure, teaching equipment, Psychology Laboratory, information technologies and resources, including databases). · Feedback is provided between students and academic staff, which generally contributes to the improvement of the study process. · Teaching and learning materials in e-environment have been prepared, methodological guidelines for writing semester paper, Bachelor's and Master's theses have been prepared, a number of methods have been adapted; there is a good IT base for ensuring the study process (databases), library resources have been provided. · Teachers have good contact with students that improves the feedback on the study process and have a positive impact on the acquisition of knowledge and skills; students appreciate the content of the study programmes and the quality of implementation. · Simulation practice is used in the study process. · Placement documentation regarding patient/customer groups is compliant with the requirements specified in laws and regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · There are no state-funded study places in any of the study programmes, doctoral students do not have access to RSU grant funding, which supports research work of the doctoral students or dissemination of knowledge. · Significant costs for students from their own resources. · Teaching staff have relatively little experience in attracting international research grants. · Student mobility is not sufficiently developed, which is hindered by the fact that many students combine studies and work.
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External Factors

Opportunities

- To strengthen internationalisation by attracting visiting lecturers from the most advanced European universities/research centres, by engaging in the organisation of international events, improving mobility, developing joint projects with other higher education institutions; developing study programmes in English.
- To engage in different projects for the provision of continuous and sufficient funding.
- To take advantage of the opportunities provided by the science policy and to engage more in the priority research niches defined by the state, to encourage the involvement of lecturers and doctoral students in the development of various research projects.
- To strengthen public demand for skilled professionals.
- To continue the internal development of the study programmes, to improve the structure and content of study plans: to continue developing teaching materials (including visual and audio-visual teaching methodological materials), textbooks and other information resources, to supplement e-study materials and to continue to engage in research work.
- To continue to support and promote the enhancement of the qualification and professional skills of the academic staff.
- To promote the adaptation and establishment of standardised psychological research methodologies in Latvia working in the Psychology Laboratory, thereby providing a good basis for the provision of psychological research courses.
- In co-operation with employers in the coming years, to focus on preparing students for further professional activity in accordance with the needs of employers for creating the network of contacts and co-operation partners.
- To continue to promote the study programmes by organising events for the general public to promote the recognition of the study programmes through greater use of social networks.

Threats

- There is no state funding for the study programmes within the study direction; there is no funding for paying to placement mentors.
- There are disproportionate competition opportunities with psychology programmes of the University of Latvia (LU), state-funded budget places are available in LU programmes.
- Due to financial problems, students need to combine their studies and work, which may hinder the completion of their studies at the scheduled time.
- High costs for obtaining a professional certificate.
- Weaknesses in the regulatory framework for professional activities of a psychologist in health care.
- Unfavourable socio-economic situation in the country as a whole, which does not stimulate doctoral studies.
- Low pay for teachers, which in the long term does not encourage doctoral students to go into teaching at RSU.
- Deterioration of the demographic situation at the end of 80s and at the beginning of 90s, which currently affects the number of people who want to study.

In order to maintain and save the strengths of the study direction, the following activities are carried out:

- feedback from all the parties involved in the study process is obtained, analysed and integrated in the implementation of the programmes;
- cooperation with the medical study programmes and professionals is strengthened; teaching staff from this sphere are attracted, promoting an interdisciplinary approach to research and research activity of lecturers;
- dissemination of knowledge of psychology in the healthcare environment is promoted;
- cooperation with the Psychology Laboratory is developed;
- materials in e-studies are revised and updated;
- the necessary information resources are analysed and maintained in cooperation with the library;
- cooperation with foreign colleagues is improved for the implementation of the study process and research, and further development of this cooperation is continued to improve effective

exchange of experience;

- the international scientific-practical conference “Personality and Health” is organised annually, and representatives of the study programmes participate in the annual international conference “Society. Education. Integration.” Psychology section and publishing of internationally peer-reviewed articles are organised.
- Doctoral students of the doctoral study programme will be further involved in the implementation of the Bachelor and Master's study programmes.

In order to reduce the weaknesses and to take advantage of the opportunities, the following actions are taken:

- the competitiveness of the programmes with the programmes having state-funded study places is promoted by making them unique and placing more emphasis on the integration of medicine and psychology;
- taking into account the evaluations of students and class observations, the invited lecturers have been changed, involving new doctoral students in the implementation of more study courses;
- the involvement of teaching staff in the development of research projects and the involvement of doctoral students in research projects is promoted; the acquisition of grants available for doctoral students will be encouraged in order to support the dissemination of research work carried out by doctoral students and/or their knowledge;
- as far as possible, the mobility of students from all programmes will be promoted through the *Erasmus +* programme;
- an international group will be established in the Bachelor's study programme, with a special focus on students from Germany; as well as distance learning opportunities in psychology will be developed.

In order to reduce the impact of external threats to reduce the potential threat of the demographic situation, psychology study programmes are promoted annually in a variety of marketing campaigns:

- giving lectures, for example at the National Library of Latvia,
- participating in counselling on the development of school children scientific research work and organising the Psychology Olympiad,
- organising events for the general public (conferences, seminars, Psychology Day events, and courses in cooperation with the Faculty of Continuing Training) to promote the popularity of the programmes.

For awareness-raising purposes of the programmes, the lecturers in the study direction “Psychology” designed the infogram for the study direction and the brochure (only in latvian) “[Ten Years of Psychology Education](#)”.

The implementation of the Bachelor's study programme has been launched in Liepāja, RSU Liepāja branch, where the study programme is provided both full-time and in the form of online video lectures. It will be strengthened in the future and gradually prepared for the implementation of the Master's degree study programme at RSU Liepāja branch.

Taking into account the SWOT analysis and RSU strategic guidelines and development priorities, a further development plan of the study direction has been developed (see Annex 4.1). Main accents of the development plan for the next study years are as follows: at the bachelor's level – the

development of bachelor's programme for part-time studies and distance learning, as well as launching international group of students. At the master's level – increase of state budget places and starting study programme's implementation in Liepāja branch. At the doctoral level – the main accent is the successful integration into the new doctoral programme "Healthcare", obtaining new grants. The development plan was developed by the head of the study direction in cooperation with the heads of the study programmes, coordinating it in the Study Direction Quality Council.

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

See Annex No.4.2 Management Structure of the Study Direction.

Head of the study direction manages the work of RSU study direction. Heads of the study programmes manage the study programmes included in the study direction. Study Quality Council (SQC) acts as a support to the development of the study direction and study programmes. It works in accordance with the regulations approved by RSU Senate (see Annex 1), and its purpose is to oversee, ensure, and improve the quality of studies. The composition of the SQC is approved at the Faculty Council, involving the Head of the respective study programme, Heads of the respective academic structural units or lecturers delegated by them, as well as employers and students. The composition of the SQC may include representatives of graduates and professional associations.

SQC evaluates the necessity to create a study direction and the study programme in accordance with the trends of the labour market in Latvia and the EU, submits proposals for the involvement of independent experts (employers) for evaluation of the topicality of the study programme and content quality. SQC participates in the preparation of descriptions and reports of the study programmes and the study direction, is involved in reviewing of internal laws and regulations, if these are related to the study process. Competence of the SQC also includes assessment of the content of the study programme and the long-term development of the study direction. SQC implements also the principle of student-centred approach. SQC includes students who together with other members of the Council take decisions regarding the study process, quality, development, etc., in accordance with the regulations of RSU regarding the work of the Study Quality Council. SQC implements a democratic management model where decisions are made by voting in the SQC meetings at least once every semester or as necessary. Decisions are approved by majority vote. Usually decisions are taken by using the principle of consensus. Usually decisions are taken by using the principle of consensus. SQC operates within the framework of regulations approved by RSU and by implementing RSU policy.

The requirements for planning, supervision, and quality control of the study process at RSU are defined by process description No 35 "Organisation of the Study Process". The requirements for determination and evaluation of learning outcomes are included in the process description No 6 "Evaluation and Submission of Learning Outcomes" and "Academic Regulations I".

Work organisation of the StP is based on the needs of students, social and labour market trends, development guidelines for national and international higher education and science, etc. Implementation of the StP is constructed, taking into account the needs of students during the

study process and carefully evaluating the quality of the StP. The study work at RSU is organised by the faculty and departments with the support of administrative departments, and is overseen by the SQC, Faculty Council, Rectorate, Dean's Council, Senate.

The Head of the study programme is responsible for the management of the study process, updating of the study programme, development, design and processing of documentation, in accordance with laws and regulations and instructions, and participation in research work. It is also necessary to emphasise the close and regular cooperation between the Heads of study programmes included within the study direction. Current issues related to developments in the study process in all study programmes are dealt with at each meeting of the Department. The Head of the Department coordinates regular idea-sharing between the Heads of study programmes and sharing of their experience both in day-to-day study process - in the meetings of the Department, and in the planning of the reporting and development stages - in the annual reports and statements. In addition, Heads of various study programmes take part in the Defence Committees of Final Papers in the final stages of the semester, year and programme, in which students prepare and defend their Final Papers (Semester Papers, placement reports, Bachelor's theses and Master's theses). Consequently, the mutual cooperation between the Heads of study programmes is regular and continuously coordinated.

The close cooperation between the administrative and technical support staff in the implementation of the study direction is also important. Both the office manager and RSU support departments (Human Resources Department, IT Department, Finance Department, Study Department, Centre for Educational Growth) are closely involved in the implementation and development of the study process, co-operating on a daily basis. Cooperation with departments takes place in a coordinated manner through the Head of the Department, Heads of study programmes and staff teachers, for example, in drawing up the study plans (Form D-1) in RSU system, the development and approval of study course descriptions, the creation of the e-learning environment, the organisation of training seminars for lecturers, and many other aspects of day-to-day work and development. Cooperation can be assessed as successful; it is clearly and transparently regulated and fully integrated in the implementation and management of the study process at RSU as a whole. As one of the illustrative examples of close and coordinated cooperation is the procedure for solving various issues related to students, which is described in greater detail in Chapter II, Section 2, subparagraph 2.3.

When evaluating the management efficiency of the study direction, it can be concluded that its content and organisation is of high quality and well, transparently organised. It is implemented in close cooperation with the Head of the study direction, the Head of the relevant department, the Faculty Council, Heads of the study programmes and also the special SQC described at the beginning of this paragraph.

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

Admission to RSU takes place based on admission requirements of the respective study level

approved by RSU Senate as defined for the particular academic year. The same way, admission takes place and admission requirements are developed in accordance with external laws and regulations – the Law on Higher Education Institutions, Cabinet Regulation No. 846 of 10 October 2006 “Regulations Regarding Requirements, Criteria and Procedure for Admission to Study Programmes”, Cabinet Regulation No. 543 of 29 September 2015 “Regulation on Replacement of Foreign Language Centralised Examination in the Programme of Comprehensive Education Programme with the Test of International Testing Institution in a Foreign Language”, as well as other external laws and regulations and the Constitution of RSU. Admission in later stages of studies in RSU takes place on the basis of Cabinet Regulation No. 932 of 16 November 2004 “The Procedure for Starting Studies in Later Stages of Studies” and Cabinet Regulation No. 505 of 14 August 2018 “Regulations on Recognition of Competences Acquired Outside Formal Education or in Professional Experience and of Learning Outcomes Achieved in Prior Education”, and other external laws and regulations.

RSU has admission regulations for each level of studies. The admission regulations are available on RSU website [in Latvian](#) and [English](#), as well as in Annex No.1.

In accordance with the Cabinet Regulation No. 932 of 16 November 2004 “[The Procedure for Starting Studies in Later Stages of Studies](#)” (document is available only in Latvian) and Cabinet Regulation No. 505 of 14 August 2018 “[Regulations on Recognition of Competences Acquired Outside Formal Education or in Professional Experience and of Learning Outcomes Achieved in Prior Education](#)” (document is available only in Latvian), RSU ensures fair recognition of previous education or professional experience so that the applicant is able to apply for studies in later stages of studies. This process is implemented by taking into consideration the fact that students are mobile both within the framework of the higher system and between the educational systems.

Admission regulations define the procedure for submission of documents, deadlines thereof, the process of the competition, procedure for the appeal and for contesting and appeal of decisions related to admission, as well as the procedure of signing the study contract and matriculation, and requirements define the rights and duties of the applicant and RSU. Annexes to the admission regulations provide accurate information on each study programme, into which admission has been planned during the specific academic year, including admission requirements, documents to be submitted, etc.

After confirmation of Admission Regulations by RSU Senate, these are published on RSU website www.rsu.lv and are available to any interested person. RSU representatives continuously ensure that RSU website provides the current information on study programmes; moreover, accurate selection criteria for admission are specified for each study programme. RSU website also features published information on availability of state-funded study places and availability of study places financed from the funds of natural or legal persons, as well as information regarding admission dates and procedure for submission of documents. At RSU Student Services, people may receive consultations on the admission procedure, including admission requirements, contesting the admission results, rights and duties of the applicants. This structural unit provides services by using e-mail, telephone, as well as meeting the people in person. Consultations on admission requirements, for example, admission examinations and specification thereof are provided by Heads of the study programmes; thus, they provide applicants with maximum information and preparation for admission at RSU.

RSU ensures admission procedures corresponding to the aim that are based on previously defined and published admission regulations. RSU admission policy, matriculation procedures and criteria are implemented consistently; applicants are admitted based on open and equal competition. RSU ensures equal admission processes: uniform admission regulations have been set for all candidates

with specific and previously known requirements rooted in respective national terms and conditions and rules of law. That way, the rights of the most suitable applicants to study in their selected study programmes are ensured. RSU fulfils its obligation to accept the documents submitted by the applicants and to decide on compliance thereof with the requirements mentioned in annexes to the admission requirements. RSU also announces the admission results in accordance with the provisions of the admission requirements and organises signing of study contracts with the applicants who have passed the competition. After signing of the study contracts and fulfilment of the defined applicant's obligations, RSU ensures the matriculation of these applicants.

The qualification to be obtained has been defined in the documents of accreditation of study directions and licensing of study programmes, descriptions of study programmes and directions, admission requirements and diplomas.

Since academic year 2018/2019, RSU has introduced the generation and printing of diplomas and diploma supplements from the Student Information System. The electronic form of the diploma supplement has been developed in accordance with the Cabinet Regulation No. 202 (Annex 7) and on the basis of RSU Procedure for Preparation and Issuance of Diplomas and Diploma Supplements. The diploma supplement is created automatically, based on the information from various sections of the Student Information System - study programme, student's study plan, register of records, student card, etc. The sections of the Student Information System that ensure the creation of a particular student's diploma supplement are formed gradually, starting from the student's enrolment.

The diploma supplement form contains fixed and variable fields. The information in the fixed fields is the same for all students of a study programme. The variable fields contain information about a specific student of this study programme. The diploma supplement is created by activating the workflow in the Student Information System. As a result, the variable information fields are automatically filled in. As mentioned, information from various sections of the Student Information System is entered in the diploma supplement. If the data entered in the diploma supplement conflicts with each other, the system highlights the erroneous data and the employee can perform a manual check of the data to correct the error.

Preparation of diploma supplements in the Student Information System ensures that the amount of manual work and errors that occur when creating a diploma supplement manually is reduced to a minimum. Creating diploma supplements manually is a time-consuming process, but a limited amount of time is allocated for this, so the work is stressful. With the introduction of the new system, the workload of employees is reduced.

Procedure for recognition of diplomas is regulated by:

- External laws and regulations:
- Sections 59.2 and 59.3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions;
- Cabinet Regulation No. 505 of 14 August 2018 "Regulations on Recognition of Competence Acquired Outside Formal Education or in Professional Experience and of Learning Outcomes Achieved in Prior Education";
- Internal laws and regulations:
- "Regulations on Validation of Competences Acquired outside Formal Education or in Professional Experience and Recognition of Learning Outcomes Achieved in Prior Learning at Rīga Stradiņš University (approved at Rīga Stradiņš University Senate meeting of 21 May 2019, minutes No. 2-1/5/2019)".
- Procedure No. 5-1/10/2020: For "Validation of Competences Acquired outside Formal Education or in Professional Experience and Recognition of Learning Outcomes Achieved in Previous Education at Rīga Stradiņš University"

In accordance with [the Cabinet Regulations No. 505 of 14 August 2018 “Regulations on Recognition of Competences Acquired Outside Formal Education or in Professional Experience and of Learning Outcomes Achieved in Prior Education”](#) (document is available only in Latvian) a person has the right to address RSU with an application regarding recognition of knowledge, skills and competences acquired outside formal education or in professional experience, as well as learning outcomes achieved in previous education.

Commission formed by the higher education institution makes a decision regarding recognition of knowledge, skills and competences acquired outside formal education or in professional experience, as well as learning outcomes achieved in previous education. Its rights, obligations and conditions of formation are included in the [“Regulations on Recognition of Learning Outcomes Achieved in Previous Education or Professional Experience at Rīga Stradiņš University”](#) (Regulations are available in the [documents section](#) on RSU website under study documents).

In order to begin recognition of knowledge, skills and competences acquired outside formal education or in professional experience, the following should be submitted to the commission: application; documents proving knowledge, skills and competences acquired outside formal education or in professional experience; payment order from the bank proving the payment made.

The commission evaluates the knowledge, skills and competences acquired by the person outside formal education or in professional experience and if these comply with the learning outcomes to be achieved in the respective study programme, shall recognise and assign respective credit points. Examination of the application and decision-making in accordance with Section 59.3, Paragraph 1 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions takes place within four months from the date of receipt of the application.

In order to begin recognition of learning outcomes achieved in previous education, the following should be submitted to the commission: application; certificate on study modules or study courses completed at the higher education institution by the person as a participant; payment order from the bank for the payment made. Examination of the application and decision-making takes place within the period specified in the Administrative Procedure Law, i.e., within one month as of the receipt of the application.

By the Rector's Decree the “Procedure for Recognition of Learning Outcomes Achieved in Previous Education or Professional Experience” has been defined; RSU defines the procedure of how RSU performs acceptance of documents, assessment and recognition of knowledge, skills and competences obtained outside formal education or in professional experience, as well as learning outcomes achieved in previous education.

RSU has successfully organised its work with a single commission, ensuring the involvement of a respective expert from the respective thematic area of the education. Such an approach (one commission for all thematic areas of education) has ensured a uniform approach throughout the university; different interpretation is avoided, thus providing equal attitude towards persons.

Until now, no one has used the opportunity to write an application in the study direction “Psychology” regarding the knowledge, skills and competences acquired outside formal education or in professional experience, but several students have received recognition of the learning outcomes achieved in previous education. General courses and foreign languages are most often recognised to students who already have a higher education, but for those who have a medical education - medical courses. If a student comes from a psychology programme of another university, the courses that have already been passed at the previous university and have a similar title and content as those study courses at RSU, are recognised.

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

Students may familiarise themselves with the criteria, conditions and binding procedures for the assessment of student performance in the Academic Regulations I and Academic Regulations III - Regulations of Doctoral Studies (documents are available [in Latvian](#) and [English](#)). Requirements for defining and evaluating learning outcomes – knowledge, skills, competence – are included in the Process Description No. 6 “Evaluation and Submission of Learning Outcomes”.

Methods of assessment of student performance and achieved learning outcomes, as well as assessment criteria for completion of study courses, are defined in the description of each study course and are available to all students prior to the start of the study course. The academic freedom of each lecturer is respected in the implementation of the study courses, including the development and implementation of study examinations, at the same time providing that the teaching and examination methods must be chosen in accordance with the learning outcomes to be achieved in the study course. In order to ensure that student performance assessment methods, procedures and principles are consistent with the attainment of the aims of the study programme and the needs of students, regular monitoring of the quality of study courses is carried out within the StD, involving both the teaching staff and the Heads of StP and RSU study process support department, in this case, in particular the quality experts of RSU Centre for Educational Growth, who examine and approve study course descriptions, as well as representatives of employers and students, including in the Study Quality Council. Within the framework of this cooperation and information exchange, both the observation of teaching and the experience-sharing workshops for the teaching staff and Heads of StP are organised and the mapping of study programmes is done during which particular attention is paid to close links between the learning outcomes of study courses and the learning outcomes of the StP. The assessment methods used in study courses are discussed between the teaching staff and students, evaluating the relevance of the methods to the aims of the StP. During the annual updating of study courses, best practices are taken over and used further. At the same time, the assessment methods used in the study courses are reviewed taking into consideration the results of the course evaluation questionnaires, in which a special section is devoted to assessment methods.

Both summative and formative assessment are combined in the study process to enhance students' individual performance and assess the level of learning outcomes achieved. In the context of learning outcomes, both study course-specific and transversal knowledge, skills, and attitudes are important, therefore, students' active involvement and participation, initiative, and taking responsibility are additionally evaluated. Individual assessment of interim and final examinations of study courses are available to each student on their student profile in RSU e-studies environment.

Creative, research, practical and self-reflective works are assessed in accordance with the aims of each study course and the evaluation criteria of the course with which the lecturer introduces to the students at the beginning of the course. Criteria for research papers are available in the methodological guidelines for research papers, which were improved and updated in 2020 for students of the Bachelor's study programme (such as [methodological guidelines for semester papers and Bachelor's theses](#) and for students of the [Master's study programme](#) (both documents available only in Latvian).

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

RSU has developed RSU Code of Ethics and established the Ethics Committee that considers violations and cases of disputes on the basis of applications. RSU has developed and approved the document "Methodological Guidelines for References and Listing of Reference Sources and Literature", which explains to students the principles of using the works of other authors and making correct references. In order to promote compliance with academic integrity and make it easier for lecturers to check student papers, RSU has implemented and uses the Unified Computerised Plagiarism Control System of Latvian higher education institutions to check the originality of the content of final theses, and RSU has purchased a license for the plagiarism checking tool "Turnitin" for wider use. For easier use, the tool is integrated into RSU e-learning website. An example of application: All the coursework envisaged, as well as all final papers and individual course reports must be submitted in e-studies at the relevant study course where it is requested to upload papers to Turnitin. After the papers are uploaded, the results on the plagiarism (matching) of the papers are available on e-studies, which show both the overall percentage of similarity and visually demonstrate matching places in the paper itself, identifying also the sources used that match some part of the text. Supervisors of coursework assess the results of similarity, taking into consideration also the [Turnitin User Guide](#) (document is available only in Latvian) for academic staff developed by RSU, which sets out the principles for the interpretation of the results (instructions on page 7). Taking into consideration these results, the supervisor of the respective work evaluates whether the work submitted complies with the principles of academic integrity and makes an assessment accordingly or informs the student if the work needs to be corrected. The evaluation of Turnitin results takes into account that a relatively high (above 20%) similarity with other sources may not mean that the submitted work shows signs of plagiarism, but indicate a lack of contribution from the author, namely the author has used other sources of information and correctly referred to them, but the work lacks the author's analysis, argumentation and interpretation, which the supervisor also points out to the student when giving the assessment or returning the work for correction.

In order to improve the lecturers' knowledge of the possibilities of this tool and to develop the skills for using it, RSU Centre for Educational Growth regularly organises practical trainings for lecturers and support staff on the benefits and use of this tool for checking, correcting students' independent work and providing feedback in the study courses, as well as for checking qualification and diploma papers at the end of the study programme. Lectures and seminars on the principles of academic integrity and mechanisms for their observation and checking are also provided to students during the study process.

Introduction of academic integrity in the programmes of the study direction in psychology:

- students at all levels learn basic principles of academic integrity, for example, in the study courses "Introduction to Studies", "Information Literacy", "Professional Activity and Ethics", "Semester Paper", "Bachelor's Thesis", "Master's Thesis", "Research Ethics";
- it is the responsibility of the Heads of the study programmes to inform about the principles of academic integrity and the prevention procedures at RSU (consideration of plagiarism cases in department meetings, maintenance of a plagiarism register, recording each case; risk of exclusion in cases of repeated plagiarism);

- all final papers (semester papers, Bachelor's thesis, Master's thesis) are uploaded to the e-studies site and checked with the help of the Turnitin tool;
- most of the coursework of the study courses are also checked with the help of the mentioned tool;
- regular consultations with RSU self-government on issues of academic integrity take place.

There have been no cases of plagiarism since the introduction of electronic checking of the papers and regular education on academic integrity. If plagiarism is detected, it is initially considered at the department meeting, giving the student the opportunity to explain the situation and the causes of plagiarism. If, after consideration, plagiarism is recognised as having been committed, the student signs in the plagiarism register that he/she has been informed that, in the case of repeated plagiarism, exclusion will follow. In the case of plagiarism in a Bachelor's or Master's thesis, the student is not allowed to defend the thesis and is excluded.

All in all, the principles of academic integrity are successfully adhered to in the study process and violations of academic integrity are primarily considered in a decentralised way at the level of faculties, study programmes, and study courses. In order to promote the implementation of a uniform approach to definition, detection, consideration of violations of academic integrity and application of punishment throughout the university, RSU has developed a plan for the development and implementation of the framework for adhering to the culture of academic integrity and its principles. This initiative is included in the draft project application of the Ministry of Education and Science Specific Support Objective 8.2.3. "To ensure better governance in higher education institutions". Within the framework of the development of a support system, the main planned activities are:

- promoting prevention. Preventive promotion of compliance with principles of ethics and academic integrity is envisaged by developing online study courses in e-studies, regular studies, and discussions at the university, educational self-learning materials, self-assessment tests. Three main target groups have been specified for the activity of the action: students, academic staff, and scientific staff; in addition, promotion of competence of the administration on principles of ethics and academic integrity is envisaged;
- improvement of the internal system It is intended to develop and improve internal regulations of RSU that will allow aligning the definition and implementation of unified principles of ethics and the management of academic integrity for students, academic staff, and research staff. Internal regulations shall define types of violations, develop processes and procedure for consideration of violations, as well as determine the applicable sanctions in accordance with the type of violation and the situation, thus promoting transparency and consistency in decision-making. Plans have been made to establish a new centralised committee that would participate in the alignment of the internal system by developing and approving procedures and regulatory framework so that it is adapted for consideration of violations of academic integrity by all students of the university and the unified committee is able to make a decision appropriate for each situation according to unified approach and system for students of all faculties, thus ensuring proportionality of decisions, compliance thereof with the internal regulatory framework and consistency. Involvement of a change agent has been envisaged for the implementation and application of this activity.

Involvement of a competent and experienced external expert for the implementation of a high-quality system of ethics and academic integrity has been planned in order to consult regarding defining of unified principles and alignment of regulatory framework, as well as the implementation of prevention mechanisms

In order to promote alignment of basic principles of ethics and academic integrity and compliance

with these principles in Latvia, cooperation with several Latvian HEIs has been intended within the framework of this direction, providing for intellectual cooperation in the establishment of principles and development of materials, sharing of the developed resources with other HEIs (e-study courses, training materials), as well as further cooperation to promote ethics and academic integrity and to solve problematic issues at the national level. So far, RSU has signed a declaration of strategic partnership with Red Cross Medical College of Rīga Stradiņš University, University of Latvia, and Riga Technical University, and other higher education institutions have agreed to cooperate to harmonise ethical and academic integrity principles; to develop teaching materials on the sharing of the academic integrity module; to exchange experience to introduce best practices in ensuring academic integrity; and raise the issue of academic integrity at national level.

1.8. Specify the websites (e.g. the homepage) on which the information on the study direction and the relevant study programmes is published (in all languages in which the study programmes are implemented) by indicating the persons responsible for the compliance of the information available on the website with the information published in the official registers.

Table 2. The websites on which the information on the study direction and the relevant study programmes.

Study Programme / Study direction	Sections of RSU homepage, where the information on the study direction and the relevant study programmes is published (the website is maintained by the Communication Department: information in Latvian https://www.rsu.lv/komunikacijas-departaments , information in English https://www.rsu.lv/en/communications-department):
Academic Bachelor's study programme "Psychology"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on the programme in Latvian: https://www.rsu.lv/studiju-programma/psihologija-bak (Person responsible: Head of the study programme) Information on the programme in English: https://www.rsu.lv/en/study-programme/psychology-0 (Person responsible: Head of the study programme) Information in Latvian about the Faculty of Communication, that monitors the implementation of the programme: https://www.rsu.lv/komunikacijas-fakultate (Person responsible: Dean of the Faculty and the office manager) Information in English about the Faculty of Communication, that monitors the implementation of the programme: https://www.rsu.lv/en/faculty-communication (Person responsible: Dean of the Faculty and the office manager)

Study Programme / Study direction	Sections of RSU homepage, where the information on the study direction and the relevant study programmes is published (the website is maintained by the Communication Department: information in Latvian https://www.rsu.lv/komunikacijas-departaments, information in English https://www.rsu.lv/en/communications-department):
Professional Master's study Programme "Health Psychology"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Information on the programme in Latvian: https://www.rsu.lv/studiju-programma/veselibas-psihologija (Person responsible: Head of the study programme) · Information on the programme in English (a minimum translation from Latvian): https://www.rsu.lv/en/study-programme/health-psychology (Person responsible: Head of the study programme) · Information on the Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy in Latvian: https://www.rsu.lv/veselibas-psihologijas-un-pedagogijas-katedra (Person responsible: Dean of the Faculty and the office manager) · Information on the Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy in English (a minimum translation from Latvian): https://www.rsu.lv/en/departament-health-psychology-and-paedagogy (Person responsible: Dean of the Faculty and the office manager) · Information in Latvian about the Faculty of Public Health and Social Welfare that monitors the implementation of the programme: https://www.rsu.lv/sabiedribas-veselibas-un-socialas-labklajibas-fakultate (Person responsible: Dean of the Faculty and the office manager) · Information in English about the Faculty of Public Health and Social Welfare that monitors the implementation of the programme: https://www.rsu.lv/en/faculty-public-health-and-social-welfare (Person responsible: Dean of the Faculty and the office manager)
Doctoral study programme "Psychology"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Information on the programme in Latvian: https://www.rsu.lv/studiju-programma/psihologija-doktorantura · Information on the programme in English: https://www.rsu.lv/en/studiju-programma/DPS · Information on the scientific research activity in psychology at RSU (available only in Latvian): https://www.rsu.lv/zinatniski-petnieciska-darbiba-psihologija · Information on the promotion: https://www.rsu.lv/en/research/doctoral-degree (Person responsible: Head of the study programme)

Study Programme / Study direction	Sections of RSU homepage, where the information on the study direction and the relevant study programmes is published (the website is maintained by the Communication Department: information in Latvian https://www.rsu.lv/komunikacijas-departaments, information in English https://www.rsu.lv/en/communications-department):
Study direction "Psychology"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Psychology education at RSU (information only in Latvian): https://www.rsu.lv/psihologijas-izglitiba · Information on the Psychology Laboratory in Latvian: https://www.rsu.lv/psihologijas-laboratorija · Information on the Psychology Laboratory in English: https://www.rsu.lv/en/psychology-laboratory (Persons responsible: Head of the study direction, Heads of the study programmes)

RSU employs a wide range of modern marketing communication tools that provide information about the higher education institution, which is a modern, open university and offers high-quality education. RSU ensures presence of the university and high-quality content in traditional and digital media, such as a website that was reconstructed in 2017; strategic work is carried out with the audience on social media, and innovative solutions for communication with young people in social media are implemented. The study programme brochure is complemented by the augmented reality application *Overly*. Digital media dominate in advertising campaigns, and the effectiveness of the selected advertising channels is monitored. Advertising materials and channels are tailored to the respective audience.

In the long term, relations are established with secondary schools all over Latvia, as well as secondary school students are offered direct contact with RSU, developing RSU messenger programme, possibility to attend programme lectures they are interested in, organising open days, tours, Olympiads in psychology etc.

RSU participates in industry events (exhibition "School", etc.), works with the database and e-mail marketing, develops various activities and events also for the target groups of Master's and doctoral study programmes.

The information published on the [website](#) of the university regarding the study programmes corresponding to the study direction corresponds to the information available in official registers, provides basic information to applicants and students, and is published in all languages of the study programme.

II - Description of the Study Direction (2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System)

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

Deming cycle is used for the implementation and application of the internal quality system: Plan – Do – Check – Act (See Figure 5).



Figure 5 Implementation and application scheme of the internal quality system

In general, supervision of RSU activities is ensured by many activities that are integrated in everyday activities, for example, approval, validation, evaluation of work quality, distribution of duties and responsibilities, etc. At the same time, targeted control measures have been implemented that are used in various periods throughout the year.

Requirements for planning, supervision, and quality control of the study process at RSU are set by Process Description No. 35 “Organisation of Study Process”. Requirements for defining and evaluating learning outcomes – knowledge, skills, competence – are included in the Process Description No. 6 “Evaluation and Submission of Learning Outcomes”.

In order to ensure supervision of study quality, a self-assessment of study directions, including SWOT analysis, is carried out once a year. In 2016, quality indicators of study programmes were approved. Heads of the study programmes summarise and assess the quality indicators of study programmes each year in accordance with “Procedure for Assessment of Quality Indicators of Study Programmes”. Results are included in the descriptions of study programmes. Data analysis related to studies, including analysis of the academic performance, analysis of the results of study course surveys, analysis of class observation results, and other measures are also performed.

In order to ensure supervision of processes taking place at the university, analysis of quality criteria performance of processes is performed once a year. For example, one of the criteria in Process Description No. 6 “Evaluation and Submission of Learning Outcomes” is: “The entry of assessment for interim examinations and end-of-course examinations in e-studies is ensured in the following

time periods:

- within one working day for oral examinations;
- not later than within six working days (or until the beginning of the examination period, if the period before the examination period is shorter - in the study system of regular classes) for written interim examinations;
- not later than within six working days for written end-of-course examinations".

Results are reported at the management meeting – Rectorate, where decisions are made regarding future activities.

The existing system ensures comprehensive supervision of study quality with control measures throughout the year.

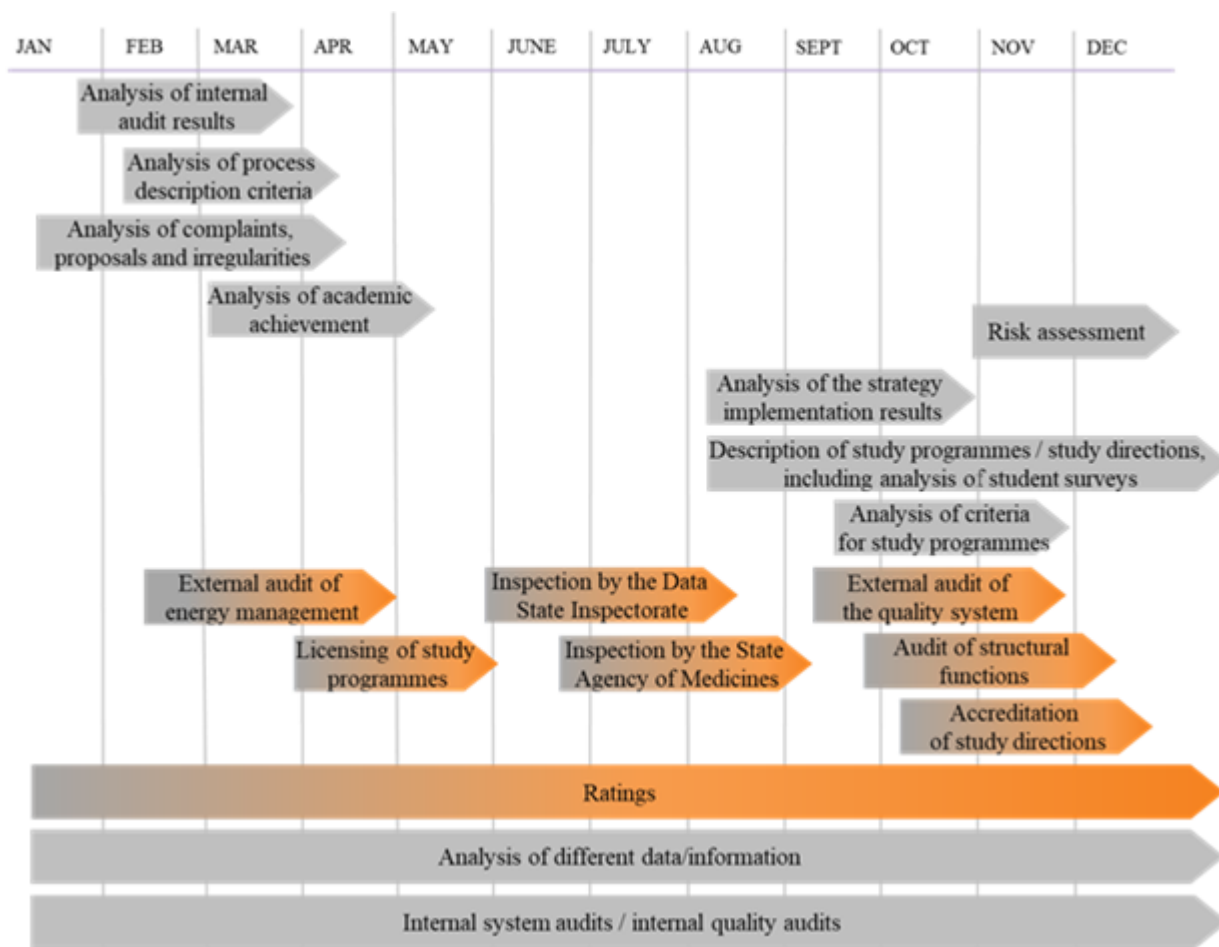


Figure 6. Measures of internal quality control.

In accordance with the results of the quality control measures performed, quality of studies is reviewed, and measures are taken to improve the quality.

2.2. Analysis and assessment of the system and the procedures for the development and review of the study programmes by providing specific examples of the procedures for the development of new study programmes within the study direction (including the approval of study programmes), the review of the study programmes, the aims, and regularity, as well as the stakeholders and their responsibilities. Description of the mechanism for obtaining and providing a feedback, including with regard to the work with the students,

graduates, and employers.

Development and revision of study programmes at RSU

RSU has established the procedure for development and internal approval of study programmes, supervision of their operation and periodical inspection. These requirements are determined in the Regulations for Development and Approval of New Study Programmes at Rīga Stradiņš University and in detail - in Process Description No. 34 "Updating and Development of Study Courses, Study Programmes, Study Directions" (see Annex No. 1) in accordance with the requirements of external laws and regulations. Necessity, usefulness, and compliance of a new study programme to the set aims are evaluated by the Centre for Educational Growth and the Vice-Rector for Studies, whereas the licensing documents of the developed study programme, as well as accreditation documents and documents for implementation of changes are coordinated by several RSU structural units and collegial institutions, including the Study Quality Council, Faculty Council, Dean's Council, Rectorate, and Senate. Supervision over the implementation of a study programme and its quality is ensured by the Head of the study programme by evaluating the study process, learning outcomes, analysing the results of student surveys, changes to the trends in the labour market, and current events in the sector and world. Several administrative structural units are also involved in monitoring the quality of studies, including Study Department (information [in Latvian](#), [in English](#)), Centre for Educational Growth (information [in Latvian](#), [in English](#)), Human Resources Department (information [in Latvian](#), [in English](#)), Quality Assurance and Internal Audit Department (information [in Latvian](#), [in English](#)).

The qualification to be obtained is specified in the licences for study programmes and in the accreditation certificates for the study direction. It is reflected in the licensing and accreditation documents of study programmes, descriptions of study programmes and study directions, admission regulations and diplomas, etc.

Development and approval of StP prior to submission to the Quality Agency for Higher Education (AIKA) include certain consecutive activities, carried out by the developer of the study programme (usually also the Head of the study programme) in cooperation with the Study Programme Development Project Manager and Coordinator of the Centre for Educational Growth who carry out informative, monitoring, coordinating and organisational functions, provide the necessary support during the development of the programme, as well as the functions for creation of the content and provision of expertise:

1. Justification for the need of the study programme and content modelling (approximately 3 months):
 - Modelling of the StP content (uses PIC EXCEL);
 - Initial evaluation and mapping of the content of the StP;
 - Discussion and clarification of the initial content of the STP (involving: lecturers, employers, representatives of professional organisations, students), coordination in the Faculty Council;
 - Register and regularly update the idea of the study programme on RSU Intranet under the section "Ideas for the development of new study programmes at RSU".
2. Development and expert-examination of the study course (StC) descriptions and other materials (approximately 3 months):

- Organising a team of lecturers;
 - Development of StC in Latvian and English (involving: Centre for Educational Growth, Study Department, Library, translators);
 - Development of study materials in Latvian and English / placing on e-studies(involving: Centre for Educational Growth, Study Departments, Library).
 - Expert-examination of the StC descriptions and materials(involving: Centre for Educational Growth, Study Departments, Library).
3. Development of licensing documentation - development of the StP description and annexes (approximately 3 months) (including also administrative departments: Centre for Educational Growth, Study Department, Library, Human Resources Department, Finance Department, Student Services, International Department, IT Department, Quality Assurance and Internal Audit Department, Student Union, Research Department, Communication Department, Translation Project Managers, etc).
 4. Expert-examination of the licensing documentation (external, independent expert) (1 month) and making adjustments specified by the expert.
 5. Coordination and approval of licensing documentation at RSU collegial bodies (1.5-2 months).
 - Coordination in the faculty - Study Quality Council and/or Faculty Council meeting;
 - Making an estimate (Finance Department - 2-3 weeks);
 - Rectorate - presentation of the overall programme, coordination of the estimate;
 - Dean's Council - presentation of the overall programme, coordination of the licensing documents;
 - Senate - presentation of the overall programme, approval of the licensing documents.
 6. Create the StP informative platform in internal systems and at rsu.lv:
 - Make an entry regarding the study programme to be licensed in the SIS (Centre for Educational Growth);
 - Draw up a study plan for the academic year (form D1);
 - Places the information about the programme on docetajs.rsu.lv;
 - In cooperation with majaslapa@rsu.lv, develop a description of the study programme on the home page noting that it is a draft programme which will be/was submitted for licensing;
 - Writes an article about the programme, describes the development process, interesting facts and interviews. Additional linking educational articles.

Following the licensing of a new study programme at the AIKA, the following is being done:

- communication on the study programme;
- recruitment and student admission;
- approbation of the StP;
- accreditation of the StP – preparation of the accreditation documents and accreditation in an agency included in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher education in accordance with national regulatory framework. When reviewing the study direction and study programmes prior to submitting documents for assessment and accreditation, the evaluation process of the study programme includes practically all the same activities as were to be carried out during the development of licensing documents.

Annual revision process of study programmes and study directions is regulated by the Rector's decree or the instructions by the Board of Studies, and its goal is to prepare a summary of

the annual study process quality monitoring.

For example, the annual report for the year 2018/2019 requires the following to be included:

1) assessment of study quality monitoring in the academic year 2018/2019.

- Quality indicators - primarily, updating the content of examinations, surveying employers and implementing recommendations, integration of simulation resources in achieving the learning outcomes (if applicable);
- Admission results, student dropout rate and reasons for exclusion.
- Survey results (results of the study programme assessment survey of the academic year 2018/2019; How is the completion of student questionnaires facilitated? How are the survey results analysed? What changes have been made based on the results obtained? How are students provided with feedback on completing the questionnaires, on the implemented and planned improvements?)
- Analysis of academic performance.

2) SWOT analysis;

3) Development and improvement measures of the study programme in the academic years 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 (implemented and planned).

- Implementation of expert recommendations and other changes in the study programme, its planning, content and organisation. Involvement of new lecturers, improvement of lecturers' qualification, attraction of visiting lecturers. Achievements since the completion of mapping, clarification of study course learning outcomes, updating of study courses, promotion of academic integrity.
- Promotion of research, integration of research and placement in the study process, publications, conferences, projects.
- Modernisation, digitisation, introduction of innovations, simulation-based learning approach, interdisciplinarity, etc.
- International cooperation, resource sharing, expansion of research and innovation potential, promotion of mobility.
- Cooperation with employers and professional organisations, including involvement in updating the professional standard.

The annual report for the year 2019/2020 requires inclusion of the following:

- Assessment of quality monitoring of studies (the same sub-criteria as above)
- Self-assessment of the implementation of remote studies
- Topicalities of the study programme and improvement measures in the academic years 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 (implemented and planned)

Whereas regarding the study direction, a plan for the development of the study direction is updated, which also includes a plan for the introduction of recommendations made by experts during previous accreditation and/or licensing. The development plan for the study direction and the plan for introduction of expert recommendations include also annexes to the accreditation documents.

The Head of the StP basically draws up the report on the study programme; whereas, the Head of the StD prepares the development plan for the study direction in cooperation with the heads of study programmes. The reports are coordinated and approved in administrative departments and collegial bodies of RSU:

- Study Quality Council and/or Faculty Council,
- Dean's Council,

The process of developing and reviewing study programmes takes place in a qualitative and well-considered manner. The annual report is published on RSU academic portal (docetajs.rsu.lv) under the information about the StP in the section "Documents". At the same time, the process of monitoring the quality of studies is regularly assessed and improved in accordance with the current situation.

Mechanism of obtaining and providing feedback in work with students and graduates

Student surveys are organised according to the procedure set by RSU Process description No.22 "Surveys" (see Annex 1):

- students fill in the study course evaluation questionnaire for each study course in e-studies (more information about e-studies in Section 3.3). It gives students an opportunity to express their opinions and suggestions about the content of the study course, its implementation methods, the competence and style of work of the lecturer;
- on completion of studies, students evaluate the study programme as a whole by completing a questionnaire on the study programme;
- views of RSU graduates are identified and implemented primarily by the heads of StPs. In 2017, in order to improve the obtaining of graduate feedback, RSU Alumni Association in cooperation with RSU Study Department and Centre for Educational Growth developed a unified questionnaire for graduates, which was published at [lv](#) (information in Latvian).

Once a year, the results of the study course survey and study programme survey are analysed. Results are reviewed at the meeting of departments, faculty councils, Study Quality Councils and Dean's Council, and are described in the mentioned annual report in an aggregate form. So, the study courses are updated each year in accordance with the evaluation given by the students. Student representatives are also involved in faculty councils ensuring representation of their opinion in decision-making processes. Generally, RSU practises student-centred education, which is described in more detail in Section I Paragraph 1.3.

Feedback to the students is ensured on RSU Academic Staff portal since January 2018. Twice a year (within two weeks after closing the survey), academic staff and heads of academic structural units have an opportunity to publish the feedback to the students regarding survey results and decisions made for improvement of study courses. Feedback can be published as soon as the survey is closed. Survey section has restricted access, by default the rights are granted to the academic staff, heads of departments and those who have been granted the right to the course. It is possible to publish feedback in Latvian and English, depending on the language of the study course. Possible statuses of the feedback – "Not Submitted", "Being Prepared", "Published". Head of the academic structural unit has been provided with a function to publish the feedback prepared by the academic staff. Academic staff and heads of academic structural units have access to a preview (assessment of questionnaires of the study course evaluation) of how the students will see the published feedback. In the published feedback, students will see the survey statistics and feedback published by the academic staff or Head of the academic structural unit.

Throughout the academic year, students are surveyed on how they evaluate the learning/teaching process of the study course upon completion of each study course (see Annex 21). These surveys assess the content of the study course, the quality and competence of the lecturer's teaching skills, as well as the technical provision of the study course. Each questionnaire completed is a valuable source of information that helps to improve the quality of study courses. Feedback from students is

additionally obtained by the Head of the study programme meeting both with the course leaders and regularly paying visits before and after lectures, as well as meeting the students and informing them about current events and intended changes.

Assessing the evaluation results of the last six years of study in Bachelor's programmes, it may be established that:

- 1) basically, all the graduates surveyed are satisfied with the choice of RSU and the study programme, its implementation, the content of classes and studies and the process of studies, and are satisfied with the assessment provided, which is generally fair and impartial;
- 2) both graduates and students enjoy the flexible course planning, which gives the opportunity to combine studies and work;
- 3) respondents value the availability of the offered materials in the e-environment, they appreciate the possibility of using scientific databases and the opportunity to participate in research projects and conferences.
- 4) graduates highly value the acquired skills and regret that the professional programme was closed.

Assessing the evaluation results of the last six years of study in Master's study programmes, the following may be identified:

- 1) graduates have been satisfied with the choice of the study programme and its content, and would recommend this programme to their acquaintances, mentioning directly the fact of successful, encouraging personal and direct communication with students on behalf of the management of the study programme/direction;
- 2) graduates are satisfied with the learning outcomes achieved, the planning of lectures and classes, the organisation of placement, which allows to conclude that the study programme was organised at a good level by choosing the most appropriate lecturers for study courses and mentors for placement;
- 3) graduates are satisfied with the range of specialist courses in the study programme, the quality of lectures, seminars and counselling and placement, which develop the skills necessary for the professional work of a psychologist and can be further used in a professional career;

All the suggestions and shortcomings mentioned by graduates are being spotted and eliminated in the following year of study.

At the moment, it is not yet possible to assess the doctoral programme as a whole from the point of view of the graduates, as there are no graduates of this programme yet. However, doctoral students are also invited to complete the standardised questionnaires for each study course upon completion it; and evaluating the questionnaires, it can be concluded that:

- 1) doctoral candidates are satisfied with the choice of the higher education institution and the study programme;
- 2) doctoral students are satisfied with the learning outcomes achieved, with the planning of lectures, availability of information regarding classes and premises;
- 3) doctoral students are satisfied or more satisfied than dissatisfied with the provision of premises and the equipment in auditoriums and other premises;
- 4) doctoral students consider that the assessment of the work done was impartial and fair.

The feedback function provides an opportunity for lecturers to respond to the study course evaluation questionnaires, and students can find out about the use of their suggestions provided in the feedback in the future. Students can get acquainted with the feedback on the Student Portal, where the feedback for the previous semester can also be seen. The Study Programme Administrator of the Study Programme Administration Unit of the Study Department (SD SPAU) is involved in the provision of the feedback by activating surveys on the StPs, electronically informing students and the Head of StP of the active StP surveys (takes place before the final surveys). In the academic year 2020/2021, the survey is being renewed, the questionnaire is being reviewed and it has been made more concise. Administrative and academic structural units, Heads of the study programmes and the students themselves were involved in the development. Currently (March 2021) the development of the new questionnaire is being continued at the IT Department.

Whereas, the Head of the study programme and the Student Union motivate students to fill in the questionnaires. The Head of the StP explains students the importance of completing the course evaluation questionnaires, especially the need for completing questionnaires at the end of the study course. The Student Union is involved in disseminating the information and in motivating students to participate in filling in of the questionnaires. Reminders about the need to fill in the questionnaires are published as infographics, video, canvases and banners shortly before the opening of the survey in January and June on RSU SU Facebook page, RSU SU Instagram, and on MYRSU platform.

After closing the survey, the survey results at RSU level are compiled and analysed according to the study direction and the faculty by the Centre for Educational Growth, that inform RSU management, Study Board, Heads of study directions and Deans about the conclusions. The Head of the study programme analyses the survey results at the level of the study programme and reports on the survey results to the SQC/FC, submits the compilation to the Dean and the Head of the study direction. The SQC/FC familiarise themselves with the survey results and decide on the necessary changes to the implementation of the StP. Subsequently, once a year, the Dean reports to the Dean's Council on the survey results and the decisions taken by the SQC/FC and the necessary changes in the implementation of the StP.

Mechanism of obtaining and providing feedback from / to employers

Employers participate in SQC meetings. The employer is provided with the opportunity to participate in examination commissions by inviting sectoral specialists. Defence of both the Bachelor's thesis and Master's thesis takes place in front of a commission composed of both academic staff from RSU, representatives of employers and practitioners. Most often, the commission for defence of the Bachelor's thesis is chaired by a professor of another university (such as Guna Svence, Professor of LU), whereas the National Examination Board is chaired by an associate professor of a higher education institution, who is a certified psychologist at the same time (for example, Aija Dudkina, Associate Professor of LU or Daina Šuškovņika, Associate Professor of Turība University). The Master's Defence Commission is chaired by a professor from another higher education institution, whereas the qualification examination is supervised by a certified psychologist with *PsyD.* degree (for example, Ilona Krone or Irina Šķupele). Such composition of the commission ensures a comprehensive assessment of students' work. During the defence, students must present the topicality, goal, objectives, research object and subject, conclusions and proposals in a fifteen-minute presentation, and answer the reviewer's questions. The Commission evaluates the topicality of the subject matter, the student's reasoning for the justification of the topicality, assesses the relevance of the work to the title and research subject and object. It is essential that the research is neither too extensive nor too narrow according to the subject-matter. The

Commission assesses the appropriateness of the objectives specified to the research, the depth of the tasks fulfilled, description and interpretation of the results, whether they are ethically correct, and the novelty of conclusions and whether the conclusions are based on the research and their practical use in the practice of psychologists. In defence, the student must demonstrate both the knowledge of the sector according to the research (e.g. neuropsychology – about cognitive reserve) and general disciplines (about personality traits in personality psychology) and presentation skills, the ability to justify their point of view and convince the others, answer questions and substantiate answers.

Representatives of employers and heads of professional organisations are sometimes invited as visiting lecturers, for example, Laura Liberte, Head of the Latvian Association of Psychologists, a certified psychologist and the owner of a micro-enterprise, participated in teaching “Counselling Psychology” at the Bachelor's level. Whereas, Nikita Bezborodovs, the Head of the Clinic for Paediatric Psychology at Riga Children's Clinical University Hospital teaches the course “Clinical and Health Psychology” in the Master's study programme, and Professor Aivars Vētra, the Head of Latvian Association of Rehabilitation Professional Organisations teaches the study course “Psychosocial Aspects of Health and Disease and Psychosocial Rehabilitation”.

The employer is given the opportunity to participate in examination boards, inviting sectoral specialists to the defence of Bachelor's and Master's theses, as well as in the qualification examination.

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

Procedure for submission and review of student complaints and proposals is defined in Process Description No. 31 “Management of Complaints, Appeals, Non-Conformities and Proposals”; requirements for submission and consideration of appeals have additionally been defined in “Academic Regulations I”. In accordance with the internal procedure, students may submit complaints to the Student Services, Student Union and Quality Assurance and Internal Audit Department. These structural units ensure registration of complaints and proposals and transfer them for consideration to the responsible structural unit. After evaluation of the complaint/ proposal and performance of corrective actions, the submitter of the complaint is informed in writing regarding results of the review and actions taken. Once a year, the information on all received complaints/proposals is summarised, and the results are included in the Report on the Quality Management System, and the information is taken into consideration when carrying out RSU risk assessment. Information on possibilities to submit complaints or proposals is available to the students on RSU website in Latvian and English and on the Student portal.

Students can submit complaints, non-conformities, proposals, as well as appeals to the Student Services. The student can submit all these applications in person, electronically by sending from their RSU student email to the following email: atsauksmes@rsu.lv or complaints@rsu.lv. Applications can also be submitted by mail. The student may submit the application of complaints,

non-conformities or proposals anonymously. The student has to identify themselves in appeals, otherwise it cannot be determined, whose and which examination has to be re-assessed.

All complaints, proposals, non-conformities, appeals should be addressed to the Head of the particular structural unit. In case of any uncertainties, the student may address the Student Services that will provide answers to unclear issues and, if necessary, will consult on how to complete the forms of complaints, proposals, non-conformities, appeals. Staff of Student Services consult without interfering in the content of the document to be submitted, without affecting the student's opinion. For example, in case of appeal, the staff of Student Services clarify, which examination is the subject of the appeal; how many times the student has taken the examination, because this will affect who is the recipient of the appeal; in which study subject the examination was taken; and who was the supervisor of the examination. Upon receipt of the application, staff of Student Services verify whether it includes all necessary details, asking to add them to the application, if necessary. Such consultations are provided to students also in case of submitting applications with complaints, proposals, and non-conformities.

After receipt of applications, staff of Student Services ensure whether the application specifies the correct recipient, then register the application in the Document Management System, transferring it for further consideration by the competent structural unit. When considering appeals, the student is invited to provide their opinion regarding the content of the appeal. The student is notified about the result after considering the appeal. If the student is not satisfied with the decision, the student can appeal the decision to a higher authority.

In 2018, several anonymous complaints were received without indicating information that could identify the person. In order for the student to remain anonymous, yet to be able to receive the decision of the commission that has considered the complaint, the student may receive the decision electronically by specifying their private email address.

Even though the consideration of complaints works successfully at RSU with maximum respect for student rights, interests, and responsibilities, there are some things that should be improved. For example, when a student submits an anonymous complaint, and the information on consideration of the case is sent to the anonymous email of the student by the competent structural unit, the person is invited to arrive and participate in the meeting where the case is considered. In such messages, the sender of the email should specify that the student has the right to attend the meeting where the case is considered, yet it is not an obligation because the student will be identified in case of attendance.

The current procedure of submission, registration, and consideration of complaints, appeals, non-conformities, and proposals has been in effect since 4 April 2018. Previous procedure was revised, and improvements were made. The new procedure can be assessed as effective because the number of registered complaints increased in the first months already, showing that the new system is convenient and understandable to everyone.

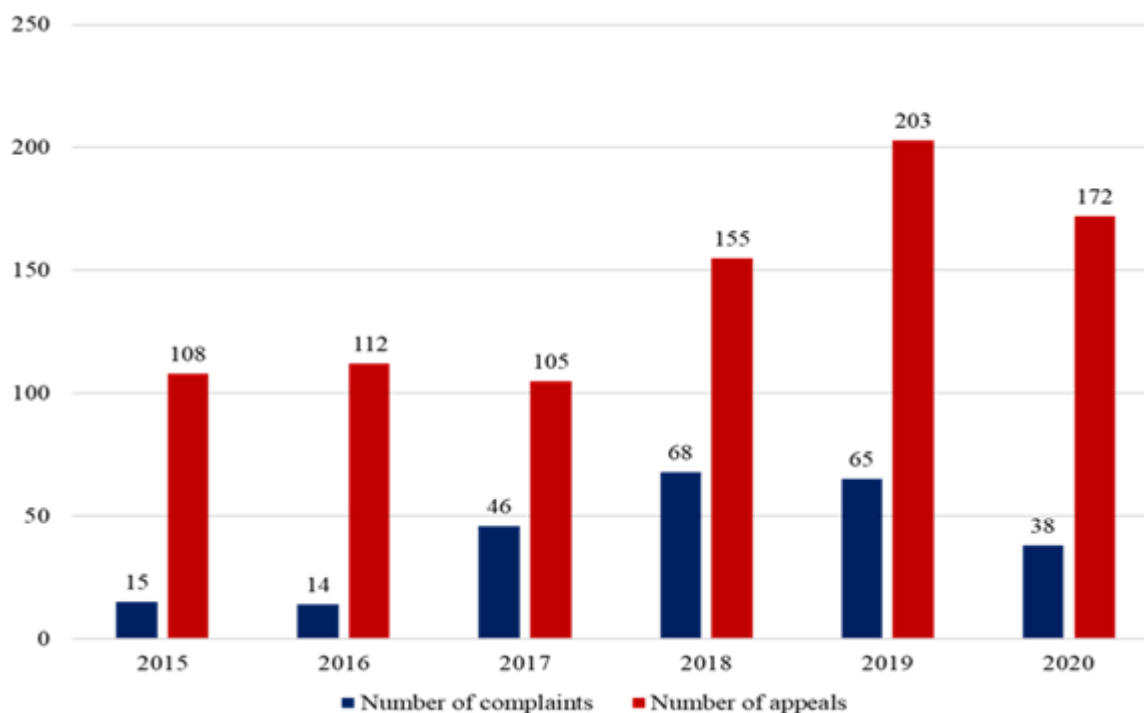


Figure 7 **Total number of complaints and appeals registered at RSU from 2015 to 2020.**

In 2020, the structural units registered 38 complaints and 192 appeals. The total number of registered complaints has decreased by 27 in comparison with the previous year. When assessing the content of complaints, it was found that most complaints were related to implementation of the study process/quality (5 complaints), and communication on various issues related to study process (5 complaints). In 2020, the Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy received one complaint about the lecturer's attitude.

In 2020, the number of appeals compared to 2019 decreased by 11 appeals. In the reporting year, there were changing trends compared to 2019 in the structural units where appeals were registered. The Department of Human Physiology and Biochemistry and the International Student Department received the largest number of appeals - 53 and 37 appeals respectively. The Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy received two appeals in 2020. There are a number of departments where no appeals were lodged in 2020.

Student representatives are active in the Faculty Councils of the Faculty of Communication and the Faculty of Public Health and Social Welfare, where student proposals are always considered. Students address the Heads of StP, so there is an opportunity to solve problems before the formal complaint is submitted.

In the academic year 2016/2017, for example, the working hours of the library were extended to 17.00 on Saturdays at the request of students for the convenience of part-time students. But over time, i.e. from the academic year 2018/2019, the Open Access Loan of the Library is available 24/7 for RSU students and employees; working hours for other users from Monday to Friday is from 8.30 - 19.00 and on Saturday from 10.00 - 17.00.

In order to improve cooperation with students in the study direction, the following mechanisms have been introduced:

- each Head of the study programme is required to meet students several times every semester;

- students may ask their questions and do so directly to the lecturer (contacts are available in the course description), the Head of the study programme, the Head of the study process, the Heads of departments and to the Dean of the faculty.
- at the beginning of study courses, not only its tasks are defined, but each lecturer informs about the possibilities for dealing with issues, proposals and complaints;
- it is possible to apply for individual tutorial with each lecturer, during which individual issues can be addressed;
- the Heads of study programmes regularly answer the questions of students both verbally and in e-forms; they are also discussed at the meetings of the Department of Sociology and Psychology and the Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy;
- student proposals with their participation are being discussed and often introduced during the semester.

2.4. Provide information on the mechanism for collecting the statistical data, as developed by the higher education institution/ college. Specify the type of the data to be collected, the collection frequency, and the way the information is used to improve the study direction.

RSU has developed a system for centralised collection and analysis of key data related to the study process. The system has a clear division of responsibilities for data analysis at various levels (RSU institutional level, study direction and programme levels, faculty and academic structural unit levels and study course level), drawing conclusions and providing feedback on the changes planned and implemented in the study process as a result of the analysis. RSU collects data on general statistical indicators characterising the higher education institution, such as the number of students, student success rate, drop-out rates and its causes, as well as admission results. There is also an in-depth analysis of key indicators.

Every month, RSU collects the most up-to-date data on the number of students, including student status (active, inactive), type of tuition financing (state-funded studies, studies for tuition fee). Information about the reasons for student drop-out is collected, compiled, and analysed, which is used to identify necessary improvements in the study programme.

Data on admission results - the number of individuals enrolled in a particular study programme and the total number of applications is collected, keeping track of the demand for the study programme. The number of students admitted to the study programme is also summarised.

The obtained statistical data are used to improve the StD, for example, in the following ways:

- The number of applications for studies, including by programmes, is used to assess the awareness of the StD and its StP. The possible causes are analysed for a reduced number of applications and changes to the study programmes are made accordingly, and/or publicity activities for the StP are stimulated.
- Statistics on study application priorities are used to identify interdisciplinary opportunities in the offer of the study programmes.
- Study applications by regions and secondary schools are used to improve publicity activities in certain regions and secondary schools in the next period.
- Statistics on the number of study contracts concluded/students enrolled are used both for a more objective assessment of the number of applications in the future periods and, of course, for the analysis of student dynamics, which affect many other indicators (drop-outs, the

number of graduates, the number of state-funded places, publicity activities).

- Statistics on academic achievement are used to analyse both the dynamics of the level of skills of students and the relevance of study courses to the needs of students, as well as to identify possible changes in the study course assessment system and the structure of content and learning outcomes, and possibly in teaching the course in general.
- Dropout statistics are analysed especially in the 1st year of study as well as during the whole period of the programme. Dropout statistics together with the reasons for dropping out are used to identify possible differences in the demand and supply of higher education, to analyse the gap in students' expectations and to facilitate the communication of the teaching staff, Heads of the study programmes and support departments with students about the reasons for dropping out (for example, various options for paying tuition fees, possibilities of having individual tutorials during studies, etc.). The dropout statistics are also analysed during the overall programme period along with the graduate statistics, which are used both in the publicity activities of the programme and in the overall assessment of the complexity and relevance of the programme.
- Statistics on the number of graduates are analysed together with the statistics on dropouts of the overall period of the programme and are used in the publicity activities of the programme and in the assessment of the overall quality and relevance of the programme.
- Statistics on the types of tuition fee payment (loans, sponsorships, grants, own finances) are taken into account to a large extent together with the analysis of dropout and its causes, as well as used in communication with students to reduce dropout risks and in publicity activities of programmes, and used in cooperation with support departments in the management of programmes, for example by setting payment schedules, possible discounts, tuition fees, etc.
- Results of study course evaluation questionnaires are used for the review of study courses and for evaluation and updating of the management of study courses every semester.
- Statistics on the causes of leaving studies are analysed together with dropout statistics to minimise the dropout risks, eliminating the reasons for leaving studies as much as possible. For example, the most common risks occurring in the course of the study process are academic and related to the study plan (motivation, combining with work, content complex, etc.), as well as financial, related to the difficulties of paying tuition fees.
- Statistics on the number and qualification of the teaching staff are used to assess the compliance of programmes with regulatory requirements, publicity activities, identification of the quality of programmes and strengthening of lecturers' qualifications, financial calculations of the study process, etc.

Analysis of study programme quality criteria

For more in-depth data analysis, quality indicators of study programmes at Rīga Stradiņš University (see Annex 1) were developed in 2016 that are collected over the academic year. Quality indicators are divided into three levels - institutional level, content level, and individual level. Based on the above levels, 14 quality criteria with 29 quality indicators have been developed. Data on the performance of the indicators is collected once a year by the Department of Study Process Quality Analysis of RSU Centre for Pedagogical Growth in cooperation with other RSU structural units and Heads of study programmes. For the purpose of summarising quality indicators, information is obtained and linked from various information systems managed by RSU. Some examples of quality indicators include the quality criterion "Provision of e-Environment", which analyses quality indicators such as timely availability of lecture and class calendar and study course descriptions, as well as timely availability of final exams on the Student Portal. Within the framework of the quality

criterion “Academic Achievements”, indicators such as the proportion of graduates who have completed the study programme within the planned term and the ratio of the number of lecturers to the number of students are analysed. Within the framework of the quality criterion “Professional Competence and Improvement of Participation”, data on the proportion of lecturers with a doctoral degree elected in academic positions and the number of lecturer class observations are analysed. Research activity indicators of lecturers and students are also analysed.

Information on the fulfilment of the Quality Indicators is provided to RSU management, Student Union, Dean’s Council, and Heads of study programmes.

Collecting and analysing quality indicators allows to understand if and what improvements are required at RSU institutionally, in the study directions, and in individual study programmes and how the development of study programmes is coordinated with the RSU Development Strategy’s objectives and targets set for 2017–2021. In 2021, the evaluation of the results of the RSU Development Strategy was initiated and the development of a new strategy was started. In the process of strategy preparation, the selection and formulation of new study programmes’ quality indicators has been started in order to update and improve the quality indicators in accordance with the aims and objectives of the new strategy.

Analysis of Academic Performance of Students

Student performance is analysed twice per academic year after the end of the autumn and spring semesters. Data on final student assessments are collected and analysed by the Study Quality Analysis Division of RSU Centre for Educational Growth by faculty and study direction, providing information to RSU management and data collections to the Deans of the faculties.

Data by study programmes is analysed by Heads of the study programmes, and the results of the analysis are reviewed by the Study Quality Council and the Faculty Council. The conclusions are summarised and included in the annual report on the actions taken to improve the study programme.

In terms of academic structural units, the data is analysed by the Heads of the academic structural units, and the results of the analysis are discussed at the structural unit meetings.

The Deans of faculties report annually to the Dean’s Council on the findings of the performance analysis, sharing their experiences and good practices.

Student feedback analysis

Twice a year, information on students’ feedback from study course and study programme assessment questionnaires is collected. Data on questionnaire completion and key indicators is collected and analysed by the Department of Study Process Quality Analysis of RSU Centre for Educational Growth, reporting results to RSU management, Student Union, Dean’s Council, and Heads of study programmes.

Data on the survey results, including student comments given in the questionnaires, are available to Heads of academic structural departments, Heads of study directions and programmes, as well as lecturers on RSU Academic Staff portal. Data is analysed at the structural unit meetings and Study Quality Councils. The students are informed about the decisions made both in person and online, using the possibility of electronic feedback on RSU Academic Staff portal.

Survey results, as well as student performance data, are analysed at structural unit meetings, study programme quality councils, and Faculty Councils. The Heads of study directions report annually on the findings of the survey result analysis to the Dean’s Council in the autumn semester.

Statistical data is reviewed in both the Council of the Faculty of Communication and the Faculty of Public Health and Social Welfare, the Dean's Council and other administrative bodies. Both the dynamics of the number of students in study programmes, the dynamics of graduates and the dynamics of student dropout are analysed. The Head of the StD reports to the Dean's Council on statistics for each previous semester. This makes it possible to take informed decisions on both the changes to the content of the StP by setting tuition fees, etc. and on similar issues. For example, the dynamism of student dropout still shows that there are quite a number of students who cannot pay tuition fees. Therefore, the tuition fee is not significantly increased by adapting to student paying capacity, at the same time ensuring the development of both the Faculty of Communication and the Faculty of Public Health and Social Welfare.

2.5. Description and assessment of the integration of the standards set forth in Part 1 of the ESG. Specify which of the standards are considered a challenge and which require special attention.

The description and assessment of the compliance of the study programme with Part I of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assessment in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is included in the Annex 23 "Description and assessment of the integration of the standards included in the Part 1 of EHEA"

The following standards are given increased attention:

- student-centred learning, which is provided by lecturers by developing appropriate forms of cooperation with students;
- involvement of external expert-examination (e.g. Anda Nulle, the Head of the National Rehabilitation Centre "Vaivari", Iveta Ķiece, the Head of Riga Psychiatry and Narcology Centre, Latvian Association of Psychologists, Psychology Service of the National Armed Forces of Latvia, the International Test Commission, European Health Psychology Society, etc.);
- the role and significance of democratic institutions and self-regulation are emphasized in the content of studies and demonstrated in practical studies in order to prepare students for life in the democratic society;
- personal development by providing students with an individual approach to the process of drawing up creative and research work;
- carefully planned placement periods throughout the study period.

The following standards pose high-level challenges:

- science and innovation; lack of funding and other resources (staff, IT software technology, patents, etc.) in social science research makes it difficult to comply with these standards;
- ensuring the environment required for teaching is problematic due to a persistent lack of resources (premises, possibility of spending more time on research), since the financial basis of the programmes within the study direction consists solely of private contributions.

II - Description of the Study Direction (3. Resources and Provision of the Study Direction)

3.1. Provide information on the system developed by the higher education institution/ college for determining the financial resources required for the implementation of the study direction and the relevant study programmes. Provide data on the available funding for the relevant study programmes, as well as the sources of the funding for the scientific research and/or artistic creation activities and their use for the development of the study direction. Provide information on the costs per one student (for each relevant study programme of the study direction) by specifying the headings indicated in the calculation of costs and the percentage of the funding among the indicated headings.

Study programmes of the psychology study direction are funded by private and legal persons. There are only two state-funded budget places financed by the Ministry of Health in the Master's Study Programme.

The academic Bachelor's study programme (ABSP) "Psychology" is implemented full-time (3 years, the estimated total number of students over three years is 120 students, the existing annual tuition fee is EUR 1950, the tuition fee starting from the academic year 2021/2022 will be EUR 2100) and by distance learning (3.5 years, the estimated total number of students in 3,5 years is 60, the annual tuition fee is EUR 1750).

The professional Master's study programme (PMSP) "Health Psychology" is intended to be implemented in full-time studies during 1.5-2 years, with the estimated total number of students of 40, and with the annual tuition fee of EUR 2389 (in the academic year 2019/2020 the tuition fee was EUR 2110).

The doctoral study programme (DSP) "Psychology" is intended to be implemented over a period of 3 years, where the annual tuition fee is set at EUR 2100; the estimated number of students over the entire study period is 18.

If the programme is implemented in English, then the tuition fee is 1.5 times higher than for students studying in Latvian. This difference in tuition fees is related to the fact that lecturers also have a bonus of EUR 0.25 for a lecture in English.

Table 3. Information about student costs

Title	ABSP "Psychology"	PMSP "Health Psychology"	DSP "Psychology"
Average cost per student, EUR	1,899	2,039	2,587
Academic staff, %	53%	50%	44%
Department resources, %	3%	2%	16%

Other direct expenses, %	9%	14%	13%
Fixed costs, %	9%	8%	7%
Overheads, %	26%	26%	21%

The funding is used for staff remuneration, taxes, maintenance of IT infrastructure, purchase of facilities and equipment and placement costs. In addition to the direct costs of delivering lectures and conducting classes, the study programme has to cover infrastructure maintenance costs (premises, IT solutions) and costs of other RSU common resources used in the study programme (Student Services, Library, organisation of the study process, grant for the Student Union and other support and administrative functions). For example, the Library budget for 2021 provides for subscription of the PsycARTICLES database of 19 thousand euro.

The study programmes of the psychology direction are implemented by the Faculty of Communication, the Faculty of Public Health and Social Welfare, Faculty of Rehabilitation, Faculty of European Studies, Faculty of Medicine, Language Centre, Department of Doctoral Studies, Department of Humanities, Unit for Continuing Education of Academic Staff, Department of Welfare and Social Work, Department of Clinical Skills and Medical Technologies and other departments. The total annual budget of these departments for higher education amounts to 3.5 million euro.

Extensive RSU facilities are available for teaching of the study courses, allowing for the booking of study rooms and computer classes in the common system.

RSU has three research platforms, one of which is the Social Sciences Platform (SZP). It aims to use purposefully RSU resources to ensure research excellence, provide internationally recognised expertise and research advice to stakeholders at national and international level.

The research activities of the SZP are organised in four directions:

- International relations and comparable politics;
- International business and economic development;
- International and national legal systems and law;
- Strategic communication and social anthropology.

The sources of RSU research funding are basic funding, research projects (national budgetary financing, EU Structural Fund funding, EU Framework Programme funding and others), infrastructure and institution development projects, as well as private funding.

Artistic creative activities (dance group and choir) are funded from:

- RSU own funds;
- Riga City Council co-financing.

In order to promote research and help researchers at the initial stage of their careers, RSU has established incentive schemes and practices:

- RSU internal grant system (approximately 400 thousand euro per year);
- joint RSU and Riga Technical University (RTU) grant programme for multidisciplinary research;
- grants for post-doctoral students and researchers at the initial stage of their careers

(European Social Fund);

- grants for doctoral students;

co-financing for international cooperation networks and mobility (*Erasmus +*).

3.2. Provide information on the infrastructure and the material and technical provision required for the implementation of the study direction and the relevant study programmes. Specify whether the required provision is available to the higher education institution/ college, availability to the students, and the teaching staff (the specific equipment required for the relevant study programme shall be indicated in Part III, Chapter 3 below the respective study programme).

The infrastructure and technical facilities established by RSU are equally available for all RSU study programmes.

All RSU buildings are provided with a safe wireless network *Eduroam Wi-Fi*. Students may connect to the *Eduroam* wireless network using their username and password. *Eduroam* is available in 36 European countries, as well as in Australia, the USA and Canada. RSU students may also use open access computers with provided access to the student systems and internet resources. Multimedia projectors are available in 193 lecture rooms for use of audio-visual materials for studies; most of these are high-resolution interactive projectors that are connected to a sound system. *Panopto* video recording system is used for the preparation of audio-visual training materials, whereas a video conferencing system is used to provide online lectures. A centralised management system of the multimedia equipment in lecture rooms has also been established. Also, ten computer rooms with more than 200 work stations that are used both for the implementation of certain study courses, as well as for provision of electronic examinations and other types of knowledge testing are available for the needs of study process. At the same time, RSU uses the Respondus Monitor platform to provide remote “closed-book” written examinations, and Zoom for remote oral examinations.

RSU offers its students to use *Office365*, providing an option to use full *Microsoft Office*, *OneDrive* file storage without additional fee. While the student studies at RSU, they have access to all software necessary for successful study process. The student can install *Microsoft Office* software, *Word*, *Excel*, *PowerPoint*, *OneNote* on five computers (*Windows* or *Mac*) and five mobile devices (e.g. a smartphone, a laptop and a tablet). Students may use *OneDrive* of 1 TB for automatic synchronisation of devices.

RSU students and academic staff are already provided with a well-developed IT infrastructure and virtual study environment. RSU students and academic staff have access to e-learning environment with study materials and student assessments, the Student portal containing the necessary study information and e-services, the Academic Staff portal containing information on academic staff, academic structural units, register of study courses and study programmes, survey system, and feedback.

RSU IT department is focused on promoting interactive content and collaboration. RSU IT infrastructure and technical resources for remote learning:

- RSU provides all study courses with an e-learning environment, which is created automatically based on the study programme plans; the availability of the e-study environment is determined by the Description of the Information System resource approved

on 18.12.2019 with the number 76-4/13/2019 "E-studies".

- In the e-environment of the study course, the virtual communication environment, *Zoom* and *MS Teams*, is used for communication between the lecturer and students. The availability of *Zoom* is determined by the Description of the Information System Resources No. 76-4/5/2020 "Video conferencing system ZOOM" approved on 23.09.2020.
- The working environment of academic departments and employees is the Academic (formerly "Lecturers") portal that ensures the organisation of the study process and the evaluation of learning outcomes, etc. The availability of the Academic portal is determined by the Description of the Information System resources approved on 11.12.2019.
- RSU provides students and lecturers with remote access to specialised software, including *SPSS*, using Terminal remote App technology - terminal.rsu.lv. The availability of the Terminal is determined by the Description of the Information System resources "Terminal Server for Scientific Applications" No. 75-4/16/2019 approved on 19.12.2019.
- To provide electronic examinations, colloquia and tests, RSU uses the *Respondus Monitor* platform to provide remote "closed-book" written examinations.
- The *Panopto* video recording system is used for the preparation of audio-visual teaching materials; on average 30 new video teaching materials are added per day. In the period from 1 March to 30 November, 8255 video teaching materials were added.
- The submission of homework in the e-environment of the study course is ensured by the *Turnitin* system - it facilitates the collection of work and automatically checks the originality of the work.
- RSU provides the Student Portal MyRSU, which is linked to the E-study (Moodle) platform. All the necessary information about studies and their process, as well as various services provided by the university are available on My RSU.
- The unified search engine *Primo* is used for the management of e-resources. It provides a fast and streamlined search for e-resources subscribed by RSU library and provides remote access to lecturers and students using
- *Skype for business* - telephone infrastructure;
- For employees, the e-mail system *Exchange* provides calendar and contact management; for students cloud service *Office 365* is provided.
- *Ms Active directory*-based electronic identity management infrastructure maintenance (one username and password for all IT systems maintained in a centralised way);
- self - service copying / printing / scanning systems.

From 1 March 2020 to 30 November 2020, the number of remote lectures and classes in the *Zoom* environment reached 60138, whereas a total of more than 16000 records are available in the *Panopto* video repository.

The lecturers have the necessary equipment for remote learning process - a computer, camera, headphones, microphone and other necessary equipment, as well as a video recording studio, separate rooms with stationary video recording equipment and document cameras, as well as mobile equipment is available to carry out specific learning scenarios.

In order to ensure the continuous availability of IT resources in the study process, an IT service centre has been established - IT support for students and lecturers, providing answers to questions related to RSU IT systems (questions may be posed via the IT User Support System - help.rsu.lv, e-mail it@rsu.lv, or by phone No. 67061515). The working hours of the Service centre is from 7.30 to 20.00 on weekdays and on from 9.00 to 16.00 on Saturdays.

In order to ensure the infrastructures necessary for the implementation of the study programmes, improvement of the informative and technical provision in accordance with the development needs of the study programmes, an IT development working group has been established consisting of

academic and administrative staff. The IT development working group reviews suggestions on development of new IT systems and improvement of the existing ones. Whereas, physical IT infrastructure is planned in accordance with requests from the structural units, evaluating the workload of the existing infrastructure during the period of drawing up RSU budget.

In order to achieve the above-mentioned aims, the IT Department is allocated annual budget pursuant to the IT long-term development plan. A considerable share of the funding is allocated for long-term investments in fixed assets, including system software. More than 30 % of the IT budget per year is dedicated to the development, i.e. for long-term investments in network and server infrastructure, equipment and software.

IT services, hardware, network and peripheral equipment are evaluated as excellent; yet it should be taken into account that upgrades are necessary in order to ensure efficiency of study processes. For example, for the students from various study programmes to be able to use knowledge, skills, and competence obtained during the study process to solve cases, it is necessary to develop RSU library of audio-visual study materials (repository of training objects) that would support approach of case studies and analysis in studies and inter-disciplinary aspect. In addition, it is necessary to upgrade the student portal by introducing an internationally recognised solution that includes a mobile application providing an option to work at the student portal, improved experience of portal use, an option to integrate functions from current RSU information systems in the portal, as well as built-in integration with *Office 365*, *Primo* search engine, email, calendar, and other applications. In order to manage the study programme more efficiently, it is necessary to develop a new mapping system of study programmes.

The current list of IT services is available on RSU [website](#).

The open source training management platform *Moodle* or e-learning platform (see the description at the beginning of section 2.2) is already used as a tool for organising the study process in each study course and provides appropriate opportunities for the implementation of the StP remotely or in distance learning.

The global pandemic from March 2020 demonstrated the possibility for implementation of remote learning and distance learning very well. The e-learning platform became the basis for the interaction between the university and students - all up-to-date information about the learning process was available there, including the lecture timetable, study course descriptions, study course materials, links to video lectures and classes via *Zoom* (video recordings were available through *Panopto* - RSU lecturers were provided with appropriate licenses).

In order to ensure the professional development of the teaching staff, the IT department provides an opportunity to apply for online individual consultations with an expert in improving digital skills of lecturers. Consultations are provided using the *Zoom* platform. In addition, a full range of IT training is offered each week.

Study process in the corresponding programmes of the study direction is planned according to the occupancy of the premises, the number of students in the course and the needs of the lecturer of the particular study course, i.e. if lecturer needs a certain type of space, it is selected depending on the number of students and the needs of the lecturer.

For example, in the bachelor's programme: if language classes have to take place in the Language Centre, then these classes are planned in the Language Centre. If a biology and genetics course requires a room with certain equipment – then a room where such equipment is available is selected. If a lecturer needs a room where you can move both the tables and the chair – then exactly such room is selected. If there is a lecture in which more than 100 students have to participate – then it is planned in one of the large auditoriums of RSU at 16 Dzirciema iela or

Hipokrātu iela.

In 2019, the Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy started working in new premises at 5 Jāņa Asara iela (information in Latvian, information in English), where almost all lectures of the Master's degree and part of the classes for the Bachelor's study programme take place. For the Liepāja programme, all classes take place in the premises of the Liepāja branch. For doctoral students, all classes take place in the premises at 16 Dzirciema iela or 5 Jāņa Asara iela.

Table 4. **Training topics on IT tools.**

It Training Topics	Training content	Frequency of training and attendance
Scheduler - a tool for organising tutorials in the E-learning environment.	Creating face-t-face and remote events; Creating individual and group events; Student registration and data processing.	The training was organised twice, 46 visitors participated.
Creating tests in the e-learning environment.	Entering questions into the system; Types of questions; Creating an activity; Adding questions to an activity; Organisational issues.	The training was organised 15 times with 453 participants.
<i>Microsoft Teams</i> for lecturers - a collaborative environment for students.	Introduction to <i>Teams</i> functionality; Development and configuration of a collaborative environment; Ways and opportunities of collaboration; Collaboration with students.	The training was organised 4 times with 80 participants.
Using <i>Microsoft Teams</i> for effective teamwork.	Introduction to <i>Teams</i> functionality; Create and configure the team site; File sharing and working with them; Task management; Other additional apps.	The training was organised 3 times with 97 participants.
Options and opportunities of the e-learning environment.	Changes to the e-learning environment in the academic year 2020/2021; Carrying out basic activities in e-studies; Use of the Forum; Uploading and structuring of the materials; Creating tasks and virtual appointments; etc.	The training was organised 16 times with 377 participants.
<i>Panopto</i> training.	Organising a lecture, a class and a seminar; Final processing of recordings; Content sharing; Video recording using the <i>Panopto</i> tool.	The training was organised 7 times with 127 participants.

It Training Topics	Training content	Frequency of training and attendance
Basic <i>ZOOM</i> platform features.	Organising a lecture, a class and a seminar; Interactive online discussion; Dividing students into groups and managing group work in a virtual environment; Video recording and uploading videos in the study course.	The training was organised 3 times with 67 participants.
In-depth <i>Zoom</i> lecture and class management.	Provision with equipment (cameras, additional devices, etc.); Additional audio/video settings; Work in virtual groups (use of Breakout rooms); Content sharing and annotations; Use of two cameras; Adding a <i>Zoom</i> recording to <i>Panopto</i> ; Security settings.	The training was organised 2 times with 75 participants.
Registering attendance in the e-learning environment.	Attendance module – the possibility of registering an attendance for both the lecturer and the student; Performance control module – it is possible to control access to resources if the previous resource has/has not been used; Assess each <i>Zoom</i> activity individually; Quick e-quizzes at the beginning of the classes.	The training was organised 5 times with 148 participants.
Possibilities for remote testing.	Test forms and their “security” levels; Technologies to be used (<i>Zoom</i> , <i>Respondus</i>); Actions to be taken before, during and after the examination.	The training was organised 13 times with 326 participants.
Creating interactive content in an E-learning environment (H5P).	Types of interactive content; Creating the content in the content bank; Inserting elements to be evaluated; Processing and displaying the results in e-grades.	The training was organised 4 times with 80 participants.

It Training Topics	Training content	Frequency of training and attendance
Organising students' independent work and examinations using the possibilities of the e-learning environment.	Communication with students (Forum, announcements); Creating tasks (file upload, tests, registration, attendance registration, <i>Turnitin</i>); E-grades.	The training was organised 7 times with 272 participants.
Creating <i>Microsoft Teams Live</i> events.	Introduction to <i>Teams</i> functionality; Creating <i>Microsoft Teams Live</i> events.	The training was organised once with 12 participants.

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

When commencing studies, each student is assigned a username and, using the self-service facility, the student can obtain and reset the password, which can be used for RSU IT systems intended for students.

Students use two main sites: the Student portal *MyRSU* and the e-studies. *MyRSU* and e-studies contain all the necessary information about studies and the process thereof, as well as various services provided by the university: electronic schedules of classes, final course assessments, application forms, information about finances, RSU student's private email inbox and access to *Office 365*, self-service printing management (printing, scanning, photocopying), study course and study programme evaluation questionnaires, study course descriptions, application for issue of a written statement regarding the student's status, documents regulating the studies (internal and external laws and regulations), online databases, current information about the student social life. The "E-databases" section of *MyRSU* portal provides students with access to electronic databases such as *EBSCO*, *Ebook Central (ProQuest)* etc. from anywhere. In the e-learning environment, students have access to e-study courses that the student is studying or has studied. A variety of study materials and video lecture recordings are published in e-study courses; tests are organised, written coursework is submitted, and student knowledge is assessed, so that all student assessments, including interim assessment, are available in the e-study courses.

RSU converged e-environment uses open source learning management platform *Moodle*, on the website (hereinafter referred to as e-studies).

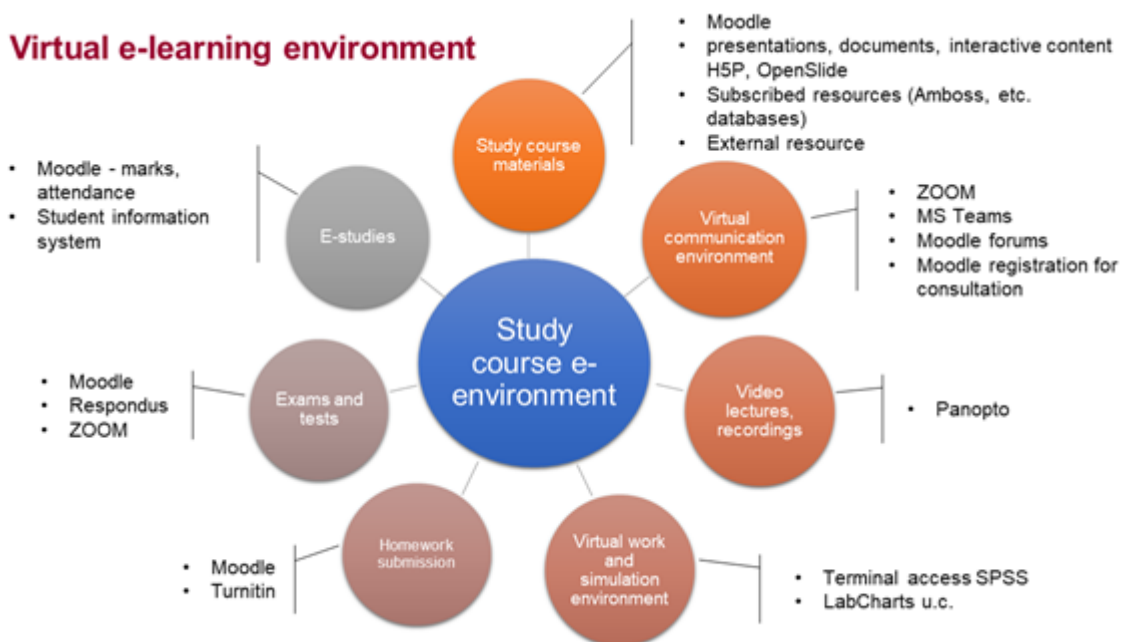


Figure 8 **Virtual e-learning environment**

E-learning environment or the *Moodle* platform is used as a tool for organising the study process in each study course - for placing various materials, taking tests and finishing homework, checking the originality (plagiarism) and for posting assessments. In addition, the e-learning environment provides the calendar of upcoming events and the latest RSU news and discussion forums, as well as study materials and all the latest information that the lecturer of the study course wants to deliver to the students - various assignments, test samples, useful additional materials, etc. By downloading the *Moodle* app to one's phone, the student accesses the study courses and course materials, as well as marks more easily from their smartphone or tablet. In the E-learning environment, students retain access to study materials until the completion of the study programme, and videos that have lost their relevance are reviewed after 3 years.

In the e-learning environment, students can access not only the courses of the current semester but also the courses studied in previous semesters and the content of the previously completed courses corresponding to the programme of the particular students. The courses of the previous semesters are kept at exactly the same status as they were when the student studied that particular course. RSU e-studies are available 24 hours a day from any location with Internet access, including from mobile phones.

In the e-learning environment, the students have access to the information on the study course, its topics and the expected learning outcomes. Most of the e-courses contain all the necessary additional materials for studies and have links to external sources of information. In most courses, interactive video lectures are created, the recordings of which are found in the e-learning environment of the corresponding course. In addition, e-studies also allow to host online conference where the lecturer and students can meet virtually. It is also possible to watch these videos on the e-conferences learning environment at a later stage of studies. The recordings of these online virtual meetings can also be watched later in the e-studies course. In some of the courses in the e-learning environment, students also have access to electronic tests for successful learning of the study course, which allows not only to assess students' knowledge quickly and in high quality, but also use it as a tool that allows the student to master the course material with the help of the self-test method.

All student papers are submitted to the lecturer-created *Turnitin* task, which not only facilitates the

collection of papers, but the system automatically checks the originality of the paper, providing a full report on the content plagiarism. The tool has the option of creating sections and comment templates, as well as for students to submit and rate one another. Checking for plagiarism is possible when comparing a paper to the work of other students (both at RSU and other higher education institutions in Latvia and in the world that use *Turnitin*), the Internet resources that are freely available to everyone, and journals, other publications, and resources included in the *Turnitin* database.

In each e-study course, the lecturer can electronically record student attendance at lectures and classes, and the attendance data automatically appears in the e-grades section, providing a more convenient overview of student performance in the course. The e-learning environment may also be used as a tool by which it is possible to register remotely for elective courses, apply for placements, tutorials, examination dates and times and other events.

As of 2019, a new system of elective courses is in operation. Students apply through the Student portal (*MyRSU*) rather than through the e-studies. Teaching staff and administrative staff have access to the Course Dashboard, which provides information about the e-study courses they are responsible for, such as whether any editorial changes have been made by the lecturer, whether the materials have been imported from the previous semester course, as well as other useful functions. For the academic staff, the e-learning environment serves not only as a location for placing study materials and organising examinations in relation to their study courses, but also as a location where they can improve their knowledge. The e-learning environment provides access not only to manuals on how to do various things on the *Moodle* platform, but also makes it possible to apply for various trainings and career development courses organised by RSU Centre for Educational Growth. The range of offered courses is broad, allowing to improve both the digital and communication and speaking skills. New ways to use *Moodle* are expanding, for example, for the development of various projects by publishing public materials; there are also videos and other materials from the scientific conference.

Library

The Library Open Access Loan is available in 24/7 mode to RSU students and staff, for other users the working hours are as follows: from Monday to Friday 8:30-19:00, on Saturdays 10:00-17:00. During the state of emergency of COVID-19, the remote application tool *Calendly* was introduced, which provides the possibility to apply for a visit to the library remotely and receive the necessary editions, complying with the national epidemiological and health safety requirements. As the number of online tutorials increased, Jira help.rsu.lv Library application form was developed, including services such as: extension of the term of use of books, book reservation, remote registration of users in the Library.

Total area of the library premises is 2,044 m², including service areas for readers of 1,318 m². Library users have access to 290 reader places, 81 computer workstations and wireless Internet. Well-equipped, vast premises are available on the ground floor of the library in the Open Access Loan, which provide the possibility to get all loan books for home use, using self-service equipment. Open Access Loan also includes reading rooms for group work and individual work. In order to provide access to RSU facilities for students and other visitors with reduced mobility, a lift was opened in the central building of the university library in December 2018, allowing the library users to move from floor to floor. The Library is located in the main RSU building (16 Dzirciema iela, Building G, 2nd floor, Riga), it also has three branches:

- two in Riga: At RSU Red Cross Medical College Information Centre for Latvian Healthcare

Specialists (5 J.Asara iela) and Medical Education Technology Centre (26a Anniņmuižas bulvāris);

- one in Liepāja: RSU Liepāja branch library (24/26 Rīņķu iela).

Services offered by the Library

Information regarding services, resources, service points and other issues is available in the section “Library” of RSU website [in Latvian](#) and [English](#).

RSU library offers a wide range of printed and electronic information resources, consultations and training in information literacy on search of printed works, electronic and other information, as well as search of information according to thematic requests. Books and other information resources for work at home may be received at the library, but the most recent study and scientific literature is available in reading rooms. Students and other users of the library may use both the computers of the library and work with their own electronic devices by using *Wi-Fi*. Information Centre of the Library offers also binding and lamination services. Textbooks and methodological materials published by RSU Publishing House may be bought in the Library.

Each year, the library environment is gradually improved and upgraded; new technologies and services are introduced (self-service facilities with possibilities for users to issue the books to themselves, return the books, extend the period of use, view the user account, as well as print, copy, scan by using multifunctional equipment).

Literature available at the Library

Resources of the Library Information Centre are freely available to any RSU student and lecturer. The collection is placed in accordance with the Universal Decimal Classification system (UDC). Overall library collection consists of around 572 900 physical units, including approximately 261 900 books (as on 1 January 2020). The library stock is regularly supplemented via purchases, as well as donations corresponding to the profile.

Financing for the purchase of resources increases rapidly each year (see Table 5) “Library funding for creation of the collection and provision of resources over the last six years”, and it was approximately EUR 32 per user of the library in 2020.

Table 5. Library funding for creation of the collection and provision of resources over the last six years:

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Allocated funding (EUR)	305,200	344,615	350,415	442,355	475,460	502,430
Including databases and other e-resources	239,872	260,322	274,006	301,870	317,532	435,389

Approximately 85 % of the budget intended for assembly of the collection is spent on subscription to electronic resources. The subscribed databases provide access to approximately 431 000 subscribed electronic resource units (including approximately 90 % e-books).

Funding for the subscription or purchase of psychology resources is from the library's total funding. Each year the Library subscribes to PsycARTICLES database, multidisciplinary resources, which also

include the psychology sector, and books and e-books for psychology programmes are purchased (see separately for books Table 6 “Funding for the purchase of books / e-books in the field of psychology (EUR)”).

Table 6. Funding for the purchase of books / e-books in the field of psychology (EUR)

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Psychology. Social Psychology	2253	2307	2393	6683	3196	2721

Resources corresponding to the field of psychology are available in both Latvian and English. Accordingly, all electronic resources for the support of the Psychology direction (e-books / e-journals) are available in English.

In contrast, those resources that are physically available in the library are only partially available in English. Information on the availability of physical resources is summarised in Table 7.

Table 7. Resources available in RSU Library in physical form*

Field	Copies in Latvian, as a percentage of available	Titles in Latvian, as a percentage of available
Psychology 159.9*	80	57
Social Psychology 316.6*	82	42
Psychiatry 616.89*	52	18
Scientific methodology 001.8*	80	20
Social science methods 303*	30	4

*data retrieval method: selection, reporting system for Aleph database by cipher (branches: psychology, social psychology, psychiatry, scientific methodology, social science methods) and choosing the result type “Report on languages”

Databases of the respective field available to the students, statistics of the use thereof

The library provides lecturers and students with access to Latvian and international electronic resources, including quality information in the field of psychology. 26 online databases are available to the students: The provision of e-resources in the field of psychology sector includes four multidisciplinary databases of e-books and ten multidisciplinary databases of journals, as well as the database APA PsycARTICLES. RSU students and lecturers can access the Library's subscribed databases remotely using the username and password assigned by RSU.

E-books in psychology are available in the subscribed databases *eBook Academic Collection (EBSCO)*, *eBook Central (ProQuest)*, *AccessMedicine* and *ClinicalKey*. For example, the database *eBook Academic Collection (EBSCO)* offers 7798 e-books under the section “Psychology”, but *eBook Central (ProQuest)* - 7257 e-books. The subscribed multidisciplinary databases *EbookCentral (ProQuest)* and *EBSCO eBookAcademicCollection* offer e-books of various publishers for various

sectors providing results of the selected information when searching by various topics/keywords.

The full texts of scientific articles in psychology are available in the subscribed databases: *PsycARTICLES*, *SAGE Premier 2021*, *Health Research Premium Collection (ProQuest)*, *MEDLINE Complete (EBSCO)*, *BMJ Journals*, *Wiley Online Journals*, *Science Direct*, *Communication Source (EBSCO)*, *Sociology Source Ultimate (EBSCO)*, *Academic Search Complete (EBSCO)*. The *APA PsycARTICLES* database contains 141 journals in psychology. In the single search box *Primo*, 685 journal titles appear in the subsector Behavioural Science (Psychology) and Counselling, and 840 journal titles in the Psychiatry & Psychology subsector.

In general, statistics of database usage is high. It is evaluated once half a year. Statistics indicators of usage tend to increase.

On the website of the library, there is a section [List of recommended e-textbooks](#), which contains the e-books mentioned in the study programmes - both purchased and from subscribed databases, including in the field of psychology.

Procedure for supplementation of library collection and procedure for subscription of databases

RSU has introduced and the Library has implemented the support process determining how to provide RSU study programmes and scientific research activity with the necessary sources of information and services at the Library. The Process Description defines the following: 1) planning of purchase of information sources, evaluation and supplementation of provisions, and 2) identification of the level of user satisfaction (identification of the user satisfaction levels and improvement activities; organisation of surveys and analysis of results).

Subscription of databases takes place after trial periods, statistics of usage and analysis of the user feedback. In case of a positive decision by the Library council, the database is advanced to the draft budget.

In order to improve the correspondence of the library collection to the needs of students, work is carried out with the course bibliography, information system data analysis on the issued items, as well as cooperation with the academic staff in order to inform them on the situation with the provision of course literature and to promote e-resources, while the users can electronically complete a questionnaire with suggestions for supplementation of the collection.

Digitalisation level of the Library collection, data availability in the digital environment of the University

The single search tool *Primo* is used for e-resource management that provides fast and rational search of e-resources subscribed by RSU, the joint electronic catalogue of five libraries of national significance, databases created by the Library and open access e-resources of the *Primo Central* collection. Information on the subscribed databases is available also from RSU Student portal *MyRSU*.

Since 2020, RSU students have had the opportunity to access students' final papers and other RSU publications in the Institutional Repository on the *DSpace* platform by contacting the Library in advance about granting access.

In 2020, intensive work was carried out on the input of publications from RSU academic staff/research staff (including the psychology sector) into the new Scientific Activity Information System *Pure*, which involved the staff of the Department of Information, Bibliography and Information Literacy of the Library.

Information available on the Library website: the joint catalogue of libraries of national significance,

including RSU electronic catalogue, databases created by the Library and the information gathered by the Library staff on the available open access e-resources.

You can follow the news and current events of the library on Twitter account @RSUbibl, as well as Facebook profile "Rīgas Stradiņa universitātes bibliotēka".

Updating the information provision

Users are offered various types of electronic resources: databases of scientific articles, databases of e-books, databases of bibliographical and quotation information of publications, databases of news and reference, as well as information collected by the library staff about the available open access e-resources. The library offers trials of new databases each year.

In order to ensure a high-quality range of services and information resources for university studies and research work, services will be developed researchers by Library specialists, continuing the creation of video guides in *Panopto* software on the new library resources and services, training programmes in media literacy will be improved and supplemented, digitalisation of part of the collection has started (theses and old books), it is planned to increase the supply of e-resources according to financial possibilities of RSU and in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science.

The collection for the informational provision of the study programme is being gradually created and supplemented, and it is possible to use the existing collection which has been continuously compiled for many years:

- 1) all literature requested by the teaching staff of the study programme is ordered;
- 2) the latest books published in Latvia are purchased on a regular basis;
- 3) it is possible to use the necessary literature in other fields of science (research methods, social sciences, medicine, etc.).

RSU library has been accredited several times as a library of national significance. The current accreditation by the Ministry of Culture for five years was received in November 2016. Since 1998, RSU Library has been established as the main library of the medical sector in the country by a document of the Cabinet of Ministers. RSU Library also actively participates in the fulfilment of criteria of the Quality Management System in accordance with the standard ISO 9001 2015 and organises work in accordance with the Process description, "Provision of Information Sources and Services in the Library" established within the framework of the quality management system. Work of the Library is regularly assessed by internal and external quality auditors, and the assessment results are usually positive. In recent years, the Library has received both the Annual Award of the Student Union (as a testimony to students' satisfaction with the quality of the resources and services) and the Annual Award of RSU Administration as the best department of RSU.

The library's resources and services are rated as good and meet the demand of students and teaching staff to ensure successful completion of the respective study course. Simple procedures have been introduced to recommend replenishment of the library stock or contact the Library on services (lecturers and students may submit applications and suggestions remotely). Both student and teaching staff surveys of the academic year 2017/2018 confirm a good and very good assessment in the area of information resources. Library services continue to be developed successfully by offering new types of support, such as various types of research support to lecturers and students. Like other universities in the world today, RSU Library buys e-books as a priority, where it is possible on available e-book platforms.

In the case of study literature in Latvian, a more often reissue of some publications, as it is done abroad, would be desirable, if the edition is in high demand. It would be also desirable for publishers to ensure study e-books in Latvian for use in the library network. RSU provides full financial support for the compilation of the Library collection in accordance with the written requests from the academic staff to the Library, since in compliance with the Regulations of the Library, the study literature is compiled on the basis of a written request by the academic staff. The bibliography in course descriptions is also supplemented and updated by the teaching staff and should be coordinated with the library so that the necessary additions to the bibliography can be at the same time actually ordered for the library collection. This is mostly the case, but not always. In the self-service reading rooms of the Library in the central building and in the branches, there are boxes containing forms where students can write the necessary literature they lack for their studies or additional literature, so that it can be quickly added to the collection. We only receive two to three requests per month, which we also try to fulfil if the edition is available on the sales network. This shows that the satisfaction is high and the Library has a dialogue with students. The Library cooperates actively also with the Student Union, and this year there have been no problems or shortcomings that should have been addressed.

As in Riga, also in Liepāja, when starting studies at RSU, each student is assigned a username, and using the self-service, the student can obtain and renew a password, which can be used in RSU IT systems for students.

A secure wireless network Eduroam WiFi is available in the RSU Liepāja branch building. Students can connect to the Eduroam wireless network using their username and password.

RSU Student portal MyRSU provides all necessary information about studies and their process, as well as various services provided by the university: electronic lesson schedules, e-courses with study materials (e-studies), video recordings of classes, assessments, application forms, information about finances, private RSU student e-mail box and access to Office365, self-service printout management (printing, scanning, copying), study course questionnaires, study course descriptions, application for a written statement on student status, study regulatory documents (internal and external regulations), online databases, up-to-date information on student life. On the student portal, the library section provides students with access to electronic databases, such as Web of Science, Ebrary eBooks, ClinicalKey, Access Medicine from any location.

RSU Liepāja branch library is a subordinate structural unit of RSU library and operates in accordance with Library Law of Republic of Latvia, regulatory enactments of RL, RSU Constitution, RSU Library Regulations approved by RSU Senate and according to international quality standard ISO 9001: 2008, using ALEPH programme.

The library of RSU Liepāja branch contains 12 000 literature sources, the library provides students and lecturers with internationally recognised, evidence-based access to e-resources for library users, in cooperation with the RSU library in Riga, 16 Dzirciema iela. In addition, various industry journals are subscribed to the library.

After carefully analysing the situation and determining the selection criteria, the purchase of new literature sources is planned every year. Students have access to the student portal, library resources both in the branch and at home. Lecture materials are available for students in e-studies. The library has seven computers with an Internet connection, providing free access to all RSU library online databases.

The library staff provides support and cooperation to lecturers and students in the development and preparation of research papers and systematic reports. All students of Liepāja branch are provided with access to RSU library resources.

The RSU library in Liepāja provides study literature in several copies, so that every student has a possibility to get acquainted with all materials physically on-site, all books published by the RSU Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy are available:

The students of the Liepāja branch have access to all e-resources to the same extent as the students of the Rīga branch.

More information about Liepāja branch and its material and technical provision can be found in the study direction “Psychology” Annex 2.2.

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

When developing a new study programme, academic and research staff in compliance with provisions of Section 55, Paragraph 1, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher education Institutions and the Law on Scientific Activity is involved for its provision. Academic and pedagogical staff with high qualification, relevant competence and good reputation are involved in the implementation of the study direction and achievement of results.

The application and selection procedure for academic staff at RSU is regulated by the [“Regulations of Rīga Stradiņš University on Academic Positions”](#) (see Annex 1) and “Rīga Stradiņš University process “Elections of Academic Staff” (see Annex 1)”.

Table 7. Organisation of staff recruitment at RSU.

Stages of staff recruitment	Performer and person involved
Information about a new vacancy or vacated position at a structural unit. Necessity for the recruitment of staff is analysed.	Head of the structural unit Collegial institution
Receives information on the vacancy	Human Resources Department
Defines the requirements profile of the position: develops the list of requirements and competences necessary to achieve the aim of the position	Head of the structural unit, Collegial institution, Human Resources Department
Agree on the type of candidate recruitment and selection	Head of the structural unit Human Resources Department
Prepare and validate the advertisement of vacancy	Head of the structural unit Human Resources Department

Stages of staff recruitment	Performer and person involved
Job advertisement is published depending on the requirements and vacancy status: on the website of RSU, official publisher "Latvijas Vēstnesis", Euraxess portal of the European Commission, social media	Human Resources Department
Collect and evaluate the candidate applications	Head of the structural unit, Collegial institution, Human Resources Department
Depending on requirements and status of the vacancy: organise selection interviews, collect references, involve in the process of practical examinations, organise meetings of the collegial institutions	Head of the structural unit, Collegial institution, Human Resources Department
Elections take place; the most suitable applicant is selected and the job is offered	Head of the structural unit, Collegial institution, Human Resources Department

During the process of staff selection, competences, professional skills and self-motivation level of the potential employee are evaluated. The international orientation of RSU requires very good knowledge of English, while the ever-increasing share of IT systems in the processes requires excellent digital skills and systematic thinking. Applicants to RSU academic positions are set higher research, educational qualification requirements, organisational and professional competences than specified by the requirements of external laws and regulations; thus, the best possible professionals are recruited for the work.

Competitions for academic and research positions, as well as general staff positions are announced openly – on the website of RSU, in the portal "Latvijas Vēstnesis", in specialised portals of job advertisements (*CV-online*, etc.), if necessary also on international online sites of job advertisements, thus giving an opportunity to any interested person to apply for work at RSU within a month after posting the vacancy. In order to recruit applicants of a specific area or narrow specialisation, other methods of recruitment may be used in addition, for example, dissemination of information via social media sites (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.).

Application documentation, submitted recommendations, previous research activity, as well as an open lecture, practical seminar, laboratory work or other type of class organised, prepared and given by the applicant and with participation of students is in relation to applicants to academic positions.

Qualification and competences of the academic staff are constantly improved by ensuring growth of educational skills, improvement of English, and professional training related to the particular field.

Official language knowledge of the academic staff fully complies with the Cabinet Regulation No. 733 of 07.07.2008 "Regulations Regarding the Amount of the Knowledge of the Official Language and the Procedures for Examination of the Knowledge of the Official Language for the Performance of Professional Duties and Duties of Office, Receipt of the Permanent Residence Permit and Obtaining of the Status of a Long-term Resident of the European Union and the State Fee for Examination of the Fluency in the Official Language". RSU Human Resources Department checks the official language skills when selecting the staff, as well as while collection of documents during the preparation process for the academic election.

Heads of structural units pay particular attention to succession issues and interaction between staff of different generations. In order to improve the content of the study programme, as well as to introduce innovative methods in study processes, RSU involves foreign visiting academic staff.

The process of recruitment and evaluation of lecturers is transparent, effective and one of the prerequisites for high quality of the study process.

At the study programme level, the duty of the head of the study programme is to ensure compliance of the content of the study programme with internal and external laws and regulations, requirements of the labour market, sectoral development trends and needs of students, to analyse data that might provide information about factors affecting results and quality of the study programmes and to implement necessary improvements to the study programmes. At the study programme level, quality indicators of the study programmes are measured that are directly linked to remuneration of the heads of the study programmes. This aspect promotes taking responsibility and motivates the heads of the study programmes to achieve higher quality standards defined.

At RSU level, the duty of the management is to set strategic and quality aims and quality policy, to make a decision on quality approach, to manage resources, and set the internal procedures. Supervision of the system introduced by RSU is performed by both the internal system and quality auditors and independent external experts. At the university level, one of the indicators of study quality is the public attitude and opinion, as well as the popularity of RSU. It is regularly established by participating in a reputation survey and brand evaluation.

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

For the lecturers involved in the study direction and programme implementation, the teaching load is planned according to the study plan of each academic year and study semester. Study courses can be organised in modules and the workload is reviewed according to necessity and regulations. RSU promotes a balanced workload for lecturers, and promotes a healthy lifestyle to reduce and eliminate the risk of burnout for teaching staff.

Academic and research activities at RSU are carried out by distinguished and highly regarded permanent employees elected to academic positions. In order to ensure comprehensive knowledge and skills appreciated on the labour market, educational staff performing the duties as the teaching staff only for a certain time are involved in addition to the permanent staff. The staff includes industry experts and teaching staff elected in other higher education institutions, etc.

Annex No. 6.2 provides biographies of the teaching staff attached electronically (*Curriculum Vitae in EuroPass* format). Annex No. 6.1 (in *Excel* format) provides basic information on the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study direction, specifying their degree/qualification, election status at the higher education institution, study programmes and study courses, in the

implementation of which they participate, and certification of knowledge of the official language and foreign language (if applicable).

In order to ensure the fulfilment of functions in support of the training and study process, record keeping and quality management, human resources and financial management, solution of legal issues, RSU employs general and administrative staff, that constitute one fourth of the number of employees. Whereas, general services staff ensure the management of buildings and territory, infrastructure development and are responsible for the operation of road vehicles.

The academic staff application and selection procedure at RSU is regulated by internal regulations:

- 1) RSU Regulations on Academic Positions;
- 2) RSU Process "Academic Staff Elections";
- 3) Regulations on the Procedure of Inviting Visiting Lecturers to Rīga Stradiņš University.

Qualification for an academic position takes place according to the requirements set for the job in the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the tasks of academic positions defined in RSU Constitution and the election procedure of RSU on the basis of the individual's:

- education,
- experience,
- competences,
- potential,
- achievements,
- research contribution,
- teaching skills,
- service record,
- recommendations of experts and sectoral representatives.

The career development of academic staff is one of the main ways, how RSU can affect the renewal of human resources for research and studies. RSU invests considerable amounts of own funds into the maintenance of the remuneration and motivation system. Pursuant to the Strategy, RSU supports further education and career development of academic staff by implementing various support measures and providing different incentive tools to the academic staff:

- RSU Centre for Educational Growth provides the possibility to improve skills in university teaching, education technology, and education management areas (see below for details);
- RSU has formal lifelong learning support activities in place – RSU staff receive material support for continuing studies (in the form of a tuition fee discount) and are offered the possibility to attend courses at RSU Open University;
- in 2015, RSU started the project for the improvement of the English language skills of RSU staff as an additional motivation tool, and in the course of its implementation, language skills of the academic staff are audited, and training is provided to improve their English from A2 to B2 level. Full compliance of the English language skills with the goal set by RSU – level B2 – enables to get a higher remuneration rate for work in English. Sustainable development of the English language skills during the next years will be implemented also within the framework of the project "Capacity Building of Rīga Stradiņš University Academic Staff" (No. 8.2.2.0/18/A/013) and the project "Improvement of the Management Process and Study Content Modernisation at Rīga Stradiņš University" (No. 8.2.3.0/18/A/011);
- The Performance Management System introduced in RSU in 2011 envisages cycles of evaluation of performance indicators, discussions between the superiors and employees on the results achieved, employee's career and qualification development plans and

opportunities. Based on the results of these interviews, at the time of drawing up the budget, managers plan support measures for the improvement of specific professional skills and knowledge of their employees – courses, seminars, conferences, experience exchange activities organised in Latvia or abroad, or career development in terms of position change;

- once in 2 years, RSU organises an employee satisfaction and participation survey, including in order to learn the opinion of employees on important factors to ensure sustainable growth of RSU; and recommendations of employees to the extent possible are integrated in practical actions and taken into account in decision-making.

RSU Centre for Educational Growth (hereinafter referred to as the Centre) was created in 2014 for the improvement of the quality of studies and competence of university lecturers. Within the scope of its operations, the Centre provides support in the improvement of the quality of studies by analysing the study process and organising pedagogical growth of academic staff in continuing education activities according to current needs.

The training offered by the Centre is implemented pursuant to Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 569 “Regulations of Education and Professional Qualification Needed by Teachers and Procedure of Improvement of Professional Competence of Teachers”, where continuing education of university lecturers is defined as a mandatory targeted activity for strengthening of academic capacity. Learning activities of the Centre are based in four content areas – education management, didactics of a higher education institution, information and communication technology skills, general skills – and up to now they have been implemented in more than 30 thematic cycles, lectures, workshops, and other interactive forms. Within the framework of one semester, approximately 10 thematic cycles are implemented for the total of 170 academic hours on average. Interest in offered activities continues to increase. During the last three years, the Centre learning activities have registered more than 2,000 participants, and the number dynamics shows a trend to grow.

Teaching staff involved in implementation of study programmes included in the study direction “Psychology” have access to the whole content of the further education of the Centre for Pedagogical Growth which is updated each semester. Contribution to the quality of the study process is provided by the fact that thematic studies are attended not only by the teaching staff, but also the support staff involved in organisation of the study process in order to promote pedagogical understanding of the study process and strengthen effective cooperation with the students. Each semester of the academic year, relevant content in various process forms corresponding to the research of the lecturers’ needs is offered.

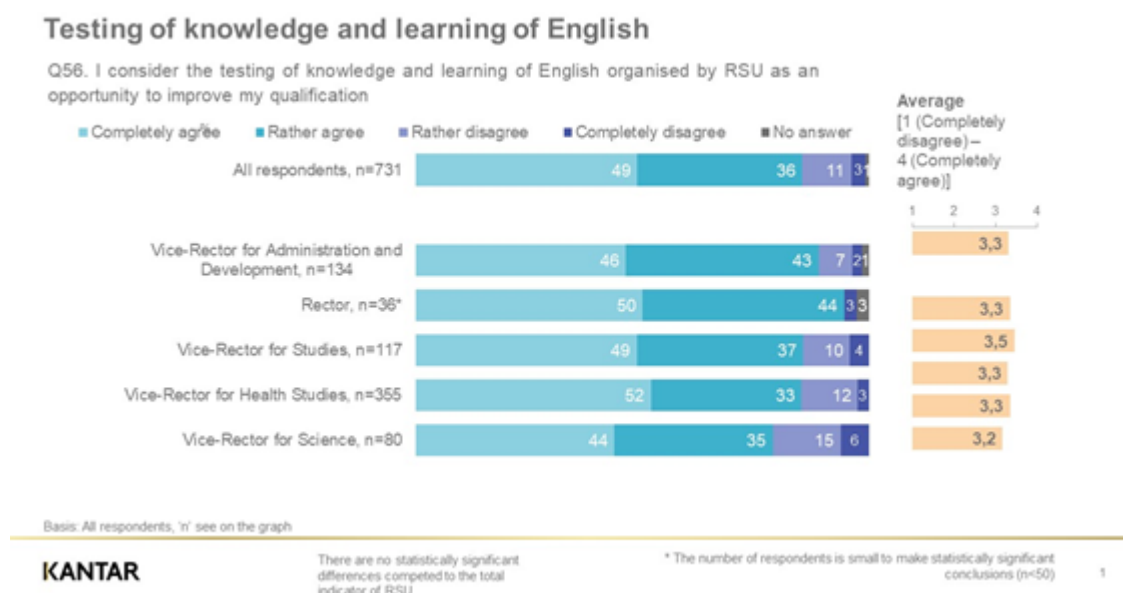
Overall, in the spring semester of 2019/2020 and in the autumn semester of 2020/2021, the continuing training activities organised by the Centre for Educational Growth and the Information Technology Department were attended by 45 lecturers who teach the study courses in the study direction Psychology. They participated in the activities such as *Creating Engaging and Interactive Online Course Design and Delivery*, advice to lecturers on how to organise active learning in online activities, providing a remote learning process using the e-learning environment: *Panopto* and *Zoom*, building interactive content in the e-learning environments (H5P) and others.

In order to strengthen the professional skills of the young lecturers in the classroom and to promote their career development, the School of Junior Academics (SJA) was established at RSU in 2019 within the framework of the project Strengthening the Capacity of the Academic Staff of Rīga Stradiņš University (No. 8.2.2.0/18/A/013). The SJA was established, based on the research of the needs of RSU academic staff and students and the results of theoretical literature and international practice research. Six thematic directions of lecturer competence development are proposed for learning activities, the transversal motives of which are leadership and ICT skills development:

- 1) student-centred approach in the single higher education area;
- 2) RSU development vision;
- 3) student and lecturer identity;
- 4) organisation of the study process;
- 5) development and implementation of study content;
- 6) internal and external evaluation of study quality.

The SJA is conducted over a six-month period with one class per week, covering a total of 47 academic hours. The on-site classes integrate interactive teaching and learning methods, the classes are recorded in video format, and an e-studies environment has been created, so that the learning process of young lecturers is not tied to physical environment, but people have the option to study in person or online in a convenient place and time. The learning process is strengthened through activities such as class observation, mentoring, educational games, and creation of a reflection portfolio. SJA was held twice. The first group of SJA members consisted of 20 lecturers from 12 academic structural units, including 1 lecturer from the Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy. The second group of SJA involved 25 lecturers from 17 academic structural units, including 2 lecturers from the Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy.

In RSU External Reputation Assessment, for the third time in a row, RSU has been recognised as the university with the best reputation in Latvia by a study conducted by *Kantar* among the largest universities. RSU also attracts *Kantar* to conduct research on employee satisfaction. The English language training project assessment was included in the questions of RSU Employee Satisfaction and Engagement Survey in 2019, confirming that 85% of the employees who participated in the survey (a total of 731 employees) consider the English language proficiency testing and training project as an opportunity to improve their qualifications.



At the same time, with regard to ensuring of the development of improvement of the lecturers' competences, most of the 367 lecturers - 86% - have answered affirmatively to the statement "I receive sufficient support for the improvement of my pedagogical competence".

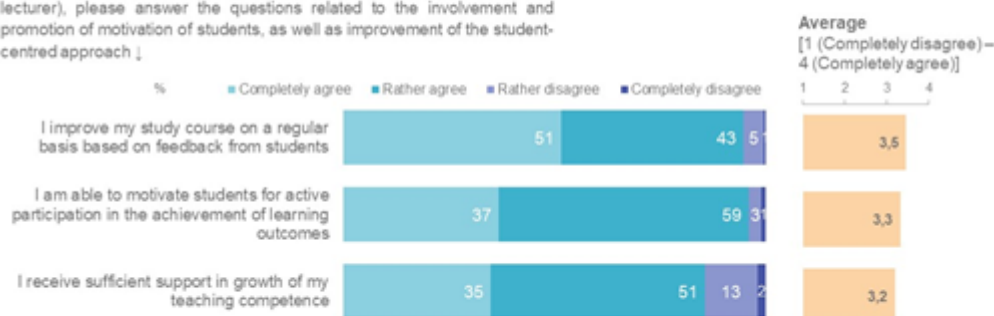
Involvement and motivation of RSU students and improvement of the student-centred approach

Q60. I worked at the Riga Stradiņš University as a lecturer (in any status – in an elected academic position, as an acting or adjunct lecturer) →

Q61 – Q63. If you worked at the Riga Stradiņš University as a lecturer (in any status – in an elected academic position, as an acting or adjunct lecturer), please answer the questions related to the involvement and promotion of motivation of students, as well as improvement of the student-centred approach ↓

50% of respondents at RSU work as lecturers

Basis: All respondents, n=731



Basis: Respondents who work as lecturers, n=367

KANTAR

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In general, it can be concluded that systematic, regular activities are carried out to strengthen the capacity of the teaching staff, which is also welcomed by them.

3.6. Provide information on the number of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the relevant study programmes of the study direction, as well as the analysis and assessment of the academic and research workload. Provide the assessment of the incoming and outgoing mobility of the teaching staff over the reporting period, the mobility dynamics, and the issues which the higher education institution/ college must tackle with regard to the mobility of the teaching staff.

See Annex No. 6.1 (in *Excel* format) for basic information on the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study direction.

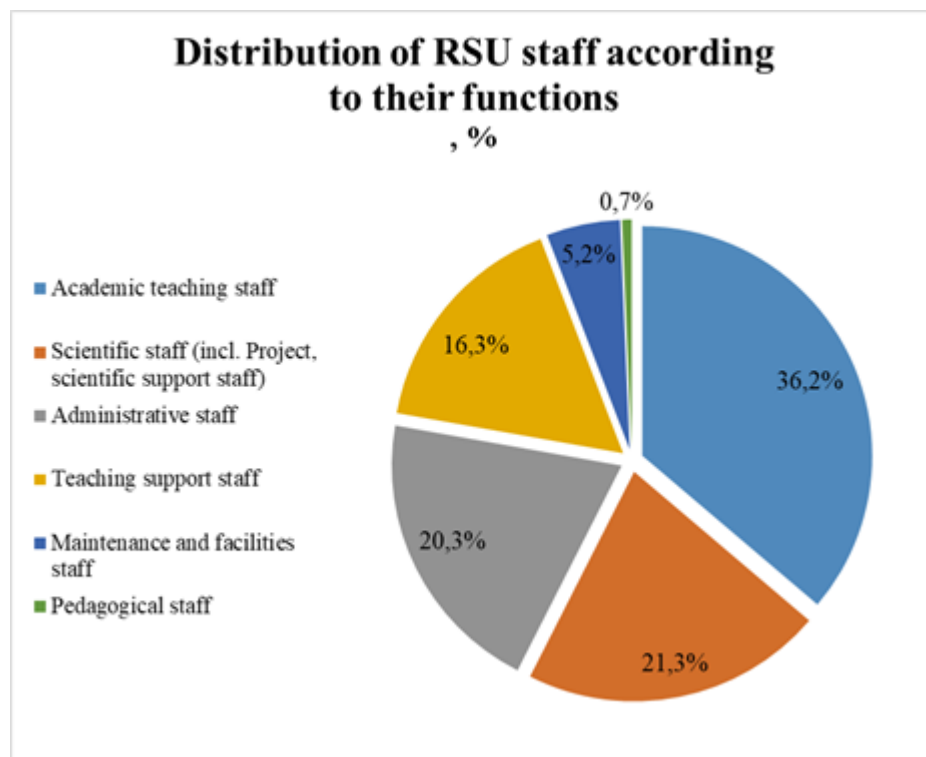
See Annex No. 6.2 for information on incoming and outgoing mobility of teaching staff during the reporting period.

See Annex No. 6.3 for biographies of the teaching staff (in *Curriculum Vitae Europass* format).

The teaching staff involved in the implementation of the Study Direction and study programmes plan their pedagogical workload according to the study programme for each semester and academic year. Individual study courses are organised in modules and the workload is reviewed in accordance with the need and provisions of laws and regulations. RSU contributes to a balanced workload and rest for teaching staff and promotes a healthy lifestyle to reduce and eliminate the risk of burnout of teaching staff.

Academic and research activities at RSU are carried out by distinguished and highly regarded permanent employees elected to academic positions. In order to ensure comprehensive knowledge and skills appreciated on the labour market, educational staff performing the duties as the teaching staff only for a certain time are involved in addition to the permanent staff. The staff includes industry experts and teaching staff elected in other higher education institutions.

In order to ensure the fulfilment of functions in support of the training and study process, record keeping and quality management, human resources and financial management, solution of legal issues, RSU employs general and administrative staff, that constitute one fourth of the number of employees. At the same time, the operating staff is responsible for the management of the buildings and the territory, for the development of the infrastructure, and for the operation of the motor transport.



Data as of 31 December 2020.

Figure 9 **RSU positions by function.**

The implementation of the study direction involves highly qualified lecturers (for example K. Mārtinsone, S. Mihailova, V. Perepjolkina, J. Koļesņikova, J. Ļubenko) and who are experts in the sector and specialise in the respective study course topics.

Lecturers, whose qualification and abilities are of high level and assessed over a long period of cooperation, are involved in the implementation of the study direction and programmes, therefore, changes in the staff composition are not relevant.

Full-time university lecturers are required to participate in research activities that are regulated by staff job descriptions. Depending on the type of academic position, the following proportion of duties and responsibilities of the employee in scientific and research activities has been determined:

- assistants carry out scientific and research work 30% of the working time;
- lecturers carry out scientific and research work 15% of the working time;
- assistant professors, associate professors, professors carry out scientific and research work 20% of the working time.

The division of responsibilities within a structural unit may be changed by the head of the structural unit in agreement with the employee, according to the planning of the pedagogical work and the projects to be implemented.

Results of the research activity of the academic staff are summarised once a year and included in the research activity report. For some groups of the staff, they are related to the principles of remuneration and motivation. Lecturer achievements are included in their CV.

RSU is constantly planning and implementing activities aimed at motivating the academic staff to engage in high-level scientific and research work, in particular associate professors and professors (aiming to reach 60% of working time spent on research), which will encourage new specialists to engage in sectoral research, and contribute to the overall development of science at national and international level.

In 2018, in cooperation with professional associations, Latvian Association of Professional Rehabilitation organisations and Association of Health Psychology of Latvia it was achieved that the services of health psychologists during the rehabilitation process are paid from the budget of the Ministry of Health (the Cabinet Regulations No. 555 adopted in Riga on 28 August 2018) RSU lecturers (Jelena Koļesnikova and Sandra Mihailova) also participated in the development of a new "Professional Standard for Psychologists", which will determine the new content of education in the future.

A group of authors under the leadership of the Professor K.Mārtinsone wrote "Psihologu profesionālā darbība Latvijā: saturs, organizācija, regulējums. Psihologu likuma komentāri". [Professional Activity of Psychologists in Latvia: content, organisation and regulation. Comments on the Law of Psychologist] (Rīga: Tiesu nama aģentūra, 2018, 367 lpp.)

In order to promote recognition and students' interest in research, RSU Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy organizes an annual International scientific-practical conference "[Health and personal development: an interdisciplinary approach](#)".

Cooperation with the developers of the web intervention *MePlusMe* has been established and preparations have been made for the research on the use of health behaviour-enhancing intervention for RSU international students, which will continue in the coming years in the development of Masters' these.

Cooperation with non-governmental organisations (including through involvement in the work of the Council of Latvian Association of Psychologists) is strengthened in order to facilitate the public demand for qualified specialists.

In order to facilitate the solution of placement issues, a round table discussion was organized with employers on the professional activity of health psychologists in the medical environment, the organisation of placement and documentation regarding patient / client groups was improved and the work on the placement organisation at RSU was started.

Description and assessment of the mobility of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study direction during the reporting period

Assessment of the outgoing mobility of the teaching staff during the reporting period.

Outgoing mobility of the teaching staff of RSU is implemented within the framework of *Erasmus+* programme, bilateral cooperation and a number of EU-funded projects. Cooperation agreements have been concluded with other higher education institutions of the European Union, in which equal study programmes are implemented in order to ensure full cooperation. Before leaving for a teaching visit, the teaching staff contact the receiving higher education institution in order to develop the lecture plan of suitable content. Main condition of a teaching visit within *Erasmus+*: the lecturer must provide at least eight academic hours that can be both lectures and seminars.

Guest lectures must be given in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

In the period from 2016 within the framework of mobility projects (Erasmus + etc.), following outgoing mobilities of lecturers has taken place:

- 2016. Jeļena Koļesņikova and Aelita Vagale, University of Padua, Italy.
- 2017. Indra Majore Dūšele, Edge Hill University, Great Britain.
- 2018. Indra Majore Dūšele, Tallinn University, Estonia.
- 2019. Ervīns Čukurs and Jeļena Harlamova, Università Degli Studi di Padova, Italy.
- 2020. Jeļena Ļubenko and Jeļena Koļesņikova, University of Algarve, Portugal.
- 2021. Kristīne Vende-Kotova, Tallinn University, Estonia.
- 2022. Indra Majore Dūšele, Edge Hill University, Great Britain.
- 2023. Inguna Giskeviča, University of Coimbra, Portugal.
- 2024. Kristīne Mārtinsone, Klaipėda University, Lithuania.
- 2025. Jeļena Koļesņikova and Jeļena Ļubenko, University of Cyprus, Cyprus.
- 2026. Kristīne Mārtinsone, Vilnius University, Lithuania.

This means that 9 lecturers of the field have visited 6 countries and given their guest lectures, as well as improved their experience in discussions with lecturers of universities of other countries.

Assessment of the incoming mobility of the teaching staff during the reporting period.

Incoming mobility of the teaching staff is implemented at RSU mostly within the framework of project activities within *ERASMUS+* programme. Conditions of bilateral cooperation agreements provide for exchange of teaching staff between higher education institutions of the European Union implementing study programmes of appropriate content. Prior to receiving the visiting teaching staff, content of lectures is validated, as well as the study cycle of students (Bachelor's, Master's, or doctoral studies) in order to ensure full attendance of lectures and added value to the current study course. See Annex No. 6.3.

During the last six years, the Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy has hosted 33 visiting lecturers. For example, the following foreign academic staff lectured and exchanged experience at the Faculty of Public Health and Social Welfare in the academic year 2018/2019: L.Lagutina from Great Britain conducted the seminar "Understanding trauma: neurobiology, attachment and intergenerational perspectives on working with early relational trauma" and the tutorial; J.Kropotov from the Russian Academy of Sciences conducted the seminar "Event-related cognitive potentials; T. Kanonire from Russia (Department of Educational Programmes of the Institute of Education at Higher School of Economics (HSE) with the course "Test development".

Cooperation is also developing outside *Erasmus+*. In 2020, all the planned lectures and seminars with visiting lecturers took place online on the *Zoom* platform. The annual collaboration with Vicky Karkou from Great Britain (*Edge Hill University*), who almost every academic year participates in the international conference "Health and Personality" organised by RSU Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy has been particularly interesting. She presents interesting reports on psychological research in health care. For several years, successful cooperation has developed with S. Keitler from Israel (*Tel Aviv University*), who lectured on psychooncology. It expanded the worldview of students.

Incoming mobility is promoted and will be promoted by the annual international scientific-practical conference "Personality and Health", as usually the visiting lectures and seminars are related to the participation of visiting lecturers in the conference.

Summarising the data on the mobility of RSU lecturers in the study field, it should be noted that it is

successfully implemented. RSU offers various projects within which mobility can be implemented. The only obstacles to the wider possibilities of mobility of lecturers are personal workload, family issues and the interest to participate in one of the mobility projects.

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

RSU student with special needs is a RSU student with functional restrictions requiring adaptation of the study environment and process in order to create equal opportunities to receive the higher education. RSU supports students with special needs in various stages related to studies – selecting a suitable study programme, when enrolling with the higher education institution, and in the study process (study materials, taking examinations, etc.) and creating appropriate social and physical environment (see [on the availability of the METC environment](#)). The aim of the support measure is to promote the independence and inclusion in the study process of the students with special needs. Guidelines and support policy have been developed regarding support to RSU students with special needs (see Annex No. 1.).

Since 2012, all RSU students have access to psycho-emotional support. The service was introduced with the aim of helping students to overcome adaptation problems when starting their studies, reducing the emotional manifestations of stress, stress-related health disorders, psychosomatic disorders or illnesses, overcoming relationship-building difficulties and crisis situations. A human being is a single entity, and only an emotionally stable and balanced student rarely gets sick and achieves more. The need for the service has been appreciated by both local and international students. The student may choose to attend group or individual visits to the resident physician. The introduction of the service has helped to reduce the number of students who have dropped out of the study process, and has helped to increase the efficiency of study work by reducing students' stress and adaptive disorders

RSU has a Career Centre. The Career Centre is an active member of the Latvian Career Development Support Association (LKAAA). LKAAA is a non-governmental organisation established with the aim of promoting the development of the career development support system (KAAS) intended for strengthening the national economy and well-being of the people of Latvia. LKAAA cooperates with the EC Career guidance and information network *Euroguidance*. In Latvia, *Euroguidance* is represented by the Information and Career Support Department of the State Education Development Agency. *Euroguidance* aims to promote the policy and practice of the KAAS by providing information to policy makers and support to career guidance counsellors and other actors in the system.

The services of the Career Centre are available to all RSU students, prospective students, as well as employees. Group career counselling is particularly appreciated and in demand. Individual consultations are held regularly for any interested party upon request. Events organised by the Career Centre on current issues in the labour market, as well as other career and self-development related topics, are regular (weekly) and in demand among the students. Students can post their CVs and get information about job vacancies on RSU [website](#) (also [in English](#)). RSU Career Centre provides literature and information materials on career topics that students can read on the spot or take home for reading. "My Career Book" was published in collaboration with the author Arta Citko -

a workbook for young people to discover their potential career, business or study choices and other adventures.

Since 2019, excellent cooperation has been maintained with the National Library of Latvia - "Come with the classmates on an excursion to the National Library of Latvia and participate in a class of RSU Career Centre!". Prospective students, i.e. secondary school students, are provided with the opportunity to learn about career choices, higher education options during the seminar, as well as to perform an express test developed at the Career Centre in cooperation with the specialists of the Psychosomatics Clinic.

Cooperation with employers takes place continuously and on several levels. In order to promote cooperation with employers' organisations, their involvement in the education of future specialists, as well as to increase RSU students' competitiveness on the labour market, meetings, guest lectures and excursions to cooperation companies and institutions are organised on a regular basis. Employers' organisations give presentations where employer representatives tell about the career opportunities in the respective organisation, offer RSU students and graduates the current vacancies, as well as give practical advice on how to succeed in the labour market.

The International Department (ID) provides informational support to the international students who have confirmed their desire to commence studies to ensure their successful and swift integration in RSU and Latvia. The new international students electronically receive an invitation to RSU Orientation Week, informative edition of *Survival Guide*, internal rules and regulations of the higher education institution, as well as other regulatory study documents and a sample of a study contract in Latvian and in English, also information on various accommodation options in Riga, etc. RSU website in English offers wide information on RSU and life in Riga. To make the life of the students easier, the university offers several housing options, including RSU Halls of Residence at 5 Dārza iela, Riga, which was built at the end of 2017 and opened by the Minister for Health. The ID provides support to third-country nationals in handling immigration procedures.

One week before the beginning of each semester, the ID organises Orientation Week during which international students are informed about the university, studies, assessment system, students' rights and duties, students' E-Systems, immigration and residence aspects, the Latvian culture and language. During the Orientation Week, international students learn of various RSU structural units (for example, the Student Services, IT Department, Library, Faculties) and their responsibilities. RSU student organisations - RSU Student Union and International Students' Association, are also involved in the events of the Week. In cooperation with the ID, they provide a cultural programme for the new international students.

Mentor programme is maintained with the aim of helping the new international students to adapt to the higher education institution. Even before the new students arrive in Latvia, they may contact previously trained mentors, senior local and international RSU students. Before the beginning of each semester, the ID organise the informative exhibition, providing the opportunity for the new international students to obtain information about various RSU student organisations, amateur groups, sports club, health centre and clinic of psychosomatic medicine, etc.

II - Description of the Study Direction (4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation)

4.1. Description and assessment of the directions of scientific research and/or artistic creation in the study direction, their compliance with the aims of the higher education

institution/ college and the study direction, and the development level of scientific research and artistic creation (provide a separate description of the role of the doctoral study programmes, if applicable).

In research, RSU acts in accordance with approved strategies; current strategy was developed in 2015. Taking into account the ongoing implementation of reforms in the education system, current Development Strategy of RSU Scientific Institution for 2015–2020 is valid until the approval of the new RSU strategy, which is planned to be approved by 31.12.2021. RSU science development strategy will be included in RSU development strategy.

[Development Strategy of RSU Scientific Institution for 2015-2020](#). The strategy is based on all three of the University's key directions of action - internationally competitive education, excellent research, and technology transfer to strengthen innovation as the foundation for RSU sustainable development.

As a research institution, RSU aims to train highly qualified research staff, support excellent science and efficient technology transfer to foster innovation and increase RSU global competitiveness. The medium-term objective is to offer and implement extensive academic and professional university education, as well as research opportunities in the following basic fields – medicine, health and social care, teaching, social sciences and natural sciences. (Article 2.2 of RSU Constitution).

In the strategy development process, based on RSU research resources, RSU research was prioritised into three main blocks:

- leading areas of research,
- supporting areas of research,
- new growth areas of research.

The relevant research blocks are based on the availability of resources and the potential for sustainable development, the accumulated experience, the presence of strategic leadership and the importance of the research sector for the overall development of RSU.

The priorities have been selected in the medium term. RSU supports research in all directions of social sciences, which have supportive capacity in the University, and all such research is a priority to strengthen the role of social sciences at the University. The direction has a great untapped potential, especially in close collaboration with leading research and development sectors, providing a critical assessment and alternative views, making a significant contribution to addressing societal challenges. Synergy with health sciences focused on public health promotion. Social innovation is a significant field of synergy, which supports healthy lifestyle, family health, active and healthy ageing

The lecturers involved in the StD are actively involved in research in accordance with their scientific interests (see Annex 6.4).

Six lecturers of the study direction “Psychology” who have a doctoral degree, *PsyD*. (Mārtinsone K., Pipere A., Mihailova S., Kolesnikova J., Lubenko J., Prepjolkina V.) are experts of the Latvian Council of Science.

The lecturers, in accordance with their specialisation in the study direction “Psychology”, carried out extensive research work together with other professionals and published several collective monographs in psychology and research intended for the academic staff and other interested persons. See more on [RSU website](#) (information available only in Latvian). For example, four

collective monographs were published in 2019: one in scientific writing, two in health psychology and one in group counselling.

The Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy in cooperation with the Department of Sociology and Psychology and other RSU structural units organise an annual three-day international scientific and practical conference “Personality and Health” on various issues. For example, at the conference of 2020 (which was held online due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and not as usual on-site), guest lecturers in three plenary sessions and one master-class raised contemporary research topics in the context of psychological assessment and assistance, including SEM modelling, visual data and their use in research, psychometric models and digital interventions; the second days symposium was dedicated to the results of the national research programme *Interframe-LV*. Whereas, “*Six-key model*”, a tool for the evaluation of arts therapy, was discussed at the plenary session. The work continued in the master-classes conducted by foreign guest lecturers, where there was an opportunity to get acquainted with the topics presented by guest lecturers. On the third day, the work started with a panel discussion on visual methods in research. After the discussion, the work continued in three parallel sessions: evaluation, patient groups and interventions, professional identity, where it was possible to listen to local lecturers. In the end, there was an opportunity to attend master-classes, the open lecture and expert discussion (see more at <https://www.rsu.lv/konferences-psihiologija> (page available only in latvian)).

Table 9. Priorities set out in the strategy 2015-2020.

<u>Pillars</u>	Clinical medicine	Biomedicine	Rehabilitation	Public health
<u>Basic research</u>	Molecular medicine	Structural biology	Research methodologies	Social/cultural/environmental/public health
<u>Leading areas of research.</u>	Oncology			
	Infectious diseases and immunology			
	Occupational diseases		Occupational and environmental health	
	Regenerative medicine, tissue bioengineering			
<u>Growth sectors</u>	Dosage form technologies (Pharmacy)			
	Rehabilitation and public ageing			
	Chronic diseases and treatment algorithms			
	Neuroscience/research of human brain disorders			
	Maternal and child health			
	Nuclear medicine, radiology and modern visualisation methods			
	Social sciences and humanities			

<u>Transversal sectors</u>	Anatomy, embryology, histology, pathology, structural biology
	Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care
	Emergency and military medicine
	Healthcare science
	Public health
	Social policy

Organisation of research at the University is regulated by the Law on Scientific Activity. The highest collegial body in research is the Research Council. It adopts strategic decisions related to research, as well as elects the scientific staff by secret ballot. On the level of operational administration, the research activities are supervised by the Research Board that is chaired by RSU Vice-Rector for Science.

Annual monitoring in research is ensured by summarising results of research activities of the structural units in January of the following year, when each academic and research structural unit completes a special report form. Data is collected and reported in the annual scientific conference held in March or April, and provided in printed format as Report on RSU Scientific activities drawn up by the end of May for the previous year.

As to RSU internal grants – each year in November information on implementation of grants is submitted, it is evaluated by the evaluation committee, and a decision is made regarding continuation in the following year and on recommendations for the involved.

Monitoring of the research activities at the level of structural units is carried out by the Heads of the structural units. Supervision of scientific research activities is included in job description of the Heads of all the research and academic structural units.

External funds are attracted for research, as well as RSU internal programmes are used, that are funded from RSU resources. The funding for internal research projects is allocated during the planning of RSU annual budget. Several internal funding programmes exist: grants for doctoral students, RSU internal grants, inter-university cooperation grants, aid to certain projects from RSU Alumni Association in cooperation with the Boris and Inara Teterev Foundation. For example, total RSU funding for these internal research projects in 2016 amounted to 512 860 EUR (284 000 EUR were allocated for internal grants, 100 000 EUR for RTU-RSU grants, 128 860 EUR for grants to doctoral students).

Research activities of the academic staff are partly compensated within their basic salary (a particular amount of research work is determined depending on the type of the position). In accordance with financial possibilities of RSU and topicality of the research direction, RSU supports participation of the academic staff in scientific conferences by assigning a paid period of absence or creative leave. Such a system of research organisation exists throughout the university.

The research strategy of the social sciences platform is based on the comprehensive [RSU Scientific Institution Development Strategy for 2015 - 2020](#). ([A video on the social sciences platform at RSU is available in English](#)). The platform implements research mainly in the horizontal directions defined by RSU, which have a great potential for expansion and scalability in other RSU research areas and platforms. The main task of the platform as an RSU coordination unit is to provide excellent research in line with the strategy, as well as to promote new development opportunities for specific and promising research areas, such as medical law (in cooperation with RSU Public Health platform), on the impact of digitisation in different sectors, etc. One of the main research directions

of RSU Social Sciences platform is international and national legal systems and law: international law and EU law, national and cyber security, medical law, which are growing areas of research.

The activities of the social sciences platform are coordinated with the national-level guidelines aimed at the development of science and economy, including envisaging involvement in the national reform programmes, the basic and applied research programmes of the Latvian Council of Science, and support for doctoral students. Lead researchers are advisers to public policy makers. Any research carried out within the platform must meet the highest ethical standards and requirements coordinated by RSU.

The social sciences platform also provides training for RSU doctoral and post-doctoral students, as well as provides support in the training of qualified academic and research staff. To support scientific activity, the academic and research staff of the platform teach study courses related to research methodology and organisation, including the ethical aspects of scientific work. All activities related to doctoral and post-doctoral education, resources and grants for individual doctoral research, as well as the entire study programme are coordinated by RSU Department of Doctoral Studies. Thanks to the doctoral study programme in psychology, the group of lecturers of the field is annually being supplemented. Doctoral students are actively involved not only in the development and implementation of new courses, but also in the management of course papers and bachelor's theses. Consequently, almost every new doctoral student is actively involved in the development of the field of Psychology in general, but especially in the upbringing of young researchers in accordance with the objectives of the university and study direction.

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

The Platform for Social Sciences constantly looks for opportunities and implements important applied research using reliable scientific methods and research results. The Platform actively forms consortia with its strategic partners, thus providing jobs for students and researchers in the early stages of their careers.

Studies are an essential part of the platform, providing young professionals with theoretical and academic knowledge, competence and skills development in real conditions, through a variety of Bachelor's, Master's and doctoral study programmes. Part of the study process is dedicated to supportive research.

Scientific research directions fully correspond to the goals of the study direction to be accredited. Lecturers are actively involved in scientific research work, which is focused on several directions:

- preparation of monographs and scientific articles for publication;
- approbation of research results in both local and international conferences, symposia, and publications;
- involvement in the peer review process in scientific editions;
- organisation of the annual international conference *Health and Personality Development: an interdisciplinary approach* and involvement in the organisation of other conferences;
- participation in science promotion activities organised by RSU: in the Researchers' Night, Researchers' Breakfast, etc.;
- involvement of students in research projects carried out by lecturers;

- coordination of the students' scientific interest group in psychology.

Scientific research may be divided into the following main topics:

- psychological assistance and support in working with different groups of clients and patients;
- adaptation and design of psychological research tools;
- development of the Latvian Clinical Personality Test and its digitisation;
- adaptation of the Intelligence Structure Test;
- health behaviour as disease prevention and web interventions to promote health behaviour;
- professional competence and development thereof, professional identity;
- basic didactic principles in educating patients and clients;
- personality traits and studies of their relationship determinants;
- experimental studies in quantum psychology, in collaboration with quantum physics specialists;
- studies of monetary behaviour.

The study content development processes created by RSU and the internal logic of the content of study programmes within the study direction establish a permanent link between research and the study process at all levels of studies:

- the inclusion of research articles in psychology in the content of study courses and the bibliography;
- the use of research data in lectures and seminar discussions, their analysis and discussions on research intentions, their design, methodology, results, correlation of the results with other research (e.g. study courses "Research in Psychology", "Psychometrics", "Multivariate Static");
- presentation and inclusion of the data from research conducted by the lecturers in the study process, such as presentations of the results of the "Clinical Personality Test" developed by RSU team and training to use this test in various study courses;
- research-related compulsory study assignments (e.g. "Semester Paper", "Bachelor's Thesis", "Bachelor's Thesis Seminar", "Master's Thesis Seminar", "Master's Thesis");
- opportunities for students to join research project teams. For example, "Reflection on Values and Behaviour Models during Social and Economic Change, ECO SOCLV 95; public health block No.5.8.2 of the National Research Programme *BIOMEDICINE . New Technologies "Latvian Clinical Personality Test" and block No. 5.8. Research into major health problems caused by mental diseases and cognitive dysfunction, and reduction of burden,*
- regular participation of foreign researchers in the annual international conferences "Health and Personality Development: Interdisciplinary Approach" and "Society. Health. Welfare" and delivery of lectures;
- Proposals made by lecturers for research topics including innovative data processing methods and topical subject matters;
- the possibility of publishing the results of the best Bachelor and Master's theses in scientific journals, preparing scientific publications together with the supervisor;
- cooperation with various Latvian and foreign universities and institutions in conducting research(e.g. with RTU, with the Ministry of Defence, with Riga Psychiatry and Narcology Centre, Daugavpils Psychoneurological Hospital, National Rehabilitation Centre "Vaivari", and University of Sussex, University of Konstanz, University of Padua, etc.);
- doctoral students of the study direction regularly present their research and their results to other students of the study direction Psychology (for example, the study course "Research in

Psychology in Practice”, etc.);

- doctoral students of the study direction are lecturers in the study programmes within the study direction (K. Šneidere, J. Zuitiņš, I. Paičs, etc.).
- A research interest group has been established that brings together students from different levels of psychology programmes who work on a common topic.

In the future, more students are planned to be involved in the new projects, as well as to create more interdisciplinary projects both at the level of Latvia and in cooperation with researchers from other EU countries.

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

One of the aims of the social sciences platform is to promote further international cooperation in research, as well as further international recognition of research, promote studies with a cross-sectoral and multi-dimensional perspective, in-depth research on global and European challenges affecting the socio-economic development of Latvia. Important research is carried out on the social sciences platform, the opportunities are looked for to increase its international recognition and the number of publications in high-impact journals, to increase its participation in international conferences and its involvement in international research networks.

Experience and capacity to conduct the applied sectoral research give the social sciences platform unique competitiveness in the international scientific context. At all levels, RSU focuses on high-quality professionals and respect for existing traditions while striving for global growth. A significant advantage is the location in the centre of the Baltic region, the promotion of synergies with comprehensive clinical practice, innovative companies and risk funds, and the involvement in large-scale events organised in Riga. The central location also provides good logistics facilities, providing an opportunity to serve as an international hub for exploring international relations. Another advantage is better access to research materials in the health and medical sector, the social sciences platform, respectively, provides materials for health and lifestyle-related research.

This offers special advantages in relations with the international research community and places the social sciences platform as an effective knowledge centre for research into social innovation, international relations and comparative politics in Northern Europe. Research conducted by scientists of the social sciences platform is not limited to national level: they participate in global social sector scientific debates, as well as theoretical research, and ensure international knowledge transfer to address the challenges of Latvia and other countries.

Table 9. Linking scientific research projects with study courses in programmes during the last 6 years.

Scientific research projects of lecturers within the Psychology direction during the last 6 years	Study courses, which are linked to project data and results
<p>Project of the Ministry of Defence of Latvia, RSU, RTU. (2017–2020). “Development of a computerised personality assessment system” (information available only in Latvian)</p>	<p>BP- Personality Research, Basic Psychological Research, Research in Psychology, Psychometrics, Semester Paper, Bachelor’s Thesis, MP - Master’s Thesis DP – seminar 3 and 4 for doctoral students</p>
<p>2014 -2017 National research programme EKOSOC-LV “Reflection on Values and Behaviour Models during Social and Economic Change”</p>	<p>BP - Social Psychology, Research in Psychology, Semester Paper, Bachelor’s Thesis, MP - Master's Thesis DP – seminars for doctoral students <i>Methodology of Research Activity</i>, science writing and communication, development trends in contemporary psychology, interdisciplinary trend</p>
<p>National Research Programme. (2018–2021). "Challenges and Solutions of Latvian State and Society in an International Framework (INTERFRAME-LV)) (information available only in Latvian)</p>	<p>BP - Intercultural Psychology, Research in Psychology, Semester Paper, Bachelor’s Thesis, MP - Master's Thesis;</p>
<p>National Research Programme <i>Biomedicine</i> in the sub-project No. 5.8.2 for public health <i>Research into Health Problems Caused by Cognitive Dysfunction and Reduction of the Burden</i> Impact of long-term regular aerobic exercise on cognitive processes – Latvian section for the international research and cooperation project <i>Establishing the Net Attainable Benefits for Long-term Exercise (ENABLE)</i></p>	<p>BP - Cognitive Psychology, Neuropsychology, Developmental Psychology, Semester Paper, Bachelor’s Thesis, MP - Psychosocial Aspects of Health and Disease and Psychosocial Rehabilitation, Master’s Thesis; DP - doctoral theses during doctoral studies; seminars 3 and 4 for doctoral students <i>Development Trends in Contemporary Psychology and Interdisciplinary Approach in the Context of Health Care.</i></p>

Scientific research projects of lecturers within the Psychology direction during the last 6 years	Study courses, which are linked to project data and results
2019 -2020; <i>"ELPA-COG - The Effect of Lifetime Physical Activity on the Burden Caused by Cognitive Dysfunction and Depression in Elderly"</i> ;	BP - Research in Psychology, Psychometrics, Semester Paper, Bachelor's Thesis, Developmental Psychology, Clinical Psychology MP - Master's Thesis; DP - doctoral theses during doctoral studies; seminars 3 and 4 for doctoral students <i>Development Trends in Contemporary Psychology and Interdisciplinary Approach in the Context of Health Care.</i>
2014 -2017; The Latvian Clinical Personality Test developed within the National Research Programme <i>BIOMEDICINE</i> sub-project No.5.8.2 for public health <i>Development and Transfer of New Technologies "Latvian Clinical Personality Test" into National Economy</i>	BP - Personality Research, Basic Psychological Research, Research in Psychology, Psychometrics, Semester Paper, Bachelor's Thesis, MP - Master's Thesis DP - <i>Development Trends in Contemporary Psychology and Interdisciplinary Approach in the Context of Health Care</i>
2016 -2022; Prisons Administration European Social Fund project No. 9.1.3.0/16/I/001 "Improvement of the Efficiency of the Resocialisation System", Resocialisation Programme Unit	BP - Research in Psychology, Psychometrics, Semester Paper, Bachelor's Thesis, Introduction into Legal Psychology MP - Master's Thesis, Psychosocial Aspects of Health and Disease and Psychosocial Rehabilitation;
2020:ESF project "Development of Responsible, Diverse and High-quality Journalism in Latvian National and Regional Mass Media, Promoting Social Inclusion of Third-country Nationals in Latvia"	BP - Intercultural Psychology, Psychological Counselling, Social Psychology
2020. ERDF 1.2.1. Specific objective "Increase private sector investment in R&D" 1.2.1.2. measure "Support for the improvement of the technology transfer system" project "Clinical Personality inventory".	BP - Research in Psychology, Psychometrics, Semester Paper, Bachelor's Thesis, MP - Master's Thesis DP - doctoral theses during doctoral studies; seminars for doctoral students

Scientific research projects of lecturers within the Psychology direction during the last 6 years	Study courses, which are linked to project data and results
2020: Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia project "Life with COVID – 19: Evaluation of coronavirus-induced crisis management in Latvia and proposals for future sustainability of society, "	BP – Research in Psychology, Psychometrics, Semester Paper, Bachelor's Thesis, Health Psychology MP – Master's Thesis, Psychosocial Aspects of Health and Disease and Psychosocial Rehabilitation DP – Methodology of Research Activity, Seminar 1, 2 and 3 for doctoral students
2020: National Research Programme for reduction of COVID-19 impact. Project No. VPP-COVID-2020/1-0011 "Impact of COVID-19 epidemic on the healthcare system and public health in Latvia; strengthening the preparedness of the health sector for future epidemics".	BP – Research in Psychology, Psychometrics, Semester Paper, Bachelor's Thesis, Health Psychology MP – Master's Thesis, Psychosocial Aspects of Health and Disease and Psychosocial Rehabilitation DP - <i>Methodology of Research Activity</i> , science writing and communication
2020: International project COVID-19 IMPACT (Coping mechanisms and behaviour related to COVID-19)	BP – Research in Psychology, Psychometrics, Semester Paper, Bachelor's Thesis, Health Psychology MP – Master's Thesis, Psychosocial Aspects of Health and Disease and Psychosocial Rehabilitation DP - <i>Methodology of Research Activity</i> , science writing and communication
2021. Latvian Investment and Development Agency (LIAA). Project KC-PI-2020/18 "Clinical Personality Test".	BP – Research in Psychology, Psychometrics, Semester Paper, Bachelor's Thesis, Clinical Psychology MP – Master's Thesis

Abbreviations in the table: BP - Bachelor's programme, MP - Master's programme, DP - doctoral programme

As shown in Table 9, research work of the academic staff is linked to the current topics of the sector, in an interdisciplinary context. Namely, the research conducted by the academic staff is a significant contribution to the development of the sector, as well as to the development of study programmes and improvement of the study content. Through research, lecturers bring the current sectoral issues into their study courses. Teaching staff prepare scientific articles, participate in conferences and workshops, write textbooks and methodological materials (see CVs). The projects carried out by the academic staff contribute to the development of research capacity and competitiveness, which could also be characterised by an increase in the number of scientific articles in *Web of Science* databases and *Scopus* journals, thereby strengthening the authority and recognition of RSU as a study and science centre.

As has already been mentioned, the status of the expert of the Latvian Council of Science has been

granted to a large number of those involved in the doctoral study programme. Doctoral theses at RSU are supervised only by scientists with the rights of an expert of the Latvian Council of Science, which confirms that scientists constantly carry out research and publish research results at international level.

Specific examples of scientific achievements of the academic staff in the sector are the following:

- The development of the Latvian Clinical Personality Test and its further development in digital form for the needs of the National Armed Forces;
- interdisciplinary research on security issues and ageing;
- the development of new research methodologies, such as the development of a conceptual basis for a more extensive analysis of transdisciplinary research, describing the epistemological, axiological and methodological dimensions of the dialogue approach in the context of a transdisciplinary research; secondary data analysis used, etc.

International cooperation in scientific research takes place in 3 directions. First, the involvement of lecturers in intercultural research. For example, Assistant Professor Jelena Lubenko participated as a representative from Latvia in the international study "COVID-19 IMPACT (Coping mechanisms and behaviour in relation to COVID-19). (04.2020 – 08.2020). In turn, Assistant Professor Jeļena Koļesņikova participated as a representative of Latvia in the project "EUCLID- Project Risk perceptions & behaviour in the context of the Coronavirus outbreak (2020).

Secondly, international cooperation is being successfully implemented in connection with the conference "Personality and Health", which is organised every year by the staff of the Department of Health Psychology and Paedagogy under the leadership of Professor Kristīne Martinsone.

Thirdly, international cooperation takes place in the production of joint scientific publications and scientific monographs. For example, Associate Professor Sandra Mihailova together with scientists from Italy and France participates in the creation of a joint monograph on Coherent Interaction, scheduled for publication in autumn 2021.

In general, the academic staff involved in the implementation of the study direction is actively involved in scientific research; scientific publications are used in the study process (recommended as compulsory or recommended literature in the study course), thereby contributing to the quality and sustainability of the implementation of the study programme.

Research Development Plan

- Preparation of 1 project application per year, involving partners from different countries;
- participation as partners in the preparation of existing international projects (Horizon 2020, Erasmus +, Nordplus etc.);
- attracting of post-doctoral researchers
- Defence of 2-3 doctoral theses in the doctoral study programme "Psychology" by 2023;
- involvement of international researchers in research projects carried out at the university, such as the project "Establishing the Net Attainable Benefits for Long-term Exercise (ENABLE)".

See Annex 14 for the information on projects, in which RSU is involved.

4.4. Specify the way how the higher education institution/ college promotes the involvement of the teaching staff in scientific research and/or artistic creation. Provide the

description and assessment of the activities carried out by the academic staff in the field of scientific research and/or artistic creation relevant to the study direction by providing examples and the summary of the quantitative data on the activities in the field of scientific research and/or artistic creation relevant to the study direction over the reporting period, for instance, the publications, participation in conferences, activities in the field of artistic creation, participation in projects by the academic staff members, etc., by listing the aforementioned according to the relevance.

To achieve the scientific goals of RSU - to motivate the teaching staff to engage in research and to increase support for more active involvement of the teaching staff in research:

- a motivating remuneration system for involvement of staff, including the teaching staff, in research projects is being developed;
- academic staff will be paid a variable remuneration component (lump sum) once a year from 2019 to 2021, based on the following research results for the previous year: anonymous peer-reviewed scientific publication with RSU affiliation, defended doctoral theses supervised, registered patents with RSU ownership, total contract amount of RSU-attracted project funds;
- organising networking activities for the academic staff on topics related to research funding, registration of the intellectual property rights, responsible research and innovation, etc.;
- financial support is provided for publications in WoS/SCOPUS cited journals, especially open-access publications;
- studies focused on the research topic are ensured.

See Annex 6.4 "List of Scientific Publications by the Teaching Staff Related to the Study Programme for the Last Six Years", Annex 6.5 "Summary of publications, participation in conferences and projects, experience in the sector of the teaching staff involved in the Study Direction "Psychology"".

In addition see <https://www.rsu.lv/zinatniski-petnieciska-darbiba-psihologija> (information only in Latvian).

In total, summarising the scientific activity of lecturers in the field of psychology, it can be said that in this reporting period since 2015, 190 scientific articles (in the database of Web of Science, database EricPlus, etc.) and 157 scientific theses have been published, scientific collective monographs have been written, as well as publications have been submitted and these publications have been the subject of presentations at scientific conferences.

The scientific staff development strategy of RSU social sciences platform is aimed at ensuring excellent research in the social sciences and providing a sustainable and supportive research ecosystem for students and RSU academic and research staff.

The aim of the research staff development strategy is to identify areas of activity that can have a significant impact on the development and attraction of scientific talent, to analyse the conditions necessary for the intended activities to achieve their goal, as well as to make the necessary changes. These actions also serve as a tool for the sustainable and responsible strategic development of human resources, in accordance with the principles set out in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

Planned development of research staff in 2013–2018 has yielded the following results:

- new employment opportunities for the new doctoral students and support during initial stages of a researcher's career to promote growth;

- five post-doctoral research support projects have been attracted;
- visiting lecturers have received competitive salaries; flexible working hours have been ensured, transport and subsistence costs have been covered (the Human Resources Department also uses "Euraxess" to select lecturers);
- groups of scientists, the aim of who is to attract new, foreign or re-emigrating Latvian scientists, the result of which is three new projects and additional research capacity;
- student involvement in a number of grants and projects is now mandatory.

The strategic goal is to attract more scientific talent to vacant positions in the reporting period for 2013 - 2018:

- succession plans for academic staff have been prepared;
- training on research topics is provided;
- the Statistics Unit provides analytical support and advice on research methodologies, etc.;
- support and advice for project application preparation and project management;
- English language proficiency testing and English language training;
- financial support for publications *Web of Science / Scopus, Open Access*.

Increasing the support for the strategic goal for the research activity of RSU staff; results of the measures to reduce remuneration imbalances in the reporting period for 2013-2018:

- a significant increase in the remuneration of research staff and technical support staff to research staff;
- a performance-based monthly bonus system, also taking into account staff involvement in research projects;
- electronic working time accounting (working time compliance tracking) applications have been introduced;
- The results of the annual staff performance evaluation carried out in 2017 showed that the researcher affiliation rate is still insufficient - RSU dealt with this problem by introducing an internal grant and motivation system.

Activities related to the strategic goal award for outstanding management of research staff from 2018 in order to promote RSU participation in the award:

- increased administrative support for project implementation;
- increasing remuneration for research staff;
- new positions for leading scientists (for example, three lead researchers in social sciences);
- an annual performance-based bonus for members of the academic and research staff involved in research projects related to publications, registered patents, doctoral dissertations defended, based on the amount of funding attracted (contract amount).

Social sciences platform promotes the modernisation of the study environment and content by involving academic staff in research projects, thus improving their knowledge of modern technologies and sectoral trends. The lead researchers of the platform work closely with public organisations and politicians, thus gaining an opportunity to participate in policy-making and prepare proposals for amending regulatory enactments, strengthening collaboration with industry players to promote innovation and commercialisation. Research results and innovations are constantly integrated into the study process and study programmes.

Summary of scientific research activities of teaching staff involved in the implementation of the Study Direction during the reporting period is listed in Annex 6.5: "Summary of the publications by the teaching staff, experience within the sector and participation in projects".

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

Participation of students in scientific research take place at all 3 levels of study, taking into account the level of knowledge, skills, competence and experience of students.

In general, RSU students may participate in research activities in the following ways:

- by participating in student research interest groups in various areas. Currently, 26 research interest groups have been formed and work actively (more information on the [website](#));
- by applying for receipt of financial aid from the Student Union for participation in conferences or seminars in the country or abroad (each year, more than 10 students receive financial aid for participation in conferences);
- by applying at the student portal with a doctoral student of RSU to assist in the development of a research paper;
- participating in RSU SU Academy of Researchers;
- by participating in RSU scientific conference;
- by participating with their own research in RSU International Student Conference (ISC). RSU ISC is an annual project hosted by the SU that became international in 2015, and each year it attracts more and more students from various countries. In 2018, the conference reached new peaks, being organised for two days and involving more than 270 students with research work both in healthcare and social sciences. More information about the conference of this year and previous year can be found on RSU ISC [website](#).
- Students of all levels have an opportunity to apply for work in research projects that are mentioned in the Table 9; at present the students of the study direction are involved in the following projects: INTERFRAME-LV, ENABLE, BIOMEDICINE.

In organising RSU International Student Conference, RSU departments and student research interest groups are involved in creation of workshops, RSU professors are involved in evaluation of research papers, and the management and departments are involved in various organisational matters.

Each year, a new team of organisers is created for this project; therefore, each year, the project manager faces a challenge to set a higher standard than the previous year, so the outcome depends on the vision and ambitions of the manager. Each year, more works are submitted in health sciences, and it is difficult to involve students of social sciences in the conference. Experience shows that mostly it is related to motivation of medical students to collect points for residency. Students of social sciences are more difficult to motivate; therefore, ideas are sought on added value obtained by a student who would receive an award, for example, adding a grade to the final paper or granting discounts for the tuition fee. In 2019 and 2020, it was particular success in advertising the conference both via the conference website and radio interviews, as well as distribution of tangible materials in RSU and buildings of other universities. Challenge of the next year's conference is to involve even more students with their research work both in the healthcare and social sciences sessions in order to increase the number of sessions and interested participants.

Starting from the first year of study, students prepare research papers, where they acquire the methodology for drawing up research work that allows students to acquire basic research skills already in the first year. In the third year of study, students draw up Bachelor's theses in accordance with the content of the study programme and the research directions related to the study programme.

From April 2019, the annual Research Week is organised, within the framework of which an international scientific conference of researchers and also students takes place. It promotes the development of wider international cooperation, involvement in research networks and associations, allows to attract international partners to joint projects, research and publications.

The involvement of students in scientific research begins with the 2nd year of the bachelor's programme, when students take the course "Research in Psychology" and continue until the defense of the doctoral thesis. Students are involved in almost all lecturers' projects, furthermore, bachelor's and master's students help doctoral students with their research. For example, RSU lecturers together with students of the master's study programme "Health Psychology" developed and presented 10 videos, 11 psychoeducational programmes and recommendations at the RSU Scientific Conference "Psychological Resources and Risk Factors for the Health of the Population under COVID-19. Research of National Programme for Practice" (see: <https://www.rsu.lv/konference-psihologiskie-resursi-riska-faktori-veselibai-covid> (available only in Latvian)).

It can be mentioned that during the accreditation period following bachelor theses were developed and defended (in 2018) "LKPT personības iezīmju skalu un mazvērtības izjūtas skalu validācija studentu izlasē" and "LKPT personības un ticamības skalu rādītāju specifika ieslodzīto grupā" (supervisor for both: Viktorija Perepjolkina). These theses contributed to the development of the Latvian clinical personality test. Students are also actively involved in other lecturers' projects with their course, bachelor's and master's theses. See more: <https://www.rsu.lv/zinatniski-petnieciska-darbiba-psihologija> (available only in Latvian).

Students regularly present their research at both RSU student conferences and the international conference "Health and Personality", as well as participate in the development of scientific publications. Students also participate in the creation of joint monographs. Thus, for example, several students and graduates of the master's programme participated in the collective monograph "Health Psychology: Interdisciplinarity of theory and practice".

The questionnaires and tests adapted in the students' works annually supplement the "Psychology Laboratory" (information in English about the Psychology Laboratory) test database, where all information about the students' adapted and tested tests is stored. In turn, using the equipment of this laboratory and the tests in the database, further student research works are developed.

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

Mapping

In 2017-2018, a new type of study programme mapping was performed at RSU, which is a part of the study programme management process and promotes the possibility to implement a student-

centred approach. When mapping study programmes, analysis of programme content, mostly results of the programme, is carried out. Results of the mapping process of a study programme – the maps obtained and the observations made are intended for the analysis and quality assessment of study programmes and for the improvement of the study programme.

Mapping is performed by using MS Excel mapping tool developed by Study Programme Administration Unit of the Centre for Educational Growth of RSU, which extracts data from descriptions of study courses of the respective study programme in RSU register of study courses. See mapping results in Annex No. 18.1.

Specification of the mapping information system was developed within the framework of the ESF SAM project “Improvement of Management Process and Modernisation of Study Programme Content at Rīga Stradiņš University” in 2019, the system development was scheduled for 2020. The planned mapping system will be integrated into RSU IT systems and will ensure the mapping of the results of the study programmes and study courses and the monitoring of the coherence of the learning outcomes.

BITF

In 2014, target-specific scholarships of Boris and Inara Teterev Foundation (BITF) for RSU teaching staff were created: “Integration of International Experience”, “Modernisation of the Study Programme Content”, and “Increasing International Citation Index of the Teaching Staff”.

Activities of the target-specific scholarship are implemented in two ways: for the new or experienced teaching staff individually or for the new teaching staff in cooperation with a mentor. Support financing is received both by the new teaching staff and the experienced teaching staff mentor, and in close cooperation they develop materials necessary for the study course. Both participants of the activity are equally responsible for both the process and quality of the work result.

RSU Development Strategy 2017-2021 defined the concept for the development of RSU IT infrastructure, which supports the improvement of existing information systems and development of new e-solutions in order to improve the quality of studies and promote administrative efficacy.

RSU students and lecturers already have a well-developed IT infrastructure and virtual study environment, however, the existing IT systems need to be improved and new e-solutions should be developed to ensure closer integration of systems, development of new e-services and a friendlier interface for students and lecturers.

Since February this year, students have access to a new and upgraded portal and mobile application *MyRSU*, which is flexible for conversion and development, taking student interests into account. Mobile applications and portal versions are designed to make the student's everyday life easier by offering the existing functionality, adding new services such as a map with all RSU training facilities, online e-service availability (application and statement requests, e-mail personalisation, e-ticket extension, scholarship applications). For more information, see Section I Paragraph 3.3.

In order to increase the quality of studies by using advanced technologies and e-solutions, RSU has set the following tasks:

- 1) to develop the mapping system of study programmes that will ensure the possibility to see the role of the particular study course in the study programme, and how the student can

acquire knowledge, skills, and competences required for the particular profession by completing certain study courses. E-solution of study programme mapping will strengthen the shared use of resources, promote development of joint study programmes, and decrease duplication of the content of study programmes.

- 2) to supplement the existing RSU Register of Study Programmes for a more efficient management of study programmes that will ensure definition of learning outcomes of study programmes and the joint plan, preparation of accreditation reports, analysis and benchmark comparison of performance indicators of the study programmes;
- 3) to supplement the existing RSU Register of Study Courses in order to ensure vertical integration of the content of study courses that will provide a possibility to link topics of study courses within the framework of the study programme in support of succession of study courses. A dictionary of keywords of study courses and visualisation of keywords will be developed that will reflect the related topics of the study courses;
- 4) to establish a link between the thematic planning of the course description and the corresponding e-studies environment course, where the lecturer would be allowed to choose whether to create the respective e-course with the same thematic division as indicated in the study course description;
- 5) to use RSU library of audio-visual study materials, including descriptions of various study objects, for example, clinical cases, dissection cases, simulation scenarios, interactive training videos, etc., ensuring systematisation and collection of study objects, as well as the possibility to share study objects with other higher education institutions; and for the students to be able to find the necessary simulation cases, clinical cases, and other study objects easily.
- 6) to develop a new system that would make it much easier for students to register for the available elective study courses at times convenient to them. Establishing a system would facilitate the work of the administrative staff, allowing students to be added to elective courses more easily and quickly;
- 7) to improve the Electronic Admission System by reducing the administrative workload, automating manual actions, improving the user interface, supplementing functionality, etc.

In order to ensure an advanced internal information exchange system for solution of administrative issues, speeding up the circulation of information and decision-making, as well as to ensure electronic circulation of documents within RSU, the following tasks for increasing administrative efficiency are set by RSU:

- 1) transition to electronic storage of the student file – in accordance with the Cabinet Regulations No. 203, applications, requests of the students and decrees on the movement of students and study process may be stored only electronically. It will decrease the time for processing of documents, increase the efficiency of administrative work and data quality, decrease the use of natural resources;
- 2) acquisition of additional HOP modules to provide availability of new e-services: expanding HOP functionality by implementing new e-services for the staff, for example, record keeping of business trips, e-instructions, etc.
- 3) Change of the Performance Management System - RSU has the Performance Management System that ensures management of the assessment of achievement of aims and management of work performance. Change of the Performance Management System portal is necessary in order to improve usability and help in work of the Heads of the structural units, ensure integration with other RSU information systems;
- 4) acquisition of invoice digitalisation tool – in accordance with the EU directive, pursuant to which all invoices between companies and state authorities must be in electronic format as of 27 November 2018, a possibility to digitalise printed invoices and create meta-invoices from

these must be ensured.

- 5) to develop a quality and process management system – RSU Quality Assurance and Internal Audit Department already uses process management tool *QPR Enterprise Architect*. In May 2019, an agreement was signed, under which additional licenses were acquired to use the process modelling tool in a more comprehensive manner and to access the latest version of *QPR*. Employees will have access to the *QPR web* portal, which will allow each RSU employee to view the processes created, customize the content of the site to their own needs, and keep track of changes made and monitor the activities under their responsibility.

When evaluating innovative solutions implemented in order to support the study process, it can be said that it is a continuous process of growth guided by RSU management and respective structural units.

The Psychology Laboratory helps to introduce the innovative solutions directly in the process of psychology study programmes (information [in Latvian](#), [in English](#)), which aims to ensure the development, adaptation and approbation of psychological research and evaluation tools that meet modern scientific requirements, as well as advise RSU teaching staff and students on psychological issues. Using these laboratory facilities, students can conduct innovative research for their Master's theses and doctoral theses.

II - Description of the Study Direction (5. Cooperation and Internationalisation)

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

RSU International Department (ID) has established an extensive network of partner higher education institutions in Europe. Partner higher education institutions are regularly informed on *Erasmus* exchange possibilities at RSU, including the exchange of visiting teaching staff. In addition to electronic communication, every year RSU ID organises *Erasmus+* International Week, the programme of which includes several professional networking events. Within the framework of this event, contacts are established with new *Erasmus+* cooperation partners.

In addition to these events organised by RSU, representatives of RSU ID regularly attend annual events of professional international associations with a purpose to ensure exchanges, including visiting teaching. For example, RSU participates in networking exhibitions organised by the *European Association of Erasmus Coordinators* and *European Association for International Education*.

RSU ID supports *Erasmus* visiting teaching visits both before the visiting teaching staff arrives in Riga and during the period of their visiting teaching (for example, administers documentation of the visiting teaching, develops the plan of activities, assists in the process of the visit, etc.).

Current development of cooperation and internationalisation is in line with the objectives of the directions and the plan and is generally considered sufficient.

The Social Sciences Platform has established successful collaborations with key stakeholders in the sector in order to achieve its strategic goals, continuous research topicality, increase the potential for commercialisation of research results and their coherence with the development of the sector.

Cooperation agreements with other institutions have been signed in order to implement the study programmes, see Annex 7.

RSU students have the opportunity to go on exchange studies or international placement for one semester or the entire academic year abroad with an *Erasmus+* scholarship. The programme covers all study programmes as well as all levels of higher education, including doctoral studies. (Information is available on [RSU website](#)).

There is continuous cooperation with employers on several levels. In order to facilitate cooperation with employers' organisations, their participation in educating prospective professionals, as well as to increase the competitiveness of RSU students on the labour market, a Career Week is organised in the university each year. During this week presentations of employers' organisations are made with representatives of employers telling about career opportunities in the represented organisation and offering current vacancies to RSU graduates and students, as well as giving practical advice on how to succeed in the labour market.

National Examination Boards and Committees for defence of Master and Bachelor's theses comprise at least 50% of employers: it is established by the Cabinet Regulations No. 481 of the Republic of Latvia, and the compliance with these Regulations is strictly controlled at RSU.

The *Erasmus+* programme mobility activity has been implemented among the countries of the programme. In total, more than 200 bilateral cooperation agreements have been signed, providing mobility of the students and staff in all cycles of studies: during Bachelor's, Master's, and doctoral studies. The partner universities are selected on the basis of information available on equivalent study programmes and the language of instruction. One of the main conditions is the coordination of study courses during the student exchange programme in order to be able to validate the study courses and to add them to the Diploma supplement of the corresponding study programme of RSU. As a result, a full study process is provided, complemented by experience from abroad. The *Erasmus +* programme mobility activity has been implemented among the countries of the programme.

RSU has been positively evaluated in the international environment. International university ranking *QS World University Rankings 2019* included RSU among the 1,000 best-performing universities in the world, especially appreciating the ability of the university to attract international students. Similarly, RSU regularly receives the highest rating "A" in various categories in the *U-Multirank* rating of European Union universities.

The university has also received other international recognitions. For example, as mentioned above, it was recognised as a student-centred higher education institution in the evaluation *PASCL* of the European Association of Students. In their 2016 study, the World Bank experts also praised the involvement of students in RSU decision-making, the presence of international students and strategic planning at the university.

The extensive network of *Erasmus* partner higher education institutions also proves the international recognition of RSU. In 2017, RSU received recognition from the National Education and Development Agency for the successful implementation of the European Commission's *Erasmus* programme.

Cooperation with foreign universities in Psychology was started with the establishment of study programmes. Lecturers within the study direction Psychology have contacts with a number of British universities, such as *Edge Hill University* and *University of Sussex*, *Ruppin Academic Center* in Israel, *University of Padua* in Italy, *Vilnius University*, *Vytautas Magnus University* and *Vilnius Pedagogical University* in Lithuania, etc.

Cooperation with the University of Sussex in Great Britain was established during the National Research Programme "Biomedicine ENABLE". It is particularly important to highlight the fact that, for more than three years, a link has been developed with the University of Padua in Italy, an internationally recognised centre of interdisciplinary research in experimental psychology.

Lectures and master-classes on the health behaviour research by Professor Paul Norman of the University of Sheffield, the former president of the European Health Psychology Society (EHPS) as well as participation in the international conference "Psychology in Health Care" organised by RSU teaching staff in cooperation with the Latvian Association of Health Psychology and the Latvian Association of Clinical Psychologists in 2013 was an important cooperation project that contributed to the development of health psychology in Latvia. The conference was attended by around 120 participants, representing all professional psychologist organisations and universities involved in the training of psychologists. The development of research topics in health psychology in Latvia was also promoted by the video lecture on e-interventions (in 2014) given by the Associate Professor Efrat Neter, from the Ruppin Academic Center, and by her presentation in the conference of the Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy on the most important and most frequently researched topics of modern health psychology (in 2015 and 2016).

Important cooperation originated from the conferences of the European Health Psychology Society, the content of which marked interdisciplinarity and the activities dedicated to psychooncology, that were developed together with Shulamith Kreitler, emeritus professor, the clinical and health psychologist from Tel Aviv University. These include guest lectures at RSU, participation in conferences organised by the Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy, video lectures, etc. For example, in 2017, when the Professor repeatedly visited RSU, she gave a public lecture and a two-day seminar on psychooncology providing an opportunity to discuss the use of health psychology research results and approaches in the multiprofessional context. These events were attended by more than 80 people - health professionals, including doctors and residents, psychologists and representatives of assisting professions and patients' organisations, as well as RSU students and lecturers interested in psychooncology.

Guest lectures and video lectures are regularly organised by the Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy. For example, in 2016, students, teaching staff and interested persons had the opportunity to listen not only to the already mentioned lectures by E.Neter and Sh.Kreitler but also to the guest lectures on healthy ageing related to physical activity given by Yael Netz, Professor of the Wingate University of Israel, as well as to video lectures and guest lectures on the impact of epigenesis on the child development, the development of biological sex, gender identity and sexual orientation and the critical periods of early ontogenesis delivered by the Professor Jelena Nikolajeva, Doctor of biology from Russia. It was also possible to attend a guest lecture on family counselling issues given by the Professor Gediminas Navaitis from Mykolas Romeris University in Lithuania.

In 2017, the 3rd annual international scientific-practical conference "Health and Personality Development: Integrative Approach" brought together participants from six countries (Israel, Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Lithuania and Russia), whose guest lectures were on a variety of topics, including models of working with emotion in cognitive-behavioural therapy, the role of heart rate variability in physical and mental health, adaptation to the infertility treatment process., the

provision of psycho-emotional support to patients with haemato-oncology and their relatives, the relationship between the schoolchildren health behaviour and suicidal thoughts. Guest lecturers conducted five master-classes during the conference. The keynote speaker at the conference was Professor Reinout Wiers from Amsterdam University in the Netherlands. He presented on the evaluation of implicit cognitive processes and changes in people with addiction.

The exchange of lecturers is undeniably a two-way process. Teaching staff of RSU psychology direction also lecture in the higher education institutions of other countries. RSU teaching staff have visited several universities: for example, in 2015, Kristīne Mārtinsone gave lectures and conducted classes at Edge Hill University in Great Britain and Nuertingen-Geislingen University in Germany, Jelena Koļesnikova and Aelita Vagule at the University of Padua in Italy; in 2016, Kristīne Mārtinsone and in 2017, Jelena Kolesnikova visited the Ruppın Academic Center in Israel, whereas Jelena Levina delivered lectures at Tel Aviv University in Israel and College of Humanities in Greece in the same year.

Students have the opportunity to participate in the *Erasmus+* mobility programme, which has been used by three students from the study direction of psychology who completed psychology study courses at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. In turn, K. Šneidere after graduation of her Master's degree studies, in November and December 2017 went to the University of Padua to study cognitive and neuropsychology in depth during the graduate placement and has now become one of the lecturers of the bachelor's and master's programmes in psychology.

Criteria for the cooperation of the study direction with higher education institutions, NGOs and employers and forms of cooperation:

- The higher education institution or organisation concerned researches current topics in the psychology sector (e.g. the International Federation on Ageing, the University of Padua, etc.).
- They have the appropriate environment and facilities for providing placement (NRC "Vaivari", Riga Psychiatry and Narcology Centre (RPNC), etc.)
- Placement can be provided for the students and work places for the graduates of the programme (hospital in Gintermuiža in Jelgava, NRC "Vaivari", Children Clinical University Hospital, etc.)
- Opportunities for the introduction of innovative technologies in the psychology sector are offered (RTU, Ministry of Defence, etc.)
- Participation in the development of the content of study programmes is ensured (NRC "Vaivari", Children Clinical University Hospital, National Library of Latvia, European Health Psychology Society, etc.);
- the possibility of co-operation in the development of research projects is provided (RTU, the University of Padua, the University of Konstanz, University of Cyprus, etc.);
- student exchange opportunities are provided (the University of Algarve, the University of Padua, the University of Sussex, Ruppın Academic Center)
- expertise and assistance in the conduct of applied research are provided (RTU, Ministry of Defence, National Library of Latvia, etc.);

Cooperation with organisations and involvement of employers take place in the following ways:

- employers are regularly invited to teach study courses, to deliver lectures and to conduct seminars;
- employers and representatives of different organisations are involved in provision of the content within the direction;

- study courses are partly taught at the employers, for example in medical institutions, etc.;
- the range of placement providers is regularly renewed and updated by Heads of the study programmes, who respond to requests to offer students for placement and look for placement providers themselves;
- student meetings with placement providers are organised (e.g. with the management of the NRC “Vaivari”);
- requests from employers to apply for the placement and vacancies are sent to students and published on RSU social media sites.
- Employers are also actively involved in organising the annual conference “Personality and Health”.

See Annex 7 “Information on cooperation agreements concluded with other institutions”.

5.2. Specify the system or mechanisms, which are used to attract the students and the teaching staff from abroad and provide a description of the dynamics of the number of the attracted students and the teaching staff.

There are currently no international students in this study direction. Within the study direction, student mobility is implemented using the European Commission *Erasmus +* programme. Incoming students are included in the study programmes within the study direction as students during the exchange period. Students are provided with the required amount of study courses and the number of credit points. The offered courses are implemented in English. Students can also take courses in other social sciences faculties.

In the last six years, there have been no incoming students in the study direction “Psychology”, but there have been 3 outgoing students from the Bachelor's degree programme and 1 outgoing student from the Master's degree programme and 33 foreign lecturers.

Other options are also in use. For example, most foreign lecturers come to the annual conference “Personality and Health”, when they conduct master-classes or give lectures before or after the conference.

In total, during the last six years, there have been 0 incoming students, 6 outgoing students (mainly undergraduate students and doctoral students) and 33 foreign lecturers with the support of the *Erasmus +* programme.

See Annexes 8.1 and 8.2 for statistical data on international students and teaching staff during the reporting period, statistics on the outgoing and incoming mobility of students during the reporting period by study programmes.

5.3. In the event that the study programme entails a traineeship, provide a description of the traineeship options offered to the students, as well as the provision, and work organisation. Specify whether the higher education institution/ college provides assistance in finding traineeships.

The Bachelor's study programme provides for 2 placements of 6 CP. In the plan of the study programme, the placement is provided for in the 4th and 6th semesters of study, thus giving students the opportunity to consolidate the acquired theoretical knowledge and the knowledge of research in practice (see Annex 9 for more).

During the placement in the Bachelor's degree programme, the student acquires basic practical skills in psychological research, which are necessary for further acquisition of the competences mentioned in the standard of the profession of a psychologist in the Master's degree programme and pass the qualification examination. In the Bachelor's Programme, cooperation agreements with placement providers are at the level of the Faculty of Communication and usually each student has his/her own placement location, that can be a school and an organisation, a medical institution, crisis centres, social services, etc.

Whereas, at the university level, there are cooperation agreements with several medical institutions, on providing placement for Master's degree students, for example, with RNC "Vaivari", Hospital "Gintermuiža", etc. c. In the professional Master's study programme "Health Psychology", the placement constitutes 26 CP. The study programme is designed so that after the completion of the study programme, graduates can work as psychologists under supervision and prepare for the professional certificate examination, as well as continue their studies in doctoral studies.

In the professional Master's study programme, the placement is conducted in accordance with the placement assignments. (see the Placement Regulations) The goal of the placement is to develop all the competences defined in the professional standard of the psychologist

See Annex 9.1 "Description of the Placement Organisation (Regulations for Placement of the Bachelor's Programme and Regulations for Placement of Master's Programme)".

See Annex 9.2 "Information about Contracts and Other Statements regarding Provision of Placement to Students". (co-operation agreements)

Placements are organised as follows:

- they are included in the curriculum of the study programme and in the plan for the academic year;
- guidelines are developed for them (including placement goals, tasks, requirements for each study programme), placement agreement, placement reporting documents (placement log-book, placement assessment on behalf of the placement provider, student self-assessment of the placement);
- Heads of the study programmes establish cooperation with placement providers;
- Heads of the study programmes advise and prepare students for the placement by recommending placement locations corresponding to the study content so that they correspond to the aims of the study programme to be studied;
- where necessary, the Head of the study programme helps to find a place for the placement and agrees with the placement provider on the placement goals and tasks and other conditions for the placement
- Heads of the study programmes evaluate the placement results of each student;
- practice assessments are included in the student's academic record and in the Diploma Supplement.

5.4. In the event that joint study programmes are implemented in the study direction, provide the justification of the creation of the joint study programmes and a description and assessment of the selection of the partnering higher education institutions by

including information on the principles and the procedures for the creation and implementation of these joint study programmes. In the event that no joint study programmes are implemented in the study direction, provide a description and assessment of the plans of the higher education institution/ college for the creation of such study programmes within the study direction.

There are currently no plans to develop joint study programmes in the StD Psychology. Discussions on the development of joint study programmes at RSU are maintained, however, the complicated development of joint study programmes is taken into account, especially in relation to administrative burdens, agreement on this process at international level, where there are differences in the process of drawing up, licensing and accreditation of study programmes.

II - Description of the Study Direction (6. Implementation of the Recommendations Received During the Previous Assessment Procedures)

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

See Annex 11 “Fulfilment of the Implementation Plan of Recommendations Provided by the Previous Accreditation Experts”

Recommendations provided during the previous study direction assessment procedures have been fully implemented, the recommendations have been analysed, and they are suitable for the specifics of the study direction and the corresponding study programmes.

The impact of the recommendations introduced on the quality of studies is as follows:

- coordination of learning outcomes between the study programmes and mapping of study courses was done in the study programmes, thereby reducing the fragmentation of content, linking the goals and learning outcomes of different study courses to form a unified, mutually complementary set of knowledge, skills and competences so that upon completion of Master's studies, the student has all the necessary competences corresponding to the qualifications of the psychologist;
- examinations and evaluation criteria were diversified according to the aims of the study course and the learning outcomes to be obtained;
- student-centred approach to the implementation of the study programmes within the direction was developed and strengthened by educating the teaching staff and using students' recommendations for the improvement of the study process;
- the workload of full-time lecturers and the professional burnout risk was reduced by attracting more professional psychologists as full-time lecturers and visiting lecturers, the new doctoral students and graduates;

- in order to increase the level of student research skills in the study process, into the study course "Research in Psychology" of the Bachelor's study programme, three following courses "Research in Psychology", "Mathematical Statistics" and "Quality Research" were integrated; there was also established a student research interest group and set up a psychology laboratory for conducting research in neuropsychology;
- in order to improve student counselling skills, a special simulation room for practice was set up;
- the content of the Master's degree programme was improved by increasing the number of theoretical courses by 2 CP, and updating the course on psychological research methods (increased from 2 CP to 4 CP);
- links with employers were improved by increasing the number of placement providers and involving them in study programmes (invited to deliver lectures and conduct master-classes, and to participate in Quality Councils); several medical institutions are involved in the study process: NRC "Vaivari", hospital "Gintermuiža", etc.;
- International cooperation was improved;
- the Round Table discussion with employers on the activity of health psychologists in a medical environment was organised to facilitate the solution of placement issues; the placement organisation and documentation related to patient/client groups was improved; work has started related to placement organisation at RSU;
- in the professional master's study programme, study courses, including placement, were revised and improved. A new study course "Individual Counselling" (emphasising individual psychological research and psychological counselling) was developed in the specialisation "Counselling Psychology". Whereas, work with different patient groups was emphasized in the specialisation "Clinical and Health Psychology".

In general, it can be said that the implementation of the recommendations of the Accreditation Commission has promoted the development and improvement in all programs, created new courses and attracted new lecturers, promoted international cooperation, as well as more active involvement of students in research projects. During this time, the Psychology Laboratory has been improved, a special simulation room for practices has been created.

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

See Annex 11 "Fulfilment of the Implementation Plan of Recommendations Provided by the Previous Accreditation Experts"

Recommendations provided during the previous study direction assessment procedures have been fully implemented, the recommendations have been analysed, and they are suitable for the specifics of the study direction and the corresponding study programmes.

During the previous accreditation, following changes have taken place in the field of psychology: the doctoral programme "Psychology" was created and licensed, the professional bachelor's programme was transformed into academic bachelor's programme, changes were made on duration of implementation of the master's programme from 3 to 2 and from 2 to 1, 5 years, the

possibility to implement a bachelor's and master's programme in RSU Liepāja branch has been added (more information on the characteristics of study programmes in Section I, 1.1).

Recommendations received during the licensing procedures have been largely implemented, but some have not been implemented. For example, expert advice was to reduce the fragmentation of study courses. All study courses were additionally evaluated in depth and the possibility to combine courses and increase the obtained credit points was considered. However, considering the usefulness in point of fact, as well as taking into account the organisational structure of the programme, taking into account the approbation of such a scenario in advance, no such changes were made in the programme. During the approbation, when some courses were combined, it was later decided to redistribute these courses again so that the content of the programme is transparent and corresponding to the standard of the profession. In addition, as several years of experience have shown, if we leave the fragmentation of previous courses – we can attract higher-level specialists to teach the specified courses in the specified field. Due to the reorganisation of the Faculty of Communication, the number of staff lecturers – psychologists has not been increased yet.

APPROVED

at Rīga Stradiņš University Senate meeting

of 16 June 2020, minutes No. 2-1/6/2020

Updated as of April 2021.

Annexes

I. Information on the Higher Education Institution/ College		
List of the governing regulatory enactments and regulations of the higher education institution/ college	1_pielik_RSU_Nomativie_akti_Eng_junijs_2021.pdf	1_pielik_kopa_Nomativie_dok_junijs_2021_LV.pdf
Information on the implementation of the study direction in the branches of the higher education institution/ college (if applicable)	2_pielik_LF_resursi_papildinats_06-2021_ENG.pdf	2_pielik_LF_resursi_papildinats_06-2021_Lv.pdf
Management structure of the higher education institution/ college	3_pielik_RSU_org_chart_19112019_eng.pdf	3_pielik_RSU_strukturshema_19112019_lv.pdf
II. Description of the Study Direction - 1. Management of the Study Direction		
Plan for the development of the study direction (if applicable)	4.1_pielik_StV_Psihologija-attistibas_plans_ENG.pdf	4.1_pielik_StV_Psihologija-attistibas_plans_lv.pdf
Management structure of the study direction	4.2_pielik_StV_parvald_shema_eng.pdf	4.2_StV_parvaldibas_shema_lv.pdf
II. Description of the Study Direction - 3. Resources and Provision of the Study Direction		
Basic information on the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study direction	6.1_6.5_pielik_Docetaju_saraksts_Psihologija_ENG_22-06-2021.xlsx	6.1_6.5_pielik_Docetaju_saraksts_Psihologija_LV_21-06-2021.xlsx
Biographies of the teaching staff members (in Europass Curriculum Vitae format)	6_2_pielik_CV_EN.pdf	6_2_pielik_CV_LV.pdf
Summary of the statistical data on the incoming and outgoing mobility of the teaching staff over the reporting period	6.3_pielik_Docetaju_mobilitate_iz_jen_ENG_preciz_06-2021.pdf	6.3_pielik_Docetaju_mobilitate_iz_jen_lv_preciz_06-2021.pdf
II. Description of the Study Direction - 4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation		
List of the publications, patents, and artistic creations of the teaching staff over the reporting period	6.4_pielik_Publikacijas_Psihologija.pdf	6.4_pielik_Publikacijas_Psihologija.pdf
II. Description of the Study Direction - 5. Cooperation and Internationalisation		
List of cooperation agreements	7_pielik_Erasmus_sad_lig_ENG-Psihologija.pdf	7_pielik_Erasmus_sad_lig_lv-Psihologija.pdf
Statistical data on the teaching staff and the students from abroad	8.1_pielik_macibspeku_mobilitate_ENG_preciz_06-2021.pdf	8.2_pielik_studejoso_mobilitate_lv_preciz_06-2021.docx
Statistical data on the mobility of students (by specifying the study programmes)	8.2_pielik_studejoso_mobilitate_ENG_preciz_06-2021.pdf	8.2_pielik_studejoso_mobilitate_lv_preciz_06-2021.pdf
Description of the organisation of the traineeship of the students		
Information on the agreements and other documents confirming the traineeship of the students in companies		
II. Description of the Study Direction - 6. Implementation of the Recommendations Received During the Previous Assessment Procedures		
Overview of the implementation of the provided recommendations	4.1_pielik_StV_Psihologija-attistibas_plans_preciz_06-2021_ENG.pdf	4.1_pielik_StV_Psihologija-attistibas_plans_preciz_06-2021_lv.pdf
Description of the Study Programme - Other mandatory attachments		
Confirmation signed by the rector, director or the head of the study programme or the study direction of the higher education institution/ college which states that the official language proficiency of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the relevant study programmes of the study direction complies 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.	24-4_pielik_Aplicin_latv_valodas_StV_Psihologija_EN.pdf	Aplicinājums par studiju virziena "Psihologija" studiju programmām valsts_valoda.edoc
III. Description of the Study Programme - 1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education (table)		
Statistics on the students over the reporting period		
III. Description of the Study Programme - 2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance of the study programme with the State Education Standard		17-1_pielikums_Atbilstiba-izglitiba-standartam_ABSP_LV_preciz_06_2021.pdf
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme		
Curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)		
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules		
Description of the Study Direction - Other mandatory attachments		
Sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme.		
Description of the Study Programme - Other mandatory attachments		
Document 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		
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		
Confirmation of the higher education institution/ college that 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 according to European language levels (see the levels under www.europass.lv), if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language.		
If the study programmes in the study direction subject to the assessment are doctoral study programmes, a confirmation that at least five teaching staff members with doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field or sub-field of science, in which the study programme has intended to award a scientific degree.		

If academic study programmes are implemented within the study direction, a document confirming that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the provisions set out in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause three of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education		
Sample (or samples) of the study agreement	24.8_pielik_Ligums_standarta_LV_atjaunots_2021.pdf	
If academic study programmes for less than 250 full-time students are implemented within the study direction, the opinion of the Council for Higher Education shall be attached in compliance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.		
Description of the Study Direction - Other mandatory attachments		
Electronically signed application form for assessment of a study direction	RSU_iesniegums_AIKA_StV_Psihologija_novertesana_30-06-2021_eng.pdf	iesniegums studiju virziena "Psihologija" novērtēšanai.edoc

Other annexes

Name of document	Document
4.3_Psihologijas virziena kvalitātes padome-2021_LV.pdf	4.3_Psihologijas virziena kvalitātes padome-2021_LV.pdf
5_pielik_Stud_pasparvalde_lv.pdf	5_pielik_Stud_pasparvalde_lv.pdf
7_pielik_Erasmus_sad_lig_lv-Psihologija.pdf	7_pielik_Erasmus_sad_lig_lv-Psihologija.pdf
8.1_pielik_macibspeku_mobilitate_lv_28-04-2021.pdf	8.1_pielik_macibspeku_mobilitate_lv_28-04-2021.pdf
8.2_pielik_studejoso_mobilitate_lv_28-04-2021.pdf	8.2_pielik_studejoso_mobilitate_lv_28-04-2021.pdf
10_pielik_VID_Absolventi_2015_2016_lv.pdf	10_pielik_VID_Absolventi_2015_2016_lv.pdf
12_pielik_atsauksmes_darba_dev_lv.pdf	12_pielik_atsauksmes_darba_dev_lv.pdf
13_pielik_RSU_apbalv_market_KD_lv.pdf	13_pielik_RSU_apbalv_market_KD_lv.pdf
14_pielik_RSU_istenotie_projekti_lv_28-04-2021.pdf	14_pielik_RSU_istenotie_projekti_lv_28-04-2021.pdf
20.2_pielik_C_dala_2019_2020_lv.pdf	20.2_pielik_C_dala_2019_2020_lv.pdf
26_pielik_talmacibas_istenosana_lv.pdf	26_pielik_talmacibas_istenosana_lv.pdf
27_pielik_Senata_Izraksts par StV Psihologija_lv.pdf	27_pielik_Senata_Izraksts par StV Psihologija_lv.pdf
4.3_Psihologijas virziena kvalitātes padome-2021_ENG.pdf	4.3_Psihologijas virziena kvalitātes padome-2021_ENG.pdf
5_pielik_Studentu_pasparvalde_eng.pdf	5_pielik_Studentu_pasparvalde_eng.pdf
7_pielik_Erasmus_sad_lig_ENG-Psihologija.pdf	7_pielik_Erasmus_sad_lig_ENG-Psihologija.pdf
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8.1_pielik_macibspeku_mobilitate_ENG.pdf	8.1_pielik_macibspeku_mobilitate_ENG.pdf
8.2_pielik_studejoso_mobilitate_ENG.pdf	8.2_pielik_studejoso_mobilitate_ENG.pdf
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20.2_pielik_C_dala_ENG.pdf	20.2_pielik_C_dala_ENG.pdf
23_pielik_Atbilstiba_ESG_lv.pdf	23_pielik_Atbilstiba_ESG_lv.pdf
23_pielik_Atbilstiba_ESG_eng.pdf	23_pielik_Atbilstiba_ESG_eng.pdf
001_Psihologija_Pielikumu_uzskaitijums_lv.pdf	001_Psihologija_Pielikumu_uzskaitijums_lv.pdf
26_pielik_Talmacibas_istenosana_ENG.pdf	26_pielik_Talmacibas_istenosana_ENG.pdf
27_Senata_Izraksts par StV Psihologija_ENG.docx	27_Senata_Izraksts par StV Psihologija_ENG.docx
10_pielik_VID_Absolventi_2015_2016_ENG.pdf	10_pielik_VID_Absolventi_2015_2016_ENG.pdf
26_pielik_Talmacibas_istenosana_ENG_preciz_06-2021.pdf	26_pielik_Talmacibas_istenosana_ENG_preciz_06-2021.pdf
21.3_pielik_absolventu_aptaujas_anketas_ENG.pdf	21.3_pielik_absolventu_aptaujas_anketas_ENG.pdf
21.3_pielik_absolventu_aptaujas_anketas_LV.pdf	21.3_pielik_absolventu_aptaujas_anketas_LV.pdf
28_pielik_Internacionalizācijas īstenošana un attīstība RSU	28_pielik_Internacionalizācijas_istenosana_un_attistiba_RSU_lv.pdf
28_pielik_Internacionalizācijas īstenošana un attīstība RSU	28_pielik_Internacionalizācijas_istenosana_RSU_eng.pdf
4.1_pielik_StV_Psihologija-attistibas_plans_preciz_06-2021_lv.pdf	4.1_pielik_StV_Psihologija-attistibas_plans_preciz_06-2021_lv.pdf
4.1_pielik_StV_Psihologija-attistibas_plans_preciz_06-2021_ENG.pdf	4.1_pielik_StV_Psihologija-attistibas_plans_preciz_06-2021_ENG.pdf
24.8._pielik_Līgums_standarta_ENG_atjaunots_2021.pdf	24.8._pielik_Līgums_standarta_ENG_atjaunots_2021.pdf
24.8._pielik_Līgums_standarta_LV_atjaunots_2021.pdf	24.8._pielik_Līgums_standarta_LV_atjaunots_2021.pdf
25_pielik_RSU_Karjeras_centra_pakalpojumi_LV.pdf	25_pielik_RSU_Karjeras_centra_pakalpojumi_LV.pdf
25_pielik_RSU_Karjeras_centra_pakalpojumi_ENG.pdf	25_pielik_RSU_Karjeras_centra_pakalpojumi_ENG.pdf
001_Psihologija_Pielikumu_uzskaitijums_ENG_06-2021.pdf	001_Psihologija_Pielikumu_uzskaitijums_ENG_06-2021.pdf
001_Psihologija_Pielikumu_uzskaitijums_lv_06-2021.pdf	001_Psihologija_Pielikumu_uzskaitijums_lv_06-2021.pdf
1 Annex 18.2 LV updated - Compliance with Professional Standard	18.2_pielik_Atbilstiba_prof_standartam_LV_04-08-2021.pdf
2 Annex 18.2 ENG updated - Compliance with Professional Standard	18.2_pielik_Atbilstiba_prof_standartam_ENG_04-08-2021.pdf
3 Additional info for Annex 8 (foreign teaching staff), LV	8_pielik_papildinajums_Arzemju_viesdocetaju_saraksts_lv_16-08-2021.docx
4 Additional info for Annex 8 (foreign teaching staff), ENG	8_pielik_papildinajums_Arzemju_viesdocetaju_saraksts_ENG_16-08-2021.docx

5 Presentation - Characteristics of the Direction of Study-2021	Characteristics of the Direction of Study-2021-pv.pdf
6 Presentation RSU Library Psychology	RSU_Biblioteka_Psihologija_akredit_17-08-2021_eng.pdf
7 Presentation RSU E-studies Psychology	RSU_E-studies-Psychology_17-08-2021_MSilis_eng.pdf
8 Presentation RSU Liepaja branch	RSU_LiepFil_Akreditācija_Psych_19-08-2021_eng.pdf
9 (Latvian only) RSU Liepaja branch - election protocol	RSU_LF_Velesanu_protokols_2021.pdf
10 Contracts - mobility	Ligums_.pdf
11 Link to video: facilities for Master's programme at J. Asara street	Facilities video.txt
12 Information about Psychology Laboratory	Psychology Laboratory_JKolesnikova.pdf

Psychology (43313)

Study field	<i>Psychology</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Psychology</i>
Education classification code	<i>43313</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>Academic bachelor study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Sandra</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Mihailova</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>sandra.mihailova@rsu.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Dr. psych.</i>
Phone of the study programme director	
Goal of the study programme	<i>To create an opportunity for obtaining academic bachelor's education in psychology, emphasizing work in the healthcare environment, and to create a basis for further study of psychology in master's study programmes and for obtaining the qualification of a psychologist both in Latvia and abroad.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. To provide and develop up-to-date education in the Bachelor's programme in psychology that is of excellent quality and highly valued on the labour market corresponding to all the laws and regulations;</i> <i>2. To enable students to learn the theoretical foundations of psychology and the skills necessary for a psychologist, so that students can formulate and analytically describe information, problems and solutions in psychology, explain and discuss them in a reasoned way with both specialists and non-specialists.</i> <i>3. To provide students with a wide variety of learning forms, including participation in various psychology and interdisciplinary research programmes and conferences on a local and international scale.</i> <i>4. To enable students to master the tools developed and adapted by RSU lecturers</i> <i>5. To expand the cooperation network between employers and professional organisations in improving the quality of studies and the content of study courses</i> <i>6. To continue updating teaching methodological materials and other informative resources, by supplementing e-study materials every year;</i> <i>7. To promote the students' ability to independently structure their learning and teamwork, to obtain, select and analyse information independently and use it ethically in the professional and research work of a psychologist.</i> <i>8. To develop the students' ability of self-reflection on themselves, their life experience, work and its impact on clients, groups and society as a whole;</i> <i>9. To continue promoting the study programme by organising events for the general public in order to promote the popularity of the study programme.</i>

Results of the study programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ability to demonstrate a scientific approach to problem solving by independent conduct of scientifically correct research in psychology, in accordance with the requirements of scientific publications. 2. Ability to make decisions and solve problems in various communication situations in the work of a psychologist. 3. Ability to use the acquired theoretical knowledge of the basic branches of psychology and other sectors through psychological research and research activity. 4. Ability to evaluate the impact of their professional activity on themselves, others, the environment and society. 5. Ability to use the acquired theoretical foundations and skills for expressing and analytically describing information, problems and solutions in psychology, to explain and discuss them in a reasoned way with specialists and non-specialists. 6. Ability to demonstrate the understanding of professional ethics in the work of a psychologist. 7. Ability to advance their further learning and professional development. 8. Ability to demonstrate the basic and specialised knowledge characteristic of psychology and a critical understanding of this knowledge; in addition, part of the knowledge corresponds to the highest level of achievement in psychology. 9. Ability to demonstrate the understanding of the most important concepts and regularities of psychology. 10. Ability to independently structure their learning and teamwork. 11. Ability to obtain, select and analyse information independently and use it in the professional and research work of a psychologist.
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	Bachelor's Thesis

Study programme forms

Full time studies - 3 years - latvian

Study type and form	Full time studies
Duration in full years	3
Duration in month	0
Language	latvian
Amount (CP)	120
Admission requirements (in English)	Secondary education
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	Bachelor of Social Sciences in Psychology
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	—

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Rīga Stradiņš University	RĪGA	DZIRCIEMA IELA 16, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1007

Liepāja branch of Rīga Stradiņš University	LIEPĀJA	RIŅĶU IELA 24/26, LIEPĀJA, LV-3405
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Full time studies - 3 years - english

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	3
Duration in month	0
Language	<i>english</i>
Amount (CP)	120
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Secondary education and proof of English language knowledge</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Bachelor of Social Sciences in Psychology</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	—

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Rīga Stradiņš University	RĪGA	DZIRCIEMA IELA 16, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1007
Liepāja branch of Rīga Stradiņš University	LIEPĀJA	RIŅĶU IELA 24/26, LIEPĀJA, LV-3405

Part time studies - 3 years, 6 months - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Part time studies</i>
Duration in full years	3
Duration in month	6
Language	<i>latvian</i>
Amount (CP)	120
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Secondary education</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Bachelor of Social Sciences in Psychology</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	—

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Rīga Stradiņš University	RĪGA	DZIRCIEMA IELA 16, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1007
Liepāja branch of Rīga Stradiņš University	LIEPĀJA	RIŅĶU IELA 24/26, LIEPĀJA, LV-3405

Part time studies - 3 years, 6 months - english

Study type and form	<i>Part time studies</i>
Duration in full years	3
Duration in month	6
Language	<i>english</i>
Amount (CP)	120
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Secondary education and proof of English language knowledge</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Bachelor of Social Sciences in Psychology</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	—

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Rīga Stradiņš University	RĪGA	DZIRCIEMA IELA 16, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1007
Liepāja branch of Rīga Stradiņš University	LIEPĀJA	RIŅĶU IELA 24/26, LIEPĀJA, LV-3405

Part time extramural studies distance education - 3 years, 6 months - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Part time extramural studies distance education</i>
Duration in full years	3
Duration in month	6
Language	<i>latvian</i>
Amount (CP)	120
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Secondary education</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Bachelor of Social Sciences in Psychology</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	—

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Rīga Stradiņš University	RĪGA	DZIRCIEMA IELA 16, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1007
Liepāja branch of Rīga Stradiņš University	LIEPĀJA	RIŅĶU IELA 24/26, LIEPĀJA, LV-3405

Part time extramural studies distance education - 3 years, 6 months - english

Study type and form	<i>Part time extramural studies distance education</i>
Duration in full years	3
Duration in month	6
Language	<i>english</i>
Amount (CP)	120
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Secondary education and proof of English language knowledge</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Bachelor of Social Sciences in Psychology</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	—

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Rīga Stradiņš University	RĪGA	DZIRCIEMA IELA 16, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1007
Liepāja branch of Rīga Stradiņš University	LIEPĀJA	RIŅĶU IELA 24/26, LIEPĀJA, LV-3405

III - DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME (1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme)

1.1. Description and analysis of changes in study programme parameters that have taken place since the issue of the previous accreditation certificate of study direction or the license of study programme if study programme is not included in the accreditation page of the study direction

The study programme has been modified twice during the accreditation period:

1. QAHE SQC 23.07.2018 – Decision No. 85-A – additional implementation place added (Liepāja Branch);
2. QAHE SQC 06.09.2019 – Decision No. 2019/15-1 – programme has been changed from professional to academic in accordance with the entry into force of the Law on Psychologists.

In addition, it has also been decided to extend the implementation of the programme to part-time and distance learning studies.

No.	Parameter	Analysis of changes
1.	Study direction	—
2.	Title of the study programme	—
3.	Code according to the Latvian Education Classification	43 313 The code of the study programmes has been updated 06.09.2019.
4.	Head of the study programme	—
5.	Academic / scientific degree of the head of the study programme	—
6.	Aim of the study programme	The aim has been specified in the context of the change of the study programme from professional to academic.
7.	Objectives of the study programme	The objectives have been specified in the context of the change of the study programme from professional to academic.

No.	Parameter	Analysis of changes
8.	Learning outcomes to be achieved	Annex 18.1. provides the information regarding the analysis of the results of studies performed during the mapping process. The results of the studies are specified according to the aim, objectives and LQF/EQF. Thus, the competences, knowledge and skills contribute achieving the results defined by the studies in a logical way.
9.	Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	Bachelor's Thesis. Previously in the professional programme – Bachelor's Thesis and qualification exam.
10.	Type and form of studies	During the course of the accreditation, the possibility of part-time and distance learning has been added in order to extend future learning opportunities.
11.	Duration of implementation	The duration of implementation has been reduced from 4 years to 3 years through the transition from professional bachelor's programme to academic programme in 2019.
12.	Language of implementation	—
13.	Amount of the study programme (CP)	SP amount has been reduced from 160 CP to 120 CP due to the changes described in parameter 11.
14.	Admission requirements	—
15.	Degree to be awarded	Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology)
16.	Qualification to be awarded	Since the transformation of the programme into an academic programme, no longer has been awarded.

No.	Parameter	Analysis of changes
17.	Name of the implementation place	Rīga, Liepāja. For the additional implementation place in Riga, 23.07.2018 there has been added another implementation place – RSU Liepāja Branch and the programme is being implemented.

During the accreditation, the possibility to implement the study programme also in part-time and distance learning is added. This question has been raised since more and more people are interested in the possibility to study psychology at RSU within part-time studies, as well as there are people from other countries interested in distance learning possibilities. Thanks to more than a year of studies which took place in distance learning due to the Covid pandemic, for almost all study courses materials have been prepared (such as video lectures, as well as various additional materials for independent studies, programme lecturers have acquired both skills and developed appropriate materials in RSU e-studies) so that study process can also be organised in part-time and by distance learning. The implementation of the programme in English was suggested by a specialist in higher education from Germany, since Germany cannot provide psychology education to all interested parties in Germany on the spot and therefore opportunities are being sought outside the country. The expert chose RSU as a potential place to train German students in psychology. RSU has extensive, long-term experience in working with foreign students, especially from Germany (about 45% of foreign students at RSU come from Germany), see Annex 28 "Implementation and development of internationalisation at RSU". When developing the 3-year programme, it was designed to match the curriculum and to develop the knowledge, skills and competences that German students need so that they can continue their studies for a master's degree in Germany or elsewhere in Europe without any problems.

1.2. Analysis and assessment of the statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down in the different study forms, types, and languages.

The Bachelor's study programme "Psychology" is being implemented in full-time studies.

In the future, the programme is also intended to be offered in part-time and distance learning.

Table 2: Study programme "Psychology" – number of applicants and students

Year	Applications received	State-funded study places	Places with tuition fee (in one group)	Competition on 1 study place (state-funded/place with tuition fee)	Number of admitted students (including students in Liepāja branch)	Number of graduates	Number of excluded
2015/16		1	25				

2016/17		1	25		31	17	16
2017/18		1	25		26	14	7
2018/19		1	25		44 (6)	8	21
2019/20	358	1	25		65 (5)	8	18
2020/21	547	1	25		136 (127)	38	15

The statistics on the number of students show that the number of applications received and the number of students admitted increases each year, despite the fact that the number of state-funded places does not change, while the number of graduates decreases by June 2019 and then increases again. The reasons for the increase in student numbers can be mentioned as followings: RSU rating, parental and friends' recommendations, as well as recommendations from graduates.

The admission of students takes place in accordance with the Admission Regulations approved by the RSU Senate for the academic year concerned and the external laws and regulations. The number of admitted students increased each year, by 44 admitted students in 2018/2019 (including 6 students in Liepāja branch), while already in 2019/2020 by 65 admitted students (including 6 students in Liepāja branch) and, for the first time in the history of the programme, there were even 2 groups of students created, showing an increase in the popularity of the programme. This trend also continued in 2020/2021, when 136 students were admitted (including 27 in Liepāja branch), divided into 5 groups, one of which in Liepāja. Officially, 25 study places for tuition fee are announced every year, although in recent years the number of students actually admitted is much higher (see Table 1). It should be noted, that 1 budget place is financed from RSU and the Faculty of Communication (hereinafter FC) funds every year. Due to the large influx of students in 2020, 3 RSU funded study places are allocated since 2021 by the decision of the August sitting of the FC Council. There have never been any state-funded places for the programme.

Table 3. Number of excluded students (by academic years and by study years), indicating the reason of exclusion

		On one's own will	Failure	Non-attendance	Not resuming after academic leave	Not paying tuition fee	Not paying tuition fee and failure	Full theoretical course acquired (as listener)	Non-assignment of Bachelor's Thesis within the specified time
2016./17. ac. y.	1. year	6	2	2	2	1	1		
	2. year	2	3						
	3. year	1	2			1			
	4. year							1	

2017./18. ac. y.	1. year	2	1						
	2. year	1	1			1			
	3. year		2						
	4. year								
2018./19. ac. y.	1. year	7	1	1	2				
	2. year	3	2		2	1			
	3. year	1	2	2			1	1	
	4. year		3	1					1
2019./20. ac. y.	1. year	3	1	2		1	1		
	2. year	2	3		1				
	3. year		4	1		1			
	4. year		1						

Reference: The following table provides information on the exclusion, regardless of whether the student has resumed his or her studies after exclusion or not, and of his or her current status. If the student has been excluded several times, all his exclusions are included.

Each year there is also a drop-out of students, for example, 21 students withdrew, counting all 4 study years in 2018/2019. Main withdrawal reasons: difficulty in combining studies with work and giving priority to work; family conditions, birth of child and parental leave, failure and non-attendance etc. (see the table above). Thus, the greatest number of excluded students is seen during the first study year and on one's own will. The reason may be an unconscious decision or understanding that the profession to be acquired is not appropriate, etc. Some students have acknowledged that they wanted to study psychology to better understand themselves and afterwards to understand more precise what they really want to learn or do in life in the future. During the first year, students usually understand what they want to learn and continue to study in the programme they really want to.

The survey shows that the majority of students combine studies (starting from the first year) with work, and often the combination of studies and work presents challenges that lead to academic failures. As a result, there is usually such a large number of student failures that students need to be excluded. However, it is noted that students excluded due to student failures choose to come back, to pass the failures and to continue studies on an individual plan. In the last three years, it has also been noted that students who stopped the studies even more than five years ago, have resumed studying.

In Annex 16, statistical data on students during the reference period.

1.3. Analysis and assessment of the interrelation between the name of the study programme, the degree or professional qualification to be acquired or the degree and professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements.

The name, degree to be acquired of the Academic Bachelor's study programme "Psychology" – Bachelor of social sciences in psychology – are interrelated and meet the admission requirements, aims and objectives, as well as learning outcomes of the programme. The programme provides bachelor education in psychology, which opens up opportunities for studies in the professional Master's study programme in psychology and provides with basic skills to obtain a psychologist's qualification in Master studies.

Requirements for starting studies – secondary education and knowledge of Latvian and a foreign language, – on the one hand, are general and do not create artificial barriers for those wishing to start studies, but, on the other hand, are justified for the student to be able to study and obtain the study material also in a foreign language. Proof of English language proficiency is required for studies in English in accordance with national laws and regulations. More information in Annex 1.5.

The compliance of content of the study programme, the interrelation between the degree and the aims, objectives, learning outcomes is confirmed by mapping of study courses, namely, it is known precisely, which study courses foster the achievement of the defined learning outcomes and therefore the implementation of aims and objectives of the entire programme. The mapping results show that the study courses of the programme provide an opportunity to achieve all the outcomes of the study programme (each study course is linked to each learning outcome, mastering of which ensures the achievement of the learning outcome); all the study courses included are justified and meet the specifics of the RSU psychology programme and all the requirements for an academic programme. Each of the study courses is linked to some outcomes of the study programme; the sequence of courses corresponds to the sequence in which they should be mastered: from simple basic courses in the first years to more complex – in the last years. Formulations of the study course outcomes correspond to the outcomes of the study programme and are aligned with programmes of next levels (i.e. Master and doctoral studies). Thus, it can be considered that the study programme has been created in a structured and consistent way to enable students to master the study course materials in a logical sequence, achieve aims and objectives, and defined learning outcomes of the programme, as well as obtain basic skills in assessment and counselling. Therefore, the Bachelor's programme together with the Master programme is mapped in such way that when Master studies are completed, the graduate has all the skills described in the psychologist's profession standard.

Overall, it can be said that the aim and objectives, as well as learning outcomes of the Bachelor's study programme "Psychology" correspond to EQF/LQF 6 and the regulatory framework (Law on Psychologists (*entered into force on 01.10.2018*), Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No.301 "Regulations on Psychologists" (*entered into force on 01.06.2018*)).

III - DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME (2. The Content of

Studies and Implementation Thereof)

2.1. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study course/ module and the compliance with the needs of the relevant industry and labour market and with the trends in science. Provide information on how and whether the content of the study course/ module is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science. In case of master's and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation.

The Psychology Bachelor's programme (120 CP) includes courses, which enable students to master basic settings, principles, structure and methodology of psychology of 26 CP. Students learn mandatory study courses: the history of development and current issues of the psychology science and its sub-fields of 22 CP, characteristics of the field of science or sub-field of science and the problems in a cross-sectoral context of 16 CP, general courses of a Bachelor's study programme of 14 CP and professional activity courses of 16 CP, as well as 20 CP of restricted elective courses and 4 CP of free elective courses. During the entire programme students have two placements of 6 CP, during which students get some idea about the psychologist's work in psychological assessment and research, which help them to make a decision to continue studies in the professional psychology programme and to become psychologists or not to continue on this path and specialise in other area in Master studies.

Overall, study courses and their content comply with the needs of the relevant industry and labour market and with science trends. This can be achieved by annual revision of the content of the study programme, the content of study courses, which is fostered by the RSU quality mechanism, feedback from university lecturers, students and placement mentors.

Study courses include the objectives aimed at studying latest scientific development trends and practical application of this knowledge in assessment work. For example, based on the demand of the labour market, the study courses "Intercultural Psychology", "Military Psychology", etc. were included in the study programme. Since several employers indicated the inability of student to talk to customers in Russian as a problem – the course "Russian Language" was introduced in the study programme.

The best link between the content of studies and labour market needs may be ensured by professional and knowledgeable university lecturers. All the lecturers of the study programme also practically work in the respective sector, allowing the content of the programme and study courses to be consistent with the real work situation. Almost all the psychology lecturers working in the programme are certified psychologists and supervisors in different areas of activity: for example, clinical and health psychology (Jeļena Koļešņikova – supervisor, Aelita Vagale – supervisor), school and educational psychology (Zane Gulbe, Ieva Gaile – supervisor, Inga Safina), counselling psychology (Kristīne Mārtinsone – supervisor, Jeļena Ļubenko), organisational psychology (Ervīns Čukurs). The lecturers have summarised their experience and knowledge in several collective monographs.

University lecturers are well-known and appreciated in the community of the relevant sectors, as well they are recognised professionals and experts in the academic environment, for example, Professor Kristīne Mārtinsone is the author and scientific editor of many psychology books, Lecturer

Viktorija Perepjolkina is the author of several psychology tests and together with Jeļena Koļesņikova leads a training in mastering the Clinical Personality Test for professionals. Meanwhile, the head of the study programme Sandra Mihailova is an LCS expert in psychology, co-author of several psychology books, certified psychologist in three areas: clinical and health psychology, counselling psychology and school and educational psychology, as well as supervises the law in two areas: clinical and health psychology, counselling psychology.

2.2. Assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators, the relation between the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. In case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels.

The head of the study programme discusses with the lecturer of the respective study course its content, aims and learning outcomes in accordance with the mapping of outcomes. The study course content is updated, when needed, to achieve the preferred result. The study course description clearly states its aim and outcomes (knowledge, skills, competences) to be achieved. Taking into account that lecturers of the study programme are experienced professionals, different forms of study content are implemented – not only lectures, but also interactive seminars, case and role plays, visiting lectures; visiting lectures with foreign lecturers are usually organised together with Master students of psychology, off-site classes, for example, students of the “Health Care and Rehabilitation” course visited the Vaivari Rehabilitation Centre and the Gaīlezers Clinic, students of the “Introduction to Legal Psychology” course visited Šķīrotava Prison, within the “Pathopsychology” course students attended a special boarding school, within the “Psychiatry” course students attended patients at the Psychoneurological Clinic, within the “Military Psychology” course students attended NAF military facilities, diagnostic centre, etc.

After the implementation of the study course feedback is received from students (surveys and personal meetings) and from the university lecturer (personal talks with the lecturer after every semester).

The assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme is clearly demonstrated by mapping of study courses, which has been performed in the last two years.

2.3. Assessment of the study implementation methods (including the evaluation methods) by providing the analysis of how the study implementation methods (including the evaluation methods) used in the study courses/ modules are selected, what they are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.

Until now, the study programme has been implemented only as full-time studies and in Latvian. In

the future, a possibility is considered to extend the study programme implementation options and to attract also part-time and international students. The planning of part-time studies is appended in the planning in Annex 19. The differences in the planning for international students would be only that the offer of the study course “English for Psychology” would be replaced with the course “Latvian Language Course for Foreign Students” in Part A.

Study process is implemented mostly as interactive lectures, practical interactive classes or seminars and independent work of students. All the advanced technologies available at RSU are used during lectures and classes.

During their studies at RSU, students can ask questions they are interested in, discuss them with the lecturer and fellow students. Problem-centred teaching strategies are used for studies. All additional study materials are freely available to the students in the e-studies environment. It also provides references to additional information sources for studying the specific issues, as well as materials for self-guided learning (for example, practical assignments that can be done at home).

Both formative and summative assessment is used in the studies. Formative evaluation takes place during everyday study process: by asking control questions to the students during the contact lessons, as well as by discussing the independent works of students that are practised during the study process. Summative evaluation takes place at the conclusion of each study course as a test or examination. Summative evaluation tests are organised in a written form (in paper format or electronically) or as oral discussions. At the conclusion of studies, the students select a topic they are interested in and write and defend a Bachelor's thesis in cooperation with the selected supervisor.

With the development of part-time studies and distance learning, it is expected that there will be fewer contact hours than for the full-time studies. The proportion of independent work will increase accordingly. And more emphasis will be placed on information in the e-learning environment. Students' independent works will be focused more on the independent acquisition of the subject. In turn, in distance learning, students will acquire the programme independently, getting acquainted with videos of the lectures and study materials put in the e-studies themselves. Currently, the implementation of distance learning is planned in a sequential way, however, further adjustments are possible. It is expected that when the student is acquainted with the materials of one lecture / lesson, he / she passes the test and then gets access to the materials of the next lecture / lesson. Once the student has mastered all the materials of the particular course and completed the assigned tasks, which are credited by the lecturer, he is admitted to the exam and this exam becomes available on the e-studies platform. After successful completion of the test, student obtains credit points for the completed course and can start to take another course. Thus, a distance learning student acquires a course after a course on his / her own speed and defends his / her bachelor's thesis at the end. Also, all students have the opportunity to have consultations online, for full-time students also in person with any lecturer of the programme.

As already mentioned, at the end of each study course, students are asked to complete the evaluation survey in RSU e-environment, wherein they can express their opinion and provide proposals both regarding the content of the study course and the methods of implementation thereof, as well as competences and work style of the lecturers. Therefore, study courses are updated each year in accordance with the evaluation given by the students. Student representatives are also involved in quality councils ensuring representation of their opinion in decision-making.

In general, RSU practises student-centred education, providing that:

- an independently learning student is at the centre of the study process;

- learning outcomes are clearly formulated and known, and the student studies to achieve them;
- students know and understand the intended learning outcomes of the study programme or course;
- evaluation of the student's achievements is formed in a way that it is possible to check whether and at what level the planned learning outcomes have been achieved;
- the lecturer's task is to facilitate the study process of the student so that the student achieves the set learning outcomes;
- it can be observed that the aggregate of outcomes of separate study courses forms the learning outcomes of the study programme.

Learning outcomes of the study programme are formulated in a student-centred way and the outcomes:

- establish a unified understanding of students and teaching staff regarding of what is expected from the student at the end of the course or the programme;
- provide the students with an opportunity to study more effectively, i.e., students clearly know what knowledge and skills they will obtain if they successfully complete the respective course. The students can also track what they have already learned and what they still need to learn, and what is their progress towards achieving the outcomes of the programme;
- present a tool for the teaching staff to be able to organise the study process more effectively: lectures, seminars, group work, discussions, laboratory work, etc., selecting topics and materials, as well as teaching strategies in accordance with the learning outcomes set for the study course or study programme;
- create a mutual understanding between the teaching staff and colleagues regarding for achievement of which learning outcome the course is studied, and the respective learning method is selected;
- identify the areas where certain types of learning outcomes overlap or lack (by comparing courses and compliance thereof with the programme);
- aid the students in selecting, which courses to study in accordance with the learning outcomes the student wishes to achieve;
- provide clear information for employers on the knowledge and skills the students have acquired, as well as provide an opportunity to assess this knowledge and skills in accordance with the defined professional qualification.

The study implementation and evaluation methods applied contribute to the achievement of the study course results and the aim set for the study programme.

Study process and study course descriptions are in line with Article 1(8) of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (1 CP corresponds to 40 academic hours of work). Paragraph 9 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 240 "Regulations on the National Standard of Academic Education" provides that contact hours make up no less than 40% of a Bachelor's study programme in full-time studies (except for the amount intended for placement and writing of the Bachelor's thesis). **In planning of the study programme "Psychology", the amount of contact hours makes 44 % of the study programme (see the mapping).** In addition to contact hours in the form of lectures and seminars, in order to implement the aims, objectives of the study programme and the planned innovative solution for creation of skills, knowledge and competences, solutions for their transfer and co-working, several formats of contact hours are implemented in each study course, including individual consultations, visiting lectures, participation in RSU Research Week and the annual RSU international scientific conference for students and other wider public scientific and research events – conferences, seminars, discussions. Participation of students in the RSU Research Week includes plenary sessions of the research week and attendance of parallel sessions, as well as

increasingly more frequent preparation of a publication and presentation to speak at the conference. After attendance of sessions, students contemplate on the obtained knowledge in home assignments and independent work, reflecting the latest scientific and practical developments in trends of the psychology industry. The students, who participate in the conference with a report, receive specific advisory support from lecturers in the preparation of an abstract, article and presentation for the conference.

Every year, students also participate in the three-day international scientific and practical conference “Health and Personality” organised by lecturers of the psychology direction, where they present their research results.

In order to promote students’ participation in the annual RSU scientific conference for students, the RSU international scientific and practical conference “Health and Personality”, as well as the RSU Research Week, students receive special conference-related tasks in individual study courses (e.g. “Research in Psychology in Practice” etc.). For participation with a presentation of her Bachelor’s thesis research at the international conference, students’ final mark in the “Research in Psychology in Practice” is improved.

If necessary, student of each year can receive individual consultations from the course lecturer and the head of the programme, which promote individual approach with regard to each student and with regard to profound understanding of the course being learned and its wider context (for example, link to other fields of social sciences, specifics in different professional areas, etc.) and solutions to resolve them.

The amount of contact hours of **individual consultations** depends on the diversity and level of complexity of topics of the respective study course. During them, lecturers of the study course discuss with the student in detail aspects of the topic covered in the study course, the content and methods of fulfilment of independent work – individual studies, reading, creative works, home assignments and other elements of independent studies. In this way, lecturers ensure more active involvement and higher motivation of students to participate in the assessment of different topical problems of psychology and in a solution search discussion. Individual consultations are organised based on individual agreement. They take place face-to-face, by phone and e-mail, contacting about different matters related to the course content and individual studies.

Similarly, in each year of studies, in addition to lectures and seminars, there are visiting lectures and placements in different workplaces of psychologists, when certified psychologists help students master assessment skills in accordance with the specific customer’s order. All placements are supervised by RSU and at the end are defended in front of a special placement defence commission composed of 3 people.

For more detailed planned distribution of contact hours see the tables below.

Total amount of contact hours

Semester	Credit points				CH per CP A	CH per CP B	CH per CP total
	A	B	C	Total			
1.	20	0	0	20	48%		48%

2.	20	0	0	20	45%		45%
3.	16	2	2	20	42%	55%	43%
4.	18	2	0	20	40%	55%	42%
5.	6	12	2	20	30%	41%	40%
6.	16	4	0	20	45%	43%	45%
Total:				120			

Additional contact hours

Learning activities	Semester	Contact hours
Individual consultations	1	20.00
Individual consultations	2	20.00
Individual consultations	3	16.00
Individual consultations	4	18.00
Individual consultations	5	2.00
Individual consultations	6	10.00

2.4. If the study programme entails a traineeship, provide the analysis and assessment of the relation between the tasks of the traineeship included in the study programme and the learning outcomes of the study programme. Specify how the higher education institution/ college supports the students within the study programme regarding the fulfilment of the tasks set for students during the traineeship.

Although the study programme is an academic Bachelor's study programme, there is assessment placement on the 2nd year of studies and a research placement on the 3rd year of studies to ensure the link between knowledge and skills of students and real job.

In the 4th semester students are expected to have a 16-week internship "Psychological Assessment in Placement", where students guided by professional psychologists carry out a cognitive and a personality assessment of a specific customer (16 weeks in total in the 2nd year of studies), which is supervised every week by an RSU lecturer responsible for the course. "Placement Regulations" (see Annex 9.1) have been drafted, which clearly define the aim, deadlines for papers, tasks of placement supervisor at RSU and mentors. This material is available to the students in e-studies environment before the beginning of the placement. Placement supervisors from RSU meet students of the respective year on a regular basis, every week in supervisions, when specific placement cases are discussed and the results obtained are reviewed.

Each placement has its tasks, and students describe the fulfilment of them in the placement report. The tasks included in placement are directly related to the study material previously learned by the student, i.e. the tasks of the placement in the 4th semester “Basics of Psychological Assessment” are related to the material learned in the 3rd semester in the course “Psychological Assessment in Placement”, while placement “Research in Psychology in Practice” complements the material of courses “Research in Psychology” and “Course Paper” thus improving skills of students in research and helping them to develop quality bachelor theses. In this course, students learn to practically apply different research methods, create different research designs, prepare presentations for conferences of various scales and write scientific texts. During the weekly meetings, students talk about their difficulties in creating a bachelor's thesis and together with the lecturer look for the best solution. The lecturer becomes a supervisor during the development of the bachelor's thesis and provides all students with equal opportunities to solve their problems and continue to develop their bachelor's thesis within this course. The implementation of placements for distance learning students is planned similarly, yet consultations for the student with the lecturer will take place in the e-environment and individually as needed. Student will initially take those courses that are mandatory before taking the placement (see before) and then will be admitted to the placement. Student will get acquainted with the placement tasks in e-studies and will implement them independently, if necessary, receiving support from the respective lecturer. After completing placement tasks, student writes a placement report and submits it to the e-learning environment. The student will be able to defend the placement online. After successful defence, student is awarded credit points corresponding to the respective placement. International students will acquire material about research methods in English and the placement will also be available only to English-speaking clients. The supervision of the placement, as for the Latvian-speaking students, will be ensured by the respective lecturer.

Sometimes employers offer themselves placement opportunities for psychology students, and such offers are sent to students.

Readiness of students for the labour market requirements is confirmed by the fact that placement places offer a psychologist's job to the most knowledgeable and motivated students after they get a Master's degree and a psychologist's qualification.

2.5. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the evaluations of the final theses.

Thematic directions of final theses of students are defined in accordance with development of the industry and market, and topics and specialisation directions of lecturers and professors of the department, as well as projects currently implemented by the department. However, since students choose topics independently and formulate them together with scientific supervisors of the study programme and the paper, final theses may also be on innovative topics differing from the above-mentioned ones. There has been made a presentation for a scientific conference on students' final papers (Šneidere K, Mārtinsone K, Ļevina “Analysis of graduation papers defended by students of the RSU psychology direction (2007-2017)”). Students with their Bachelor's theses were involved in national research programmes and made their contribution to the projects “Biomedicine-LV” and “Ekosoc-LV”, and “EUCLID”, “COVID-IMPACT”. They have also participated in the development of two tools “Latvian Clinical Personality Test” and “Individual Anatomy Survey”, participated in intercultural research (Research of the system of meanings in cooperation with a professor from

Israel).

Overall, thematic directions of Bachelor's theses can be divided into the following large blocks:

- approbations of tests (in the emotional and personality spheres, health behaviour and lifestyle, cognitive processes);
- correlation studies (e.g. the relationship between personality traits with satisfaction with life);
- secondary and tertiary data studies;
- studies in individual groups of respondents (e.g. prisoners, young mothers, seniors, students).

Students receive an assessment for their final thesis by successfully defending it – presenting and answering questions of the commission. It should be noted that papers of many students in the period being covered were assessed as excellent and have been a valuable contribution to the development of Latvian psychological science in Latvia, as well as are included in the base of research results of the department increasing the expertise of RSU FC. Since the management and lecturers of the study programme – supervisors of Bachelor's theses work specifically to guarantee the motivation of students and the quality of Bachelor's theses, the overall quality of the Bachelor's theses is good, as evidenced by the annual feedback from the Head of the Bachelor's Commission.

For several years, there has been a scientific hobby group of students, whose main aim is to provide students with the opportunity to develop their research competence, develop their skills to carry out an independent study in line with the basic scientific principles and present its results, to discuss the results of research by developing critical and productive thinking. In this hobby group, students working on one topic, join in teams and share their experiences, lessons learned, thereby gaining a wider view of their field of research. The hobby group is led by a Master student and is mentored by an in-house lecturer (e.g. J. Ļevina, K. Mārtinsone).

In recent years, more than two-thirds of the papers have been assessed as with distinction, excellent and good, none of the papers was assessed by the Commission as unsatisfactory. This has been achieved through motivational and preparatory measures, including, in particular, the study course "Bachelor's Thesis" intended the preparation of the graduation paper, the concept development and development of the research design. The concept of Bachelor's thesis is evaluated by a commission of 3 people, then, the student works on his/her Bachelor's thesis in the course "Research in Psychology" and "Research Data Processing", then, when the results have already been collected – the student presents his or her performance in a pre-defence of the Bachelor's thesis, where the quality of work is evaluated very carefully advising not to submit the paper if its quality is not high enough. It should be noted that the majority of students who do not submit their paper based on the recommendation of the commission develop it more qualitatively and defend it in one of the following years.

Each year, graduates of the Bachelor's programme participate in the "Competition of Young Scientists" organised within Psychology Days, when they need to create a three-minute video that reflects the research methodology and key results. For example, B. E. Markāne and L. Regzdiņa participated in the competition in 2019. (for more information see <https://www.rsu.lv/zinatniski-petnieciska-darbiba-psihologija> (only in latvian)).

As of 2017, a separate section in the field "psychology" has been created at the RSU students' international conference and, in cooperation with Rezekne Academy of Technologies, a separate collection of articles in the field "psychology" was created in which students can obtain internationally quotable publications for their studies.

Table on compliance of the study programme with the State Education Standard in Annex 17.1.

Mapping of the study courses for the achievement of learning outcomes of the study programme in Annex 18.1.

Planning of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme) in Annex 19.

Descriptions of the study courses of the study programme in Annex 20.

2.6. Analysis and assessment of the outcomes of the surveys conducted among the students, graduates, and employers, and the use of these outcomes for the improvement of the content and quality of studies by providing the respective examples.

Surveys of students (surveys on the RSU portal) take place after the end of each study course, whereof students are reminded in group e-mails, and upon graduation of the study programme. The head of the programme uses these results when planning the next study semester and year, and also in work with lecturers and for the development of the programme. In addition, feedback from students is obtained in regular meetings between the head of the study programme and students (at least twice per semester). The results obtained are discussed in the quality council of the psychology direction and at the meeting of lecturers, which is organised after each semester for the lecturers, who taught in the respective semester.

Surveys on study courses include the following main questions: obtained knowledge and skills, conditions of learning the study course, cooperation with the university lecturer, progress of study courses. Students are generally satisfied with the range of lectures, their content, cooperation with lecturers and the study environment of the higher education institution.

Some quotes from evaluation questionnaires for students:

- *Both theoretical knowledge and many practical examples were received during the course and contributed to a better perception and understanding of theoretical material. This knowledge will certainly be useful in professional work.*
- *Of course! One of the most important and useful courses because the practical tasks made me realise that I can do more! And I felt a lot of support from my course mates.*
- *A course, expanding the perspective where a new complementary dimension is added to what has already been learned in psychology. After learning the course, I began to look more broadly at the ongoing processes and professional tasks, including cross-cultural aspects, questions, vision.*
- *I liked the course and the teacher. The course was also more organised as a discussion rather than a dry theory, so it was interesting and the substance was much better understood and memorised.*

Students specify as strengths of the study programme the quality of lecturers, that they are knowledgeable, patient and forthcoming, are able to interact with both all students of the year and each student individually; that there are many practical courses, good link between theory and practice.

Students' recommendations change every year because the previous ones are no longer up to date as they have already been put in place. For example, in academic year 2018/2019, students indicated in the survey that the first aid part of the course "Civil and Environmental Protection" duplicates the "First Aid" course. This recommendation was taken into account and addressed in

the planning of academic year 2019/2020 by introducing the course “Civil and Environmental Protection, First Aid” course. They also pointed out that the course “Health Care and Rehabilitation” course duplicated other courses, so the course was removed from the Bachelor’s programme and integrated into the Master’s programme.

For several years, a special survey was provided in parallel to the RSU’s general survey, which showed what students were unhappy with and what they proposed to change. Student recommendations have changed course positions in the programme (e.g. students of the 3rd year objected that they had too many placements in the 6th semester, therefore the personality assessment placement was moved to the 5th semester), lecturers were changed in the programme (e.g., the history of psychology was taught by Jeļena Ļevina, but based on student survey results this course is now read by Jekaterina Bierre, in the sociology course Viola Korpa was replaced by Ritma Rungule), some study courses were transformed (initially there were courses “Anatomy” and “Physiology”, but now there is a course “Biomedical Aspects of Human Functioning”), as well as integrated in the Master’s programme (e.g. the study course “Health Care and Rehabilitation”).

Student surveys are reviewed at the end of each semester and based on them, as well as on employers’ recommendations, plans for the next academic year are drawn up and visiting lecturers are selected, as well as study courses are distributed among in-house lecturers.

Surveys for graduates contain questions about satisfaction with the choice of the study programme and the higher education institution, the study process, the evaluation of obtained knowledge, skills and competences.

For example, 8 students graduated the study programme in 2019, and all of them filled the questionnaire. In total, graduates evaluated the study programme and the higher education institution positively, recognising that study programmes of the psychology direction have a good reputation and they are appreciated in the industry. Students are generally satisfied with the obtained knowledge and skills, personal growth and prospects in their profession, however, they are sad that this will no longer be professional Bachelor education, because they believe that placements were the most valuable element. Graduates also indicated that no other courses are necessary when they write their Bachelor’s thesis, but this is not really possible, because the Bachelor’s thesis is only 10 CP, but the course should contain 20 CP. Graduates were also dissatisfied with great variability of places within one day. This recommendation was taken into account and the planning for the next year was created in such way that students, to the extent possible, did not have to go from one RSU building to another more than once.

Reproaches of some graduates in the questionnaire are not always justified: e.g. that there is not enough information for developing a course paper and a Bachelor’s thesis, although special methodological material describing everything in detail was created for students.

Graduates were mainly satisfied with the level of teaching in the programme, the material and technical provision at RSU, the premises at Dzirciema iela and Anniņmuiža, however, graduates of previous years were dissatisfied with premises in the 1st hospital and J. Asara iela 5 before renovation. In recent years, psychology students no longer have classes in the 1st hospital, while there are several newly renovated premises at J. Asara iela, which are intended exactly for lecturers and students of the psychology direction.

Several graduates of academic year 2018/2019 were dissatisfied with the study course “Business”, therefore in academic year 2019/2020 this course was taught by other lecturer (business consultant Sandra Pallo), whom students liked very much.

The proposed elective courses were reviewed based on graduates’ recommendations and new

elective courses “Introduction into Religion Psychology”, “Introduction into Military Psychology” were offered in academic year 2019/2020.

All the graduates indicated that assessment in the study programme was mainly objective and fair, that programme placements ensured the achievement of outcomes.

Recommendations of students are evaluated on a regular basis and special attention in the improvement of the quality of the study process is devoted to *ensuring feedback*:

- meetings with the head of the programme are systematically organised to discuss the needs of the students during the study process;
- students are personally informed about changes to study courses based on the results of student survey;
- within each course lecturers provide feedback on anonymously received student evaluations in the e-studies, which includes a short summary of positive and negative evaluations of the course, as well as planned improvements;
- the students participate in the evaluation of the study process and its results within the Study Quality Council (students of the 3rd and 4th year) and provide their recommendations to improve the study programme.

Employers are actively involved in the consulting on the study process of the programme, including planning, implementation and evaluation (Study Quality Council, the State Qualification Examination, lectures/classes). The employers’ survey on the relevance of knowledge, competences and skills of the results of the study programme to the needs of the labour market is carried out annually using special questionnaires when students have placement. Employers’ surveys show that students of the programme:

- 1) demonstrate a general understanding of the methods of psychological assistance.
- 2) assessment (evaluation) methods (interview, tests, etc.) are correctly selected according to the needs of the customer and the current situation; they are able to perform psychological assessment of an individual, a group and an organisation.
- 3) are able to perform psychological counselling for support and to use other psychological help techniques, are able to evaluate the effectiveness of its help and to provide feedback to the customer
- 4) are able to document their professional activity, as well as are aware of and respect the ethics of professional activity.
- 5) are able to critically analyse their professional activities (skills, abilities, knowledge, competences), contemplate on their limitations and resources.

Employers’ recommendations were: learning to take care of oneself, finding own emotional hygiene style to avoid burning out; teaching students empathetic understanding and cooperation with different types of colleagues; teaching methods for dealing with behavioural problems and cooperating with parents; having self-treatment; learning to explain own competence to another professional and cooperate with other specialists.

Employers’ recommendations were taken into account and adjustments were made to the following study courses: stress management, pedagogical psychology, psychological counselling. A new course “Psychoprophylaxis” with elements of mindfulness practice is planned in the future. Students of the first year are also recommended to attend individual or group psychotherapy, and many students use this opportunity by attending specialists of the RSU Clinic of Psychosomatic Medicine and Psychotherapy and other certified psychotherapists.

The study programme management is always searching for ways of involving professionals in the course teaching work – in recent years visiting lecturers Inga Safina, Indulis Paičs, Renāte Cāne, Ieva Gaile, Kristis Lazdiņš, etc., who are well-known professionals in their areas have been reading lectures within the scope of their competence. Former graduates of the programme return to the study programme as lecturers (Zane Gulbe, Kristis Lazdiņš, earlier also Anete Hofmane and Jānis Ķīrsis) and as placement mentors (Līva Spīgane, Laura Liberte, Zane Gulbe, etc.) to share their professional knowledge and skills to new student. The programme management searches solutions for this challenge on a regular basis, because we are facing the same problems as Latvian higher education in general – the remuneration proposed to professionals by the university is often not attractive, because 4-5 times higher remuneration can be received for individual counselling than for a prepared and read lecture or class.

Having received employers' and students' survey results, the head of the study programme analyses survey results and cooperates with lecturers for the improvement of methodological teaching work. At the meeting of lecturers, which is held after an academic year, the results of employers' survey are assessed. Based on the survey results every year lecturers make required changes to study course descriptions, as well as assessment criteria, taking into account the feedback provided in surveys and recommendations from students regarding the content of the study course, planning of lectures and classes and other matters.

Survey results (incl. mapping results) are evaluated in the Study Quality Council and possible changes to improve the quality of the study programme are discussed/coordinated.

Thus, all survey results are discussed in several ways:

- during meetings with students (once per semester);
- in the quality council of the Psychology direction (once per semester);
- at Council meetings of the Faculty of Communication and the Faculty of Public Health and Social Welfare (once a semester);
- when reviewing complaints and listening to proposals of students also in informal talks.

The changes related to survey results are implemented in the following forms:

- by answering to questions and proposals of students;
- in personal talks with university lecturers, asking them to make improvement, proposing changes;
- by informing other RSU organisational units, which provide the environment or services for implementation of study courses.

2.7. Provide the assessment of the options of the incoming and outgoing mobility of the students, the dynamics of the number of the used opportunities, and the recognition of the study courses acquired during the mobility.

RSU offers students mobility opportunities using *Erasmus+*. Students of the study programme are offered to go on *Erasmus+* exchange programme. However, in recent years, students of the Bachelor programme have chosen not to use this opportunity, because they were working and did not want to stop their job. Going on the *Erasmus+* mobility has always been difficult due to seven placements, which were always included in this programme, when it was a professional programme. Now, when it has been transformed into an academic programme – only 2 placements are left, it will be easier for students to get involved in the *Erasmus +* exchange programme in the

future.

Since studies in the study programme are mainly in Latvian, foreign students do not use Erasmus+ opportunities to study one semester in this programme. There is currently an offer of courses to propose to Erasmus + students in English. Thus, creating new opportunities for students to go to the Erasmus + exchange programme.

The head of the study programme informs and motivates students to use the opportunities provided by *Erasmus+* at regular meetings and during individual talks, however, participation of students by 2020 was relatively low, which changed rapidly in 2021, when 7 freshman students opined to use the advantaged of this opportunity. The students who had used *Erasmus+* opportunities were satisfied, but admitted that there was an overload when they returned to Latvia.

Recognition of study courses takes place through careful and individual evaluation and in accordance with the procedure adopted by RSU. That is, since the courses learned in foreign universities differ in content and size in most cases from those of the RSU academic Bachelor's degree programme "Psychology" in the relevant semester, the management of the programme has carefully assessed the content and extent of each foreign university course and taking into account the interests and needs of the student (mostly selected in the context of the course or Bachelor's thesis topic), creates a list of courses to be learned in the context of mobility so that the learning outcomes of the course were comparable to the learning outcomes of the courses in the RSU programme.

III - DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME (3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme)

3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples. Whilst carrying out the assessment, it is possible to refer to the information provided for in the criteria set forth in Part II, Chapter 3, sub-paragraphs 3.1 to 3.3.

Students are informed and trained (in the study course "Information Literacy") how to search for and find necessary information in databases of scientific articles.

In several study courses (for example, "Psychophysiology", "Personality Psychology", "Intercultural Psychology", etc.) students of the study programme get tasks to find in the [databases of scientific articles to which RSU is subscribed](#) latest research in the industry on a specific topic relating to the topic of the studies, course – to read, analyse and conduct a general analysis and then present it to course mates and the university lecturer.

In order to provide convenient approach of students to study materials, they are placed in the e-environment, which is available through the student portal and *MyRSU* mobile app.

Students have access to comfortable and well-equipped study environment in the entire university, namely, during breaks or at any other time students can do everything necessary for the study

process not only in the library (there is free internet, study desks and chairs, power connection, and so on in university halls).

All RSU resources (library resources, IT availability, etc.) are equally available to all RSU students, regardless of whether they study in Riga or Liepāja. As many courses for Liepāja students take place on a teleconference by one lecturer together with students in Rīga – study materials placed in the e-environment are also similar. The main difference in resources is the premises, because the Liepāja branch does not have as large premises as in Rīga, therefore it is not possible to admit more than 25 students in one year.

3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific support, including the resources provided within the cooperation with other science institutes and institutions of higher education (applicable to the doctoral study programmes).

Not applicable.

III - DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME (4. Teaching Staff)

4.1. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.

The implementation of the study direction involves highly qualified lecturers who are experts in the field and specialise in the respective study course topics.

Lecturers, whose qualification and abilities are of high level (8 *Dr.psych.*, including 5 LCS experts in psychology with experience in research projects) and assessed over a long period of cooperation, are involved in the implementation of the study direction and programmes. As the number of students in the programme increases, the workload of lecturers increased as well, therefore lecturers in several study courses are outsourced to ease the workload of in-house lecturers. Thus, compared to the previous accreditation, the number of subjects taught per in-house lecturer has reduced and there are more invited lecturers, who teach one course, in which they are industry professionals (e.g. K. Lazdiņš – military psychology, I. Gaile – pedagogical psychology, etc.).

Local psychologists were involved in the study programme in Liepāja, who teach a course corresponding to their area of activity (for example, S. Štāle – “Psychological Assessment”, L. Kokina – “Clinical Psychology”, A. Kraskura – “Basics of Psychiatry and Narcology”).

Graduates of the Bachelor and Master programme have been involved in the study programme for several years, who initially only assisted in-house lecturers, but then became main lecturers themselves, L. Liberte, Z. Gulbe, E. Zemvaldis. Doctoral students are also involved in the programme to the extent possible, for example, K. Šneidere and I. Jokste in research courses, as well as for several years the Psychological Counselling placement was supervised by J. Zuitiņš. In the next academic year it is planned to involve more new lecturers from former graduates (for example, A. Bildzens).

In the last years of studies, the list of teaching staff involved in the study programme was supplemented also by introducing new elective study courses in the study programme, for example, the theologian and the doctoral student of psychology Indulis Paičs started to teach the course “Introduction into Religion Psychology”, and our graduate, military psychologist K. Lazdiņš started to teach the course “Introduction into Military Psychology”. Thus, RSU lecturers are supplemented with graduates and doctoral students, some other are planned to be involved in the future.

Full-time university lecturers are required to participate in research activities that are regulated by staff job descriptions. Depending on the type of academic position, the following proportion of duties and responsibilities of the employee in scientific and research activities has been determined:

- assistants carry out scientific and research work 30% of the working time;
- lecturers carry out scientific and research work 15% of the working time;
- assistant professors, associate professors, professors carry out scientific and research work 20% of the working time.

The division of responsibilities within a structural unit may be changed by the head of the structural unit in agreement with the employee, according to the planning of the pedagogical work and the projects to be implemented.

The scientific activity results of the academic staff are summarised once a year and included in the scientific activity report. For some groups of staff, they are related to the principles of remuneration and motivation. Lecturer achievements are included in their CV.

RSU is constantly planning and implementing activities aimed at motivating the academic staff to engage in high-level scientific and research work, in particular associate professors and professors (aiming to reach 60% of working time spent on research), which will encourage new professionals to engage in industry research, and contribute to the overall development of science at national and international level.

4.2. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members (academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

The qualification of teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programme corresponds to the conditions of implementation of the study programme and the requirements of regulatory enactments, as well as ensures the achievement of aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and respective study courses. When reviewing and supplementing the academic Bachelor's study programme “Psychology” on a regular basis, research directions and expertise fields of lecturers of the departments have been taken into account. Therefore, most of lecturers engaged in the implementation of the programme, are RSU employees.

All faculty members who are involved as lecturers or visiting lecturers in the study programme shall have at least a Master's degree in a related discipline (see Annex 24.7 on the analysis of the composition of academic staff involved in the implementation of the study programme). All the

lecturers involved in the programme are industry professionals (for example, in medicine – Jānis Vētra, Daina Šmite, Agrita Puzuka, in philosophy – Olafs Brūveris, in business – Sandra Pallo, in law – Ivans Jānis Mihailovs, in statistics – Silva Senkane, in sociology – Ritma Rungule, in psychology – Kristīne Mārtinsons, Viktorija Perepjolkina, Sandra Mihailova, Jeļena Koļesņikova, Jeļena Ļubenko, Ervīns Čukurs, Aelita Vagale).

On the other side, the academic and scientific potential of teaching staff of the programme is increasingly strengthened. Several lecturers of the programme – for example, Indulis Paičs, Juris Zuitiņš, Inese Jokste, Kristīne Šneidere – have studied the RSU doctoral programme in recent years, while others obtained a higher-level academic position such as, for instance, the lecturer of Department of Health Psychology and Paedagogy Jeļena Ļubenko, who was elected as assistant professor. Scientific and academic degree is taken into account when employing freelance lecturers and inviting visiting lecturers (see Annex 6.1 “Basic information on teaching staff involved in implementation of the study direction and their language skills”).

See the list of academic staff publications for the reporting period in Annex 6.4.

See the summary of academic staff publications, participation in conferences and projects and projects, experience in the field in Annex 6.5.

Forms of attracting potential students are constantly being improved by providing widely available information on the study programme. One of the plans is to offer an academic programme in English. At the moment, some study courses can be learned in English: neuropsychology, organisational psychology, research in psychology, introduction to project management, biology and genetics etc. Since the programme lecturers regularly improve their English knowledge, it is planned to offer all courses in English in the future.

In order to verify knowledge of foreign language of the teaching staff implementing study programmes in English, RSU periodically organises a detailed detection of English skill level, and if necessary, organises additional training. If the study programme is implemented in English, lecturers with at least B2 level of knowledge of English are involved. See Annex 24.5 of the RSU certification that the English proficiency level of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programmes of the study direction, which are wholly or partly implemented in English, is at least B2, according to the European Language proficiency rating.

4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals may be additionally specified (if applicable).

Not applicable

4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information

on the reporting period (if applicable).

Not applicable

4.5. Provide examples of the involvement of the academic staff in the scientific research and/or artistic creation activities both at national and at international level (in the fields related to the content of the study programme), as well as the use of the obtained information in the study process.

All lecturers involved in the implementation of the study programme (except invited lecturers having high qualification, long experience and significant experience in the professional field) perform scientific research work in parallel to their pedagogical work. The insights and examples from such work enrich the study course content making it up-to-date and close to practice. Since study methods emphasise the principle of participation, in discussions lecturers tend to use what they have tested in their research and examples as a basis.

From 2014 to 2018 lecturers (Kristīne Mārtinsone, Jeļena Ļevina) participated in the LCS project “Transformation of national economy, smart growth, management and legal framework for the sustainable development of state and society – new approaches for creating a sustainable knowledge society (EKOSOC-LV)”. Sub-theme: Reflection regarding values and action models during social and economic changes (EKOSOC_5.2.5.).

From 2014, lecturers participated in the project “Biomedicine for public health (BIOMEDICINE)” in two subprojects: “Development of a New Technology “Latvian Clinical Personality Test” and Transfer to the Economy”. (Viktorija Perepjolkina, Jeļena Koļesņikova, Kristīne Mārtinsone), and in sub-project: ENABLE-LV – Latvian section for the international research and cooperation project: “Establishing the Net Attainable Benefits of Long-term Exercise, ENABLE” (Kristīne Šneidere, Jeļena Harlamova).

From 28 October 2015 to 30 November 2015 – participation in ERDF project “Development and Promotion of Riga Stradiņš University Scientific Capacity in the Common European Research Area”, No.2DP/2.1.1.2.0./14/APIA/VIAA/013.

Latvian Ministry of Defence, RSU, RTU project (2017-2020) “Development of Computerised System for Assessing Individual’s Personality” (Viktorija Perepjolkina, Jeļena Koļesņikova, Jeļena Ļubenko). Based on the *Latvian Clinical Personality Test*” (LCPT) developed within the *BIOMEDICINE* project, the RSU group of researchers in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence and National Armed Forces implements the project *Development of Computerised System for Assessing Individual’s Personality* to create an original computerised individual personality assessment system (CPAS). Several physiological parameters will be integrated along with psychological ones, which will provide the possibility to interpret test results more accurately.

The National Research Programme (2018–2021) “NRP Challenges and solutions of Latvian State and Society in an International Framework (Interframe-LV)” (Kristīne Mārtinsone).

In 2020, nearly all of the programme's lecturers (e.g. Kristīne Mārtinsone, Sandra Mihailova, Jeļena Koļesņikova, Jeļena Ļubenko, Viktorija Perepjolkina, Kristīne Šneidere etc.) participated in various projects at both Latvian and international level in relation to the Coronavirus pandemic research

(e.g. "EUCLID", "COVID-IMPACT").

Scientific research results are published on local and international conferences.

<https://www.rsu.lv/zinatniski-petnieciska-darbiba-psihologija> (available only in latvian).

Lecturers actively involve students in research work also in different projects implemented by the department. Topics of Bachelor's theses are often related to the topics of the research projects implemented by lecturers of the programme. A bright example is the development of the clinical personality at RSU, to which several Bachelor's theses are devoted every year: for example, in 2018 "Validation of Latvian Clinical Personality Test Personality Trait Scales and Inferiority Sense Scales in Student Sample" and "Specifics of Personality and Reliability Scale Indicators of Latvian Clinical Personality Test in the Group of Prisoners" (supervisor of both papers Viktorija Perepjolkina). Similarly, students get actively involved in other projects of lecturers with their course, Bachelor and Master papers. See <https://www.rsu.lv/zinatniski-petnieciska-darbiba-psihologija> (available only in latvian).

Lecturers involved students and graduates also in their monographs. For example, four students were involved in the collective monograph "Health Psychology". The program's graduate Laura Regzdiņa, together with Professor Kristīne Mārtinsonē, compiled the "Personality and Psychological Assistance in Latvia: Experience Stories."

RSU has had a "Psychology Laboratory" for several years, the objective of which is to ensure the development, adaptation and approbation of psychological research and assessment instruments according to modern scientific requirements, and to advise RSU academic personnel and students on the issues of psychometry. All the information about the tests adapted and approbated by students is stored in this laboratory. Several research papers of students are developed using lab equipment and tests. For more information see <https://www.rsu.lv/en/psychology-laboratory>

4.6. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).

The head of the study programme discusses with lecturers the content of the study course and its mutual link to other study courses. The content of study courses is clarified, if necessary. Such talks are usually held before the beginning of the year of studies / study semester or before the beginning of a new study course.

The mutual cooperation of the lecturers is usually discussed at the extended meetings of the Psychology Quality Council at the end of the semester, when not only the members of the Psychology Quality Council but also all the lecturers of the semester participate. If some shortcomings are stated, they are initially resolved at the level of heads and lecturers of the programme; if this does not help, these are resolved at the level of the head of the department / dean and lecturer. However, there were no such cases.

There has been established good link and cooperation with the visiting university lecturer of the study course "Pedagogical Psychology" I. Gaile, who also offers placements for students in the Āgenskalns State Gymnasium. (<https://www.rsu.lv/atsauksmes> information available only in latvian).

The evaluation of the study course by students (at the end of the course) is one of the means of prevention of content overlapping or other shortcomings. Communication between group leaders and the head of the study programme is used for operative response.

When calculating the total number of lecturers specified in accreditation documents, the total number of lecturers involved in the implementation of ABSP “Psychology” is 46, but the total number of students on 2021 was 237, therefore the student/teacher ratio is 5.2. It should be taken into account that study courses of Part C are implemented for students of several Bachelor’s study programmes together, thus sharing resources. Such joint implementation of study courses strengthens financial profitability of study programmes and supports interdisciplinary cooperation between students.

For more information, see Part II, Paragraph 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6 of the study direction description.

Annexes

III. Description of the Study Programme - 1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education (table)		
Statistics on the students over the reporting period	16_pielik_ABSP_statistika_eng_preciz_06_2021.pdf	16_pielik_ABSP_statistika_lv_preciz_06_2021.pdf
III. Description of the Study Programme - 2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance of the study programme with the State Education Standard	17-1_pielik_Atbalst-izgl-standartam_ABSP_ENG_preciz_06_2021.pdf	17-1_pielik_Atbalst-izgl-standartam_ABSP_LV_preciz_06_2021.pdf
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)	17-2_pielik_Atb_Psihologu_likumam_eng.pdf	17-2_pielik_Atb_Psihologu_likumam_lv.pdf
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	18-1_pielik_StK_StR_kartejums_ABSP_Ps_17-06-2020_ENG.pdf	18-1_pielik_StK_StR_kartejums_ABSP_Ps_17-06-2020-lv.pdf
Curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	19_pielik_Ps_planojums_PL_un_NL_EN_preciz_06-2021.pdf	19_pielik_Ps_planojums_PL_un_NL_LV_preciz_06-2021.pdf
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	20.1_pielik_Kursu_apraksti_ABSP_eng_preciz_06-2021.pdf	20.1_pielik_Kursu_apraksti_ABSP_lv_preciz_06-2021.pdf
Description of the Study Direction - Other mandatory attachments		
Sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme.	24.1.0_pielik_Diplom_pielik_ABSP_ENG.pdf	24.1_pielik_ABSP_Diploms_pielikums_lv.pdf
Description of the Study Programme - Other mandatory attachments		
Document 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	24.2_Vienošanās ar DU-2020_ENG.pdf	Vienošanās ar DU.edoc
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	24-3_pielikums_Apliecinajums_par_zaudejumiem_StV_Psihologija_EN.pdf	Apliecinājums par studējošo zaudējumu kompensāciju.edoc
Confirmation of the higher education institution/ college that 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 according to European language levels (see the levels under www.europass.lv), if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language.	24-5_pielik_Apliecin_anglu_val_StV_Psihologija_EN.pdf	Apliecinājums par studiju virziena "Psihologija" studiju programmām_anglu_val.edoc
If the study programmes in the study direction subject to the assessment are doctoral study programmes, a confirmation that at least five teaching staff members with doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field or sub-field of science, in which the study programme has intended to award a scientific degree.		
If academic study programmes are implemented within the study direction, a document confirming that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the provisions set out in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause three of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education	24.7_ABSP_Psihologija_ENG.pdf	24.7_ABSP_Psihologija_lv.pdf
Sample (or samples) of the study agreement	24.8_pielik_Studiju_lig_eng.pdf	24.8_pielik_Studiju_lig_lv.pdf
If academic study programmes for less than 250 full-time students are implemented within the study direction, the opinion of the Council for Higher Education shall be attached in compliance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.	24-9_pielik_AIP_atzinums_ABSP_Ps_ENG.pdf	24-9_pielik_AIP_atzinums_ABSP_Ps_LV.pdf

Health Psychology (47313)

Study field	<i>Psychology</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Health Psychology</i>
Education classification code	<i>47313</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>Professional master study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Jelena</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Koļesņikova</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>jelena.kolesnikova@rsu.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Zinātniskais doktora grāds zinātnes doktore (Dr. psych.) psiholoģijā.</i>
Phone of the study programme director	
Goal of the study programme	<i>To provide an opportunity to master the theoretical and empirically justified principles of psychology, to develop and increase understanding, practical skills and competence in order to obtain a professional master's degree in psychology and the qualification of a psychologist in one of the following professional fields: clinical and health psychology, military psychology, counselling psychology. Graduates of the professional master's study programme may, in accordance with the requirements of the Law on Psychologists, perform the professional duties of a psychologist under the supervision of a certified psychologist-supervisor, as well as may continue their studies in doctoral study programmes in Latvia or abroad.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. To ensure the acquisition of knowledge, professional skills and competences necessary in the work of a psychologist, in accordance with the professional standard.</i> <i>2. To improve the skills of carrying out independent research in psychology in accordance with the basic principles of research, and presenting the research results.</i> <i>3. To promote the implementation of high standards of professional ethics and motivation for the improvement of their competence.</i> <i>4. To develop motivation for growth and postgraduate education.</i>

Results of the study programme	<p>Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyses, compares and critically evaluates psychological theories, development trends and discoveries of the psychology sector, demonstrating in-depth understanding of clinical and health, military or counselling psychology, incl. in-between different areas. On the basis of the latest achievements in the field of professional activity, deeply analyses and critically evaluates different interaction aspects among biological, psychological and social processes in the context of psychological assessment of and psychological assistance to different groups of clients/patients. <p>Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains and discusses in an argued manner complex psychological issues and aspects of psychologist's professional activity with specialists, members of a multidisciplinary team and non-specialists. Defines the aim of provision of psychological assistance in accordance with the specific situation and needs of clients/patients by choosing, creating and using scientifically justified psychological assessment and psychological assistance methods, prepares a psychologist's report, as well as critically evaluates the effectiveness of own work, implementing professional activity in health or counselling psychology, including in business, observing legal and ethical aspects of professional activity. Under supervision, performs a critical evaluation of the information obtained, independently plans and implements the improvement of own competences and lifelong learning. Independently develops a research project in psychology according to modern research principles, implements it and presents the results obtained. <p>Competence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of psychology and other fields is integrated into research and professional activities in order to contribute to the arrangement of knowledge, creation of new knowledge, the development of research and professional activity methods, as well as justify the decisions taken, understanding the potential impact of own professional activities on an individual, group, society and the environment. Independently formulates and critically analyses complicated psychological problems, taking into account different interaction aspects between psychological, social and biological aspects, as well as by working independently or in a multidisciplinary team, conducts an assessment of an individual and/or group, plans and implements psychological assistance methods, observing legal and ethical aspects of professional activity.
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	Master's Thesis and a qualification examination.

Study programme forms

Full time studies - 1 years, 6 months - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	<i>1</i>
Duration in month	<i>6</i>
Language	<i>latvian</i>
Amount (CP)	<i>60</i>
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>The second level higher professional education in psychology (higher professional education in psychology or Bachelor's education in psychology with a professional qualification)</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Professional Master's degree in Psychology</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	<i>Psychologist</i>

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Rīga Stradiņš University	RĪGA	DZIRCIEMA IELA 16, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1007
Liepāja branch of Rīga Stradiņš University	LIEPĀJA	RIŅĶU IELA 24/26, LIEPĀJA, LV-3405

Full time studies - 2 years - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	<i>2</i>
Duration in month	<i>0</i>
Language	<i>latvian</i>
Amount (CP)	<i>80</i>
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Bachelor's degree of Social Sciences in Psychology</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Professional Master's degree in Psychology</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	<i>Psychologist</i>

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Rīga Stradiņš University	RĪGA	DZIRCIEMA IELA 16, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1007
Liepāja branch of Rīga Stradiņš University	LIEPĀJA	RIŅĶU IELA 24/26, LIEPĀJA, LV-3405

Full time studies - 2 years - english

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	<i>2</i>
Duration in month	<i>0</i>
Language	<i>english</i>
Amount (CP)	<i>80</i>
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Bachelor's degree of Social Sciences in Psychology and proof of English language knowledge</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Professional Master's degree in Psychology</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	<i>Psychologist</i>

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Rīga Stradiņš University	RĪGA	DZIRCIEMA IELA 16, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1007
Liepāja branch of Rīga Stradiņš University	LIEPĀJA	RIŅĶU IELA 24/26, LIEPĀJA, LV-3405

III - DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME (1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme)

1.1. Description and analysis of changes in study programme parameters that have taken place since the issue of the previous accreditation certificate of study direction or the license of study programme if study programme is not included in the accreditation page of the study direction

During the accreditation period, the following changes have been made in the study programme:

1. QAHE Committee for Accreditation of Studies decision No. 85-A as of 23.07.2018- the place of implementation in Liepāja branch has been added and the duration of the programme has been changed in accordance with the entry into force of the Law on Psychologists.
2. English has been added as a language of implementation.

No	Parameter	Analysis of changes
1.	Study direction	—
2.	Title of the study programme	---
3.	Code according to the Latvian Education Classification	—
4.	Head of the study programme	—
5.	Scientific degree of the head of the study programme	—
6.	Aim of the study programme	Basically, the objectives of the study programme have not changed, however, using the current European and Latvian educational policy documents, as well as on the basis of the results of surveys of employers and graduates, work is ongoing on the development of a more specific focus, the precise wording of the objectives and the harmonisation with the outcomes of study courses and the study programme.
7.	Objectives of the study programme	The objectives of the study programme have been developed and supplemented due to focusing of the objectives of the study programme, which in turn took place in the context of EU and Latvian education policy and in relation to the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers.

No	Parameter	Analysis of changes
8.	Learning outcomes to be achieved	The information regarding the analysis of the learning outcomes performed during the mapping process are reflected in Annex 18.1. The learning outcomes have been clarified according to the aim, objectives and wording of LQF/EQF. Thus, the competences, knowledge and skills learned in individual courses contribute in a logical sequence help to achieve the defined learning outcomes. Mapping has allowed programme management to better review the interaction between the competences, knowledge and skills to be learned in individual courses and the outcome of the study programme, their relevance to the aims and objectives.
9.	Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	—
10.	Type and form of studies	—
11.	Duration of implementation	<p>—</p> <p>An in-depth analysis of the study programme, including mapping, resulted in changes to the study programme and on 13 July 2018 these changes were approved at the Academic Information Centre, receiving an opinion on the evaluation of changes in the accredited study direction at Rīga Stradiņš University in the study direction “Psychology” in the professional Master’s study programme “Health Psychology”.</p> <p>At present, the Master’s study programme includes study plan I and II, depending on the applicant’s previous education:</p> <p><i>Master’s degree planning I (previous education – academic Bachelor degree of Social Science (Psychology):</i></p> <p>The study programme is implemented for full-time students in four semesters (two academic years), and its total volume is 80 CP (120 ECTS).</p> <p><i>Master’s degree planning II (previous education – professional higher education in psychology or Bachelor’s degree in psychology with the professional qualification):</i></p> <p>– total volume 60 credit points.</p> <p>The Master’s study programme is implemented for full-time students in three semesters (two academic years), and its total volume is 60 CP (90 ECTS).</p>

No	Parameter	Analysis of changes
12.	Language of implementation	There are intentions to add English as language of implementation during the accreditation, although there are no specific plans to start offering studies in English for now. According to the plan of development of the study direction (see Annex 4.1) there are intentions to set up a working group to evaluate the extension of the possibilities for the implementation of study programmes.
13.	Amount of the study programme (CP)	— see Parameter 11
14.	Admission requirements	—
15.	Degree to be awarded	—
16.	Qualification to be awarded	—
17.	Place of implementation	Another place of implementation of the study programme at the RSU Liepaja Branch was approved at the Academic Information Centre on 13 July 2018 in addition to the place of implementation of the study programme in Riga.

Summarising the information provided in the Table 1.1. about the changes in the study programme “Health Psychology”:

1. Approved changes relate to the duration of studies and the place of implementation of the programme. The duration of the study programme has changed taking into account the applicant's previous education. Currently, the master's study programme includes study plannings I and II depending on the applicant's previous education. Changes in the reporting period have also been made in connection with the place of implementation of the study programme, adding Liepāja branch, where admission is planned to be organised starting from 2021/2022 ac. y., taking into account that in 2021 the Liepāja branch will have the first graduates of the bachelor's study programme.
2. In the documents submitted for accreditation the parameters of the study programme have been clarified, the aim and tasks of the study programme have also been defined more exactly and supplemented in accordance with EU and Latvian education policy documents, normative documents regulating psychologists' activities, as well as employers' and graduates' recommendations. Based on the mapping results of the study programme, learning outcomes to be achieved have been specified in accordance with the aim and objectives of the study programme as well as with the LQF / EQF formulations. In addition to the above-mentioned, it is planned to add English as the language of implementation during the accreditation in order to expand the possibilities of the study programme over time.

1.2. Analysis and assessment of the statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down in the different study forms, types, and languages.

The Master's study programme "Health Psychology" is implemented as full-time regular study programme. Annex 16 provides statistical data on students in the reporting period.

Table 1. Number of applicants and students in the study programme "Health Psychology"

Year	Applications received	State-funded study place	Studies for tuition fee	Admitted students	Number of graduates	Number of excluded students
2016/17	22		24	22	16	2
2017/18	16		24	14	11	6
2018/19	20		24	19	12	8
2019/20	26	2	24	19	9	12
2020/21	50	2	24	28	12	3

In total, about 14-19 students are admitted in the programme every year. The number of students enrolled in some years has reached even 28 students (for example, in 2020). This is a significantly better result than in the period of financial and economic crisis and in the post-crisis period (2009-2012). However, enrolment performance is an unstable indicator since many students get enrolled without fully assessing their possibilities themselves, such as the ability to combine work with studies (in terms of time and study intensity, and finances), which results in drop-out. Some students do not resume their studies after academic leave, often due to their financial situation. Furthermore, students are frequently being excluded after the first year of studies, mainly due to failures. In turn, the dynamics of the number of graduates is mostly stable.

The reasons for the increase in the number of students are: RSU rating, Law on Psychologists (requirements for psychologist education), study programme's recruitment events (blogs on health psychology issues, video stories, active participation in Psychology Day events and conferences), continuing education for psychologists, state-funded study places, as well as feedback from employers and graduates.

Student survey data shows that the majority of students combine studies with work in industry companies, where they often hold the positions of a psychologist, HR assistant (e.g. addiction prevention consultant), office administrator or manager, etc. The requirements of the Law on Psychologists regarding the necessary education and work in responsible positions are usually the factor that causes people to seek additional education, improvement of competences and the possibility to gain better understanding, including to acquire appropriate education.

Students appreciate the opportunities offered by the curriculum of the study programme, furthermore, the study work planning model proposed by professional Master's programmes of the RSU Faculty of Public Health and Social Welfare (FPHSW), Department of Health Psychology and

Paedagogy (DHPP) is well designed to meet the needs of students and to ensure full-time study opportunities without stopping professional activity. Practical actual experience at work improves the content of the study process by offering students examples of daily working life in joint discussions, analyses and discussions, which is an important pedagogical method and approach of the programme. At the same time, this factor also has a negative impact on the dynamics of the number of students, since the inability to combine studies with work and the intensity are one of the most serious reasons why studies are being discontinued. There are mainly two stages, when students discontinue studies the most: several students leave every year during the first months following the beginning of their studies because they have not sufficiently considered their interests and opportunities, and after the first year of study, when students leave on their own will or are excluded mainly because of academic failures.

Overall, approximately 14-18 students are enrolled in the programme every year. The number of students admitted in individual years has reached approximately 22 students (for example, in 2016). This is a significantly better result than during and after the financial and economic crisis (2009-2012), but the admission results are evaluated as an unstable indicator, largely because many become students of the study programme without having fully evaluated their opportunities and discontinue their studies soon.

The management of the study programme regularly works on the recognition of the study programme, as well as is implementing measures that promote the idea of potential students about the study programme prior to the commencement of studies, for example,

- Marketing specialists of the RSU Faculty of Communication in cooperation with the Faculty of Public Health and Social Welfare (FPHSW) and the head of the study programme regularly implement the recruitment measures of the study programme. The activity “Stress Management” was implemented during RSU Admissions Night event, interviews with the graduates of the study programme were prepared and published. In connection with current events in the study programme, the content of the RSU website has been updated. Informing the organisations that use the services of psychologists about the possibility for psychologists to improve their qualification by studying in the study programme “Health Psychology”;
- Furthermore, every year RSU implements different measures during the RSU’s Open Days, for example, see <https://www.rsu.lv/add-magistrantura> (information available only in Latvian) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2klldZRdl50&t=29s>; (video material available in Latvian);
- RSU Department of Health Psychology and Paedagogy has been actively involved in the organisation of Psychology Days in Latvia since 2014. Within Psychology Days, open lectures, visiting lectures, seminars are organised with particular emphasis on clinical and health psychology, counselling psychology and military psychology;
- in addition, in 2018, specialists of the Marketing Unit of the RSU Faculty of Communication, in cooperation with FPHSW and the head of the study programme, implemented recruitment activities for the study programme: The “Stress Management” activity was carried out during the Admission’s Night event, an interview with a graduate of the study programme was prepared and published, the content of the RSU website was improved according to changes in the study programme, the organisations associated with the use of psychologists’ service are informed about the possibility of raising qualifications for psychologists by studying in the “Health Psychology” study programme;
- Activities were implemented in 2018, 2019 during the RSU Researchers’ Night – “Cognitive Challenge Relay-race” activity (for example, visitors were able to solve different tasks related to cognitive challenges);
- in October 2017, RSU celebrated the 10-year anniversary of psychology education by hosting a conference, issuing a book in psychology created by RSU lecturers, preparing an

informative stand – an exhibition, and issuing a collection of articles;

- The RSU Department of Health Psychology and Paedagogy has been organising the International Scientific-Practical Conference “Health and Personality Development: An Interdisciplinary Approach” for seven years. During the conference, the issues of psychological assistance in working with different groups of clients and patients, psychological research methods, professional activity and identity, competences and their development, as well as the psychological characteristics and behaviour of the Latvian population during the Covid-19 pandemic were raised (see <https://www.rsu.lv/konference-veselibai-un-personibas-attistiba-starpdisciplinara-pieejja-2021>).
- In 2020, RSU Master's study programme “Health Psychology” students presented recommendations for promoting vitality and identifying resources in uncertain conditions for specific population groups at the scientific conference “Psiholoģiskie resursi un riska faktori iedzīvotāju veselībai COVID-19 apstākļos: VPP pētījumi praksei” (see: <https://www.rsu.lv/konference-psihologiskie-resursi-riska-faktori-veselibai-covid> information available only in Latvian. See other inspirational videos (only in Latvian):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60rJgAkFVzg&feature=emb_logo

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wazSThJRrTM&feature=emb_logo

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MR880CFOVYc&feature=emb_logo

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hE7lvsQqEIY&feature=emb_logo

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnRz5Pq7miE&feature=emb_logo

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OgVb3VBUIIQ&feature=emb_logo

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NGL7qI9G0SU&feature=emb_logo

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TxZ6omiRHAw&feature=emb_logo

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-7WRyZAarc&feature=emb_logo

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6GfnmavzKs&feature=emb_logo

- RSU Department of Health Psychology and Paedagogy in cooperation with the Latvian Association of Health Psychology organises continuing education events, prepares a blog on health psychology issues and communicates on social networks (see <https://practicalhealthpsychology.com/>)

In general, fluctuations in the number of students is one of the largest threats to the development of the study programme, and the management of the study programme is therefore constantly focused on finding students, finding out their study work conditions and other contextual factors, with a view to improving the studies so that they meet the needs of potential students entering the higher education market to choose the Master's study programme.

The study programme is accredited for implementation as full-time studies in Latvian. Under the StD development plan until 2023, taking into account the dynamics of the number of students and the results of market research, the availability of resources, staffing, profitability, etc. During the accreditation, the study programme is also applied for implementation in English, however, there are no such specific plans for the management of the study programme in the next two years.

1.3. Analysis and assessment of the interrelation between the name of the study programme, the degree or professional qualification to be acquired or the degree and

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

Since 2018, a psychologist is a regulated profession (the Law on Psychologists entered into force on 01.10.2018, see On Regulated Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications. Latvijas Vēstnesis (2019). Obtained from <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=26021> (available only in Latvian) and the Law on Psychologists. Latvijas Vēstnesis (2017). Obtained from <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=290115> (available only in Latvian).

The mapping results of the study programme evidence that the learning outcomes of the professional Master's study programme "Health Psychology" correspond to EQF/LQF 7, the requirements of the Law on Psychologists, the requirement of the Profession Standard (Standard for the Psychologist's Profession, coordinated in 2019 at the TCSVEE (PINTSA) meeting, minutes No. 4. Obtained from <https://visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-108.pdf> (available only in Latvian)) and other documents listed below:

- Latvijas Vēstnesis (2018). Regulations on Psychologists. Obtained from <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/299322-psihologu-noteikumi> (available only in Latvian).
- Ethics Committee of Psychologists (2019). Code of Ethics of Psychologists. Obtained from <https://ikvd.gov.lv/psihologiem/psihologu-etikas-komisija/> (available only in Latvian).
- Baumane, I. un Vesperis, V. (2018). Likumā lietotie termini. No K. Mārtinsone un B. Girgensone (red). Psihologu profesionālā darbība Latvijā: saturs, organizācija, regulējums. Psihologu likuma komentāri (103.-107.lpp). Rīga: Tiesu namu aģentūra.
- Baumane, G. un Koļesņikova, J. (2018). of the area of professional activity. No K. Mārtinsone un B. Girgensone (red). Psihologu profesionālā darbība Latvijā: saturs, organizācija, regulējums. Psihologu likuma komentāri (117.-130.lpp). Rīga: Tiesu namu aģentūra.
- European Certificate in Psychology (EuroPsy) & European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (efpa) (2017). EFPA Regulations on EuroPsy and Appendices. Obtained from <https://www.europsy.eu> (available only in English).

The Law on Psychologists determines the fields of professional activity between which clinical and health psychology are like one area of professional activity. The curriculum and outcomes of the study programme are improved in line with the requirements of the law by extending the programme with the content of clinical psychology. The curriculum of the study program also includes study courses in counselling psychology and military psychology that correspond to two other areas of professional activity.

As a result of successful learning of the professional Master's study programme "Health Psychology" students get the Master's degree in psychology and the qualification of a psychologist. This means that students need to learn theoretical models and approaches in psychology sciences, the methodology of psychological research and the latest insights to gain in-depth knowledge and to be able to continue academic studies and practical work after the graduation of the Master's programme, as well as to be able to engage actively, innovatively and creatively in social life and the labour market in the industry, which is experiencing intensive development and constant changes. In this context, the learning outcomes have been formulated in line with the **strategic aim** of the professional Master's study programme, to ensure learning of in-depth theoretical knowledge in psychological science and to prepare specialists in line with international psychological science standards, who are ready for both independent academic and scientific research and practical activities in the field; the results of studies have been formulated that way, where each course and its content, as well as the learning methods' segment, has its own place.

The history of the study programme shows how the programme has been improved so that the learning outcomes to be achieved correspond more accurately to the challenges of the degree and professional field to be obtained, as well as to the foreseeable needs of the labour market in Latvia, the EU and the world. In order to guarantee the learning outcomes and to reach the aim pursued, the admission conditions of the programme prescribe that the Master's study programme shall admit in full-time studies the applicants who have obtained the degree of a Bachelor of Social Sciences in psychology (academic) or education of the Bachelor of Psychology with a professional qualification. Foreign applicants need an education equivalent to the Latvian Bachelor's degree, and the matter is decided in the expert examination by the Academic Information Centre.

III - DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME (2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof)

2.1. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study course/ module and the compliance with the needs of the relevant industry and labour market and with the trends in science. Provide information on how and whether the content of the study course/ module is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science. In case of master's and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation.

The Master's study programme promotes the possibility of implementing a full cycle of higher education studies in psychology (Bachelor's, Master's, doctoral level studies), in line with the Bologna Process.

An in-depth analysis of the study programme, including mapping, resulted in changes to the study programme and on 13 July 2018 these changes were approved at the Academic Information Centre (see the Opinion on the evaluation of changes in the accredited study direction at Rīga Stradiņš University in the study direction "Psychology" and in the professional Master's study programme "Health Psychology"). Presently, the study programme includes study plan I (the total amount is 80 credit points) and study plan II (the total amount is 60 credit points), which the student chooses considering the previously obtained education.

Study planning I – total volume 80 credit points.

The Master's study programme is implemented for full-time students in four semesters (two academic years), and its total volume is 80 CP (120 ECTS).

During the first three semesters 14 compulsory study courses (50 CP; 75 ECTS) and 4 restricted elective study courses (8 CP; 12 ECTS), as well as free elective study courses (2 CP; 3 ECTS) are implemented in the programme. The last semester is fully devoted to the drafting and defence of the Master's thesis (20 CP, 30 ECTS) – students work on their Master's thesis, which includes study, evaluation, selection of theoretical material and doing research.

Study planning II – total volume 60 credit points.

The Master's study programme is implemented for full-time students in three semesters (two academic years), and its total volume is 60 CP (90 ECTS).

During the first two semesters 14 compulsory study courses (30 CP; 45 ECTS) and 4 restricted elective study courses (8 CP; 12 ECTS), as well as free elective study courses (2 CP; 3 ECTS) are implemented in the programme. The last semester is fully devoted to the development and defence of the Master's thesis (20 CP, 30 ECTS) – students work on their Master's thesis, which includes study, evaluation, selection of theoretical material and doing research.

As has previously been emphasised, in order to ensure the achievement of the aims of the programme, the fulfilment of its objectives and the expected achievement of learning outcomes, the curriculum of the Master's study programme is generally composed of study courses in psychological theories, quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and the Master's thesis, and also study courses which provide an opportunity to specialise in individual current directions of clinical and health, counselling and military psychology. For graduation, all theoretical, methods and specialisation courses must be listened by selecting from the proposed specialisation directions (courses of B and C levels), research papers should be prepared, exams should be successfully passed, the Master's thesis should be written and defended.

Many study courses in the curriculum of the programme stimulate students to think, judge and build their research projects with a cross-disciplinary orientation. Through the cooperation between RSU structural units, this principle has already proved being practicable and is intended to be continued in the future. Professionals, experts in the field of psychology, psychologists working in different centres, as well as in health and education system, are often invited to the auditorium. Students choose topics for their Master's thesis in a direct response to the challenges identified in society, as well as to the requirements for psychologists in the improvement of assessment methods and assistance techniques.

In the period since 2016, the curriculum of the study programme has been gradually developed following the development trends in the industry and the labour markets, as well as psychology science. Novelties and changes relate to changes in curriculum within the framework of study courses as heads of study courses constantly update the Curriculum taught and sources of literature. For example, a substantial addition to the literature used in studies is regularly obtained from the databases of e-books. A specific method in the experience of updating the curriculum of study courses can be seen in the context of the internationalisation of the study programme. Foreign lecturers are purposefully searched and invited to teach several study courses to offer a different approach, bring exchange of experience into the study process, for example, a researcher and Doctor of psychology P. Tzotzoli (UK) is involved in the study course "Digital Technology Use in Psychology", and as a result of that the *MePlusMe* online intervention (see www.meplusme.com) is approbated for RSU foreign students and research on the use of health behaviour fostering intervention is conducted. Three Master students defended Master's theses on approbation of *MePlusMe* online intervention.

The curriculum of study courses, analysing current examples and clarifying the focus of curriculum, has been purposefully changed in the study courses related to psychological assessment and psychological counselling, as well as assistance to children, patients with different chronic diseases, patients in rehabilitation (for example, patients after stroke, oncology patients, etc.), but the range of methods to be learned has been improved to support students' independent research, the topicality of which is closely monitored. For example, in order to ensure that students are prepared for further placement, the study course Research Methods in Psychology (4 CP) is carried out before the placement in the first semester.

The structure of courses at restricted elective and free elective levels is also improved. The C section of study courses is mainly developed in response to current global challenges and placement tasks (for example, new research and findings in neuropsychology and the possibilities

of using these findings, both in terms of chronic pain and in providing assistance and in dealing with addictive patients). A special example is the study course "Social Neuroscience", which has been partly read by foreign visiting lecturers J. Kropotov (Russia), J. Pavlov (Germany), S. Montemurro (Italy), J. Vinnik (Portugal) in recent years. The course "Civil and Environmental Protection" has been introduced to ensure that graduates are aware of the risks and readiness to respond to critical situations of today's environment, in line with legislative requirements.

The changes made are in line with CM Regulations and are consistent with researchers' insights about the development of psychology and labour market trends. Analyses and forecasts of the labour market development show that the Master's study programme has a stable niche in the future labour market in Latvia and Europe. Firstly, better prospects for employees with a higher level of education are projected. Secondly, there is still less unemployment among highly educated professionals in Latvia. Thirdly, psychology is now developing as a cross-sectoral field and psychologists are widely involved in interdisciplinary activities both in health care (for example, in psychosocial rehabilitation) and in the education and the military field, which is to a large extent correlated with human capital development within a wide variety of economic sectors, thus development both in the context of changing staff and new skills required is also indirectly predictable here.

The curriculum of the study programme fully complies with the Regulations of Cabinet of Ministers No. 512 "[Regulations on the National Standard of the Second Level Professional Higher Education](#)" (available only in Latvian), as of 26.08.2014. Of the 80 credit points to be obtained, one quarter, i.e. 20 CP, are intended for the successful writing and defence of the Master's thesis, 8 CP (B level courses may differ for each individual student) are received for the learning of psychological theories and as for the learning of subjects related to the approbation of theoretical considerations in the aspect of work in the field and current problems. Thus, it is ensured that the study programme "Health Psychology" provides in-depth theoretical knowledge and research skills, as well as the skills needed in practical work.

When assessing the curriculum of the study programme, it should be said that it is created in line with the sectoral labour market and higher education laws, policy guidelines and current trends. The proportion of theoretical courses is relatively high, since the strategy of the study programme provides that in the current situation it is more important to focus on an in-depth understanding of theoretical psychological concepts preparing students also for teaching and doctoral studies.

See Annex 17.1 "Compliance of the study programme with the national education standard".

Degree to be awarded by the professional master's programme

Degree to be obtained – professional master's degree in psychology and qualification of a psychologist. The professional master's study programme "Health Psychology" complies with the state regulatory enactments of higher education. The compliance of the programme is also evidenced by the evaluations of international expert commissions and the corresponding decisions of the QAHE Committee for Accreditation of Studies of 2016 and 2018. The degree is awarded for an independently developed and publicly defended master's thesis under the supervision of an experienced scientist (lecturers of the RSU Department of Health Psychology and Paedagogy with a doctoral degree in psychology), which contains the results of original scientific research and provides new insights in the field of psychological sciences.

At the same time, more active involvement of lecturers and master students in scientific research and project activities should also be noted. Lecturers of the Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy implement the vertically integrated project approach, where students are actively involved and work in a team with experienced researchers.

This approach was implemented, for example, in 2020 and 2021 in one of the most relevant studies in the framework of National Research Programme for Mitigation of Covid-19 Consequences – “*Psihiskā veselība un psiholoģiskā noturība un ar to saistītie faktori Latvijas populācijā Covid-19 pandēmijas laikā turpmākās vadības virzieni*”, as a result of which, two students of the study programme “Health Psychology” prepared articles, which were published in the collection of the international conference *Society. Integration. Education. Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference*:

1. Bundzena-Evrika (see <http://journals.ru.lv/index.php/SIE/article/view/6258> (only in English)).
2. Kristiņa-Everte (see <http://journals.ru.lv/index.php/SIE/article/view/6227/5319> (only in Latvian)).

Graduates of the study programme are often engaging in pedagogical and research activities in educational institutions in Latvia, for example, four graduates of the study programme are employed at the Psychology Laboratory as scientific assistants (see <https://www.rsu.lv/psihologijas-laboratorija>). As well as three other graduates of the study programme are employed as researchers or senior laboratory assistants, and perform scientific activities at the RSU Military Medicine Research and Study Centre.

The scope of the programme, the total duration of studies and the compulsory content for obtaining professional master's degree meet all requirements. As well as the admission to the programme takes place in accordance with all set requirements and in accordance with the applicant's previous education: bachelor of social sciences (psychology) or higher professional education in psychology or bachelor in psychology with a professional qualification. The basic principles and procedures for the evaluation of the acquisition of the programme comply with the requirements specified in regulatory enactments. Graduates of the study programme “Health Psychology” can continue their education in the Doctoral study programmes in the field of Psychology that are available in Latvia.

See Annex 17.1 “Compliance of the study programme with the national education standard”.

2.2. Assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators, the relation between the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. In case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels.

The management of the study programme is working constantly on achieving the aims of balancing the curriculum of study courses. Due to the strategic aim of the study programme, it is important to balance the theoretical preparedness, the depth and breadth of vision of future Masters, the sharpness of critical analytical vision with practical insight and readiness to work creatively, boldly, innovatively in the psychology sector. Given the current development trends in psychology, it is important that studies largely focus on four components:

- 1) development of theoretical understanding;
- 2) development of research and analytical skills;
- 3) competence building in the specific fields of psychology and within the meaning of the principles of action in each of them;
- 4) cultivation of independent, innovative and sustainable entrepreneurial skills so that

graduates of the study programme can not only become psychologists, researchers, experts and professionals in the psychology sector but also be able to respond independently, flexibly to changes in the field by analysing and understanding trends.

Overall, 8 learning outcomes have been defined for the programme based on the European Qualifications Framework (see parameters, see Annex 18.1 “Mapping of the study courses for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme”).

To develop theoretical understanding, learning of study courses should guarantee the outcomes of LQF 7, namely the ability of students to demonstrate in-depth or extended knowledge and understanding based on the latest findings in the field – the basis for creative and research activities and the competence to integrate knowledge from different areas building new knowledge, developing research methods, and doing this in an ethical way and treating the consequences of own activities with conscience. In order to ensure that this knowledge and competences are learned, the curriculum of the study programme includes study courses like “Development of Master’s Thesis”, “Analytical Statistical Methods in Psychological Research”, etc. These courses guarantee learning of competence – the ability to model problems, situations in the process and forecast development. Others, such as “Development of Methodological Materials and Psychoeducation in the Placement of Psychology”, develop the capacity to debate in a reasoned way with specialists on complex and systemic aspects of the relevant science sector or professional field.

For the development of research and analytical skills, it is intended that individual study courses of the study programme, such as the “Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methodology”, and the writing and defence of the Master’s thesis itself give students the necessary capacity to independently use theory, diverse research methods and problem-solving skills to carry out research activities or highly qualified professional functions.

For students to become competent specialists who would be able work independently (under supervision of a psychologist) in one of the fields of professional activity, students should choose one of three directions that ensure the learning of competence in clinical and health psychology, or counselling psychology, or military psychology. After the selected direction has been learned, Master students independently formulate and critically analyse professional problems, students are prepared to work according to the specifics of the fields of professional activity (for a more detailed description see: Dāvidsone, un Koļesņikova, 2018).^[1]

The knowledge, skills and competences required in professional placement are provided, for example, by the following study courses “Psychologist’s Professional Work”, “Research Methods in Psychology”, “Group Counselling and Psychotherapy”, “Crisis and Trauma Psychology”, “Short-Term Counselling”, “Cognitive and Behavioural Therapy” and “Psychological Research and Counselling Placement”.

As can be seen from the description above, the development strategy of the study programme always takes into account the principle of building transversal competences – that is to say, different knowledge and skills are acquired at different stages of the study plan in different study courses, in order to ensure and strengthen the competences required in research and professional practice.

When evaluating the alignment of aims and learning outcomes with the learning outcomes of study courses, it should be concluded it has been achieved in the study programme and, in general, all study courses in the study programme form part of the learning outcomes needed to achieve the aims.

[1] Dāvidsone, G. un Koļesņikova, J. (2018). Psihologa profesionālās darbības jomas. No: K. Mārtinsone (autoru kol. vad.), Psihologu profesionālā darbība Latvijā: Saturs, organizācija, regulējums: Psihologu likuma komentāri (117.–130. lpp.). Rīga: Tiesu namu aģentūra.

2.3. Assessment of the study implementation methods (including the evaluation methods) by providing the analysis of how the study implementation methods (including the evaluation methods) used in the study courses/ modules are selected, what they are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.

The main forms of learning in the study programme are lectures, which account for about half of the total number of contact hours, while the other half are seminars and practical classes. However, the number of contact hours in Master's level courses is significantly lower than the number of hours devoted to independent work, and therefore the quality of independent work is very important. In addition to the reading of compulsory literature, which is controlled by assessment of practical tasks and replies during seminars, where the knowledge obtained should be used, one or more works or a research projects should be prepared in each study course.

The following study methods are used in the study programme: specification of the mastered theoretical and practical knowledge in seminars, discussions, tests and test works, development of individual and group projects, and simulation placement. In addition, students attend the DHPP conference "*Health and Personality Development: Interdisciplinary Approach*" (for example, in the course "Development of Master's Thesis"). In several courses where practical creative work is at the centre (for example, "Digital Technology Use in Psychology"), students work outside the university, learning skills to develop an online intervention project to promote health, based on differentiated needs of the target group.

For the purposes of modernisation, a register of psychological tests and questionnaires is available on the website of RSU in the Psychology Laboratory section of the RSU website (see <https://www.rsu.lv/psihologijas-laboratorija> in Latvian, <https://www.rsu.lv/en/psychology-laboratory> in English), which summarises and regularly supplements information on psychological tests and questionnaires developed and adapted in psychology and in other fields in Latvia. The register has been designed to ensure the availability of psychological tools developed and adapted by RSU students and lecturers. It should be noted that the modernisation and digitisation of psychological assessment methods take place actively, for example, the Latvian Clinical Personality Test (LCPT) has been digitalised, which facilitates the implementation of psychological assessment placement and the mastering of this assessment method. The digitalised LCPT tool ensures quick, convenient and accurate analysis of the data obtained. When planning the introduction of innovative digital tests in the study process, it should be noted that the Psychology Laboratory implements the digitalisation and adaptation of the intellect structure tests for adolescents and adults in ac.y. 2020/2021.

Overall, a lot of attention is paid to students' independent work, which is aimed at the studying and analysis of scientific literature, acquisition and analysis of empirical material, use of scientific research methods, preparation and presentation of individual projects.

The task of lecturers is to help students organise their independent work, to provide consultations and advice, and encourage discussion and motivate the choice of study directions. Therefore, 2

consultation hours are provided in each learning module, but lecturers are also available to students outside the times of consultations. Students may also consult and receive materials in e-studies, as well as use e-mail correspondence, because students can receive learning materials, send homework to lecturers in a study course, as well as learn the comments, recommendations and assessments of the lecturer.

A detailed description is developed for each study course, which provides detailed information on the subjects of classes, the requirements of the teacher, the compulsory literature and independent work tasks. To facilitate the learning of material, students are offered mandatory electronic copies of literature materials that can be printed or used by students in electronic form. The amount of compulsory literature is approximately 300-600 pages per study course per two credits, because learning of knowledge is linked to the ability to review large amounts of materials.

The study programme uses different study methods and forms, which are selected according to the objectives and specifics of each course. For example, lecturers integrate in lectures active learning methods such as discussions, group work, problem situation analysis. In turn, the following learning methods are used in seminars: work in pairs, case study, simulated client, modelling, role play (including using a mirror wall). Test work and tests that allow to check the knowledge learned during a semester, and to assess students' skills in analysing the material learned are used in lectures and seminars as knowledge testing methods. A written exam is the most commonly used form of assessment of student's knowledge. To learn the content of a study course and to pass an examination, students independently read the specified literature, study video materials, perform case studies according to specified criteria, prepare an opinion, a cooperation report, and prepare reports (for example, placement documentation).

It should be noted that placement courses include psychologist-supervisor monitoring sessions that contribute to the development of the necessary competencies of the psychologist's profession. They contribute to the improvement of students' communication skills, skills to express own opinions and case study skills. When working in supervision sessions, students enrich each other's experience, exchange thoughts with the certified psychologist-supervisor, become aware of the diversity of existing opinions. Such sessions are also crucial for the self-awareness, self-reflection and personality growth of students as future psychologists.

All previously described advanced technologies available at RSU are used during lectures and classes.

During their studies at RSU, students have a possibility to ask questions they are interested in, discuss them with the lecturer and fellow students. Problem-centred teaching strategies are used for studies. All additional study course materials are freely available to the students in the e-studies environment. It also provides references to additional information sources for studying the specific issues, as well as materials for self-guided learning (for example, practical assignments that can be done at home with self-assessment algorithm).

Both formative and summative assessment is used in the studies. Formative evaluation takes place during everyday study process: by asking control questions to the students during the contact lessons, as well as by discussing the independent works of students that are practised during the study process. Summative evaluation takes place at the conclusion of each study course as an examination. Summative evaluation tests are organised in a written form (in paper format or electronically) or as oral discussions. At the conclusion of the first semester of the study programme the student selects a topic he or she is interested in and in cooperation with selected paper supervisor develops and defends the Master's thesis in the last semester. Students have access to the list of topics to choose from on the RSU website (for example see the section of the Department of Health Psychology and Paedagogy in Latvian:

<https://www.rsu.lv/veselibas-psihologijas-un-pedagogijas-katedra>, in English: <https://www.rsu.lv/en/departament-health-psychology-and-paedagogy>). Topics are mainly developed within different projects, therefore students have the opportunity to deepen their knowledge and skills in research in cooperation with a team of researchers.

The system for assessment of studies in the Master's programme "Health Psychology" is based on three basic principles – a positive assessment of the learning of the study programme is mandatory; all courses use different forms of interim examination (test work, presentations, tests, etc.) and one final test form – an examination; both knowledge and skills and competencies and also the skills through which students are able to use the theoretically learned material in practice in each subject.

The assessment system for each particular course is specified in the course description. At the beginning of each module and course, the students are informed about the assessment criteria. Results are assessed using the 10-point system, considering the assessment of 4 points (almost satisfactory) as the lowest successful assessment. The final grade is the sum of all grades that the students receive for various activities during the implementation of the study course.

Acquiring the study material is assessed by the following forms of examination:

- 1) attendance of lectures, seminars and practical classes;
- 2) participation and quality of answers in seminar classes, as well as completion of tests;
- 3) development and defence of a theoretical report or empirical research;
- 4) examination.

When learning a study course, each student may follow their assessments in the e-study environment.

The staff of the DHPP department follows up the students' progress and students are regularly informed about their assessments in line with data protection policies. The general status of progress is discussed at least once per semester in the meeting between the management of the department of the study programme and students of each year, as well as is analysed by study quality supervision institutes – examined in the study quality council, the dean's council.

Studies are characterised by individual attitudes towards students, stimulating creative attitude, freedom of expression and academic ethics. Cases of plagiarism in student paper are examined at the meeting of the DHPP department. In the case of repeated deliberate plagiarism, the student may be excluded without the right to be restored as an RSU student.

As already mentioned, by the end of each academic year, students are asked to complete the evaluation survey in the RSU e-environment, where they can express their opinion and provide proposals both regarding the content of the study course and the methods of implementation thereof, as well as the competence and work style of the lecturers. Therefore, study courses are updated each year in accordance with the evaluation given by the students. Student representatives are also involved in faculty councils, as well as study quality councils ensuring representation of their opinion in decision-making.

In general, RSU practises student-centred education, providing that:

- an independently learning student is at the centre of the study process;
- learning outcomes are clearly formulated and known, and the student studies to achieve them;
- students know and understand the intended learning outcomes of the study programme or

course;

- evaluation of the student's achievements is formed in a way that it is possible to check whether and at what level the planned learning outcomes have been achieved;
- the lecturer's task is to facilitate the study process of the student so that the student achieves the set learning outcomes;
- it can be observed that the aggregate of outcomes of separate study courses forms the learning outcomes of the study programme.

Learning outcomes of the study programme are formulated in a student-centred way and the outcomes:

- establish a unified understanding of students and teaching staff regarding of what is expected from the student at the end of the course or the programme;
- provide the students with an opportunity to study more effectively, i.e., students clearly know what knowledge and skills they will obtain if they successfully complete the respective course. The students can also track what they have learned already and what they still need to learn, and what is their progress towards achieving the outcomes of the programme;
- present a tool for the teaching staff to be able to organise the study process more effectively: lectures, seminars, group work, discussions, etc., by selecting topics and materials, as well as learning strategies in accordance with the learning outcomes specified for the study course or study programme;
- create a mutual understanding between the teaching staff and colleagues on the learning outcome of the course and the appropriate learning method;
- identify the areas where certain types of learning outcomes overlap or lack (by comparing courses and compliance thereof with the programme);
- aid the students in selecting, which courses to study in accordance with the learning outcomes the student wishes to achieve;
- provide clear information for employers on the knowledge and skills the students have acquired, as well as provide an opportunity to assess this knowledge and skills in accordance with the defined professional qualification.

The study implementation and evaluation methods applied contribute to the achievement of the study course results and the aim set for the study programme.

The choice of forms and timing for the implementation of studies is, in general, evaluated as successful under the given conditions of the higher education market. Assessment methods are sufficiently diverse, but their suitability must be re-examined again and again in such a way that students are aware of the effectiveness and integrity of tests in the study process and in real life needs.

2.4. If the study programme entails a traineeship, provide the analysis and assessment of the relation between the tasks of the traineeship included in the study programme and the learning outcomes of the study programme. Specify how the higher education institution/ college supports the students within the study programme regarding the fulfilment of the tasks set for students during the traineeship.

The professional Master's study programme "Health Psychology" provides a placement in the amount of 26 CP. The aim of placement in the study programme is to provide students with an in-depth knowledge, skills and competence in line with the standards of the psychologist's profession

(Niedre, R., Strika, E., Avotiņa, Z., Lazda, R., Caune, D., Mūze, E., Vlasenko, O., Silkāne, V., Koļesņikova, J., Mihailova, S. un Jurisa, I. (2019). Standard for the Psychologist's Profession. Approved at the TCSVEE (PINTSA) meeting on 12.06.2019, minutes No. 4. Obtained from <https://visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-108.pdf>) (available only in Latvian).

Basing on the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 512 "Regulations on the National Standard of the Second Level Professional Higher Education" Paragraph 23.3 "placement in the amount of at least 26 credit points, if it is intended for graduates of the academic bachelor study programme, or in the amount of at least six credit points, if it is intended for graduates of the bachelor programme", as of 26.08.2014, Study Planning I with the amount of 26 credit points for placement and Study Planning II with the amount of 6 credit points for placement have been created.

The professional master's study programme "Health Psychology" (study planning I - total amount of credit points: 80) provides for practice in the amount of 26 CP.

In the first study year, the placement course "Psychological Examination and Counselling Placement I" (10 CP) is implemented, which is divided into two semesters. In the first semester, students participate in an introductory seminar on psychological research methods, cognitive process, emotional / motivational research for children, possibilities and limitations of application of methods, as well as students get acquainted with the results of psychological research, basic principles. The seminar is led by a certified psychologist-supervisor – RSU lecturer. Secondly, students observe psychological research work with children of a certified psychologist-supervisor. Thirdly, psychological examinations are performed with at least 4 children under the supervision of a certified psychologist-supervisor.

In the second semester, the placement course is organised similarly, including an introductory seminar on psychological research methods for adults, as well as including observation and psychological research work of certified psychologist-supervisor with adults for at least 4 clients / patients.

In the placement course "Development of Methodological Materials and Psychoeducation in the Placement of Psychology" (2 CP) students perform psychoeducational work for a certain target audience (in the amount of 4–6 h), developing an educational programme and methodological material in psychology based on professional information sources.

In the second year, the placement course "Psychological Examination and Counselling Placement II" (14 CP) includes psychological counselling of 4 clients / patients and application of psychological assistance methods under the supervision of the placement supervisor, certified psychologist.

At the beginning of this course students also participate in an introductory seminar, taught by a certified psychologist-supervisor, on psychological counselling and psychological assistance methods, their application possibilities and limitations, principles on how to prepare cooperation report with clients / patients. Secondly, students observe the work of psychological counselling with clients / patients by a certified psychologist. Thirdly, under the supervision of a certified psychologist, clients / patients are provided with psychological counselling and psychological assistance methods.

The professional master's study programme "Health Psychology" (study planning II – total amount of credit points: 60) provides for placement in the amount of 6 CP.

In the first year, students acquire the placement course "Psychological Examination and Counselling Placement" (4 CP). The implementation of the course is divided into two semesters:

In the first semester, students participate in an introductory seminar led by a certified psychologist

supervisor – RSU lecturer, on psychological research methods for adults and children, their application methods and limitations, as well as on results of psychological research basic principles. Secondly, students observe psychological research work with children and adults of a certified psychologist-supervisor. Thirdly, psychological examinations are performed with at least 2 children and 2 adults under the supervision of a certified psychologist-supervisor.

In the second semester placement course is organised similarly including an introductory seminar, led by a certified psychologist-supervisor, RSU lecturer, on psychological counselling and psychological assistance methods, their application possibilities and limitations, as well as on basic principles of cooperation with clients / patients.

Secondly, students observe the work of psychological counselling with clients / patients by a certified psychologist. Thirdly, clients / patients are provided with psychological counselling under the supervision of a certified psychologist, using psychological assistance methods for at least 2 clients / patients.

In the placement course “Development of Methodological Materials and Psychoeducation in the Placement of Psychology” (2CP) students perform psychoeducational work for a certain target audience (in the amount of 4–6 h), developing an educational programme and methodological material in psychology based on professional information sources.

In addition, starting from 2020, 2nd year students under the supervision of a certified psychologist and in cooperation with RSU Student Service offer psychological support group seminars for students (see <https://www.rsu.lv/aktualitates/aprilis-emocionalas-labsajutas-menesis-rsu-career-center> (information available only in Latvian)), as well as provide RSU students with psychological assistance in various issues (see <https://www.rsu.lv/aktualitates/rsu-studejosajai-tiessaiste-pieejams-psihologiskais-atbalsts> (information available only in Latvian)): Overcoming and reducing stress, self-regulation, effective time planning during studies, social self-isolation in an emergency situation, awareness of resources, starting and maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and other issues.

Thus, the necessary basic knowledge, skills and competence, as specified in the Standard for the Psychologist’s Profession, are learned in the study programme. On the other hand, the knowledge, skills and competence specified in Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 301 of 29 May 2018 “Regulations on Psychologists” are developed in further professional activity – in accordance with the chosen field of professional activity (read more^[1]). This approach is in line with the description of professional competence in Europe (*European Certificate in Psychology (EuroPsy) & European Federation of Psychologists’ Associations* (2017). *EFPA Regulations on EuroPsy and Appendices*. Obtained from <https://www.europsy.eu>)

For example, in order to ensure provisions of the standard for the psychologist’s profession with regard to psychological assessment, psychological counselling and assistance (including crisis intervention), the Master’s study programme includes the following compulsory study courses: “Research Methods in Psychology” (2 CP), “Cognitive and Behavioural Therapy” (2 CP), “Short-Term Counselling” (2 CP), “Crisis and Trauma Psychology” (2 CP), as well as “Psychological Examination and Counselling Placement” (24 CP) and “Development of Methodological Materials and Psychoeducation in the Placement of Psychology” (2 CP). These study courses provide basic competence which is developed in the further professional specialisation of a psychologist.

The tasks of student placement included in the study programme are linked to the learning outcomes to be achieved in the study programme and are reflected in the mapping results of the study programme.

The placement tasks include:

1. Under the supervision of the placement supervisor (certified psychologist-supervisor) to develop and implement on practice-based evidence a psychoeducational programme – project (methodological material) according to the selected target audience and its purpose.
2. Under the supervision of the placement supervisor, to conduct psychological assessment according to the request and to the needs of the client/patient. Preparation of opinions on the results of psychological assessment.
3. Under the supervision of the placement supervisor – to conduct psychological counselling to clients/patients using psychological assistance techniques (including remotely) according to the request and/or the needs of the client/patient. Preparation of cooperation reports and other documents.
4. To evaluate the results of one's own work with arguments and formulate the tasks of professional development.
5. To regularly attend (at least 85%) placement supervision sessions and present a case study in a group.
6. To prepare placement documentation (according to the set criteria) and present it during the defence of placement.

Placement tasks are described in detail in the placement annex (see page Annex 9). The Master student needs to go through the placement sequentially. Each subsequent placement stage can be started only after successful completion of the examination of the previous placement stage, which ends with a qualification exam with a theoretical and practical part. After the respective placement, students have acquired the appropriate knowledge, skills, and competences.

It should be further emphasised that Master students should participate in the introductory seminar (led by a certified psychologist – RSU lecturer) on placement tasks, where the knowledge, skills and competences previously acquired on psychological assessment methods, the possibilities and limitations of their use, the basic principles for preparing opinions on the results of psychological assessment, as well as individual psychological counselling and assistance, basic principles for the preparation of cooperation reports are updated/revised in a concentrated way. In addition to the organisation of placement in a remote environment, the rules “RULES on the provision of individual and group counselling in a remote environment in the study programme “Health Psychology”” and placement documentation have been developed. Students also have an opportunity to familiarise with the topics of online interventions/digital technologies in counselling (see <https://www.rsu.lv/aktualitates/rsu-petnieki-izmegina-jaunu-psihologiska-atbalsta-programmu-studentiem> (page is available only in latvian)).

The higher education institution supports the students within the study programme regarding the fulfilment of the tasks set for students during the placement. Administrative resources are provided for the development of study programme placement. Students are provided with placement sites in accordance with contracts concluded. Students have the option of choosing placement sites, including remote placement (see “RULES on the provision of individual and group counselling in a remote environment in the study programme “Health Psychology”).

It is essential that employers are actively involved in the consulting on the study process of the programme, including planning, implementation and evaluation (work of the Study Quality Council, the State Qualification Examination, lectures/classes). Cooperation with employers is attested by concluded cooperation agreements, for example, with following health care institutions:

- SLLC NRC “Vaivari”,
- SLLC Psychiatry and Narcology Centre;
- SLLC Hospital “Ģintermuiža”,
- SLLC Children's Clinical University Hospital, Children's Psychiatry Clinic

- LLC “Riga East University Hospital”.

Agreements on student supervision placement with working and certified psychologists in these institutions have also been concluded, which in turn ensure the availability of placement supervisors and the quality supervision of students. Several students after their placement in health care institutions were invited to stay and they continue working as psychologists after graduating the university.

Graduates mainly work in their profession (state health care and rehabilitation institutions and educational institutions, social services, social agencies, the National Armed Forces (professional military service), private practices, private organisations, etc.), as well as continue doctoral studies.

See Annex 9.1 “Description of the student placement organisation”.

See Annex 9.1.1 “Description of the student placement organisation – remotely”

See Annex 9.2 Information on contracts and other confirmations about the provision of student placements in companies.

[1] Mārtinsone K., Girgensone B. (red.). (2019). Psihologu profesionālā darbība Latvijā: saturs, organizācija, regulējums. Psihologu likuma komentāri. Rīga: Tiesu namu aģentūra, 365 lpp).

2.5. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the evaluations of the final theses.

Thematic directions of graduation papers of students are defined in accordance with development of the industry and market, and topics and specialisation directions of lecturers and professors of the department, as well as projects currently implemented by the department. The thematic directions of Master’s thesis are mainly formulated in 5 large blocks:

1. Psychological assistance and support in work with different groups of clients and patients, its transformation during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Psychological assistance and support in remote work.
3. Basic principles of didactics in patients/clients’ education.
4. Health behaviour as disease prevention and online intervention to foster health behaviour.
5. Normal and abnormal cognitive ageing and related factors.

However, since students choose topics independently and formulate them together with scientific supervisors of the study programme, graduation papers may also be on other innovative topics differing from the above-mentioned ones.

Students receive an assessment for their graduation paper by successfully defending it – presenting and answering questions of the commission. It should be noted that papers of many students in the period being covered were assessed as excellent and have been a valuable contribution to the development of psychological science in Latvia, were presented at international conferences and published in scientific, reviewed journals. This fact is illustrated by the information collected on directions of psychological education, which broadly reflects activities of students and its results in research, see in Latvian: Psychological education at RSU.

Since the management and lecturers of the programme – supervisors of Master's theses work specifically to guarantee the motivation of students and the quality of Master's theses, the overall quality of the Master's theses is good. In recent years, only about a quarter of papers have been assessed below 7 (good), there is only one paper with lowest assessment possible – 4 (almost satisfactory), and one of the papers assessed by the commission was unsatisfactory. Most often, around a quarter of all the papers defended, papers are assessed with 8 (very good). This has been achieved through motivational and preparatory measures, including, in particular, the study course "Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methodology" intended the preparation of the graduation paper, the concept development and development of the research design. The abstracts of the Master's thesis are assessed in the defence of abstracts, the first version of the paper – assessed by the commission of the teaching staff of the FPHSW in a pre-defence of the paper, where the quality of work is evaluated very carefully advising not to submit the paper if its quality is not high enough. There were two students in the reporting period who did not submit their paper based on the recommendation of the commission develop it more qualitatively and defend it in one of the following years.

When assessing the topics of graduation papers, it should be noted that they are diverse, students often take on serious challenges in the psychological area and do so in very high quality, they often reach important conclusions.

Topics of the graduation papers of students are summarised in Annex 22.

17.2. Compliance of study programmes with the specific normative regulation of the field of psychologists

18.2. Correspondence of the qualification obtained in the study programme to the professional standard.

2.6. Analysis and assessment of the outcomes of the surveys conducted among the students, graduates, and employers, and the use of these outcomes for the improvement of the content and quality of studies by providing the respective examples.

The management of the programme highly appreciates the analysis of student survey on the study process, its results, the positive and negative sides. Due to the relatively limited number of students in the Master's study programme, it is possible to carry out a qualitative evaluation – in each study year, at least regularly, the head of the study programme meets with students to evaluate the last stage of studies and prepare for the next stage, and to answer to questions and comments of students.

Students systematically evaluate the study process in two quantitative surveys:

- 1) each study course is evaluated in detail in an anonymous survey after its completion;
- 2) a survey of graduates evaluates the studies as a whole.

This data is support for the programme and department management in the further improvement of and prevention of shortcomings in the programme, although it should be said that, given that there are not many students in general (for example, the number of graduates was 16 in 2017, and 11 in 2018), the problems, if any, are addressed in a timely manner. However, it is evaluated

positively that almost all students and graduates participate in surveys (all of them in the end-of-course survey), and the data are carefully evaluated. For example, the number of students who provided answers about the study programme in ac. y. 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 was 100%.

Every semester, students complete surveys on study courses and a feedback system is also in place, in which lecturer discusses the evaluation provided with students. Consequently, all parties are involved in the improvement of the study programme and there is bilateral communication. Master students completed the RSU's electronic questionnaire (evaluation on a 4-point system). For example, the analysis in ac. y. 2018/2019 shows that the average evaluation is high – 3.53 points. The last survey results show that, generally, graduates would like more information about different patient groups and different working environments. Thus, in the new year of studies, the study course “Clinical and Health Psychology” will be implemented with an expanded clinical psychology curriculum. The survey results obtained show that students were actively involved in the evaluation process of study courses and the study programme. The completion of student surveys is facilitated by the successful cooperation between students and lecturers, the management of the programme and the department.

In general, according to survey data, students of the study programme are generally very satisfied with studies, including the choice of the study programmes and the university, although they also mention that they expected higher level of teaching in some study courses. In particular, students were satisfied with the planning of lectures and the availability of information about them, and also its material and technical supplies. Students are not particularly concerned about individual elements of studies – most of students evaluate lectures and visiting lectures, as well as seminars, tutorials and practical work positively. It should be noted that RSU regularly invites visiting lecturers to contribute to the development of psychology education. For example, in 2019, students and graduates welcomed the opportunity to visit visiting lectures by *Dr. psych.* Larisa Lagutina and learn about neurobiology of trauma, attachment and early relationship traumas, intergenerational traumas, trauma and therapeutic relationships (see <https://www.rsu.lv/en/events/2019-psychology-days-guest-lecture-understanding-trauma>).

Students are informed about the need to complete evaluation surveys by the education organisation specialist of the RSU DHPP, as well as the head of the study programme, regarding the evaluation of study courses – the head of the study course.

Recommendations of students are evaluated on a regular basis and special attention in the improvement of the quality of the study process is devoted to *ensuring feedback*:

- meetings with the head of the programme are systematically organised to discuss the needs of the students during the study process;
- students are personally informed about changes to study courses based on the results of student survey;
- the students participate in the evaluation of the study process and its results within the Study Quality Council (students of the 1st and 2nd year) and provide their recommendations to improve the study programme (DHPP lecturers provide feedback to students in 100% of cases);
- the students participate in the evaluation of the study process and its results within the Study Quality Council (Master students of the 1st and 2nd year) and provide their recommendations to improve the study programme.

In separate discussions with students, a lot of attention is paid directly to the evaluation of course curriculum, teaching practice, tasks and teaching manners of the course teacher. Given that there are not many students in the Master's study programme, it is quality in-depth information that gives a more accurate and constructive idea of what is happening in the programme and what

students want. The information obtained is regularly discussed with the head of the study programme, the head of the department and the lecturers, whose work has shortcomings. This is done in order to qualitatively improve the study process – content, planning, methods, including assessment methods and the type of tests.

In order to ensure the compliance of the knowledge, competences and skills of the results of the study programme with the needs of the labour market, as mentioned above, employers are also involved in the work of the Study Quality Council, the State Qualification Examination, the implementation of lectures/classes. It should be noted that an electronic survey of employers (managers of health care institutions) is being carried out with a view to learning the extent to which the services of a psychologist are requested and what should be supplemented in the curriculum of the study programme (see Annex XX). Employers highly evaluate the opportunities of the labour market for psychologists prepared in a modern and qualitative way. The recommendations for the development of the programme highlight the need to focus more attention on multidisciplinary teams and training on cooperation with other specialists in study courses. It should be noted that the management of the programme is aware of these challenges and is guided by these considerations in daily work.

The most important evaluation of employers for the RSU study programme “Health Psychology” is reflected in the employment data of RSU students and graduates:

- 1) in parallel to studies, students in the study programme work in the sector – this means that the curriculum and outcomes of the education provided by the programme are highly appreciated by specialists and management of the sector;
- 2) many graduates of the study programme are employed as psychologists,
- 3) immediately after completing the Master’s study programme, former students often become lecturers of the programme, continuing with doctoral studies at RSU.

An excellent example here is the student of the RSU doctoral study programme “Psychology”, who also started teaching at RSU without leaving her practical work as a psychologist.

In general, surveys of students, graduates and employers are an important tool for ensuring the quality of the study programme.

2.7. Provide the assessment of the options of the incoming and outgoing mobility of the students, the dynamics of the number of the used opportunities, and the recognition of the study courses acquired during the mobility.

Once a year, students of the study programme have the possibility to participate in a competition to study in one of the foreign universities, with which RSU concluded ERASMUS exchange agreements in the field of psychology, using the ERASMUS scholarship (see Annex 7). The management of the study programme support such an opportunity and, when assessing the study plan in a foreign university on the basis of quality, volume, content and learning outcomes include the material learned by the student in studies abroad. As Master studies last only two years, and students often in parallel work professionally and/or do not want to leave the country for a longer period because of family conditions, so far, a relatively small number of students have taken advantage of this opportunity – one student has studied psychology at the University of Padua (Italy) since 2016.

It should be noted that cooperation with foreign countries has been improved, for example, cooperation agreements were concluded (ERASMUS mobility of students and lecturers, see page Annex 7): with the University of Padua (Italy), the Ruppin Academic Center and the Tel Aviv University (Israel), the University of Cyprus (Cyprus), University of Algarve (Portugal) and the Vytautas Magnus University (Lithuania).

The lecturers of the study programme offer and annually implement psychology study courses in English for foreign students: VPUPK_266 Self-Efficacy and Self-Regulation, course supervisor: J. Ļubenko (2 CP, (B) elective study course); VPUPK_142 Health Behaviour, course supervisor: K. Vende-Kotova (2 CP, (B) elective study course); VPUPK_268 Human Resource Management, study course supervisor: E. Čukurs, ĀSN REHM, (2 CP, (B) elective study course).

Recognition of study courses takes place through careful and individual evaluation and in accordance with the procedure adopted by RSU. That is, since the courses learned in foreign universities differ in content and size in most cases from those of the RSU FPHSW Master's study programme "Health Psychology" in the relevant semester, the management of the programme has carefully assessed the content and extent of each foreign university course, taking into account the interests and needs of the student (mostly selected in the context of the Master's thesis topic), creates a list of courses to be learned in the context of mobility so that the learning outcomes of the course were comparable to the learning outcomes of the courses in the RSU programme. Flexibility here is provided by the relatively large number of elective courses after the first semester of studies.

III - DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME (3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme)

3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples. Whilst carrying out the assessment, it is possible to refer to the information provided for in the criteria set forth in Part II, Chapter 3, sub-paragraphs 3.1 to 3.3.

The study base formed for the study direction is used for providing the study programme – library, classroom, technical supplies, computers, cameras, internet connection, etc. Specific learning resources are almost entirely provided in e-studies, including descriptions of study courses, tasks and tests, if any, as well as required readings. Educational literature is mostly provided through e-books and e-journals or by scanning key pieces of text and by placing in e-studies, or using internet sources – with a view to provide students with the possibility to read on e-devices (although in some cases teachers specifically ask students to work in the library).

The library provides lecturers and students with access to Latvian and international electronic resources, including qualitative information in the psychology sector. For information on the RSU Library resources and services see Description of the study direction "Psychology" (Section 2, point 3.3).

The library has SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) program installed on computers. It should be noted that the Statistical Unit, by promoting the scientific activities of RSU students and lecturers, offers consultations on research methodologies, data input, the use of data processing programmes, methods of statistical processing of data, analysis, interpretation and graphic presentation of results.

At the beginning of the implementation of each study course, the lecturer, together with the department assistant re-organises the e-studies website, updating tasks and lists of literature. In order to improve the compliance of the library collection with the needs of students, work is ongoing with lists of study course readings, there is cooperation with university lecturers to inform about the situation with supplies of study course literature and popularise e-resources, while users have the possibility to fill an electronic questionnaire for supplementing the library collection. The lecturer continues to work on the website during the implementation of the study course, using it also for communication with students, notices and answers to questions. In order to ensure deeper integration of the e-environment in the study process, there are plans to develop the diversity of tools offered by the *moodle* environment – to diversify tasks and forms of communication.

Successful cooperation with the Psychology Laboratory (PL) also contributes to the development and adaptation of psychological assessment tools that meet modern scientific requirements. As it was mentioned in Paragraph 2.3 above, a publicly available register of questionnaires and tests has been established in the PL for the purpose of informing students and lecturers of the psychological instruments developed and adapted by RSU (see in Latvian:

<https://www.rsu.lv/psihologijas-laboratorija>, in English: <https://www.rsu.lv/en/psychology-laboratory>).

In addition, PL is equipped with digitised psychological tests, equipment for electroencephalogram and a biofeedback system. PL provides students in the study process with simulation placement that enable them to study without risks to the health of the client/patient and to develop new competencies in a safe environment. Simulation placement contributes to the development and improvement of psychological counselling and assessment competencies.

The creation of PL contributes to better quality research in various projects, as well as to the use of material, technical and human resources in the study process, for example, as part of The Effect of Lifetime Physical Activity on the Burden Caused by Cognitive Disfunction and Depression in Elderly [ELPA-COG] researchers of the psychology laboratory and Master students conduct research for assessment of cognitive reserves of seniors. In the course of the education process, researchers and Master students use not only psychological tests but also the “Mitsar EEG 201” electroencephalogram system, which is in line with the RSU Development Strategy Action Plan on the Integration of Studies and Research, Research Innovation. The technical resources and potential of PL contribute to the involvement of Master students in research and the attraction of new doctoral students.

For example, the results of the “The effects of long-term physical activity on the burden caused by cognitive dysfunction and depression in elderly people” project contribute to an increase in the number of publications, such as:

- Sneidere, K., Mondini, S., & Stepens, A. (2020). Role of EEG in Measuring Cognitive Reserve: A Rapid Review. *Aging Neurosci.*, | <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnagi.2020.00249>
- Sneidere, Kristine & Ozoliņa, Zane & Stepens, Ainars. (2020). Work-related cognitive reserve predicts cognitive functioning and depression in older adults. SOCIETY. INTEGRATION. EDUCATION. Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference. 7. 168. 10.17770/sie2020vol7.5116. Šneidere, K., Alruwais, N., Dowell, N. G., Arnis, V., Harlamova, J., Kupčs, K., ... & Rusted, J. (2019, May). Differences in long-and short-term memory performance and brain matter integrity in seniors with different physical activity experience.

In order to improve the content of the study programme, as well as to introduce innovative methods in study processes, RSU involves foreign visiting academic staff and visiting lecturers. The lectures/classes and master classes by visiting lecturers implemented so far (for example, R. Viers (University of Amsterdam, Netherlands), S. Mondini (University of Padua, Italy), B. Woods (University of Cambridge, UK), J. Rusted (University of Sussex, UK), E. Vinnik (Portugal), V. Žydzūnaite (Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania), R. Augutavicius (Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania), J. Kropotov (Institute of the Human Brain of the Academy of Sciences, Russia), S. Kreitlere (Tev Aviv University, Israel), E. Netere (Ruppin Academic Centre, Israel), S. Čipoleta (University of Padua, Italy), A. Goštauts (Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania), R. Samaritere (Codarts University, Netherlands), J. Nikolajeva (Emperor Alexander I St. Petersburg State Transport University, Russia), S. Hoferkov (University of Hradec Králové, Czech Republic, etc.) have significantly supplemented the curriculum of the study programme “Health Psychology”, which is in line with learning outcomes. Good international relations provide an opportunity to learn the experience of other countries, to learn new methods and technologies for improving the quality of studies.

At RSU, it is also possible to learn the psychological assessment methods developed by the university's leading researchers or adapted and standardised in Latvia in research projects (see Paragraph 4.1) with involvement of students. A good example is the Latvian Clinical Personality Test (Perepjolkina, Koļesņikova, Mārtinsons, Stepens) created within the framework of the National Research Programme BIOMEDICINE, which allows for a multilateral assessment of the psychological state of an adult individual, emotional and social adaptation capabilities and difficulties of an adult individual, the perception of oneself and other persons, emotional reactions and other behavioural peculiarities, i.e. better understanding of the diversity of personality characteristics, including abnormal behaviour trends. Students of the study programme have the possibility to acquire necessary knowledge of the theoretical structure of the test, as well as students use this tool in practice under the supervision of a psychologist-supervisor. RSU provides training on this test to certified psychologists in continuing education.

Under the conditions of COVID-19, for the promotion of resilience and the identification of resources in the Latvian population, including students, RSU lecturers, together with students of the Master's study programme “Health Psychology” developed and presented at the RSU Scientific Conference “Psychological resources and risk factors for the health of the population under the COVID-19 conditions. National programme research for practice” 10 video clips, 11 psychoeducational programmes and recommendations (see <https://www.rsu.lv/konference-psiologiskie-resursi-riska-faktori-veselibai-covid>) (available only in Latvian).

In addition to Riga as to the place of implementation of the study programme, on 13 July 2018 Academic Information Centre approved another place of implementation of this study programme in Liepāja. The organisation and management of the study process of the study programmes in the Liepāja branch foresees that the study process is provided both in person and in the form of online video lectures simultaneously in Rīga and Liepāja. In the implementation and coordination of the study programmes one RSU lecturer has been involved. Distance learning studies are not planned. The achievement and evaluation system for students in Liepāja branch is identical as for students in Rīga and the descriptions of study courses are the same.

It is planned for the students of the study programme “Health Psychology” in Liepāja branch to continue cooperation by concluding an agreement with “Piejūras slimnīca VSIA” in Liepāja (see

document No. 48-23/2017/0211), as well as to establish cooperation with “Liepājas reģionālā slimnīca SIA” and conclude an agreement in the fall semester 2021/2022 ac. y.

Based on the admission results for the previous three-year period, starting from 2018, 27 students study in the professional bachelor’s study programme “Psychology” in Liepaja branch, thus it is planned that graduates of bachelor study programme will continue studies in Liepaja branch master’s study programme “Health Psychology”, starting from 2022/2023 ac. y.

In general, students get a complete study process, which includes the opportunity to study using the most advanced possibilities both in information circulation and use of advanced technological equipment in the study process, and in modern approach, using interactive approaches, advantages and convenience of e-studies environment. It is important to note that ensuring a complete study process contributes to the involvement of Master students in research. The Psychology Laboratory provides an additional quality learning process and contributes to the development of evidence-based practice. The attraction of foreign visiting lecturers greatly enriches the curriculum and outcome of the study programme.

3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific support, including the resources provided within the cooperation with other science institutes and institutions of higher education (applicable to the doctoral study programmes).

Not applicable

III - DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME (4. Teaching Staff)

4.1. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.

Those lecturers are involved in the implementation of the study direction and programmes, whose qualification and competence are at high level and have been evaluated during a long cooperation period, therefore changes to the composition of the teaching staff are relatively insignificant – lecturers of only 5 study courses have changed. In the study courses “Analytical Statistical Methods in Psychological Research”, “Psychosocial Aspects and Psychosocial Rehabilitation of Health and Diseases” this happened for the purposes of replacing lecturers working based on a contract with elected teaching staff of RSU FPHSW as course leaders, who invite visiting lecturers and visiting teachers to deepen and specify individual segments of curriculum. The list of teaching staff involved in the study programme has been supplemented also by introducing new study courses in the study programme, for example, “Digital Technology Use in Psychology”, “Military Psychology I” and “Military Psychology II”, “Social Neuroscience”. It is also important to diversify the perspective by inviting representatives of other sciences to ensure interdisciplinarity in the study programme. The cooperation with RSU Department of Public Health and Epidemiology, as part of which Prof. Ģirts Brīdis teaches the study course “Clinical and Health Psychology” is a good example. The important aim set by the management of the study programme in the context of European higher

education internationalisation policy is the attraction of foreign lecturer. During the reporting period, it not only succeeded in attracting several foreign experts in the field of psychology as visiting lecturers (for example, E. Vinnik (Portugal) partly implemented the study course “Social Neuroscience”, P. Tzotzoli (UK) read lectures/classes in the study course “Digital Technology Use in Psychology”), but has also has established long-term cooperation with foreign lecturers entrusting them the development and teaching of individual study courses (for example, Prof. E. Neter (Ruppin Academic Center, Israel), prof. S. Mondini (University of Padova, Italy) or Prof. J. Kropotovs (Institute of the Human Brain, Russia). This strategy is considered to be an important quality guarantor by the management of the study programme and it will continue to be implemented in the future.

It should also be noted that during the Covid-19 pandemic, lecturers are actively involved in various projects (see below) and are conducting research together with students. For example, in cooperation with researchers from the University of Cyprus Maria Karekla, Angelos Kassianos and Andrew Gloster the lecturer Jelena Lubenko participated in the Project COVID-19 IMPACT (Combatting Mechanisms and Behaviour due to COVID-19) (04.2020-08.2020) The following publications were prepared as a result that:

1. Gloster, A. T., Lamnisos, D., Lubenko, J., Presti, G., Squatrito, V., Constantinou, M., & Karekla, M. (2020). Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on mental health: An international study. *PloS one*, 15(12), e0244809.
2. Chong, Y. Y., Chien, W. T., Lamnisos, D., Lubenko, J., Presti, G., Squatrito, V., & Constantinou, M. (2021). Patterns of Psychological Responses Among the Public During The Early Phase Of COVID-19: A Cross-Regional Analysis. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18084143>
3. Neto, D. D., da Silva, A. N., Roberto, M. S., Lubenko, J., & Constantinou, M. (2021). Illness Perceptions of COVID-19 in Europe: Predictors, Impacts and Temporal Evolution. *Frontiers in Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.640955>

It should be noted that lecturers participated in mobility projects (Erasmus+ and other) gaining teaching experience in the international environment:

- 2016. Jeļena Koļesņikova and Aelita Vagale, University of Padua, Italy.
- 2017. Indra Majore Dūšele, Edge Hill University, UK.
- 2018. Indra Majore Dūšele, Tallinn University, Estonia.
- 2019. Ervīns Čukurs and Jeļena Harlamova, Università Degli Studi di Padova, Italy.
- 2020. Jeļena Ļubenko and Jeļena Koļesņikova, University of Algarve, Portugal.
- 2021. Kristīne Vende-Kotova, Tallinn University, Estonia.
- 2022. Indra Majore Dūšele, Edge Hill University, UK.
- 2023. Inguna Giskeviča, University of Coimbra, Portugal.
- 2024. Kristīne Mārtinsone, Klaipėdas University, Lithuania.
- 2025. Jeļena Koļesņikova and Jeļena Ļubenko, University of Cyprus, Cyprus.
- 2026. Kristīne Mārtinsone, Vilnius University, Lithuania.

Full-time university lecturers are required to participate in research activities that are regulated by staff job descriptions.

The division of responsibilities within a structural unit may be changed by the head of the structural unit in agreement with the employee according to the planning of the pedagogical work and the projects to be implemented.

Lecturers of the RSU study programme have been / are involved in the development of several research projects. Namely:

- Latvian National Research Programme to mitigate the effects of COVID-19. Project No. VPP-

- COVID-2020/1-0011, "The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the health system and public health in Latvia; strengthening the health sector's preparedness for future epidemics";
- Latvian National Research Programme to mitigate the effects of COVID-19. Project No. VPP-COVID-2020/1-0013, "Life with COVID-19: Assessment of overcoming the crisis caused by coronavirus in Latvia and proposals for the sustainability of society in the future";
 - A study on the prevalence of mental disorders and suicidal behaviour in the adult population in Latvia (No. VM 2018/32 / ESF) within ESF project No. 9.2.4.1/16/I/001, "Complex health promotion and disease prevention measures" (2020–2021);
 - Support for the improvement of technology transfer system", activity under the ERDF Specific support objective "Increase private sector investment in R&D" 1.2.1.2., project "Clinical Personality Inventory";
 - Investment and Development Agency of Latvia (IDAL). Project KC-PI-2020/18 "Clinical Personality Inventory" (2021);
 - ESF project No.9.1.3.0/16/I/001 of the Latvian Prison Administration "Increasing efficiency of the resocialisation system" (2017–2022);
 - Latvian National Research Programme (2018–2021). Project "NRP Challenges and solutions of Latvian State and Society in International Framework (INTERFRAME-LV)";
 - "The effect of lifetime physical activity on the burden caused by cognitive dysfunction and depression in elderly (ELPA-COG)" (2019–2020);
 - Project No. 48- 23/2017/0452 "Development of a computerised personality assessment system of an individual" (2017– 2020);
 - Nordplus Project NPAD-2017-10077. "Age is not an obstacle" (2017–2020);
 - LNRP EKOSOC-LV "Reflection on the values and action models during social and economic changes" (2014–2017);
 - 2014 – 2017. NRP BIOMEDICINE "Effect of long-term regular aerobic exercise on cognitive processes – ENABLE-LV".

The projects contribute to the development of scientific capacity and competitiveness, which could also be characterised by the increase in the number of scientific articles in the *Web of Science* databases and *Scopus* journals, which strengthens the authority and recognisability of RSU as a centre of study and science.

It is important to emphasise that the books, methodical and informative learning materials available to students for the achievement of learning outcomes have been developed by lecturers of the study programme.

Methodical materials

- Methodical instructions for development of Master's thesis in RSU psychology, art therapy and supervision study programmes (approved at the meeting of the Department of Health Psychology and Paedagogy, Meeting minutes No.24-45-1/9/2019). (Riga, Rīga Stradiņš University, accepted for publishing).
- [Explanatory dictionary of research terms](https://www.rsu.lv/petniecibas-terminu-vardnica)(available online, only in latvian) Scientific editors: prof. Kristīne Mārtinsons and prof. Anita Pipere. (Riga, Rīgas Stradiņš University, Obtained: <https://www.rsu.lv/petniecibas-terminu-vardnica>).
- Requirements of RSU Department of Health Psychology and Paedagogy for scientific papers' development (approved at the meeting of the Department of Health Psychology and Paedagogy on 13 April 2017, Meeting minutes No.2017/4).
- A collective monograph "Scientific Writing and Scientific Communication" (second, enlarged edition) has been developed. Scientific editors: under the scientific editorship of prof. K. Mārtinsons and A. Pipere, which, inter alia describes international experience gaining practices (Riga, Rīgas Stradiņš University, 2019).

- Group of authors led by prof. K. Mārtinsone have developed an edition “Professional activities of psychologists in Latvia: content, organisation, regulation. Commentary on Law on Psychologists”. (Riga: Tiesu nama aģentūra, 2018, 367 lpp.)
- Lecturers of the psychology direction developed a brochure “Ten Years of Psychology Education” (Riga, Rīga Stradiņš University, 2017).
- A collective monograph “Research: Theory and Practice”. Under scientific editorship of PK. Mārtinsone and A. Pipere, (Riga, RaKa, 2016) has been developed.

Books

- Mārtinsone, K., Pipere, A. (red.) (2021). *Zinātniskās darbības metodoloģija*. Izdevniecība: RSU
- Sudraba, V. un Mārtinsone, K. (2019). *Grupu psiholoģiskā konsultēšana un psihoterapija*. 2.izd. RSU izdevniecība.
- Mārtinsone, K. un Pipere A. (red.). (2019). *Zinātniskā rakstīšana un pētījumu rezultātu izplatīšana*. 2.izd. RSU izdevniecība.
- Mārtinsones, K. un Sudrabas, V. (red.). (2019). *Veselības psiholoģija. Teorijas un prakses starpdisciplinārā perspektīva*. RSU izdevniecība.
- Mārtinsone, K. (Autoru kol.vad.). (2018). *Psihologu profesionālā darbība Latvijā: saturs, organizācija, regulējums. Psihologu likuma komentāri*. Tiesu namu aģentūra.
- Mārtinsone, K. un Pipere, A. (red.). (2018). *Zinātniskā rakstīšana un pētījumu rezultātu izplatīšana*. RSU izdevniecība.
- Bite, I., Mārtinsone, K. un Sudraba V. (2016). *Konsultēšanas un psihoterapijas teorija un prakse*. Zvaigzne ABC
- Mārtinsone, K., Lasmane, A. un Karpova Ā. (2016). *Psiholoģijas vēsture*. Zvaigzne ABC.

Other informative materials

- Martinsone, K. (2021). *Pašpalīdzības un pašvadības iespēju arsenāls*. RSU izdevniecība.
- Mārtinsone, K. un Freimane, G. (2019). *Veselības psiholoģija – psiholoģijas zinātnes apakšnozare un profesionālās darbības joma*. RSU izdevniecība.
- Mārtinsone, K. (sast.). (2017). *Psiholoģijas izglītības desmit gadi Rīgas Stradiņa universitātē*. RSU izdevniecība. Document is available only in latvian: https://www.rsu.lv/sites/default/files/book_download/Psihologijas-izglitibas-10-gadi-RSU_2017.pdf
- Ļevina, J. un Mārtinsone, K. (2016). *Konsultēšana un konsultatīvā psiholoģija*. RSU izdevniecība. Document is available only in latvian: https://www.rsu.lv/sites/default/files/book_download/konsultesana_un_konsultativa_psihologija.pdf

The scientific activity results of the academic staff are summarised once a year and included in the scientific activity report. For some groups of staff, they are related to the principles of remuneration and motivation. The achievements of lecturers are included in persons' CVs in Annex 6.2, summarised in the lists of publications in Annex 6.4 and in the summary of experience and publications in Annex 6.5.

RSU systematically introduces succession solutions, develops motivation programmes for employees of the young generation, as well as seniors, according to the plan. Academic staff is improved in a uniform professional competence improvement and career growth model. In accordance with the RSU Human Resources Development Plan 2017 – 2021, the Centre for Educational Growth (CEG) and the Personnel Department provide a systemic framework for the improvement of competence of academic staff and the curriculum meeting current needs (for more information see the description of the study direction in Section II Paragraph 3.5.).

RSU is constantly planning and implementing activities aimed at motivating the academic staff to engage in high-level scientific and research work, in particular associate professors and professors (aiming to reach 60% of working time spent on research), which will encourage new professionals to engage in industry research, and contribute to the overall development of science at national and international level.

To resume the changes in the composition of lecturers of the study programme, it should be said that the qualifications of the lecturers are very high and comply with the requirements laid down in regulatory enactments. Changes in the composition of lecturers are made in such a way that they do not diminish that quality. Basically, the changes reflect a desire to strengthen this situation, including also in the context of interdisciplinary and internationalisation of higher education.

4.2. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members (academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

The qualification of teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programme corresponds to the conditions of implementation of the study programme and the requirements of regulatory enactments, as well as ensures the achievement of aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and respective study courses. When creating this Master's study programme, research directions and expertise fields of lecturers of the departments have been taken into account. Therefore, most of lecturers engaged in the implementation of the programme, are RSU FPHSW employees.

The study programme is implemented by RSU FPHSW professors – K. Mārtinsone, S. Mihailova, A. Pipere, G. Briģis, D. Mozgis, A. Villeruša and RSU FR professors A. Vētra, S. Tomsone, who are recognised experts in psychology and medical sciences and leading researchers in the fields, in which they teach study courses in the Master's study programme. It is therefore guaranteed that studies will be able to provide in-depth and extensive knowledge and understanding in line with the latest findings and will encourage students to focus on research, being able to use theories and methods approbated in psychology by carrying out independent studies, and will develop the ability of students to analyse and explain. The achievement of these results is guaranteed by the participation of professionals known and experienced in social sciences/psychology in the implementation of the studies. The head of the programme specialises in clinical and health psychology. RSU doctoral students are also involved in teaching, who at the same time are long-serving and well-known lecturers in their industry segments not only as researchers, but also as successful and persuasive practitioners, for example, B. Purvīniece, I. Paiča. Other RSU specialists are also involved for learning of specialisations in different directions – Ņ. Bezborodovs, I. J. Mihailovs.

Invited specialists in various areas, for example, *Dr. psych.* A. Ruža, *Dr. psych.* I. Krone, *Dr. psych.* D. Zanda provide a significant overview of psychology aspects and psychology expertise areas in the study programme "Health Psychology". Foreign lecturers providing students with the experience of other national scientific schools should be particularly highlighted in this respect.

When evaluating the composition of the teaching staff of the study programme and its development strategy, it should be acknowledged that, as a whole, it has been possible to exploit the intellectual and professional potential of department and faculty staff, and, in particular, by raising Erasmus and other project funds, to find solutions for the updating and improvement of study courses with the involvement of foreign specialists, which ensures flexibility and “outside perspective”. A lot of work has also been done for the involvement of practitioners in the study process. However, the number of students in the programme requires compliance with strict economic regime and the load/rate plan to be offered is not acceptable for potential lecturers, so the management of the study programme should seek solutions to attract lecturers with specific specialisation as teaching staff of the study programme.

All teaching staff involved as lecturers or visiting lecturers in the study programme mainly have a doctoral degree in a related discipline (see Annex 24.7 on the analysis of the composition of academic staff involved in the implementation of the study programme). A large part of the lecturers are professionals of their field.

On the other side, the academic and scientific potential of teaching staff of the programme is increasingly strengthened. Several lecturers of the study programme – for example, I. Majore Dūšele K. Šneidere, I. Paiča, B. Purvlniece – have studied the RSU doctoral programme in recent years, while others obtained a higher-level academic position such as, for instance, the dean of RSU FPHSW Inga Millere, who was elected as a professor. Scientific and academic degree is taken into account when employing freelance lecturers and inviting visiting lecturers, they mostly have a doctoral degree or are specialists in their field (practically working) with a master’s degree – only some of the lecturers in the programme have not obtained a doctoral degree.

4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals may be additionally specified (if applicable).

Not applicable

4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).

Not applicable

4.5. Provide examples of the involvement of the academic staff in the scientific research

and/or artistic creation activities both at national and at international level (in the fields related to the content of the study programme), as well as the use of the obtained information in the study process.

As specified in Chapter 4.1, all lecturers of the department and basically also all the lecturers involved in the implementation of the study programme (except invited lecturers having high qualification, long experience and significant experience in the respective professional field) perform scientific research work in parallel to their pedagogical work. The insights and examples from such work enrich the study course content making it up-to-date and close to practice. For example, at the beginning of the study, in the study course “Digital Technology Use in Psychology”, each of the lecturers involved presents the results of their ongoing research involving students in a co-research using focused tasks. Since study methods emphasise the principle of participation, in discussions lecturers tend to use what they have tested in their research and examples as a basis. Lecturers actively involve students in research work also in different projects implemented by the department. The topics of Master’s theses are often related to the topics of research projects conducted by lecturers of the department. A bright example: students perform interdisciplinary innovative research as part of their Master’s thesis using the latest generation technologies. A group of researchers in cooperation with Riga Technical University and the National Armed Forces implement project No. 48- 23/2017/0452 “Development of a computerised individual personality assessment system” (2017–2020), involving students, to create an original computerised individual personality assessment system (CPAS)”. One of the Master’s theses within this project is “Approbation of a Computerised Personality Assessment System and Validation of Social Preferability Scale”.

Lecturers of the study programme foster cooperation with professional organizations abroad. There is a national representative office of the European Health Psychology Society (EHPS), assoc. prof. K. Mārtinsons and assist. prof. Jeļena Koļesnikova are national delegates of EHPS (see <http://www.ehps.net/content/latvia>). Every year lecturers prepare and publish a report on health psychology in Latvia “EHPS Annual National Delegate Report – A brief report about the profession of psychologists in Latvia” (for more detailed information see https://ehps.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/EHPS_annual-report-latvia2019.pdf).

There is international cooperation with the following organisations and universities:

- International Test Commission.
- Institute of the Human Brain, Russia.
- Ruppiner Academic Center, Israel.
- University of Padua, Italy.
- University of Sussex, UK.
- Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania.
- Vilnius University, Lithuania.
- Algarve University, Portugal.
- University of Cyprus, Cyprus.

See Annex 6.4 “Summary of the teaching staff’s publications and experience in the industry”.

Overall, it should be noted that most of lecturers of the study programme constantly perform scientific research work and also get involved in the implementation of projects of the department to provide breadth and continuation of research in the future.

4.6. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).

The lecturers employed in the study programme are invited regularly, several times per semester, to participate in the critical analysis of the study work and in discussions on it. For example, they discuss the results of student surveys among themselves and visiting lecturers are given a brief evaluation with suggestions. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members is very high. It has to be noted that in the work of the teaching staff is a team work in which everyone sees their place and task. Therefore, changes and improvements to the study programme are made directly on the basis of the conclusions of the collegial discussion. For example, when evaluating student survey results, the following measures are implemented:

1. At the meetings of the DHPP, an overall evaluation of the results of the survey is carried by all lecturers of the study programme, the decisions taken on the necessary measures for the improvement of teaching methodological work are discussed.
2. The head of the programme analyses survey results and cooperates with the head of the department and lecturers for the improvement of methodological teaching work.
3. Every year lecturers make required changes to study course descriptions, as well as assessment criteria, taking into account the feedback provided in surveys and recommendations from students regarding the content of the study course, planning of lectures and classes and other matters.
4. The study course descriptions and assessment criteria are updated and refined by the beginning of the new academic year. This work starts after the end of the autumn semester.
5. Survey results are evaluated in the Study Quality Council and possible changes to improve the quality of the study programme are discussed/coordinated.
6. In addition, the curriculum, succession, logic and validity of assessment criteria of study courses are evaluated by the lecturers of the psychology direction involved in the methodological work groups.

In line with the university's strategy and internal procedure, regular observation work is also performed. The cooperation of teaching staff takes place, for example, in the form of attendance of each other's lectures and classes making it possible to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the work. Mutual feedback seminars on current topics are organised for mutual cooperation of lecturers. Several members of teaching staff cooperate by jointly creating study courses, supervising papers of students, as well as performing scientific activity.

Part of the study courses are developed in direct cooperation between several lecturers directly, also by inviting visiting lecturers to provide several perspectives and interpretations for the material being learned in the study course. This diversity of opinions and perspectives, provided by lecturers with experience and knowledge in a single course but in slightly different fields, is very

important in the study programme development strategy. The study course “Clinical and Health Psychology” is one of the best examples. This study course is implemented by three department lecturers – N. Bezborodovs, Ģ. Briģis, and J. Koļesņikova – with involvement of additional new visiting lecturers every year.

As mentioned above, the number of students in the programme has been relatively low by 2019 – there are approximately 35 students in each study year and the number of RSU lecturers involved is 24. The ratio of the number of students and teaching staff in the study programme is 1.46. However, the number of students admitted in 2020 is higher, 42 students in total, therefore the ratio of students to teaching staff is 1.75.

Annexes

III. Description of the Study Programme - 1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education (table)		
Statistics on the students over the reporting period	16_pielik_PMSP_Statistika_eng_Preciz_06_2021.pdf	16_pielik_PMSP_statistika_lv_Preciz_06_2021.pdf
III. Description of the Study Programme - 2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance of the study programme with the State Education Standard	17-1_pielik_Atbalst-izgl-standartam_PMSP_ENG_preciz_06_2021.pdf	17-1_pielik_Atbalst-izgl-standartam_PMSP_lv_preciz_06-2021.pdf
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard (if applicable)	18.2_pielik_Atbalstiba_prof_standartam.pdf	18.2_pielik_Atbalstiba_prof_standartam.pdf
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)	17-1_pielik_Atbalst-izgl-standartam_PMSP_ENG_preciz_06_2021.pdf	17-1_pielik_Atbalst-izgl-standartam_PMSP_lv_preciz_06-2021.pdf
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	18-1_pielik_StK_StR_kartejums_PMSP_eng_preciz-06_2021.pdf	18-1_pielik_StK_StR_kartejums_PMSP_lv_preciz-06_2021.pdf
Curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	19_pielik_VP_planojums_PL_80_un_60_KP_EN.pdf	19_pielik_VP_planojums_PL_80_un_60_KP_LV.pdf
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	20.1_pielik_kursu_apraksti_EN_precizets.pdf	20.1_pielik_kursu_apraksti_LV_precizets.pdf
Description of the Study Direction - Other mandatory attachments		
Sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme.	24.1_pielik_Diploms_pielikums_ENG.pdf	24.1_pielik_Diploms_Pielikums_lv.pdf
Description of the Study Programme - Other mandatory attachments		
Document 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	24.2_Vienošanās_ar_DU-2020_ENG.pdf	Vienošanās_ar_DU.edoc
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	24-3_pielikums_Apliecinajums_par_zaudējumiem_StV_Psihologija_EN.pdf	Apliecinājums_par_studējošo_zaudējumu_kompensāciju.edoc
Confirmation of the higher education institution/ college that 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 according to European language levels (see the levels under www.europass.lv), if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language.	24-5_pielik_Apliecin_anglu_val_StV_Psihologija_EN.pdf	Apliecinājums_par_studiju_virziena "Psihologija" studiju programmām_anglu_val.edoc
If the study programmes in the study direction subject to the assessment are doctoral study programmes, a confirmation that at least five teaching staff members with doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field or sub-field of science, in which the study programme has intended to award a scientific degree.		
If academic study programmes are implemented within the study direction, a document confirming that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the provisions set out in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause three of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education		
Sample (or samples) of the study agreement	24.8_pielik_Ligums_standarta_ENG_atjaunots_2021.pdf	24.8_pielik_Ligums_standarta_LV_atjaunots_2021.pdf
If academic study programmes for less than 250 full-time students are implemented within the study direction, the opinion of the Council for Higher Education shall be attached in compliance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.		

Psychology (51313)

Study field	<i>Psychology</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Psychology</i>
Education classification code	<i>51313</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>Doctoral study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Kristīne</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Mārtinsone</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>kristine.martinsone@rsu.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Dr. psych.</i>
Phone of the study programme director	
Goal of the study programme	<i>To prepare highly qualified scientists and academic staff in psychology, developing their competences of the planning, organisation, implementation, and management of research work, as well as competences required for academic work, based on an in-depth understanding of the psychology theories and methodology and the competence to design and carry out innovative research projects, to cooperate with specialists in Latvia and at the international level.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. To provide doctoral students with the opportunity to acquire the necessary competence for scientific research work in order to perform modern, original and important research projects in psychology in health-related contexts, in cooperation with Latvian and foreign colleagues, as well as to disseminate the results of the research obtained and communicate on them with the wider scientific community and society as a whole.</i> <i>2. To provide doctoral students with the opportunity to acquire the necessary competence for academic work in order to fulfil the duties of a lecturer in Latvian and foreign higher education institutions.</i> <i>3. To develop the competence of doctoral students to increase their scientific qualifications and mutual, national and international cooperation in the field of research.</i>

Results of the study programme	<p>1. Analyses and explains the trends and regularities of modern psychology, discusses current theories and lessons in psychology in health-related contexts, has an in-depth understanding of research methodologies.</p> <p>2. Independently develops an original study in psychology, using a methodology that meets modern scientific requirements, critically evaluates the results obtained and disseminates them by preparing presentations at conferences and publishing internationally citable scientific articles, thus contributing to expanding psychological knowledge boundaries or providing a new understanding of existing knowledge and their use in practice.</p> <p>3. Carries out scientific communication on his/her field of scientific activity with the wider scientific community and society as a whole, including does academic work (prepares and reads lectures and conducts seminars), in line with the achievements of modern adult pedagogy, ensuring the integration of research and academic work.</p> <p>4. Independently raises his/her scientific qualifications and implements or leads research or development projects that meet international criteria in the psychology sector in companies, institutions, organisations.</p> <p>5. Solves significant research or innovation challenges in psychology through critical analysis, synthesis and evaluation, independently proposing the research idea, planning, structuring and leading scientific projects, including international ones, in line with own individual capabilities and research interests, and disseminates the results obtained.</p>
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	Doctoral Exam in Psychology

Study programme forms

Full time studies - 3 years - latvian

Study type and form	Full time studies
Duration in full years	3
Duration in month	0
Language	latvian
Amount (CP)	120
Admission requirements (in English)	Master's degree in psychology or a corresponding higher education diploma in social and human action sciences or healthcare, or social welfare, or in teacher education and education sciences or in humanities. An applicant who has not obtained a Master's or Bachelor's degree in psychology must additionally pass an examination in the basic branches of psychology: general (cognitive) psychology; developmental psychology; personality psychology; social psychology; clinical psychology, health psychology.
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	Scientific degree of a doctor (Ph.D.) in psychology
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	—

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Rīga Stradiņš University	RĪGA	DZIRCIEMA IELA 16, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1007

Full time studies - 3 years - english

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	3
Duration in month	0
Language	<i>english</i>
Amount (CP)	120
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Master's degree in psychology or a corresponding higher education diploma in social and human action sciences or healthcare, or social welfare, or in teacher education and education sciences or in humanities and proof of English language knowledge. An applicant who has not obtained a Master's or Bachelor's degree in psychology must additionally pass an examination in the basic branches of psychology: general (cognitive) psychology; developmental psychology; personality psychology; social psychology; clinical psychology, health psychology.</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Scientific degree of a doctor (Ph.D.) in psychology</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	—

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Rīga Stradiņš University	RĪGA	DZIRCIEMA IELA 16, KURZEMES RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1007

III - DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME (1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme)

1.1. Description and analysis of changes in study programme parameters that have taken place since the issue of the previous accreditation certificate of study direction or the license of study programme if study programme is not included in the accreditation page of the study direction

Table 1. Parameters

No	Parameter	Analysis of changes
1.	Study direction	—
2.	Title of the study programme	—
3.	Code according to the Latvian Education Classification	—
4.	Head of the study programme	—
5.	Scientific degree of the head of the study programme	—
6.	Aim of the study programme	—
7.	Objectives of the study programme	—
8.	Learning outcomes to be achieved	—
9.	Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	—
10.	Type and form of studies	—
11.	Duration of implementation	—

No	Parameter	Analysis of changes
12.	Language of implementation	—
13.	Amount of the study programme (CP)	—
14.	Admission requirements	—
15.	Degree to be awarded	Doctoral degree, PhD in psychology - changed according to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Cabinet Regulation No. 49 "Regulations on the Fields and Subfields of Science in Latvia" (23 January 2018) · Instructions given by the Latvian Council of Science in letter No. 60-6/30/2020 of 20 January 2020, addressed to RSU and AIC (AIKA) · Approved by AIC (AIKA) Study Quality Commission on 20 April 2020, decision No. 2020/19-I
16.	Qualification to be awarded	—
17.	Place of implementation	—

The doctoral study programme "Psychology" is accredited without changes to give current students the opportunity to graduate from the programme in which they have been enrolled. Meanwhile, in parallel in 2019–2021, work has been done on a new model – new doctoral study programme "Health Care", within which the programme "Psychology" will be implemented as one of the sub-programmes from 2022/2023. ac. y. English will also be added to the implementation possibilities of the new doctoral study programme.

Study programme (SP) "Health Care", which combines three effective doctoral SP "Medicine", "Pharmacy" and "Psychology", has been developed in cooperation with industry experts, involving academic staff, general staff, student representatives and foreign experts, implementing the Rīga Stradiņš University (RSU) SP development and consolidation plan^[1] adopted in 2018, which was developed within the framework of the agreement of Central Finance and Contracting Agency on the project "Reducing study programme fragmentation and promoting study internationalisation at Rīga Stradiņš University" (Project No. 8.2.1.0/18/A/014, Operational Programme "Growth and Employment", specific support objective "To reduce fragmentation of study programmes and strengthen sharing of resources" 8.2.1. second selection of project applications (hereinafter – SAM

The necessity for this doctoral study programme was determined and its concept is substantiated by the WHO Strategic Policy Documents for the European Region in Health Care *The Roadmap to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, building on Health 2020, the European policy for health and well-being*[2]), European Union's strategic documents in education (Bologna process[3]), as well as the development direction and needs of the Latvian state and national economy (National Development Plan 2021–2027[4]; Cabinet Order No. 345 "On the introduction of a new doctoral model in Latvia"), educational documents (Law on Higher Education Institutions[5]; Science, Technology Development and Innovation Guidelines 2021–2027[6]), as well as RSU's vision, which states that RSU is a modern, prestigious, European and world-known university, where the main value is human and which provides research-based, high-quality and exportable higher education (RSU Development Strategy for 2017–2021[7]).

[1] In accordance with the RSU Study Programme Development and Consolidation Plan *, the study programme "Psychology" will be included in the new doctoral study programme "Health Care".

* The Study Programme Development and Consolidation Plan of Rīga Stradiņš University (RSU) has been approved by the Study Programme Development and Consolidation Plan Evaluation Commission established by the Ministry of Education and Science (MES), which is confirmed by the MES letter No. 4-6e/2018/3795, and adjustments in letter No. 4-6e/19/184. RSU Study Programme Development and Consolidation Plan was approved at the RSU Senate meeting on 18 September, 2018, Minutes No. 2-1 / 18.09.18 and after adjustments approved by the RSU Presidium of Senate on 4 January, 2019, Minutes No. 3-1 / 2/2019.

[2] WHO. Regional office for Europe (2017). *Roadmap to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, building on Health 2020, the European policy for health and well-being* (2017). Available at:

https://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/345599/67wd09e_SDGroadmap_170638.pdf

[3] As indicated on the website of the Ministry of Education and Science www.izm.gov.lv, current information on the Bologna Process is available on the official website of the EHEA:

<http://www.ehea.info>. Additional information is available at: European Higher Education Area (National) Library: <http://www.aic.lv/bolona>, and State Education Development Agency website: http://www.viaa.gov.lv/eng/coordinate_processing/bolonas_process/par_bolonas_procesu

[4] Documents available at: <https://www.pkc.gov.lv/lv/nap2027>

[5] Available at: <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=37967&mode=KDOC>

[6] Available at:

<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/322468-par-zinatnes-tehnologijas-attistibas-un-inovacijas-pamatnostadnem-20212027-gadam>

[7] Documents available at: <https://www.rsu.lv/par-rsu/strategija-dokumenti>

Information about RSU doctoral study programmes is available [here](#), about doctoral study programme "Psychology" – [here](#).

1.2. Analysis and assessment of the statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down in the

different study forms, types, and languages.

Until now, the doctoral study programme has been implemented for full-time students.

As at the spring semester of academic year 2019/2020, there were 18 students in the study programme. After the opening of the study programme, eight doctoral students were admitted in the first year of studies, but one doctoral student has dropped out of studies due to the inability to combine work with studies. The following year, four doctoral students were admitted, and in the third year – seven doctoral students. Availability of state-funded study places is an important factor in increasing the number of students. They are currently unavailable. There is a tendency that every year the interest in studies is higher than the number of applications received. Namely, in discussions with the head of the programme, potential doctoral students indicate that the opportunity to study in a state-funded study place is important for them.

In academic year 2019/2020, a positive stimulating factor for attracting doctoral students was the positions created by RSU, namely, deputy research assistant. According to the results of the competition, three doctoral students of the study programme Psychology, starting from 2020, are deputy research assistants with 0.25 workload. As a positive factor, it should also be mentioned that one doctoral student has received a 100% fee discount for studies at RSU. Attracting doctoral students is facilitated by the possibility to receive [doctoral grants](#) (link available only in Latvian).

In order to facilitate the recruitment of students, the RSU Department of Doctoral Studies together with the heads of doctoral study programmes in academic years 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 organized seminar “From a Master to a Doctoral Student” and developed handouts in order to arouse potential doctoral students’ interest in doctoral study programmes, provide the necessary practical information on admission requirements, on the course of the study process, etc. Both heads of study programmes and doctoral students spoke at the seminar. Doctoral students presented their study experience in doctoral studies. The seminar could be attended both in person at RSU (in [2018](#) and [2019](#), available only in latvian), and watched via live streaming on social networks such as *Facebook*. [The RSU website](#) (also in [English](#)) contains doctoral students’ [feedback on the motivation](#) (only in latvian) to study for a doctoral degree, as well as [individual articles about doctoral students](#) (link available only in Latvian).

Each year, the yearbook of RSU doctoral studies is prepared, which contains the most important information about the doctoral study programmes. This allows the prospective and current doctoral students to get acquainted with the information on admission criteria, on the selected doctoral study programme, organisation of studies, mobility opportunities, etc. in an aggregated form.

In 2019, for the first time, a [preparatory course](#) (link available only in Latvian) for studies in doctoral study programmes in social sciences was organised for the first time, which provided information on the specifics of doctoral studies, the development of an annotation (required for admission to the doctoral study programme), the formulation of research objective and hypotheses, the relevance of the objective to the topic and its attainability, research strategies and designs, etc.

In addition, the head of the study programme annually prepares an informative message about the studies and distributes it through various channels, namely, conferences, sending information to professional associations, introducing them to graduates, etc.

More information on the doctoral study programme is available on the [RSU website](#) (also in [English](#)).

1.3. Analysis and assessment of the interrelation between the name of the study programme, the degree or professional qualification to be acquired or the degree and professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements.

The formulated learning outcomes in the doctoral study programme Psychology follow from the aim of the study course and the outcomes to be achieved, while they follow from the aim of the programme and the outcomes to be achieved, which correspond to the degree to be obtained. This interrelation is clearly shown in the mapping of the study programme (see Annex 18.1). Several study courses correspond to each learning outcome. Their implementation, planned in a certain order and with the appropriate level of complexity, corresponds both to the knowledge, skills and competencies defined in qualification level 8 and to the level of development of modern psychology in the international context to prepare high-quality specialists in psychology.

In order to achieve the outcomes and fulfil the tasks of the study programme, and to achieve the goals of the study programme, attention is paid to the requirements for admission of doctoral students. They correspond to the aim of the programme and are prepared to make sure that the applicant is suitable for the doctoral study programme. Admission requirements are designed to assess the applicant's understanding of scientific methodological work and knowledge in the field of psychology, ability to conduct and organise research, ability to present their work, explain and discuss their research idea and its planned implementation with arguments, as well as motivation. The formal criterion is checked – a Master's degree in psychology or an equivalent higher education diploma in social and behavioural sciences or health care, or social welfare, or teacher education and education sciences, or the humanities, or an appropriate higher education (in which case a statement by AIC must be provided that the higher education is equivalent to a Master's degree). All applicants must prepare an annotation of the planned doctoral thesis, which must be defended in public. An applicant who has not obtained a Master's or Bachelor's degree in psychology must, before submitting the annotation, additionally pass an examination in the basic branches of psychology: general (cognitive) psychology; developmental psychology; personality psychology; social psychology; clinical psychology, health psychology. Applicants are enrolled based on the results of the competition, which consists of the sum of the following criteria:

- 1) evaluation of the annotation of the planned doctoral thesis by two reviewers;
- 2) evaluation of scientific developments;
- 3) evaluation of the annotation of the planned doctoral thesis by the oral defence commission.

Student admission is carried out in accordance with the Admission Regulation approved by the RSU Senate for the respective academic year and external regulations (available in Latvian and English in Annex 1). In accordance with Paragraph 3 of Cabinet Regulations No. 846 Regarding Requirements, Criteria and Procedure for Admission to Study Programmes of 10 October 2006, the rules for admission to study programmes for the following academic year shall be drawn up, approved and published (also on the RSU website) each year by 1 November.

The technical procedures of admission are established and described in Paragraph 7.1 of RSU Process Description No. 7 Service Provision for Students (see Annex 1).

RSU applicants apply electronically on the [RSU website](#).

The quality of doctoral studies is ensured not only by the studies, but also by an open admission process. The admission regulations are designed to select applicants who are able and willing to

engage in scientific research, thus enabling the university to prepare a new generation of scientists and teachers who are able to solve important research or innovation tasks in psychology.

The Department of Doctoral Studies collects the documents submitted by the applicants, organises the appointment of reviewers, determines the time and procedure for oral presentation of the planned doctoral thesis, and informs the applicants about it. Planned supervisors of doctoral theses are not appointed as reviewers in order to avoid potential conflicts of interest. The oral defence commission of the planned doctoral thesis annotation traditionally consists of the Dean of the Department of Doctoral Studies, the heads of doctoral study programmes of the social sciences block, as well as the heads of departments. The composition of the commission shall be established by an order of the Rector. If the supervisor of the planned doctoral thesis is also a member of the commission, they do not assess their potential doctoral student. The assessment criteria (for both the reviewers and the commission) are precisely defined in the Rīga Stradiņš University Admission Regulations for doctoral study programmes.

The requirements for admission to doctoral studies are reviewed every year, and, if necessary, updating them, additional requirements may be set to ensure the quality of further study programme implementation.

III - DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME (2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof)

2.1. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study course/ module and the compliance with the needs of the relevant industry and labour market and with the trends in science. Provide information on how and whether the content of the study course/ module is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science. In case of master's and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation.

Today, it is clear that doctoral studies, which play an important role in the European Research Area and the European higher education system, are a stage that lays the foundations for the successful development of the national economy, improving competitiveness, development and production of higher value-added products. It is a stage of higher education that is different from Bachelor's and Master's studies. In particular, it supports an individual's growth path in which the university supports the development of the doctoral student by creating a high-quality, stimulating and at the same time inclusive research environment to enable research-oriented thinking, to foster flexibility of opinions, creativity and intellectual independence, developing original research projects that meet the demands of the labour market and the challenges of modern science. The competence of doctoral students as junior scientists is developed primarily through research and dissemination of the results thereof, using the opportunities to gain mobility and international cooperation experience. And doctoral students – junior scientists – make an important contribution to the creation of new knowledge, and supervision of doctoral students, which is based on a clear division of responsibilities and transparency, plays a decisive role in the study process.

The doctoral study programme Psychology is developed in line with the aforesaid understanding

and vision of RSU, which emphasizes that RSU is a modern, prestigious university recognised in Europe and around the world, the main value of which is a person and which provides high-quality and exportable research-based higher education. This means that doctoral studies are one of the priorities of RSU development. This is confirmed by the fact that RSU has created positions of deputy research assistant for doctoral students, which can be [applied for by competition, if the selected topic corresponds to the priority topics of science formulated by RSU, namely](#) (link is available only in Latvian): *Professional Identity as a Framework for the Development of Civil Society for Psychological Care Providers; Latvian Society's Social Trust and Sense of Belonging in an International Context: A Comparative Study; Evaluation of the Perception and Use of Invitations to Screening Diagnostic in the Latvian Population and Principles of Promoting Health Behaviour for Participation in Screening Programs.*

Such an approach corresponds to the priorities set out in the national programming documents for the implementation of the European Union's common strategies, which prescribe the development of doctoral studies as one of the priorities in education, as doctoral studies contribute to the reproduction of the supply of human resources for the successful development of the national economy, increasing competitiveness, contributing to the development of a knowledge-based society. Referring to the National Development Plan of Latvia for 2014–2020, the goals and tasks based on the strategic document Latvia 2030 prescribing to ensure the reproduction of population (healthy lifestyle is a precondition), as well as the implementation of the action line A Healthy and Able-Bodied Person (a healthy and able-bodied person brings threefold benefits to the economy), it should be noted that as the number of people decreases and society ages, it is important not to reduce the value of the human capital base and increase its productivity.

The doctoral study programme is implemented on the basis of the guidelines for science, technology development and innovation for 2014–2020 (On the Guidelines for Science, Technology Development and Innovation for 2014–2020. Order No. 685 of the Cabinet of Ministers. 28 December 2013, minutes No. 67 §97). According to this order, the overarching goal of science, technology, and innovation policy is the development of the knowledge base and innovation capacity of Latvia and the coordination of the innovation system. Several sub-goals and respective strategic directions of action have been identified to achieve this goal, including the development of human capital in science, technology, and innovation, increasing the number of people employed in research at scientific institutions and the business sector at least up to seven thousand by 2020, focusing research topics in the identified areas for knowledge specialisation; to promote the international competitiveness of Latvian science, observing the principle of regional development and focusing research in a smaller number of larger and stronger institutions, facilitating an increase in the number of scientific articles published in internationally recognised databases to 1,500 articles and the increase in the number of inventions to 50 intellectual property units per year; to modernise and integrate the research and education sector, increasing their ability to respond to future challenges in research, technology development, and innovation, and increasing the mobility of the education sector.

Based on the above, the framework and content of the study programme Psychology has been created. Six semesters (three academic years) are intended for full-time regular studies to complete the programme. The amount of the study programme is 120 CP or 180 ECTS (part-time studies can be implemented over seven semesters). The programme is implemented in person in the official language, as well as it is possible to implement it in English and by distance learning. After the completion of the studies the doctoral student receives a certification of graduation from doctoral studies. Namely, EQF qualification degree 8 is obtained when the doctoral student has mastered the doctoral study programme Psychology and defended the doctoral thesis. Upon completion of the study programme, the graduate, in accordance with the learning outcomes,

understands and analyses the development trends and regularities of modern psychology, has an in-depth understanding of research methodology issues, as well as has developed the competence of academic work.

Upon successful defence of the doctoral thesis, the doctoral student is awarded a scientific doctoral degree, PhD in psychology. The study programme Psychology for obtaining a doctoral degree is based on the achievements and findings of the field of psychology. This is illustrated by a number of aspects of its design and organisation, four examples of which are given below.

Firstly, the implementation of the study programme. Namely, doctoral studies are organised by the RSU [Department of Doctoral Studies](#) (information [in English](#)) in accordance with the [Doctoral Studies Regulations](#) (also available [in English](#)), which stipulates that doctoral studies are studies are an independent work of a doctoral student led by a supervisor and academic staff for obtaining a doctoral degree. According to the RSU doctoral studies concept, there are three parts in the preparation of doctoral students: the compulsory part (A), restricted elective part (B), and elective part (C).

The compulsory part (see Annex 19 Planning of the Doctoral Study Programme Psychology) includes several study courses, which are implemented for all RSU doctoral study programmes, and their aim is to expand and deepen the competence of doctoral students' research and academic work, as well as to promote interdisciplinary dialogue. They are as follows: *Methodology of Scientific Activity, Pedagogy of Higher Education Institution, Research Ethics*. The compulsory part also includes study courses of the respective field, which are designed to create a framework in the first semesters for the later stages of studies, namely, so that the knowledge, skills and competences acquired in them provide an opportunity to work independently in collaboration with one's supervisor(s). They are as follows: *Qualitative Research Methods in Psychology, Quantitative Research Methods in Psychology (Multivariate Statistics and Modelling), Scientific Writing and Scientific Communication*. In the study course *Contemporary Psychology Development Trends and Interdisciplinary Approach in the Context of Health Care I*, the latest achievements in psychology and current topics are highlighted. All these study courses of the study programme are regularly improved in accordance with the current developments of psychology.

If the study programme was implemented in English, doctoral students would not take the study course *Scientific Writing and Scientific Communication*, but they would have to master the study course *Latvian for Foreign Students*.

The compulsory part also includes study courses that are focused on the development of specific doctoral student topics. The development of the research paper is supported by four *Doctoral Student Seminars*, the content of which is successive and includes such topics as the methodology and methods of doctoral thesis development (2nd semester), discussion of the theoretical part (3rd semester), discussion of the research part (4th semester) and development of the doctoral thesis (5th semester).

The largest number of credit points (78 CP) is obtained by doctoral students for their independent original scientific research, namely, scientific research work carried out in cooperation with and under the supervision of the supervisor of the doctoral thesis. This work is carried out in accordance with the plan of the doctoral study programme developed by the doctoral student together with the supervisor of the doctoral thesis for each year of studies. The procedure of awarding credit points for scientific research work is the same for all doctoral study programmes of RSU. In turn, *Knowledge Dissemination* study courses, which are implemented in the 2nd and 3rd year of studies, are focused on the doctoral student's involvement in academic activities and their scientific communication at various levels, including participation in conferences, preparation and publishing of publications, organisation of conferences and participation in creating an article collection etc.

These study courses develop the competence of doctoral students to share knowledge with others – students in Bachelor's and Master's programmes, local and foreign colleagues. The doctoral student may do pedagogical work in their workplace or at the RSU department, in which their supervisor of the doctoral thesis works. Appropriate records are made of this work. In the report on the achievements of the study year, and credit points are awarded on this basis.

The compulsory part also includes the *Doctoral Examination in a Foreign Language* and the *Doctoral Examination in Psychology*.

In turn, the restricted elective courses allow doctoral students to study both current topics of the field in an interdisciplinary context (*Communication Psychology* and *Modern Psychology Development Trends and Interdisciplinary Approach in the Context of Health Care II*) and study *Scientific Writing / Scientific Language* and *Other Types of Scientific Work* in depth. The restricted elective part also includes the study course *Civil Defence and Environmental Protection* for students who have not mastered it in earlier stages of education.

Doctoral students must obtain four credit points for elective study courses. Until now, doctoral students have chosen study courses by a visiting lecturer to obtain these credit points.

Evidently, the study courses are arranged in succession and together they allow to achieve the aim, tasks and learning outcomes of the study programme. The aim of each individual study course is also related to the aim and tasks of the study programme, learning outcomes, which is confirmed by the mapping of study courses of the study programme against the learning outcomes of the study programme to be achieved (see Annex 18.1).

With regard to the organisation of the programme, special emphasis should be placed on the involvement of doctoral students in research projects, organisation of conferences and other scientific and mobility activities. Research results of doctoral students confirm the originality of the research and the need to introduce them to the wider scientific community. Participation in research projects, organisation of conferences ensures direct involvement and cooperation, promotes adequate understanding of the needs of the field of psychology and scientific trends. [For example, in 2019, doctoral students organised a section on qualitative research at the international scientific-practical conference *Health and Personality Development: Interdisciplinary Approach*](#) (link available only in Latvian), provided support in the preparation of a collection of articles (Proceeding) of the international conference *Society. Integration. Education*. In order to promote the personal and professional growth of junior scientists, cooperation is developed at the international and national level (for example, supervisors are professors from both foreign and other Latvian universities). Three doctoral students have also taken advantage of *Erasmus plus* mobility opportunities (see also sections 2.2 and 2.3 of this report).

Secondly, the said compliance is ensured by the content of the study programme. All the above-mentioned diverse research and research result / knowledge dissemination and communication study courses (*Methodology of Scientific Activity, Qualitative Research Methods in Psychology, Quantitative Research Methods in Psychology (Multivariate Statistics and Modelling), Scientific Writing and Scientific Communication, Research Ethics* and *four Doctoral Student Seminars*) forms a framework for doctoral students to develop their doctoral thesis, prepare publications and participate in conferences with reports, in accordance with the level of modern science in accordance with the topic of their doctoral thesis, in cooperation with the supervisor(s). As mentioned, each of the formulated topics is current, it has a defined and described novelty and practical application. The development of these topics in the study process and the results disseminated at different stages of the work not only enrich the practice and provides new insights for practical work and / or help to explain psychological regularities, but also enrich the study process because doctoral students are involved in study work. Namely, developing the competence

acquired in the *Pedagogy of Higher Education Institution*, they also implement the study course *Dissemination of Knowledge*, within which they work with students both organising lectures and classes, and supervising research work (each doctoral student has an individual plan for this work). Thus, the implementation of the programme also ensures the attraction of new teaching staff. Eight doctoral students work as lecturers or researchers at the RSU Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy in their full-time job, but five – at RSU as guest lecturers. One doctoral student works at another university.

Before each study year, taking into account the needs of the field of psychology, as well as scientific trends, the content of study courses is updated, which can be seen in the course descriptions, namely, changes are made both by including current literature and specifying evaluation criteria and reviewing course topics. When updating the descriptions of study courses, the feedback of doctoral students on the study courses is also taken into account.

In order to ensure that during doctoral studies everyone has the opportunity to learn the latest achievements in the field, the study course *Modern Psychology Development Trends and Interdisciplinary Approach I* in the context of health care has been developed, within which doctoral students acquire the latest scientific knowledge. In the second part of this course, in accordance with the student-centred approach, great attention is paid to the student's individual needs in studying the topic, including the involvement of visiting lecturers of the respective field (for more details, see also Section 2.2).

Thirdly, the compliance of the study programme with the needs of the field of psychology and scientific trends is promoted by the purposefully designed study environment of RSU and available resources, including library resources, the possibility to use objective measurements, such as the Psychology Laboratory equipment. Contribution to the development of the field of science is also made by interdisciplinary links, which are provided in several study courses of block A (see above).

Namely, the learning outcomes are achieved by creating an intellectually stimulating research environment, organising study courses and other events (conferences, symposia) with the participation of lecturers from RSU and other universities; involving foreign visiting lecturers; providing doctoral students with access to the necessary literature and methodological materials; offering an opportunity to engage in research programmes; promoting mutual cooperation among doctoral students in order to exchange knowledge and experience; creating an opportunity to teach study courses in Bachelor's and Master's programmes; providing doctoral students with an opportunity to gain international experience by participating in conferences, publishing articles in scientific journals; developing the skills of doctoral students to engage in public discussions.

Fourthly, the compliance of the study programme with the needs of the field of psychology and scientific trends is ensured by RSU teaching staff and invited visiting lecturers and supervisors of doctoral theses. Attention should be paid to the fact that the teaching staff of the study programme not only participates in research projects in cooperation with doctoral students, but also represents local and international professional organisations, as national delegates of the European Health Psychology Society, members of the board and council of Latvian Society of Psychologists etc, are members thereof, for example, in the International Test Commission, etc., so they are very well informed and involved in the needs and development of the field, bringing this knowledge and practice to the study work as well.

Taking into account the results of mapping of the study programme and the defined learning outcomes, meetings have been organised with lecturers of the study courses to ensure understanding of the general aim of the study programme, mutual cooperation between lecturers, and compliance of study courses with the outcomes of the study programme. All doctoral students together with their supervisors are invited to a meeting twice a year to discuss the progress of the

doctoral thesis.

As can be seen, the structure and organisation of the study programme, the content of study courses corresponds to the needs of the labour market of the field and the development trends of science, it is based on the achievements and findings of the field of psychology.

2.2. Assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators, the relation between the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. In case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels.

The mapping of the outcomes of the study programme and study courses allows to state that the study programme and study courses correspond to the eighth EQF/LQF level and the requirements set in regulatory enactments, ensure student-centred approach. Its results show the interrelation between the information included in the study courses, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and the relation between the aims of the study courses and the aims of the study programme and the intended learning outcomes (see Annex 18.1). Namely, the outcomes of study courses and the study programme are harmonised and logically interrelated; they correspond to the outcomes of the study programme allowing to achieve the goal of the study programme. Study courses are provided by implementing student-centred education at RSU. In order to certify its ambitions and attempts to ensure study process that is based on the understanding of modern education and ensures the development of modern competences, in 2016, RSU got proactively involved in measures for quality assessment of international studies, including project *Peer Assessment of Student Centred Learning (PASCL)* coordinated by the European Student Union, obtaining a certification of the implementation of the study process according to student-centred education approach principles. The report is available in [English](#) on [RSU web page](#).

The principles of student-centred education provide that:

- an independently learning student is at the centre of the study process;
- learning outcomes are clearly formulated and known, and the student studies to achieve them;
- students know and understand the intended learning outcomes of the study programme or course;
- evaluation of the student's achievements is formed in a way that it is possible to check whether and at what level the planned learning outcomes have been achieved;
- the lecturer's task is to facilitate the study process of the student so that the student achieves the set learning outcomes;
- it can be observed that the aggregate of outcomes of separate study courses forms the learning outcomes of the study programme.

Applying these principles to the study programme, they are defined as tasks that are implemented in various forms. For example, establish a unified understanding of students and teaching staff on what is expected from the student at the end of the study course or the programme. In order to fulfil this task, there are regular individual discussions with the lecturers of the study courses, before they start implementing the study course, including acquaintance with the topics submitted by the doctoral students, their research interests are clarified. As mentioned, twice a year there is a

meeting of all lecturers and doctoral students, which provides significant feedback on the directions of study content and quality improvement. After that, a meeting of lecturers is convened, where the content of study courses, necessary additions and improvements are discussed. Mutual negotiations and consultations, which take place both according to the plan and individually as needed, also promote mutual understanding of the intended learning outcome of the course and the choice of the relevant learning method. In order to make it easier for students to choose which elective courses to study according to the learning outcomes that the student wants to achieve, negotiations are held with the head of the study programme and the supervisor of the doctoral thesis.

The implementation of the doctoral study programme is based on the management of this programme and the related set of organisational measures of the study programme. During the studies, doctoral students have the opportunity to ask questions of interest to them, to discuss with lecturers and study members, using face-to-face consultations, e-mail, phone conversations, Whatsapp group. This means that the doctoral student studies independently and responsibly, develops knowledge in interaction with other students, lecturers, guest lecturers, conference audience, reviewers of scientific articles. In the study programme, attention is paid to the opportunity for each student as an individual to unleash their creative and innovative potential, which will be the crucial added value for the future researcher and/or professional of the field.

In general, the didactic concept of the study programme is focused on the greatest possible involvement of doctoral students in the study process – organising activities that promote individual and group performance of doctoral students (for example, participating in the organisation of conferences), presentations and discussions on current research and theory issues of the topic of one's doctoral thesis (for example, studying in doctoral student seminars), participation in conferences and preparation of scientific publications (obtaining an assessment in the study course *Scientific Activity*), as well as dissemination of knowledge (see also the following description and Section 2.3).

Active involvement in research is the main institutional value of RSU and the foundation on which RSU development is based. Namely, RSU supports excellent science and efficient technology transfer to promote innovation. The medium-term objective is to offer and implement extensive academic and professional university education, as well as research opportunities in the basic directions: medicine, health and social care, teaching, social sciences and natural sciences (Article 2.2 of the RSU Constitution). The research directions are based on the availability of resources and the potential for sustainable development, the accumulated experience, the presence of strategic leadership and the importance of the research industry for the overall development of RSU.

Specifying the above, it should be noted that doctoral students of the RSU study programme Psychology have been / are involved in the development of several research projects:

- 2018–2021: National research program INTERFRAME-LV Challenges and Solutions of the Development of Latvian State and Society in the International Context (3 doctoral students);
- 2019–2020: ELPA-COG – The Effect of Lifetime Physical Activity on the Burden Caused by Cognitive Dysfunction and Depression in Elderly (2 doctoral students);
- 2014–2017: National research program EKOSOC-LV Reflection on the Values and Action Models During Social and Economical Changes (2 doctoral students);
- 2014–2017: National research program BIOMEDICINE Effect of Long-Term Regular Aerobic Exercise on Cognitive Processes – ENABLE-LV (2 doctoral students).
- 2016–2022: European Social Fund project of the Prisons Administration No. 9.1.3.0/16/I/001 Increasing the Efficiency of the Resocialisation System (2 doctoral students).

In these projects, synergy with the field of health is focused on public health promotion. Significant

aspect is social innovation, which supports healthy lifestyle, family health, active and healthy ageing.

Summarising and adding to the above, it should be noted that the activities of doctoral students are focused not only on new discoveries and creation of knowledge, but also on the use of the obtained knowledge for the benefit of development and education of society, including:

- doctoral students are involved in the development of RSU research directions by preparing relevant doctoral theses (specific topics were mentioned previously) and scientific publications. As mentioned, three doctoral students of the study programme are deputy research assistants at the Department of Health Psychology and Pedagogy;
- as mentioned, doctoral students get widely involved in ensuring the study process, teaching lectures and classes, supervising Master's, Bachelor's and course papers, etc (according to individual plans). Doctoral students are generally actively involved in the study process. For example, in connection with the topic of professional identity development, a working group has been established, in which two Master's students and a supervisor of doctoral thesis participate to develop the given research problem, the doctoral student also discusses this topic in the study course on professional activity;
- doctoral students have the opportunity to receive grants for their scientific activities, which promote more active participation in European and world level conferences or allow to integrate the necessary measurements in their work (such grants were received by two doctoral students in 2018/2019, three doctoral students in 2019/2020);
- doctoral students have the opportunity to participate in mobility programmes, obtaining information for their doctoral thesis (three doctoral have participated in the Erasmus+ programme);
- every year, all doctoral students are involved in the organisation of the [international scientific-practical conference *Health and Personality Development: Interdisciplinary Approach*](#) (link is also available in [English](#)) organised by the RSU Department of Health Psychology and Paedagogy. One of the criteria for selecting guest lecturers at this conference is the interests of doctoral students;
- every year, doctoral students are also involved in the creation of proceeding Psychology of international conference *Integration. Education*. This proceeding is also indexed in the Web of Science.

Doctoral students also actively participate in the [RSU Scientific Conference](#) (link is also available in [English](#)). From 2019, it developed into a significant event – Research Week, which promotes more extensive development of international cooperation, involvement in scientific networks and associations, allowing to involve international partners into joint projects, research and publications. Two guest lecturers in the field of psychology also participated in the Research Week (prof. *Sara Mondini* and prof. *Bob Woods*), who are recognized authorities in their field. After the conference prof. *Sara Mondini* became the co-supervisor of a doctoral thesis, but prof. *Bob Woods* – a thesis consultant. Prof. *Ricou Miguel* is also consultant for a thesis.

When evaluating the perspective development of the study programme, it should be concluded that it develops in accordance with the tasks of Latvia in the implementation of common strategies of the European Union. Firstly, it provides education that is in line with the achievements of the field and promotes the education of junior researchers. Secondly, the chosen research topics are in line with the main elements of this strategy, which makes the doctoral study programme competitive.

Security issues are, for example, the *Latvian Society's Social Trust and Sense of Belonging Within the Concept of Social Capital in an International Context: A Comparative Study* (being developed within the National Research Program INTERFRAME-LV), but health issues include, for example,

Evaluation of the Perception and Use of Invitations to Screening Diagnostic in the Latvian Population and Principles of Promoting Health Behaviour for Participation in Screening Programs; Indicators of Quality of Life and Perceived Social Support and Their Changes as a Result of Approbation of the Psychological Support Program for Dementia Patients in a Social Care Institution; Relationship Between Lifelong Physical Activity and Personality Traits and Attitudes Towards Aging in Seniors; The Role of Lifelong Physical Activity and Cognitive Reserves in Maintaining Cognitive Function and Neural Efficiency in Seniors; The Effect of Awareness-Based Interventions on Emotion Regulation in Depressed Patients; Fathers' Experience With an Terminally Ill Child in Children's Palliative Care.

Research on the following topics promotes cooperation with employers: *Self-Regulation Skills and a Sense of Success for Men of Different Ages Working in Organisations in Latvia; The Connection Between the Metacognition Skills and the Efficiency of the Work of Agile Teams*, while the cooperation with professional organisations is promoted by the research on the following topics: *Characteristics of the Collective Identity of Psychological Assistance Providers in Latvia: Common and Different Traits in Different Professional Groups; Social Notions of Mental Health Care Professionals About the Practice of Psychological Assistance in Latvia; Professional Identity as a Framework for the Development of Civil Society for Psychological Care Providers.*

One of the challenges of the Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030 are [rapid changes in world economy and technologies](#) (the document is also available in [English](#)). It is positive that one thesis is developed on the basis of the current trend – web interventions, namely, *Development and Approbation of a Psychosocial Web Intervention Model for Emotion Regulation, Anxiety Reduction and Promotion of Self-Efficacy for Young People With Neurotic, Stress-Related and Somatoform Disorders.*

As can be seen, the study programme purposefully creates close synergy between research and studies, allowing to involve students in research, work of scientific organisation and development of scientific articles, thus developing the ability to contribute to the development of the field of psychology by implementing a significant amount of original research, also at the level of internationally cited publications. During their studies, doctoral students demonstrate the ability to communicate both orally and in writing on the topic of their research with the wider scientific community and society in general. The ability to independently improve one's scientific qualification, implement scientific projects, gaining achievements in accordance with international criteria in the field of psychology is also being developed. Doctoral students reach a level of competence in which they are able to independently solve important research or innovation tasks, formulate current research ideas, plan, structure scientific projects, including in an international context, for example, by participating in research projects.

The interrelation between the information included in the study courses, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators as well as interrelation between the aims of the study courses and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme is ensured in the study programme. The description of the main research roadmaps clearly shows the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels.

As a variant of the transformation of the current study programme, which would make it possible to attract funding for the development of new study programmes, using the European Social Fund co-financing under Activity 8.2.1 To Reduce Fragmentation of Study Programmes and Strengthen Resource Sharing, is the creation of a joint doctoral study programme in social sciences.

2.3. Assessment of the study implementation methods (including the evaluation methods) by providing the analysis of how the study implementation methods (including the

evaluation methods) used in the study courses/ modules are selected, what they are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.

Studies are organised in accordance with the plan for the respective study year of the study programme in the respective academic year. The scientific research part is acquired in accordance with the individual study plan of each doctoral student.

The doctoral study programme uses both traditional teaching and assessment methods for acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences (lectures, concretisation of acquired theoretical and practical knowledge in seminars, discussions, tests, development of individual and group projects, as well as project-based learning approach (development of project works, etc.), problem-based learning approach (development of appropriate solution scenarios, etc.), as well as specialised methods and approaches, which include the opportunity for doctoral students to meet additional specialists in their field, including foreign experts at conferences, seminars, summer schools, where it is possible to discuss topics of interest and meet experts in public discussions or to organise a panel of experts. For example, two doctoral students attended summer schools dedicated to qualitative research (Vilnius) and contemporary psychometrics (Moscow). Also, open educational resources are used – opportunities to use freely available knowledge to ensure better quality and accessibility of education. Other specialised methods and approaches included in the classes include statistical software (IBM SPSS, STATA, SAS, R software). Various digitised methodological material support tools, such as SciVal, Zotero, EndNote, are also widely used in the study process.

The learning outcomes are achieved by creating an intellectually stimulating research environment, organising study courses and other events (conferences, symposia) with the participation of lecturers from RSU and other universities; providing doctoral students with access to the necessary literature and methodological materials; offering an opportunity to engage in research programmes; promoting mutual cooperation among doctoral students in order to exchange knowledge and experience; creating an opportunity to teach study courses; providing doctoral students with an opportunity to gain international experience by participating in conferences, publishing articles in academic journals, and attracting foreign visiting lecturers; developing the skills of doctoral students to engage in public discussions.

During the study process, it is possible to use the RSU Psychology Laboratory, the objective of which is to ensure the development, adaptation and approbation of psychological research and assessment instruments according to modern scientific requirements, and to advise RSU academic personnel and students on the issues of psychometry.

The RSU student portal Universum contains all the necessary information about studies and the process thereof, as well as different services provided by the university: electronic schedules of classes, e-courses with study materials (e-studies), assessments, application forms, financial information, RSU student's private e-mail and access to Office365, self-service printing management (printing, scanning, copying), questionnaires about the study course, descriptions of study courses, application for a written statement about the student's status, documents regulating the studies (internal and external regulatory enactments), online databases, latest information on the student life. In the e-studies environment, students have access to information on the study course, its topics, and the results to be achieved. Most of the e-courses contain the necessary study materials and provide links to external information resources. RSU e-studies are available 24 hours

a day from any location with internet access.

In its turn, portal's Library section provides students with access to the following electronic databases from any location: *Web of Science*, *Ebrary eBooks*, *Ebook Central (ProQuest)*, *BMJ Journals*, *SAGE Premier 2018 journal collection*, *Wiley Online Journals*, *PsycARTICLES*, *EBSCO (multiple academic databases)*, *The Cochrane Library*, *DynaMed Plus*, *ProQuest journal collection*, *Health Research Premium Collection*, *Science Direct journal collection*, *SCOPUS*, *Web of Science*, *ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global*: The Sciences and Engineering Collection, Letonika, LETA news archive, Nozare.lv etc. (see <https://www.rsu.lv/en/library/resources>).

Turnitin – a system for anti-plagiarism and correcting/assessing electronic papers – is available as an additional tool for assessing student's knowledge. It is the world's leading tool for the correction of written papers and combating plagiarism that is used daily by millions of students and academics around the world. Turnitin offers two main platforms: Originality Check is a platform that automatically checks for the percentage of non-genuine content (plagiarism) in a paper and GradeMark+ETS & QuickMark – a platform that allows to electronically correct the submitted papers, which greatly speeds up and improves the quality of the correction work.

The study process is aimed at motivating doctoral students for continuous self-education, and, as mentioned, a personalised approach to each doctoral student is implemented in the study programme. For example, each doctoral student is given an individual feedback on the completion of the completed study task. Emphasising student-centred approach, the lecturer basically acts as a coordinator, while the doctoral student, who has appropriate experience and knowledge, is actively involved in the study process.

Until the autumn of 2020, the assessment in the 10-point system is provided for in doctoral examinations (psychology and foreign language), while in other study courses the final assessment is pass or fail. As of academic year 2020/ 2021, transition to assessments in the 10-point system will take place. The assessment system of doctoral students' work at RSU is developed in accordance with the Doctoral Study Regulations on the types and forms of knowledge testing and assessment.

Independent work of doctoral students includes studies and analysis of scientific literature, collection and analysis of empirical research material, implementation of individual projects, dissemination of knowledge. Testing of students' knowledge and skills is organised in different ways, depending on the study course specifics. The type of examination and assessment criteria are specified in the description of the study course. At the beginning of the implementation of each study course, the lecturers acquaint the doctoral students with the content of the study course and the list of literature necessary for its acquisition, the works to be performed and the requirements for receiving the assessment, as well as the form and type of knowledge and skills testing. Both formative and summative assessment is used in the studies. Formative evaluation takes place during everyday study process: by asking control questions to the students during the contact lessons, as well as by discussing the independent works of students that are practised during the study process. Summative evaluation takes place at the conclusion of each study course. Summative evaluation tests are organised in a written form (in paper format or electronically) or as oral discussions, or in a mixed form.

In order to ensure clear requirements for a successfully completed course, its assessment methods and forms, they are formulated in the study course descriptions, are discussed at the beginning of the study course. In the assessment process, the focus is on the application of knowledge in the development of the doctoral thesis. For example, in the study courses of scientific research methodology, doctoral students develop a methodological understanding of their doctoral thesis and present it, facilitating discussion. In the study course on scientific communication, students

prepare a plan / project for communication of the results of their work with industry professionals and non-specialists. Basically, all study courses include elements of discussion, self-assessment and mutual assessment.

In turn, for example, the doctoral examination in psychology is designed in such a way as to promote the appropriate competence development of each student. Namely, it consists of three parts. This includes not only answers to and discussion on previously announced questions and on the topic of the doctoral thesis, but also a written presentation on one of the current topics in modern psychology, which the doctoral student draws 24 hours before the exam. In order to prepare for the exam, regular consultations are held with the teaching staff, to promote the ability to critically select, process and analyse the development trends and regularities of modern psychology, to discuss with arguments the current achievements in psychology.

The course of the study process is documented in an individual doctoral student's study record document, in which they specify the individual tasks to be performed during the doctoral studies, as well as give an overview of the execution of the planned work. At the beginning of each year of studies, doctoral student's work plan is drawn up in agreement with the supervisor of the doctoral thesis, and implementation of the plan is assessed at the end of the year, reflecting the study courses completed, academic work, publications, participation in conferences and other activities. At the end of each year of studies, the assessment of doctoral students' research work is organised in accordance with the individual study plan. The doctoral student submits the results of the work with documents substantiating the scientific activity in writing and defends them in accordance with the procedures and terms specified by the Department of Doctoral Studies. The results of doctoral students' research work are evaluated and credit points are awarded by the scientific activity evaluation commission. The composition of each commission is approved by an order of the Rector.

At the end of the study course, students are asked to complete the evaluation survey in the RSU e-environment, where they can express their opinion and provide proposals both regarding the content of the study course and the methods of implementation thereof, as well as the competence and work style of the lecturers. In addition, at the end of each semester, the head of the programme meets with doctoral students to discuss these issues in person, receiving their feedback. If necessary, the necessary improvements are discussed with the lecturers of the study courses or the thesis supervisors. Study courses are updated each year in accordance with the evaluation given by the doctoral students.

The study implementation and evaluation methods applied contribute to the achievement of the study course results and the aim set for the study programme. As a result of a successful study process, doctoral students themselves are actively involved in the provision of Bachelor's and Master's study process, both in supervising study papers and Bachelor's theses, and in teaching study courses (see also above).

When evaluating the principles of student-centred teaching and learning in the doctoral study programme Psychology, it must be concluded that the study process is designed and organised to promote independence, and at the same time provide guidance and support, promote mutual respect in doctoral student and teaching staff relations, taking into account and respecting doctoral students' needs and the diversity of research interests, as well as using diverse pedagogical methods as appropriate. If necessary, RSU also has appropriate procedures for resolving student complaints. The evaluation criteria and methods have been made public in advance and the evaluation provides an opportunity to show whether / to what extent the expected results have been achieved. Doctoral students receive feedback on a regular basis. There is a procedure for reviewing student appeals, if any (see 2.3. (section II) of the study direction report).

The above demonstrates that the applied study methods are conducive to the achievement of study course results and study programme goals, taking into account the principles of student-centred education. (For more on the student-centred approach, see also Section 2.2.)

2.4. If the study programme entails a traineeship, provide the analysis and assessment of the relation between the tasks of the traineeship included in the study programme and the learning outcomes of the study programme. Specify how the higher education institution/ college supports the students within the study programme regarding the fulfilment of the tasks set for students during the traineeship.

Not applicable.

2.5. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the evaluations of the final theses.

The main aim of doctoral studies is to carry out research on the doctoral thesis, to summarise and reflect the results in the doctoral thesis, to disseminate knowledge, as well as take part in academic work. Doctoral thesis is elaborated as an independent scientific work developed in cooperation with the doctoral thesis supervisor, contains original scientific research results and provides new knowledge in the field.

According to the legislation of the Republic of Latvia, several types of doctoral theses are possible. Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 1001 Procedures and Criteria for Awarding a Doctor of Science Degree (Promotion) envisages the following types of promotion work:

- doctoral thesis;
- a thematically unified set of scientific publications. The publications must be published or accepted for publication in scientific periodicals, which are peer-reviewed, internationally available in scientific repositories, and quoted in internationally available databases;
- a monograph – a reviewed scientific book dedicated to one topic, internationally available in repositories of scientific information, containing a bibliography and a summary in a foreign language.

Thus, the basic element of the doctoral study programme is the original scientific research by the doctoral student, which must be of high quality and applicable in practice. During the studies, doctoral student acquires the competence of a scientist. At the beginning of the doctoral studies, the doctoral student together with the research supervisor develops and approves an individual plan for the year of studies at the beginning of each year of studies.

The doctoral student performs scientific research work together with their supervisor on an individual program basis. As mentioned, the program is also coordinated annually with the Dean of the Department of Doctoral Studies and the head of the study programme. The doctoral student must obtain the highest number of credit points (78 CP) for the compulsory scientific research work – it motivates the doctoral student for high-quality, independent and innovative scientific work. At the end of each year of studies, the commission assesses the doctoral student's research work. In

the case of a positive assessment, the doctoral student is awarded the relevant credit points for the year of studies.

Doctoral thesis supervisor – a doctor of science who actively participates in scientific research in their scientific discipline, which is confirmed by publications and expert status in the database of the Latvian Council of Science. The supervisor of the doctoral thesis is approved by the decision of the study programme candidate evaluation committee or, if necessary during the studies, by the decision of the Dean of the Department of Doctoral Studies and the head of the study programme.

Supervisor of the doctoral thesis:

- constantly monitors the execution of the doctoral student's plan and the progress of the doctoral thesis;
- advises the doctoral student on issues related to the doctoral thesis development;
- advises the doctoral student on the preparation of scientific publications in accordance with the requirements of collections of scientific articles and internationally quoted publications.

RSU has a requirement that only an expert of the Latvian Council of Science can be a supervisor of doctoral thesis. To obtain this status, one must comply with the requirements of Cabinet Regulation No. 320 of 9 July 2019 requiring active scientific work, the results of which must be reflected in certain types of publications.

The doctoral thesis topic is selected in accordance with the doctoral student's scientific interests. It is [recommended to choose the priority directions in science set by the Republic of Latvia](#) (link is available only in Latvian) and / or RSU, it is also evaluated when entering doctoral studies. The selection of doctoral thesis topics related to the involvement in current research projects is particularly supported (see above).

RSU Development Strategy 2017–2021 is available on the [RSU website](#) (also in [English](#)). The main development objectives of RSU are innovative studies in a contemporary environment and research of health, wildlife and humanities, including social responsibility for sustainable development of the university and society, twinning for integration in the labour market and internationalisation and reputation for international recognition. RSU strategy provides for progress towards a modern education system compliant with the requirements of future labour market, which is also supported by the doctoral study programme Psychology (see above for examples of doctoral thesis topics).

Doctoral students are invited to approbate the results of their doctoral thesis each year by participating in conferences and publishing. Doctoral students show the result of their scientific research work as follows:

- a publication in internationally reviewed scientific journals, or a confirmation of acceptance for publication;
- a publication in a reviewed Latvian scientific journal, or a confirmation of acceptance for publication;
- a publication of the full text of peer-reviewed papers of international conferences and congresses (Proceedings);
- a verbal / written report on the topic of doctoral thesis at an international congress, conference;
- a verbal /written report on the topic of doctoral thesis at a local congress, conference;
- abstract at an international congress / seminar;
- abstract at a local congress / seminar;
- a scientific monograph (sole author);
- a section in a scientific monograph.

RSU provides great support to doctoral students by providing the opportunity to participate in conferences organised by RSU free of charge and to apply for grants.

Collaboration – scientific articles and monographs prepared jointly by the supervisors of doctoral theses and doctoral students (see Annex 6.2) – can be assessed very positively. The analysis of the selected research topics is shown in Paragraph 2.2. It can be concluded that the doctoral thesis topics are topical in the field of psychology.

2.6. Analysis and assessment of the outcomes of the surveys conducted among the students, graduates, and employers, and the use of these outcomes for the improvement of the content and quality of studies by providing the respective examples.

After completing the study course, doctoral students are invited to complete standardised questionnaires. According to the results of the RSU electronic survey, it can be seen that the number of completed questionnaires is increasing every year (even up to 75%). Doctoral students indicate that they are satisfied with the study courses of the field, material and technical support and lecturers. However, it should be noted that in the direct feedback – in conversations with the head of the study programme – doctoral students have indicated that they feel that their needs are individual and it may be difficult to provide a common assessment. Therefore, the head of the study programme interviews doctoral students orally on a regular basis and invites doctoral students together with their supervisors to an extended reflection on the study process, receiving feedback from 100% doctoral students, twice during the academic year (at the end of each semester). After receiving the feedback, the obtained results are analysed and discussed with doctoral students and lecturers. It is taken into account when updating the content of study courses. Namely, the lecturers get acquainted with the evaluation questionnaires, as well as listen to the oral feedback. In the future, it is also planned to use the results of graduates' questionnaires.

Since January 2018, the RSU Academic Staff Portal provides an opportunity to provide feedback on the questionnaires filled in by students. Namely, twice a year (within two weeks after closing the survey), academic staff and heads of academic structural units can publish the feedback to the students regarding survey results and decisions made for improvement of the study courses. Feedback can be published as soon as the survey has been closed. The survey section has restricted access, by default the rights are granted to the academic staff, heads of departments, and those who have been granted the right to the study course.

The feedback function gives an opportunity for the academic staff to respond to evaluation questionnaires of the study courses, and the students can find out about the further use of their feedback. The students can get acquainted with the feedback on the Student Portal where they can also see the feedback for the previous semester. An employee of the Study Programme Administration Unit of the Study Department is involved in ensuring feedback by activating the surveys, informing the students and the head of the study programme electronically on active surveys. At the same time, the head of the study programme and the Department of Doctoral Studies motivate the students to complete the survey questionnaires. After closing the survey, the head of the study programme analyses survey results and reports them to the head of the study direction. Once a year, the Dean reports to the Dean's Council on survey results and decisions made, as well as the necessary changes in the implementation of the study programme.

The survey results are also discussed in the study quality council every semester, deciding on the issue of improvement measures, for example, on the planned topics or the way they are presented

in the research methodology study courses.

The use of survey results is an essential tool for improving the content and quality of studies; it is necessary to promote the responsiveness of students and, eventually, graduates in completing the questionnaires with evaluation of the study programme and its study courses.

Within the framework of the study programme, cooperation with employers and professional organisations is implemented both in connection with data collection and feedback on results, as well as in seminars and conferences. For example, in connection with the topic *Social Perceptions of Mental Health Care Professionals on the Practice of Psychological Assistance in Latvia*, 12 professional associations were involved. In addition, it should be noted that three heads of professional associations study in the study programme, two work on the boards of professional associations.

Study course observation is also provided to ensure the quality of lectures and classes.

Twice a year, a meeting of lecturers is convened to discuss the content of the study courses, the necessary additions and improvements, which provide significant feedback on the study course content and quality improvement directions.

See Annex No. 21.1. Results of the study course and study programme assessment surveys.

2.7. Provide the assessment of the options of the incoming and outgoing mobility of the students, the dynamics of the number of the used opportunities, and the recognition of the study courses acquired during the mobility.

Erasmus+ mobility opportunities in the doctoral study programme have been used by three doctoral students going to Lithuania, two to Vilnius University, and one to the Palliative Care Centre in Siauliai. One doctoral student also participated in an international summer school on qualitative research, and another one – on contemporary psychometrics.

In the autumn semester of 2019, in the 3rd year of studies, a doctoral student from Klaipeda University studied at RSU within the framework of Erasmus+ mobility. She used both consultations on the topic of her dissertation in relation to the qualitative research strategy (narrative approach) and RSU study environment and resources.

See Annex No. 8.1, 8.2: Statistical data on student and teaching staff mobility from academic year 2014/2015 to academic year 2019/2020.

When providing an assessment of mobility, it must be concluded that it is sufficient, because, as the doctoral students themselves admit, although it can significantly enrich the study experience, there are many constraints on its use. The constraints are financial and social – related to family and / or working life. Namely, since these are paid studies, the offered scholarship is usually not able to replace a salary. No less important are the constraints arising from the family life situation. RSU could be more supportive of doctoral student mobility efforts.

III - DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME (3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme)

3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples. Whilst carrying out the assessment, it is possible to refer to the information provided for in the criteria set forth in Part II, Chapter 3, sub-paragraphs 3.1 to 3.3.

RSU provides the students with a comprehensive study process: comfortable facilities, a modern library, modern computers, and Internet access. All auditoriums are large enough, they are selected according to the number of students, technically equipped, it is possible to use modern technology. RSU has several buildings with many classrooms, several refurbished auditoriums. In general, the auditoriums are spacious, bright, equipped with heating and ventilation systems, Internet connection, screen, comfortable furniture. Lecture auditoriums and seminar rooms are equipped with high-quality whiteboards, notebooks, video projectors. It is also possible to organise teleconferences for lecturers in the large auditoriums. Such a teleconference has also been used in studies, when the doctoral student has to present their work on a day when they are on a business trip.

Computer equipment, sound equipment, and a video projector are available to lecturers, upon request for this multimedia equipment for specific classes, or are stationary in auditoriums. At the request of the lecturers, auditoriums may be provided with video equipment. Audiences with seats for more than 100 people are used for presentation of doctoral theses and conferences. Doctoral students can use the Information Centre computers (24 computers) and computers in auditoriums, as well as the library (20 computers) etc. Doctoral students can use wireless Internet connection.

Doctoral students also have an auditorium, where lectures and classes are planned as a priority.

Proper study equipment is also available to the lecturers: hardware, Internet, audio equipment, and multimedia projectors. Lecturers use a variety of audio-visual resources, such as interactive whiteboards, video, in lectures and classes. In order to learn about the new possibilities, RSU lecturers participated in training on interactive whiteboards, search for e-resources in electronic sources, use of databases, Turnitin, etc.

Studies at the university are significantly facilitated by the European-level library and the informative resources available there. Approximately 70% of the budget for assembly of the collection are used for subscription to electronic resources. Users are offered different types of electronic resources: databases of scientific articles, databases of e-books, databases of evidence-based medicine, databases of bibliographical and quotation information of publications, news and reference databases, as well as information on available open access e-resources summarised by the library staff.

The subscribed databases provide access to approximately 403,300 subscribed electronic resource units. Students have access to [25 online databases](#) (link is available only in latvian), 2 database archives and 3 MES subscribed databases, including AccessMedicine, ClinicalKey, Ebook Central (ProQuest), Sage Journals, Wiley Online, EBSCO, Science Direct journal collection, SCOPUS, Web of Science, Lursoft, Letonika, Leta etc. Subscribed multidisciplinary databases Ebook Central (ProQuest) and EBSCO eBook Academic Collection offer e-books in different fields and from different publishers that provide selected information results searching by various topics / keywords. *ExLibris* PRIMO is currently used to manage e-resources, providing fast and streamlined search in most of

RSU's subscribed e-resources through a single search window. Subscribed databases are also available to students from home by logging in to the Student Portal (*students.rsu.lv*) with the username and password provided by RSU. Resources of the Information Centre of the Library and the open access subscription are freely available to any RSU student and lecturer and are classified in accordance with the Universal Decimal Classification (UDC).

Library resources are regularly supplemented with both new procurements and donations corresponding to the profile. In order to improve correspondence of the library collection to the needs of students, work is carried out with the course bibliography, information system data analysis on the issued items, as well as cooperation with the academic staff in order to inform them on the situation with the provision of course literature and to promote e-resources, while the users can electronically complete a questionnaire with suggestions for supplementation of the collection. Electronic catalogues are available to students: The electronic catalogue of the RSU library and the electronic central catalogue of libraries of national importance, as well as the database of publications and doctoral theses of the RSU academic staff, the database of Bachelor's and Master's theses defended at RSU. Students (including scientific degree applicants) can also work at other libraries involved in the Unified Reader's Card project and other libraries (e.g. Library of the University of Latvia, Library of Riga Technical University, Library of the Latvian Academy of Culture, etc.) and use the information sources available in the collections of these libraries and their services. RSU's collaborative e-environment uses the Moodle free-access software, the website (e-studies) contains the planned event calendar, the latest RSU news and discussion forums, as well as study materials and all the latest information that the lecturer wants to give to the students – additional tasks, exam questions, useful additional materials, etc. RSU e-studies are available 24 hours a day from both the RSU main building and RSU dormitory, as well as from any other place where Internet access is available.

In the e-studies environment, students have access to information on the study course, its topics, and the results to be achieved. Most of the e-courses contain the necessary study materials and provide links to external information resources. Lecturers are regularly trained on e-studies, because the development of study quality requires continuous work on the improvement of the e-studies environment by developing new study materials and supplementing the existing range thereof.

In general, intellectual and material (including methodological) resources, as well as information support is sufficient to implement the study programme, as they can ensure an effective study process. Students get the opportunity to study by using the most advanced possibilities both in information circulation, using advanced technological equipment in the study process, and in modern approach, using interactive approaches, advantages and convenience of the e-studies environment.

3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific support, including the resources provided within the cooperation with other science institutes and institutions of higher education (applicable to the doctoral study programmes).

Doctoral students have access to the RSU library of national significance and its databases: electronic joint catalogue of libraries of national significance, database of publications of RSU academic staff and doctoral theses, BMJ Clinical Evidence, BMJ Journals, Cambridge Journals, Cochrane Library, DynaMed, EBSCO, JAMA and Archives, MD and First Consult, MolPort, ProQuest,

PubMed, SAGE Publications, Science Direct etc.

The exchange of experience of junior scientists and scientific supervisors in foreign science centres, as well as participation in conferences and symposia is encouraged. As mentioned, the lecturers involved in the study programme are members of international professional organisations, and they participate in further training activities both in their field and in university pedagogy. Doctoral students are also involved in the work of organising international conferences.

The RSU Department of Health Psychology and Paedagogy [maintains close contacts with other Latvian and foreign universities](#) (link is available only in Latvian), including in the United States, Greece, Italy, Israel, Cyprus, Russia, the United Kingdom, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Germany.

A study course for visiting lecturers is organised on a regular basis, which is related to the interests of doctoral students. There have been such study courses about neuroscience, psychometrics, qualitative research, trauma management.

Good international relations provide an opportunity to learn the experience of other countries, to learn new methods and technologies for improving the quality of studies.

As mentioned, two foreign professors also supervise doctoral theses and two provide consultations.

It is important that doctoral theses are developed [in cooperation with various organisations, health care institutions](#) (link available only in Latvian), including Riga East University Hospital (REUH), Riga Psychiatry and Narcology Centre (RPNC), as well as with the Latvian National Armed Forces (NAF).

It can be seen that there is a wide variety of study and scientific resources that are provided in collaboration with other scientific institutions and higher education institutions, assessment, including at the international level.

III - DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME (4. Teaching Staff)

4.1. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.

In the doctoral study programme, the changes in the teaching staff are small, the involved academic staff has proven to be a strong team. The changes have taken place for objective reasons (change of workplace) and this has not affected the quality of studies.

RSU purposefully takes measures so that changes in the teaching staff, if any, do not negatively affect the quality of the study programme implementation and the compliance of the study programme with the requirements specified in regulatory enactments. RSU Centre for Educational Growth organises various educational activities: thematic cycles, seminars, guest lectures, conferences, discussions, etc., which are available free of charge to every member of the academic family of Rīga Stradiņš University.

In order to motivate students for the development of internationally cited publications, a reward system has been developed for the results of the scientific work of the academic staff, according to which the lecturer, receiving a certain number of points, receives a one-time reward for publications

included in Web of Science or Scopus databases.

4.2. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members (academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

All academic staff involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme have a high qualification as well as a great academic experience. The qualification of the academic staff corresponds to the conditions of implementation of the study programme and the requirements of regulatory enactments, as well as ensures the achievement of aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and respective study courses. All lecturers have appropriate higher education and doctoral degree, as well as lecturer experience.

Lecturers constantly participate in research work, speak at scientific conferences, including international ones. Several lecturers are authors or co-authors of scientific monographs, including on research methodology and scientific writing and dissemination of research results, as well as several collective monographs developed in the field of psychology. All lecturers prepare internationally cited publications and review scientific articles. Several lecturers work on the editorial boards of scientific journals, participate in funded research projects, are experts in various projects (for example, Asst. Prof. V. Perepjolkina worked as an external international reviewer of scientific projects for the 2019 COALESCE Research Foundation project of the Irish Science Council and was a member of the postdoctoral programme CAROLINE (Collaborative Research Fellowships for a Responsive and Innovative Europe) co-funded by the Marie Curie-Sklodowska Activity (MSCA).

Lecturers are members of professional organisations, members of the board, council, chairpersons of the board, for example, in the Latvian Health Psychology Association, the Latvian Clinical Psychology Association, the Latvian Society of Psychologists. Lecturers also represent or work in international organisations such as the European Health Psychology Society, the International Test Commission.

Lecturers who implement compulsory elective psychology study courses are experts of the Latvian Council of Science (professors K. Mārtinsone, A. Pipere, associate professor S. Mihailova, assistant professors J. Koļesņikova, J. Ļubenko, V. Perepjolkina). The majority of the academic staff involved in the implementation of the study programme, who implement other study courses, are also experts of the Latvian Council of Science.

The research directions and results of the academic staff involved in the doctoral study programme are related to several aspects, including:

- they are oriented towards the successful implementation of the doctoral study programme;
- it is related to the individual interests of lecturers of doctoral studies and their research activities, also participating in international and national research projects.

Both mentioned directions in the field of research are integrated in the implementation of the doctoral study programme (see above), which in turn ensures the interaction of the research and doctoral study process and, consequently, the quality of the study process, as well as ensures the

achievement of the goals and results of the study programme and the corresponding study courses.

In order to improve the lecturers' competence, there was a guest seminar for supervisors of doctoral theses *How to Be a Successful Supervisor of a Doctoral Thesis*, organised by RSU Centre for Educational Growth (on 10.01.2019), round table discussions were held on colleagues' good practice in conducting study courses.

Lecturers participate in Erasmus+ mobility on a regular basis, teaching at foreign universities. They regularly participate in international conferences with reports (see the self-assessment of the direction and the lecturers' CVs).

The entire academic staff involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme have a high qualification as well as a great academic experience, which corresponds to the study programme implementation conditions and legal requirements, thus ensuring achievement of the goals and results of the study programme in general and the respective study courses.

4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals may be additionally specified (if applicable).

16 lecturers are involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme. Table 2 summarises the information on the number of scientific publications of each lecturer involved in the implementation of the study programme.

Table 2. Number of scientific publications of the academic staff involved in the implementation of the study programme in the reporting period.

No.	Lecturer's name and surname	Lecturer's academic position	Ticked off here or list of publications attached in Annex 6.4	Publications in Web of Sciences/ Scopus	Other scientific publications
1.	Anita Pipere	Professor (acting)	X	5	38
2.	Dace Žibala	Lecturer	X	–	4
3.	Inga Millere	Professor	X	21	48
4.	Ingūna Griškēviča	Asst. Prof.	X	3	5
5.	Jeļena Koļesņikova	Asst. Prof.	X	14	48
6.	Jeļena Ļubenko	Asst. Prof.	X	7	26

No.	Lecturer's name and surname	Lecturer's academic position	Ticked off here or list of publications attached in Annex 6.4	Publications in Web of Sciences/ Scopus	Other scientific publications
7.	Jeļena Vrubļevska	Asst. Prof.	X	29	31
8.	Justīne Vīķe	No academic position	X	2	15
9.	Kristīne Mārtinsone	Professor	X	34	211
10.	Oļegs Sabeļņikovs	Assoc. Prof.	X	30	30
11.	Sandra Mihailova	Assoc. Prof.	X	10	57
12.	Tatjana Koķe	Professor	X	7	6
13.	Tatjana Muravska	Professor	X	16	5
14.	Uldis Berķis	No academic position	X	12	41
15.	Vents Sīlis	Assoc. Prof.	X	1	27
16.	Viktorija Perepjolkina	Asst. Prof.	X	17	45

See Annex 6.4: The List of Academic Staff's Publications, Annex 6.5 and Annex 6.1: Summary of Academic Staff's Publications, Experience in the Field and Participation in Projects, Conferences.

4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).

RSU doctoral study programme is created in accordance with the recommendations for development of the European Higher Education Area, including three priorities of Europe 2020 strategy that have been set as requirements for education: smart, sustainable, and integrating growth, to prepare highly qualified specialists – researchers and academic staff – that meet international requirements, to develop modern research and to take part in international research projects.

The doctoral study programme allows strengthening national and international competitiveness, ensure the integration of the Latvian science and research system in the European common

research area, supporting participation in the activities of joint international events and developing world-class scientific infrastructure in Latvia. Knowledge-based resources such as databases, libraries, archives, as well as any other tool essential for achieving excellence in research are used as the research infrastructure.

The involvement of the academic staff implementing the doctoral study programme in research projects is of great importance not only in the development of the field and interdisciplinary cooperation, but also in the opportunity to involve doctoral students in these projects and prepare international publications and reports on research results. This promotes the recognition of Latvian research results. The following are research projects:

- 2018–2021: National research programme: INTERFRAME-LV Challenges and Solutions of the Development of Latvian State and Society in the International Context (leader – Prof. S. Kruks, main implementer – Prof. K. Mārtinsone);
- 2019–2020: ELPA-COG – The Effect of Lifetime Physical Activity on the Burden Caused by Cognitive Dysfunction and Depression in Elderly' (leader – Dr. med. A. Stepens);
- 2017–2020: Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Latvia, RSU, Riga Technical University project Development of a Computerized Individual Personality Assessment System (leader – *med.* A. Stepens, main implementers – Assistant Prof. J. Koļesņikova, Assistant Prof. J. Ļubenko, Assistant Prof. V. Perepjolkina);
- 2014–2017: National research program EKOSOC-LV Reflection on the Values and Action Models During Social and Economical Changes (leader – Prof. S. Kruks, main implementer – Prof. K. Mārtinsone);
- 2014–2017: National research program BIOMEDICINE Effect of Long-Term Regular Aerobic Exercise on Cognitive Processes – ENABLE-LV (leader – Dr. med. A. Stepens); Development of a New Technology – Latvian Clinical Personality Test – and Transfer Thereof to the Economy (leader – Dr. med. A. Stepens, main implementers – Prof. K. Mārtinsone, Assistant Prof. J. Koļesņikova, Assistant Prof. V. Perepjolkina);
- 2016–2022: European Social Fund project of the Prisons Administration No. 9.1.3.0/16/I/001 Increasing the Efficiency of the Resocialisation System, Resocialisation program block (leader – M. Luste, main implementer – Assistant Prof. V. Perepjolkina).

Projects carried out by the academic staff contribute to the development of scientific capacity and competitiveness, which could be also characterised by the increase in the number of scientific articles in the Web of Science databases and Scopus journals, which strengthens the authority and recognisability of RSU as a centre of study and science.

4.5. Provide examples of the involvement of the academic staff in the scientific research and/or artistic creation activities both at national and at international level (in the fields related to the content of the study programme), as well as the use of the obtained information in the study process.

As can be seen above, the research work of the academic staff is related to current topics in the field, in an interdisciplinary context. Namely, research conducted by the academic staff is an important contribution to both the development of the field and the development of the study programme, as well as the improvement of the study content. Through research, the lecturers bring the novelties of the field to their study courses. Teaching staff prepares scientific papers, participates in conferences and practical seminars, develops textbooks and methodological

materials (see CVs).

As already mentioned, a large part of those involved in the doctoral study programme have been awarded the status of Latvian Science Expert; in order to qualify for the award in the field of social sciences, it is necessary to have three anonymously reviewed scientific publications published in a scientific journal or conference proceedings indexed in the Scopus or Web of Science database or included in ERIH+ database, including a scientific publication that is available in open access; or two such publications and a scientific monograph.

Doctoral theses at RSU are supervised only by scientists with the rights of the expert of the Latvian Scientific Council, which confirms that scientists are constantly doing research and publishing research results at international level.

Specific examples of the scientific achievements of the academic staff in the field:

- Development of the Latvian clinical personality test and its further development in digital form for the needs of the National Armed Forces;
- interdisciplinary research on security issues and aging;
- the development of new research methodologies, such as the development of a conceptual framework for the analysis of transdisciplinary research in a broader perspective, describing the epistemological, axiological and methodological dimensions of the dialogical approach in the context of transdisciplinary research; applied secondary analysis, etc.

In general, the academic staff involved in the implementation of the study direction is actively involved in scientific research; scientific publications are used in the study process (recommended as required or recommended readings for the study course acquisition), thus contributing to the quality and sustainability of the study programme implementation.

4.6. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).

The study process is clearly, understandably and logically structured. The established and successfully functioning quality management system ensures continuous transparency of the study process and allows solid advance towards the goal and to reach it successfully. The cooperation of the teaching staff is manifested, for example, in the mutual visiting of lectures and classes of the lecturers, which allows to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the work; preparation of lecturers' annual reports on academic, scientific and creative activities, publications, participation in scientific research and scientific conferences; promotion of international exchange of academy lecturers, creating an opportunity for lecturers to gain experience in foreign universities; inviting highly qualified visiting lecturers and lecturers to give guest lectures, including from foreign universities. The attitude of the teaching staff towards the duties to be performed clearly confirms the possibilities of sustainable development of the doctoral study programme. As mentioned above, the teaching staff is regularly invited to discuss issues related to the study process and improvement thereof.

Mutual feedback seminars on current topics, such as CEG, are organised for mutual cooperation of lecturers. Several lecturers cooperate with each other, jointly implementing study courses, working

on research projects, managing students' work. Lecturers and supervisors of doctoral theses are involved in scientific activities together with doctoral students, for example, preparing joint publications, as well as collective monographs, such as Health Psychology, Scientific Writing and Dissemination of Research Results. [Glossary of Research Terms](#) has also been prepared (link available only in Latvian). This expenditure has an impact on further scientific research.

The work of the teaching staff is a team work in which everyone sees their place and task. The qualification and motivation of the teaching staff to work in the provision of the study process and research is high. Relationships with students are humane, forthcoming, while maintaining strict requirements for each study task.

It is possible for students to receive help, consultations and support from lecturers during the study process, as well as in case of uncertainties it is possible for students to contact the Department of Doctoral Studies or the head of the study programme, receiving consultations on the most successful implementation of the study process both individually and for students in general.

There is a relatively small hierarchy of academic management for the implementation of the study programme. Students are regularly invited to comment on the quality of studies, as a result of which shortcomings and possible results are revealed in order to promote students' motivation in further study process.

The total number of lecturers involved in the implementation of the DSP "Psychology" is 16, but the total number of students as of 1 October 2021, was 19, thus the students/lecturers ratio is 1.19.

Annexes

III. Description of the Study Programme - 1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education (table)		
Statistics on the students over the reporting period	16_pielik_DSP_Studejoso_statistika_eng.pdf	16_pielik_DSP_Psihol_statistika_lv.pdf
III. Description of the Study Programme - 2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance of the study programme with the State Education Standard		
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	18-1_pielik_DSP_Ps_Kartesana_19-06_ENG.pdf	18-1_pielik_DSP_Ps_Kartesana_LV_19-06.pdf
Curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	19_pielik_Planojums_DSP_PL_EN.pdf	19_pielik_Planojums_DSP_PL_LV.pdf
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	00_20.1_pielikums_Kursa_apraksti_DSP_EN.pdf	00_20.1_pielikums_Kursa_apraksti_DSP_LV.pdf
Description of the Study Direction - Other mandatory attachments		
Sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme.	24.1_pielik_diploma_apliecinajuma_paraugs_DSP_eng.pdf	24.1_pielik_diploma_sertifikata_paraugs_DSP_lv.pdf
Description of the Study Programme - Other mandatory attachments		
Document 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	24.2_Vienošanās_ar_DU-2020_ENG.pdf	Vienošanās_ar_DU.edoc
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	24-3_pielikums_Apliecinajums_par_zaudejumiem_StV_Psihologija_EN.pdf	Apliecinājums_par_studējošo_zaudējumu_kompensāciju.edoc
Confirmation of the higher education institution/ college that 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 according to European language levels (see the levels under www.europass.lv), if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language.	24-5_pielik_Apliecin_anglu_val_StV_Psihologija_EN.pdf	Apliecinājums_par_studiju_virziena "Psihologija" studiju programmām_anglu_val.edoc
If the study programmes in the study direction subject to the assessment are doctoral study programmes, a confirmation that at least five teaching staff members with doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field or sub-field of science, in which the study programme has intended to award a scientific degree.	24-9_pielik_AIP_atzinums_DSP_Ps_ENG.pdf	24.6_24.7_DSP_Psihologija_lv.pdf
If academic study programmes are implemented within the study direction, a document confirming that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the provisions set out in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause three of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education	24.6_24.7_DSP_Psihologija_ENG.pdf	24.6_24.7_DSP_Psihologija_lv.pdf
Sample (or samples) of the study agreement	24.8_pielik_Studiju_lig_eng.pdf	24.8_pielik_Studiju_lig_lv.pdf
If academic study programmes for less than 250 full-time students are implemented within the study direction, the opinion of the Council for Higher Education shall be attached in compliance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.	24-9_pielik_AIP_atzinums_DSP_Ps_ENG.pdf	24-9_pielik_AIP_atzinums_DSP_Ps_LV.pdf