

Expert group joint opinion

Evaluation Procedure: Assessment of Study Field

Higher Education Institution: Latvian Academy of Culture

Study field: Arts

Experts:

1. Aigars Ceplītis (Chair of the Experts Group)
2. Daiva Lepaite (Secretary of the Experts Group)
3. Darko Lukic
4. Ana Vivoda
5. Marta Viļuma (Student Union of Latvia)
6. Inta Balode (Employers' Confederation of Latvia)

Summary of the Assessment of the Study Field and the Relevant Study Programmes

Summary of the Assessment of the Study Field and the Relevant Study Programmes

The trajectory of the Latvian Academy of Culture (LAC) development based on three pillars-- education, research and artistic creation—has been clearly evident throughout the discussion with faculty, employers, and students. Being a unique education institution with an orientation towards a specific niche of education, and anchored in film, theater and dance performance, the school overall is on the track to continue contributing economically and culturally on the local and international stage, with a great visibility in the cultural sector.

It is obvious the LAC has strong links to the creative industries and organizational ecosystem on the State level: many students have immediate access to the job placements as some brand names are a part of elected faculty and teaching staff to ensure a cohesive network for artistic outlets. In terms of the distribution between the staff, and teaching faculty, elected and external, the balance is being maintained. The feedback loop is well functioning, and any changes to the curriculum are implemented in almost real time. The loyalty with which the teaching staff, students, alumni, and employers, many former students of LAC exhibit is almost self-evident and it speaks highly of what might be termed as a collective tightly knit community of practitioners.

On that note, one must add that the concept of artistic research is rather fluid at the LAC, and with the new doctoral model, one can certainly ascertain that the university has clearly defined the concept for its own scholastic reasons and logistics with respect to running the research component at the school. Moreover, the scientific and artistic researches are strategically and conceptually defined as the integral part of the education process and artistic practices conducted on studies from undergraduate to the doctoral level. Both students and teachers are highly motivated to participate in the research. Number of publications and artistic presentations shows continuous engagement of the teaching staff in the research. The scope of the topics, themes and fields is very broad and diverse. The results are applicable to the content of courses and study program development.

Notwithstanding the accomplishments, there is always room to improve their stronger connections with the learning process and cultural market demands. Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies as well as Centre for Creative Activity, as the specific hubs for the research at LAC presents a good framework for coordination and support for both students and teachers. For instance, with respect to the doctoral programs, the the widely accepted general framework of the “Vienna Declaration 2020” (<https://societyforartisticresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Vienna-Declaration-on-Artistic-Research-Final.pdf>) may be helpful guidance, as all projects qualified to be “research in the arts”, “research for the arts” or “research of the arts” are generally planned, organized and developed according to the strict guidelines and the main criteria listed in the “Frascati Manual 2015” which is already included in the educational process at LAC. In terms of a more assertive approach to the international resources in order to encourage artistic research, the participation of LAC National Film School in CILECT is highly treasured, yet, being a of contemporary performing arts, dance and cultural management networks such as IETM, EASTAP, EDN, Aerowaves and ENCATC could bring significant benefits for the individual research quality and for institutional international visibility since Internationalization of the research raises institutional and individual visibility nationally, the EU and beyond.

While interdisciplinarity of the researches strengthens ability to answer quickly and flexibly to the dynamic changes in the cultural sector, and LAC features high motivation of students and teachers

to participate in research, SAR and the on-site visit, interviews paint a complex picture in demonstrating LAC's strategic development potential. That is, certainly the Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies and Centre for Creative Activity is the right direction to cement the research aspect, but their activities do not seem at the moment sufficiently branded to the students and particularly to PhD students. The students from other departments should be involved more in research activities as case study sampling pools and in support teams for doctoral students.

The dissemination of information for international opportunities and financial support is not entirely equal amongst the departments, and the logistics of the joint programs need to be closely monitored in development such as the Riga Technical University business component is not sufficiently transparent in its efficacy.

A rather similar observation can be said about the joint professional doctoral programs. While the rationale and prospects for combined resources and scholastic input are well founded and logical, at the present moment the interdisciplinary factor requires some amplification, as all the three institutions appear to run somewhat independently. There is no single handbook available that would be of a great value particularly for international students, and the dissemination of available conference and publishing opportunities is still much desired. All being equal, one must consider, in view of the doctoral programs' special standing, prepare potential PhD candidates from the inception for the life of academia, that is, branding out their PhD programs to the freshmen in BA division.

In terms of financial support LAC is in need of a different financing model to encourage the elected and external faculty to spend more time in the academy that can be achieved by conduct the analysis of financial and infrastructure issues that are crucial for strategic development of the field and mitigating the varying and uneven financial support for researchers' and teachers' participation at different international conferences and in research publishing.

Overall, the study programs are interconnected in a logical and clustered way, the programs of artistic creation and supporting artistic creation provide opportunities for lifelong learning in terms of three cycle education, in addition to demonstrating supportive structures of the digitalization agenda. The general design of organizational management is related to development of the field and implementation of strategic actions regarding quality of studies in terms of developing and implementing studies, research, and artistic activities.

Provisions and resources are partially adequate, well-maintained but for the scope and needs of student centered learning, there is room for improvement, such as the National Films School appears to benefit from the infrastructure improvements more so than other units at LAC. Somewhat a concern is the amount of logistics theater and dance components need to address daily, which takes away energy and time resources that can be channeled to creative endeavors. Perhaps a misunderstanding, but while visiting the premises at 24 Ludza Street and talking with the students during the meeting, the panel of experts was under the impression that the space is not only used for dance rehearsals but also for theatre rehearsals; the frequent rearranging or adapting the space for theatre and/or dance lessons or performances interferes with smooth development of the study process. Also, the extensive workload of teaching and research obligations and inadequate remuneration.

This foregrounds an issue of the payment scale that should encourage teaching staff to focus on providing the quality instructions, as opposed to spending excessive amounts outside the academics of LAC. On one hand, the link and professional expertise is a great addition to the overall academic quality of the school, but, on the other hand, a serious involvement with professional life can prevent

from improving methods and methodology to achieve a maximum in quality instruction.

Communication amongst the departments is excellent but the richness of the portfolio is segmented. Collaborative efforts amongst the BA programs are not as strong as they are seen on the MA level. In this regard, a personal vision should not be conflated with personal resistance to change, as it is the mandate of the administration (rector, vice-rector, etc.), which is indeed superb in their duties, to sustain the community spirit at the university. It should not, therefore, feel reticent by a few big names in the creative industries that happen to teach at the institutional level as well. Cultural Heritage and Cultural Management programs, both in BA and MA, are more astute with their target groups and more involved with the designing curriculums, and such an approach should be fostered in other divisions. Notwithstanding, the link with the employers should be also monitored as it has a binary quality: some are heavily involved with LAC community, some provide only internships and are not particularly keen on contributing to the improvement of academic life at LAC.

All programs of the study field of “Arts” have been assessed as 'good', with insignificant shortcomings, while the MA program “Audiovisual and Performing Art” (45213) and the PhD level (51212) really stand out, given the degree title is addressed in the former. While there are also shortcomings in the latter two as well, the panel of experts had felt that in comparison with other study programs implemented in the study field of Arts at LAC, both programs provides a unique and individual approach as well as a wide spectrum of resources for comparably small amount of students. The students in these programs have an opportunity to express their creative potential and carry out their ideas during their studies with extensive amount of resources and technical base available, which is a great benefit to them, while the PhD program in “Arts”, in comparison with its newest professional edition, has a reputable track record of scholastic achievements worthy of the title 'Doctor of Philosophy' in substance and acumen.

The overall strategic mapping needs to be charted out not only on the level of industry but on the school level as well because the diminishing demographics and flattening of the local economic growth for the next five years will require to expand the English language programs, highly desired by the students. Therefore, while there is a strong emphasis of studies in arts on the promotion and contribution to the national culture, expanding the courses conducted in English to meet the need of the international market and in view of the national demographics, might be the right course. LAC has cooperation agreements with two (2) universities in this context, and established cooperation in various projects with the institutions abroad, yet, while more is not necessarily better, in this instance it might be.

With that said, the report and residual recommendations and comments made are meant to advance the full potential of LAC, and even in view of the shortcomings and visibly impressive accomplishments, the study field “Arts” at LAC deserves the accreditation maximum allowed by the Law, given the recommendations are taken seriously and followed in benefit to all stakeholders.

I - Assessment of the Study Field

I - Assessment of the Study Field

1.1 Management of the Study Field

Analysis

1.1.1.

Different info sources (SAR, in-site visit and meetings with different stakeholders) indicate that the

aims of the study field "Arts" (study field) are developed by taking into account priorities of studies, research and cultural policy, the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers, initiatives of academic and administrative staff, as well as recommendations of experts in the culture and arts sector, ensuring the continuity of education regarding the levels/cycles of university's education. The reference for development of the study field refers to the Cabinet of Ministers order no. 655 "On Types of Universities" which determines LAC as one of the three universities of arts and culture in Latvia.

The aims of the study field are clearly related to the strategic document "The Development Strategy of the Latvian Academy of Culture for 2023 - 2027" where five development priorities and five strategic development directions determine the overarching goal of the study field, common goals, study programmes and subprogramms achievable results and other elements of the field. The set of priorities are supporting the excellence of studies, research and artistic creation, digital transformation, infrastructure (Tabakas fabrikas kvartāls) development for education, research and artistic creativity, and effective strategic communication. The Strategic Action Plan of LAC also covers six directions of action regarding quality of the study process, excellence of scientific activity, development of artistic creation, cooperation with the cultural and creative ecosystem, strengthening of international dimension, and enhancing efficiency of institutional management structures.

Based on these strategic development priorities the overarching goal of the field is "to provide sustainable, successive, interdisciplinarity-based higher and post-graduate (doctoral) education in the field of culture, art and the creative sector; to prepare competitive professionals in the field of culture and art (theater, dance and audiovisual arts); to closely integrate education, research and artistic creativity in the study process; to effectively integrate into the cultural, artistic and creative ecosystem of national and international scale" (see SAR, p. 1). The overarching goal is cascaded into eight common goals that are directed to internationally recognized studies in culture and arts (theater art, dance art and audiovisual art), as well as in the creative industries sector, which is a part of the national economy. Education of creative professionals is specialized in film, theater and dance arts, management of art, culture and intercultural communication processes, culture and art research and heritage preservation, as well as in creative industries.

Goals of education are meeting the European Higher Education Area agreements and provide consistency between levels/cycles of higher education. Goals of the study field focus not only on development of competences in arts but also in humanities and promote implementation of an interdisciplinary approach. The meetings with stakeholders confirmed that implementation of this approach is evident at the level of Master studies while at the level of Bachelor programmes more focus is given to mastery skills or professional education (so called craftsmanship). Development of digital skills is foreseen both in the study and research environment and in the creation of cultural and artistic content. The dimension of internationalization helps to promote the excellence and competitiveness of graduates not only locally, but also internationally.

The relevance of the study field to the needs of society and economic development is justified by the special importance of culture and art, as well as creative industries, emphasized in analysis of Latvian and international documents (see reference in the SAR to the Ministry of Culture, Cultural Policy Guidelines for 2022-2027 "Cultural State" and "UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029", p. 1).

The study programmes are interconnected in a logical and clustered way: 1) programmes for ensuring artistic creation (actors, playwrights, film and theater directors, contemporary dancers) in creative industries and 2) programmes for professions that ensure dissemination, research, communication, heritage preservation, work with audiences as well as perform other functions that maintain and support the process of artistic creation and culture as a whole. Programmes of artistic creation and supporting artistic creation provide opportunities for lifelong learning in terms of three cycle education.

The study field Arts and ten relevant study programmes that cover three cycle education comply with the main directions of the strategic development of LAC and contribute to the national development of culture and creative industries in Latvia.

1.1.2.

The LAC strategic documentation provides a comprehensive picture into development and analysis of the field Arts. The main strategic document (the LAC Strategy for 2023-2027) integrates the study direction development plan as the first direction of action "Quality of the study process". The action anticipates six tasks (see the SAR, p.3) that focus on the excellence, competitiveness and internationalization of LAC study programmes, the development and regeneration of academic staff, cooperation with the cultural and creative sector, art and culture universities, other higher education institutions, as well as international and foreign institutions, management, monitoring, and improvement of the study environment, communication of study content, process and results, promotion the digitization of the study process.

SWOT analysis is performed on the field goals and these six tasks. Strengths identify potential of the field in terms of established opportunities for progressing in higher education three cycle programmes, competitive applicants, interdisciplinarity, student-centered approach, a large proportion of industry professionals and outstanding personalities in studies. Weaknesses focus on insufficient level of internationalization dimension regarding invited foreign lectures and insufficiently used mobility in the Erasmus framework. Although recently the number of outgoing mobility is increasing among the academic staff, keeping in mind a strategic priority of international dimension, there is a space for engagement into international exchange. SWOT analysis sees opportunities in strengthening cooperation between students of different programmes. This was communicated in the meetings with the stakeholders during the in-site visit as well. Cooperation would be welcomed in the programmes of the bachelor level while at the masters level the joined study activities are more evident and promoted in various study projects. Development of a network of mentors and alumni is another opportunity that will be welcomed by the stakeholders. Analysis of threads report concerns regarding financial and infrastructure issues that are crucial for strategic development of the field, particularly on doctoral level and in research units of LAC.

SWOT analysis is concluded by 40 actions and 15 actions are identified as higher priority. Among them actions for enhancing international dimension (international and joint study programmes, the attraction of foreign lecturers), interdisciplinarity, development of a doctoral school, the integration and succession of LAC and LAC Latvian College of Culture (LCC) study programmes by developing the LAC and LCC consolidation plan also operational ones in terms of strengthening the capacity of academic staff, enhancing managerial efficiency.

1.1.3.

The management structure of the study field Arts and the study programmes is assured at the level of LAC management, including the LAC council, constitutional assembly, Rector, advisory convention, Senate, three Vice-Rectors (in academic, scientific, and creative artistic field), the head of the study field Arts and the administrative and support levels. Each study programme also has its management representatives - directors. This design of the management structure ensures wide participation and transparent decision making.

Description of the roles of each managerial level and supporting structures (see SAR, p. 5) demonstrate clear distribution of responsibilities and search for effectiveness in implementation of studies in the field. Demonstration of a virtual learning environment (Moodle) indicates that supportive structures are also linked to implementation of the Digitalization agenda.

General design of organizational management is related to development of the field and implementation of strategic actions regarding quality of studies. On the other hand, the meetings in-site indicated that there is a need for other digital environments, especially for audiovisual study

programms that require solutions of higher digital capacity.

1.1.4.

The report provides comprehensive information on requirements for admission in each programme at the bachelors, masters and doctorate levels, the admission process and procedure for students in the study field Arts. Publicity of the admission rules and application procedure (provided set of e-links in google drive) is evident and based on the Higher Education Law and regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers no. 846 of 10 October 2006 - "Regulations on the requirements, criteria and procedure for the admission to the study programmes". The specific requirements and industry environment of each study programme at the three levels/cycles is taken into account as well. Recognition of prior formal and non-formal education is carried out in accordance with regulations approved by the Ministry of Education and Science "Regulations on the Academic Recognition of Study Courses at the Latvian Academy of Culture" and LAC "Regulations on the Recognition of Competences Acquired Outside of Formal Education or in Professional Experience and Study Results Achieved in Prior Education at the Latvian Academy of Culture". The procedure is clearly described and is getting used by students. The report indicates that with the increasing student mobility, the number of cases of prior academic recognition of courses exceeds 50 cases per study semester.

The recognition of professional experience is a straightforward and relatively simple process for students or interested applicants. Cases (1-2 times per study semester) of recognizing prior professional experience does not show high demand for this procedure.

Admission procedure and documentation also ensure student's opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or in another higher education institution/college if the implementation of the study programme is interrupted (see SAR appendix 2.1.4.-1).

1.1.5.

SAR and the meetings with relevant stakeholders indicated that assessment of students' achievements is based on student-centered education principles and this approach is reflected in the strategic goal of the field Arts. The procedure of assessment is legitimized in accordance with the requirements set by the Academic Education Standard and the regulations of the Academy's study process. Achievements of students are assessed by two sets of indicators: a qualitative evaluation in percentage and a final grade in the 10-point system, and a quantitative evaluation - the number of credit points in accordance with the scope of the study course (see SAR, p. 8). The achievements of study results are evaluated on a 10-point scale or with the evaluation of "passed" / "failed". The main sources for assessment of learning outcomes are practical lessons, seminars, tests, independent study works, discussions, workshops, skill development exercises, and other activities. Assessment of achievements takes place in the courses, internship, and final examinations. In all programmes, the evaluation is ensured to be fair, consistent, and requirements are discussed annually in department meetings. Students who face learning difficulties are offered individual options (for example, taking seminars or exams at a different time).

Applied assessment methods are relevant and diversity is assured as well as students are involved in assessment by evaluating each other's contributions in group assignments, reviewing group member's study works, etc.

Assessment procedure is clearly described in terms of ensuring the public availability of the assessment criteria. The requirements for the assessments depend on the specific nature of each course and the organization of the study process in that course. The teaching staff is directly responsible to prepare, publish and regularly update the full course description in e-studies, as well as discuss the course plan, content, and requirements for independent or group work, deadlines, and evaluation conditions in the first lecture. This ensures that students are clearly informed about assessment of achievements.

Institutional regulations regarding assessment of achievements in the courses and internship are

published in the "Regulations of the Academy on Examinations in Academic Bachelor's and Master's Study programmes at the Latvian Academy of Culture", the "Statute on Internship of the Latvian Academy of Culture" and available on the google drive (see <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VQO-ky9inAKysD1hmjj7Go-55NFCb97o/view> and https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vVJh3PBMr6g20R1ynfra_emfKOzwS3Gw/view) as well as a set of 4 documents that describe assessment procedures for course papers and final examination in study programmes.

1.1.6.

LAC has established the principles of academic integrity as this responsibility is delegated to the Senate and since 2005 the Code of Ethics is approved by the Senate. Students have to sign a study agreement, committing to abide by the following principles during their studies: "In the course of completing the study programme, all individual assignments are to be completed independently, without plagiarism - the use of another author's published or unpublished work and its fragments, and indicating precise citation of the relevant author and/or work" (the SAR, p. 10).

Anti-plagiarism is assured by the "Regulations on academic integrity at the Latvian Academy of Culture" as well as these rules are designed to strengthen academic culture and integrity within the LAC academic community, foster a shared understanding of academic integrity and related concepts, describe the possible violations of the principles of academic integrity commonly encountered in the academic setting, and regulate the main procedures for their review.

A set of documentation that is related to academic integrity and mechanisms for their observance is published and available on google drive (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1l6gvsHKl7VZacHfzfH92Y2KVg2rUZH1N/view>; <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VQO-ky9inAKysD1hmjj7Go-55NFCb97o/view>

Beside these measures academic integrity topics are also included in six courses of the bachelors and masters programmes. Prepared methodological guidelines "LAC Methodical Regulations for the development of term paper, bachelor's and master's thesis" (see: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13XpjB6dU4lOQxI0Kdxgrgnz5d2TV1Aul?fbclid=IwAR3fk7NtT1dKPWFmLWhQ9Yuw20KYNIW3Gr88skzdcGM1yyqGVgLRYHg0GcU>) also support anti-plagiarism culture in development of course and final papers.

Since 2020, LAC has been checking all Theses through the Unified Plagiarism Control System (VDPKS), which includes several colleges and universities in Latvia. LAC uses the system in collaboration with the University of Latvia. System is utilized to inspect all Theses after they are uploaded to the LAIS platform. If the system detects plagiarism in the study work, further review of the student's work is organized in accordance with "Procedure for checking electronic versions of final theses in the Latvian Academy of Culture" (see <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13XpjB6dU4lOQxI0Kdxgrgnz5d2TV1Aul?fbclid=IwAR3fk7NtT1dKPWFmLWhQ9Yuw20KYNIW3Gr88skzdcGM1yyqGVgLRYHg0GcU>)

Meetings with academic staff indicated that VDPKS is applied also in terms of detailed examination of direct plagiarism and provided cases illustrate actions and measures that have been taken afterwards.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

Data collected in SAR, in-site visit and interviews with different stakeholders validate the conclusion that the study field Arts at LAC demonstrates strategic development potential in terms of developing and implementing studies, research, and artistic activities. These pillars of the field are supported by well established managerial structures, distributed responsibilities and procedures for educational provision regarding admission, assessment of student's achievements, and academic integrity.

Strategic development for studies in Arts focuses on enhancing interdisciplinarity, international dimension, and cooperation within the ecosystem of creative industries. Ten study programmes in the three levels of higher education establish a solid portfolio where there is coherent distribution between studies in performing arts, cultural sustainability and creative industries.

Strengths:

- 1) Clear rationale and goals of strategic development in the field of Arts;
- 2) Strategic thinking, management and well established procedures regarding education provision (admission, assessment of student's achievements, anti plagiarism) and partnerships within the ecosystem of the field Arts;
- 3) A strong emphasis of studies in Arts on the promotion and contribution to national culture.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Internationalization component is rather fragmented in general and specifically in the programmes in terms of establishing business as usual.
- 2) Lack of interdisciplinarity in the programmes of the Bachelor's level.

1.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System

Analysis

1.2.1.

LAC has established a quality policy, which is publicly available on the webpage of the higher education institution. It can be accessed here: Quality Management Policy of the Latvian Academy of Culture .pdf - Google Drive (in English). On the webpage of the LAC, the quality policy is accessible in Latvian under the "Dokumenti" section and "Kvalitātes vadība" subsection. It is available here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1V77AHZg28225Xa9uQWQINi14QEsUyWsQ/view?usp=sharing>.

A substantive part of the quality assurance mechanism is quality management. The LAC has created a system that ensures maintenance of it through implementation of "Quality management system manual", which can also be accessed on the web page under "Dokumenti" section and "Kvalitātes vadība" subsection: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Hpkw1KLUOKFuk3viALP7R5oi_nbBiXVc/view . The manual outlines the mission, values, policy and quality management system processes of the institution. In general terms, the key elements of the quality management system processes, in accordance with the "Quality management system manual" p.4 are: 1. To set goals and processes; 2. To implement these processes in practice; 3. To review results, compare achievements with goals; 4. To look for possible improvements through review of the process.

In accordance with the SAR p.31, there are specific quality management tools for the main purpose of monitoring and maintaining study quality of the study field. These tools are implemented in various dimensions as study process, scientific research work and artistic creative activities. As one of the examples mentioned during onsite visit was student surveys that are conducted regularly - once in a semester. Based on these suggestions submitted by students, the study programme content is reviewed annually and various changes are implemented for the next study year. However, the LAC takes into account student opinions since the beginning of each of the study courses and tries to make some updates, if possible right away, which in the opinion of experts, is a good approach. As specified by the management, study programme directors and graduates, there is close cooperation of the demands and necessities of the labor market. Based on this cooperation, LAC has specified in the SAR p.31, various substantial changes and reforms that have been made within the study programs of the study field. For example, some of the sub-programms have been transformed into separate self-sufficient study programs as academic bachelor's study programme "Art of Contemporary Dance" licensed in 2015, the academic bachelor's study programme "Audiovisual Art" licensed in 2016, the academic master's study programme licensed in 2018

“Audiovisual and Performing Art” and others. Based on the analysis, it can be stated that the LAC has developed and maintains a quality assurance system that contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field and implemented study programmes as well as ensures continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field and the relevant study programmes.

1.2.2.

The main procedures for the development and review of the relevant study programmes of the study field are surveys of the stakeholders. LAC ensures that all three groups (students, graduates and employers) are involved and part of the quality assurance procedures. As specified by the students and other groups during onsite visits, student surveys are conducted two times a year in January and June, so that students can evaluate the study courses that they just had. As stated both during the onsite visit and in the SAR p.36, the questions in the surveys address various crucial aspects of the study process as the structure of the course, compliance with the sub-programme , the moderation of the amount of independent work, as well as the work of the lecturer. Respondents have the opportunity to provide comments and suggestions for improving the course, as well as evaluate the work of the instructor. As shown during the Moodle presentation, the course surveys are accessible on the Moodle platform for each and every course separately that is taken by students. When asked during an onsite visit about the response rate of the students, it was stated that it depends on each and every course as well as students taking it, so no specific number was provided to the expert group. As the expert group believes, students are the most active in providing their opinion on a course if it is very good or contrary - requires improvements, which is a common approach by students. During onsite visit, one of the student groups stated that students are not very active in doing the surveys, except for the ones that are part of the newly implemented study programme , which requires adjustments and some improvements more than the programs that have been implemented significantly longer.

In regards joint study programs, it was found out that the quality assurance of study courses is conducted based on the study courses provided by each of the higher education institutions. So, if a course is provided by LAC, then it is responsible for evaluation of that study course quality and vice versa, which is understandable. Students are also provided with the feedback as part of a new officially implemented system.

As stated by the management and during the Moodle presentation, employer surveys have been introduced since 2022, so this is a relatively new system that is implemented, which is a good tool in a formal way to involve employers in a quality assurance mechanism. These surveys are conducted every third year. However, as stated by the employers, nearly all of the employers themselves have graduated from LAC and are in good contacts with the administration and management of the HEI. So, in case of some urgent or relevant questions, they are in contact informally. As stated in the SAR p.37, employer input is highly important when it comes to evaluation of the competence of students/graduates in various aspects, when the graduates come to work in the industry or as interns. LAC takes into account the recommendations of employers.

Based on the SAR p.36, graduate surveys are conducted once a year in autumn. During the onsite visit, graduates shared only positive examples of problem-solving. Two of the examples were mentioned. One of the examples was with a lecturer and it was fixed very quickly through the study programme director. Another example was in regards internships when Academy was forthcoming and allowed to conduct an internship at the workplace of the student having an agreement to perform a different project task as part of the internship so that student gains other skills and benefits from the internship. Until now, graduates have not been provided with quality feedback, but within the framework of the new strategy of the LAC, the creation of an organization of graduates is envisaged, which would help to provide feedback more successfully and maintain contact with the graduates network.

Based on the analysis, in the expert opinion, the procedures for the development and review of the relevant study programs of the study field and the feedback mechanisms have been defined and they are logical, efficient, and available for all stakeholders.

1.2.3.

LAC has developed a mechanism for submission of student complaints and suggestions. In the SAR pp.34-35, there are 4 possible ways of submitting a complaint/suggestion:

1. Students can contact programme directors or sub-programme heads with problems or proposals regarding the study process. LAC accepts both oral and written submissions to the head of the department. At the end of the semester or academic year, programme directors or sub-programme heads, on their own initiative, meet with students in order to perform an evaluation of the content of the semester/academic year and study programme .
2. The Student Association invites students to approach them in case of proposals or complaints regarding both the study process and practical problems/recommendations regarding access to studies and provision of facilities. The Student Association shall resolve the applications submitted or the complaints/proposals made orally in cooperation with the relevant departments of the LAC. Students' Association ensures the anonymity of respective students.
3. Students have the opportunity to address their questions/objections orally or in written form to the Department of Studies, which addresses those questions/objections in collaboration with the respective departments and LAC leadership.
4. Students have the opportunity to submit a written submission to the Rector of the LAC. The application shall be registered in the Register of LAC applications and the rector delegates the head of the respective department for examination of the application. Unless stated otherwise in the application, the reply shall be given in a written form within 10 working days or, if the time limit has been extended but not more than 20 working days.

During the onsite visit, one of the students mentioned that in case of complaints or suggestions that on every day basis students have study year chats where the study programme director is also added and in case of practical problems they can share their issues on whatsapp directly. Another student specified that the Student Council is also very helpful and open to assist, if any issues arise. As stated by the students, they cannot recall any situation when they submitted an official form because LAC tries their best to resolve any issues through communication and are responsive to such issues quickly and proactively. After the issue has been discussed, the study programme director usually communicates with the changes made and informs students what has been done to improve and resolve the existing situation. In the expert opinion, the mechanism developed for submission of student complaints and suggestions is effective, promotes the implementation of improvements, students are informed about such opportunities and receive feedback.

1.2.4.

As stated in the analysis of 1.2.2., there are regular surveys conducted of all stakeholders - students, employers and graduates. After the surveys are conducted, the data gathered is analyzed by the responsible people within the LAC. As stated in the SAR p.36, the results of student course surveys are evaluated at the department's meetings, the necessary improvements are discussed, praise is expressed and, if necessary, the results are submitted to the Council of Study programs for review. In case of graduate surveys, the results are discussed in the Council of Study programs and published on the website of the Latvian Academy of Culture. In case of employers surveys, the results of the survey are considered by the Council of Study programs, and they are also actively used by the internship coordinator of the LAC who promotes the creation of new collaborations and the organic integration of the Academy's students into the labor market.

According to SAR p. 37, as part of the system there are also other forms of surveys implemented as part of the process, which are 1. Survey of candidates of finals - conducted every year in spring

semester where the previous educational experience is evaluated, the future study and career plans of the students are clarified, the evaluation of the elements characterizing the study, teachers and administrative staff is provided, as well as recommendations for improving the study programme . 2. Survey of candidates - conducted every year, during the summer months, together with the signing of study contracts. As part of the survey, it is determined how the students found out about study opportunities at the Latvian Academy of Culture, whether the obtained information about the studies was sufficient, what the main motivation of the students to study in the chosen sub - programme was and whether the application for studies was submitted only at the Latvian Academy of Culture or at other universities.

In the opinion of the expert group, the statistical data collection mechanism established by the higher education institution is efficient, ensures regular collection and analysis of information as well as statistics on the study programs corresponding to the study field. The mechanism for obtaining and providing feedback, including from students, graduates and employers, is effective and focused on the improvement of the study field.

1.2.5.

The information about the study field and implemented study programs that is published on the website corresponds to the information available in the official registers on VIIS and E-platform when checked by experts. In the SAR pp.38-39, there are links provided to study programme description on the website to all of the implemented study programs. The information published provides applicants and students with the relevant information in all of the languages the study programme is implemented. The information includes information as 1. Language of tuition; 2. Number of budget places; 3. Tuition fee; 4. Duration of studies; 5. Degree to be obtained; 6. Place of study; 7. International mobility opportunities; 8. Head of the programme ; 9. Study programme content; 10. Teaching staff and 11. Contacts in need of clarifications or any questions. As an example, here is one of the study programme information that is provided on the website: <https://lka.edu.lv/en/studies/study-programs/bachelor-studies/creative-industries/> .

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions

LAC has a quality assurance system that is publicly available on its website. Students are actively involved in the quality assurance processes, including through regular surveys and complaints and suggestions mechanisms. The LAC regularly monitors student satisfaction on the study courses and lecturers. Employers and graduates are a substantive part of QA processes, which is a good practice. The LAC summarizes the data collected regularly. There is a statistical data collecting system established. Information about the study programs is accessible on the BAT website in English and in Latvian.

Strengths:

- 1) All of the stakeholders are a part of QA processes;

Weaknesses:

None

Assessment of the requirement [1]

- 1 R1 - Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 2.1 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field whilst implementing its internal quality assurance system:

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LAC has established a quality assurance system and developed a Quality Policy and it is available to all interested parties on the LAC website. Monitoring of the implementation of the strategic plan is carried out every year, evaluating the achieved indicators. Students, graduates and employers all are a substantial part of the improvement of the study programs. LAC ensures continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field whilst implementing its internal quality assurance system.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LAC has established a quality assurance system and developed a Quality Policy and it is available to all interested parties on the LAC website. There are various procedures in place to ensure quality of higher education such as Quality Management Manual as well as Strategy.

- 3 1.2 - A mechanism for the development and internal approval of the study programmes of the higher education institution/ college, as well as the supervision of their performance and periodic inspection thereof has been developed.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Such a mechanism has been developed and it is described within the SAR p.32, section 2.2.2. The process of developing and reviewing study programs is regulated by several internal laws and regulations of the LAC, but the main one is the procedure for developing, amending and quality monitoring of study programs at the Latvian Academy of Culture (available: Apst_LKA studiju programmu_izstradasanas_un_uzraudzisanas_kartiba_16.01.2023.pdf - Google disks (Latvian only)), which defines the road map for developing new programs.

- 4 1.3 - The criteria, conditions, and procedures for the evaluation of students' results, which enable reassurance of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes, have been developed and published.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

In accordance with section 2.1.5. of the SAR p.26-27, Evaluation of academic achievement and study results is based on student-centered education principles, in accordance with the requirements set by the Academic Education Standard and the regulations of the Academy's study process. The performance of students and study results are evaluated in practical lessons, seminars, tests, independent study works, discussions, workshops, skill development exercises, and other assessments. Assessment methods and procedures are applied to the specific study course and study programme. The existing guidelines of evaluation are available and published as for example: 1. "Regulations of the Academy on Examinations in Academic Bachelor's and Master's Study programs at the Latvian Academy of Culture" which is available: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VQO-ky9inAKysD1hmjj7Go-55NFCb97o/view>. 2. "Statute on Internship of the Latvian Academy of Culture" which is available: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vVJh3PBMr6g20R1ynfra_emfKOzwS3Gw/view.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

In accordance with SAR p.50, the evaluation of the qualification and quality of work of the academic staff of the LAC is based on the activity of teaching staff in three groups of indicators,

namely according to the three dimensions of the activity of the LAC – study work, scientific research activity and artistic creative activity. As stated by the LAC itself in the SAR and during onsite visit, the qualification and work quality of academic staff can be assessed as sufficiently effective, however, the low remuneration of academic staff creates relatively low competition for individual, especially lower academic positions, which weakens the role of qualification and work quality assessment in promoting growth and development.

- 6 1.5 - The higher education institution/ college ensures the collection and analysis of the information on the study achievements of the students, employment of the graduates, satisfaction of the students with the study programme, efficiency of the work of the academic staff, the study funds available and the disbursements thereof, as well as the key performance indicators of the higher education institution/ college.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LAC has implemented surveys as the main tool of analysis of student satisfaction, employers and graduates. All of the stakeholders are actively involved in the QA mechanism. Their surveys are conducted regularly to monitor the study quality.

- 7 1.6 - The higher education institution/ college ensures continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field whilst implementing its quality assurance systems.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

There are various mechanisms and tools on how the LAC ensures continuous improvement, development and efficient performance of the study field. These mechanisms are provided and outlined in the relevant quality assurance documents as Quality Policy, Quality Management Manual, Development Strategy that are all available on the LAC website.

1.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field

Analysis

1.3.1.

LAC is one of the three state-funded higher education institutions in the arts and culture sector in Latvia. Besides state-budget funding (which constitutes 81% of total financing), other financing sources include: “performance-based funding, funding for implementing scientific activities, revenue from tuition fees, Erasmus+ projects, Horizon Europe - European Projects, Nordplus projects, projects of National Research programme, and additional funding from approved projects by State Cultural Capital Foundation” (SAR, p. 40).

The calculation of study programme costs is developed, taking into account the requirements set by the standards of the Latvian academic education, as well as state-budget funding, performance-based funding, and tuition fee revenue. (SAR, p. 40). Study programs are full time with in-class attendance, in some examples combined with virtual classes (master's study programme Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication) and studies are conducted in Latvian, except for the joint academic master's study programme "Creative Industries and Growth Management", which is also implemented in English, starting from 2022 (SAR, p. 40). In accordance with the available resources and provisions different study programs do not enroll students every year, which applies in the first place to the Audiovisual Department and the Performing Arts Department for their study cost and material requirements are more extensive and by accepting limited number of students they maintain the level of quality (for instance Contemporary Dance programme accepts students every

3 years).

The LAC has developed a system to support scientific activity and research, it is generally project financed; Horizon Europe - European Projects funding, projects of National Research programme , and other research projects, which classify as own revenue. During 2022 the LAC accumulated 2 013 477 EUR for scientific activities in 2022, including 61 244 EUR for artistic projects from State Cultural Capital Foundation” (SAR, p. 40), which is commendable. Based on the information acquired during site visit the Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies makes an effort to integrate on every level study and research process, to implement collaboration with students and stimulate creative thinking, collaborations between programs and years of study. Students’ research projects are especially supported and by 25 % founded by Latvian Council of Science. Thus, student research projects are supported by:

1) performance funding, with the best bachelor's and master's theses pre-defence in each programme receiving a 200 euro grant each year to support the development of their research work;

2) LAC's own funded research project competitions <https://lka.edu.lv/lv/petnieciba/petijumu-projekti/lka-finansetie-petniecibas-projekti/>, where student involvement is a prerequisite for the formation of research teams;

3) students from all study programme levels are being involved in applied research carried out by LAC in the State research projects, Fundamental and Applied research projects and in the applied research projects of the Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies.

The LAC supports dissemination of scientific research through organizing annual conferences (International Research Conference “Culture Crossroads”, Student research conference “The Art-of-Knowing”, Professional Development conference for teachers of Spanish as a Foreign Language) or specific thematic conferences (International scientific conference “Impacts of Arts and Cultural Education: Arguments and Evidence” in 2020 or International research conference “Poetics and Politics of History in Film and Theatre” in 2019). Artistic research and creativity is publicly presented in traditional events as Performing and audiovisual arts festival “The Autumn of the Patriarch” that promotes interdisciplinary cooperation between students of creative and theoretical specialities. Other creative projects are produced by Creative Activity Center and students are also encouraged to participate in various cultural events to enhance the cultural life of the city such as Walpurgis Night or “Cultural Canon” Competition. Stronger cooperation between The Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies and Creative Activity Center could lead to more interdisciplinary and innovative projects.

Researchers, teachers and students are encouraged to participate at different international conferences, symposiums, festivals and similar, although with varying and uneven financial support according to information gathered through staff meetings. Support for travel expenses group visits (especially for international projects with students) is commonly provided through projects, but travel expenses and conference fees for individual teachers and researchers are scarce; at the least, at the meeting with the academic staff an insufficient financial support for participating in conferences was stated as an issue.

1.3.2.

The study process, research and artistic creativity work of the Latvian Academy of Culture is organized mainly in three separate buildings in the city; “Ludzas iela 24, Dzirnavu iela 46 (Theatre House “Zirgu pasts” of the LAC) and Elijas iela 17. Separate classes are held in the structural units of the LAC in the “ Eduards Smilgis Theatre Museum” and “The Riga Film Museum” (SAR, p. 41-42).

The building at Ludzas iela 24, has 19 auditoriums designed for the study process whether live or remote/online lectures and equipped with the necessary technical equipment. Provisions and technical support are substantial, regarding theoretical courses and study programs based on theoretical study and research. By attracting the financing of various projects, a fully equipped computer classroom with computerized workplaces and an interactive whiteboard have also been created, and internet connection is provided in the building for all auditoriums. The premises also house an appropriately equipped hall (209 m²) that meets the requirements of contemporary dance classes for the bachelor's study programme "Contemporary Dance Art", as well as the workplaces of the administrative staff of the LAC (SAR, p. 42).

The Theatre House "Zirgu pasts" of the LAC is located at Dzirnavu Street 46 is dedicated to studying programs of theater and contemporary dance, whereas since the division of the Audiovisual Department and the Department of Performing Arts and the establishment of the LAC National Film School the Theatre Venue "Zirgu pasts" no longer host the activities of programs in audio-visual arts. The building has been adapted to fit specific requirements (infrastructure and room conditions): rooms for rehearsals and performances, assembly rooms, equipment and props warehouses, make-up rooms, showers and dressing rooms. The Theatre House houses three halls for performing arts studies and the Multifunctional Hall equipped with all the necessary audio and light equipment, video equipment purchased as a part of various projects. The hall can be transformed both for the needs of the study process and performances for theater and contemporary dance study programs, which is an advantage, but at the same time not very convenient and limiting (heavy organization and workload of adapting and readapting the space on the weekly basis for different purposes). The two smaller halls are used daily for student acting classes. The SAR p. 42-43 also notices provision limitations and spaces for improvements assessing the current infrastructure resources "as partially adequate, as "due to poor sound installation, it is not possible to hold several parallel classes at the same time", which is a significant issue, considering the premises are heavily occupied.

The Department of Audiovisual Arts of the LAC and National Film School of the LAC (the NFS) use the rented premises at Elijas Street 17, adapted to the requirements of the film industry. The building houses two special filming pavilions, as well as classrooms for both practical and theoretical classes and the premises are adapted for editing work and storage of filming equipment. The premises are rented until 2024, "when the State Joint-Stock Company "Valsts nekustamie īpašumi" (the VNĪ) plans to complete and put into operation the building at Miera Street 58a for the needs of the Audiovisual Department of the LAC and the NFS. A filming pavilion and all other necessary facilities for practical and theoretical classes will be constructed in this building/block." (SAR p. 42-43) The facilities, resources and provisions of the Film School are adequate and substantial, the studying standard is higher than for theater or contemporary dance study programs (no need for adjusting/transforming spaces for different courses), and according to the development plans should be significantly improved upon moving to the new building as indicated by the SAR: "Improvements in the quality of the study environment are planned by fully implementing the transfer of the study process from Ludzas Street 24 to Miera Street 58a (Tobacco Factory block)". Completion of the first stages of the construction of the Tobacco Factory block has a decisive role in the development of these resources, which includes the construction of the Creative Industries Business Incubator and the buildings of the National Film School of the LAC. It would allow the development of the Tobacco Factory block as an important competence center of Latvian and international scale in the development of creative industries. "The move to the Tobacco Factory will also improve the university's internal integrity and more active cooperation between students and teaching staff of different disciplines, and will save time and resources when moving from one building to another" (SAR p. 43).

The LAC's plans for the future are quite ambitious regarding the forming of a new creative quarter of the Tobacco Factory where the new premises are being built. The creative block should also house the Creative Industries Business Incubator, Cinema/Photo Art Museum, which would enable the LAC to deepen the connection with the creative industries sector. The construction of the teaching

department of the LAC, the Cinema/Photo Museum and the department of the Department of Performing Arts at LAC, cinema hall and residence halls is planned as part of the 2nd stage of the project (SAR p. 43). While visiting the premises at 24 Ludza Street and talking with the students during the meeting, the panel of experts has gotten the impression that the space is used for several days for dance rehearsals and the rest of the week for theatre rehearsals. Newly planned premises in the Tobacco Factory block would be almost twice as large, which is highly important. The realization of the plans in the shortest possible time is crucial to be able to increase the number of students and reduce the premature termination of studies, develop the offer of study programs, provide the necessary facilities for research growth and artistic creativity, modern infrastructure and an attractive environment.

1.3.3.

LAC Library is an accredited library to the principles of a scientific library to provide "the accredited bachelor, master and doctoral study programs with the latest and retrospective scientific and reference literature, periodicals and fiction, as well as ensure successful foreign language learning and research work. The collection of the library consists of literature in cultural studies, cultural history, cultural anthropology, cultural and arts sociology, cultural economy, cultural management, philosophy, theater, cinema, dance, visual arts, literature, creative industries, heritage, sociology, politics, dramaturgy, folklore, linguistics, research methodology, history, etc., as well as fiction - translations and original literature in various languages (Spanish, English, German, French, Italian, etc.). A large number of literature sources are available in English." (SAR p. 43-44).

LAC regularly replenishes resources in the library, both by purchasing books and other publications, and by subscribing to databases of academic and scientific resources, with the yearly funding of EUR 5,000 per year. The compilation of the inventory is organized in cooperation with the academic staff - programme directors, sub-programme directors and lecturers and the collection is supplemented with around 100 new information sources per year. The Library also creates LAC Thesis database, which includes the bibliographic descriptions of LAC student's final thesis, is a part of the National Union Catalogue of Latvia and is renewed yearly with new records.

According to the SAR p. 44: "the LAC operates a video library located in the LAC National Film School (Elijas Street 17, Riga), with more than 2,500 different films, video recordings, recordings of theater performances obtained from foreign universities of a similar profile, from the LAC's Riga Film Museum, Latvian Television Film Library, Latvian For the Latvian State cinematographic and phonographic document archive and purchases of the National Archives structural unit. The video library also serves as an archive of LAC students' artistic creations. Students have access to the resources of LAC structural units - LAC Riga Cinema Museum and Eduards Smilgis Theater Museum - including museum collections."

The Library subscribes to the EBSCO National Electronic Resources Package, selected and approved by the Library Council, that includes database resources: EBSCO Academic Search Complete + MasterFILE Premier, Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition+Consumer Edition, Newspaper Source, ERIC, GreenFILE, LISTA, MEDLINE. The Library also uses free trial databases, OPEN ACCESS databases (core.ac.uk, openresearchlibrary.org, ijsrp.org), as well as the digital resources of the National Library of Latvia corresponding within the study programme and sub-programme framework of the LAC study direction "Arts" .

Library's users have a subscription and a reading room with free access collection, 30 workstations, 5 of which are computerized, with Internet access, electronic catalogues and databases. The electronic catalogue of the Library is a part of the National Union Catalogue of Latvia, which was added to the virtual catalogue of the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (<https://kvk.bibliothek.kit.edu/index.html?kataloge>), which also represents the largest collection of Latvia's scientific libraries. (SAR p. 44-45).

1.3.4.

One of the strategic priorities of the LAC is the concept of “digital transformation” - improving the quality of a study direction by integrating information and communication technology solutions. The information and communication technology solutions are present throughout the entire study process and are also important for research and artistic creativity activities. In the study process, the LAC uses the e-learning environment (Moodle) and the Latvian Higher Education Institutions Information System (LAIS). Since the summer of 2020, the Academy has been using its authentic applicant registration system: uznemsana.lka.edu.lv that the applicants utilize for the admission process, add the necessary documents and after data processing access data to the study information system LAIS.

LAIS ensures the access to resources and information: electronic class schedules, final course evaluations, information on finances, regulatory study documents (internal regulatory acts), current information on study issues, internships and job offers, etc. “In the LAIS, graduates of the joint study programs of the LAC and RTU have access to an electronically signed diploma supplement which is stored at the LAIS even after graduating from the LAC.” (SAR p. 46). Significant improvement of LAIS functions was also performed (for example, orders for term papers were created, a printout of the inter-university diploma supplement was prepared, the section “Student” was significantly improved, transitions between different sections were simplified, etc.). Students of different study programs confirm satisfaction with the improvements and functionality of the LAIS base, providing various useful information, including information on internships and other and generally express frequent use of the LAIS base.

Moodle platform is used as a tool for organizing the study process in each study course – for posting various materials, completing tests and homework, posting assessments - the main communication environment for students and lecturers outside of contact classes. According to the SAR p. 46 and confirmed during site visit; e-courses contain links to external information resources, teachers upload video recordings of their lectures for students who do not have the opportunity to participate in the class in person and electronic tests for the successful completion of the study course are also available for some courses. The Moodle platform is unevenly used at different study programs (even though approximately 80% of teachers use it), teachers and students of more theoretically-oriented programs and courses use it frequently and express content with its functionality (especially Intercultural Relations program). On the other hand, students and teachers of the Audiovisual and Performing Arts tend to use it much less, for its inadequacy for sending large size files and videos, which is highly understandable. Students in general consider study materials highly available in digital format, whether through Moodle or through other communication channels or platforms (One Drive for audiovisual files and communications for instance) according to the information acquired during site visit.

The SAR p. 46. states that in order to improve the implementation of information and communication technology solutions, several measures have been taken to streamline these processes; enhancing the functionality of Moodle, transferring study course materials in digital format using e-learning environment resources (and adapting students’ performance testing using Task, Test and Seminar activities and subscribing to the services of the Respondus company LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor which ensured the fair conduct of examinations and tests in several study courses.

At the LAC e-studies are available 24 hours a day from any place with an internet connection; information about the study course is available in each course: course description and requirements for awarding credit points, its topics and achievable results. The LAC has established an effective support system for lecturers in order to promote the reduction of barriers to the use of e-studies, including the training of the system administrator and lecturers and an e-study platform specialist available to provide daily support. The improved e-learning environment enables smooth development of hybrid study programs (for instance Master Study in Cultural Heritage Governance

and Communication) as well as to strengthen the components of the students' self-directed learning in education – by developing self-assessment tests of current knowledge and using other self-assessment tools (SAR p. 46).

The LAC has joined the joint plagiarism control system, which contributes to the improvement of academic honesty in the study environment in Latvia.

1.3.5.

The election of the academic staff – professors and associate professors at the Latvian Academy of Culture is preceded by the Council of Professors of the “Art Science and Arts” branch. The Council of Professors is constituted of both professors from the LAC and from other Latvian and foreign universities in the relevant scientific field and it elects the most suitable candidate to the respective position for six years.

The SAR p. 48-49 states that for a vacant or temporarily vacant academic position in the Academy, the rector can hire a visiting professor and conclude contracts with the retired academic staff for the performance of specific work or for the current academic year. In cases where a professor or associate professor has been elected to the relevant position for two consecutive terms, the employment contract is extended for an indefinite period after the Council of Professors evaluates the professional qualifications of the professor and/or associate professor.

In the personnel selection process, heads of structural units at the LAC pay special attention to succession issues and the interaction of personnel of different generations. During the reporting period, it has been possible to improve the processes of retraining academic staff; the future task is to maintain this proportion of the same number of lecturers in the age group of 25–49 and 50–65 and over by moving towards an increase in the number of lecturers in the age group of 25–34 years (SAR p. 49).

Special importance is given to the scientific or artistic creative capacity of the staff, the ability to develop and improve the content of study programs, as well as the competence to introduce innovative methods in study processes.

In order to improve the quality of studies and strive for excellence, the LAC works purposefully to involve foreign lecturers in academic work, especially in master's and doctoral programs, for instance, JMSP “Creative Industries and Growth Management” and MSP “Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication”, which is held in English or at Master Study of Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication or as a foreign supervisor at Doctoral programs. Foreign professors are engaged customary per semester and guest lectures per shorter period. Employing foreign lectures relies mainly on the sources of ERASMUS+ programs and other financial instruments (not LAC base funding) and defies the following challenges; uncompetitive remuneration for full-time academic staff and the tiny hourly rate for guest lecturers, workload creation problems, non-transparent academic career system, etc. More substantial Erasmus + sources would be favorable to attract more foreign expert teachers, especially taking into account students' enthusiasm and level of internationalization it brings to the study programme . The LAC sees the solution to these problems in the creation of a new regulatory framework for academic careers, which is still in the process of development and “would allow radical improvement of the management of human resources in the academic environment. The new regulation should provide for a level of remuneration that corresponds to the level of remuneration established in the country for equivalent qualifications, competence and duties, ensuring competitive remuneration.” (SAR p. 50)

Other internal improvements include “the development of a policy of closer linking of workloads and remuneration in order to eliminate unequal distribution of workloads and to create a result-based motivation system for academic staff.” (SAR p. 50) The teachers generally express a high level of eagerness and commitment to the Academy and working with the students, even though extensive workload of teaching and research obligations has been detected and inadequate remuneration for their work engagement.

The LAC has established strong communication connections and intensive cooperation with professional institutions in the field: theater and film industry, museums and cultural centers and various other institutions and agencies, and their representatives generally express high level of appreciation for competitive advantages of the Academy's graduates and LAC's impact on the cultural life of Riga. During the site visit, the representatives of the film and theater scene have articulated a strong need for fresh talents educated at the LAC. The highest contribution to the field has been detected in the museum sector, due to solid educational base provided by LAC, the number of professionals working in the field, good long term communication with stakeholders and impact of the museum sector to the developing of the curriculum, making suggestions to adapt it to the needs of the field.

1.3.6.

According to the SAR p. 50, the evaluation of the qualification and quality of work of the academic staff of the LAC is based on the activity of teaching staff in three groups of indicators, namely according to the three dimensions of the activity of the LAC – study work, scientific research activity and artistic creative activity. The evaluation takes place 1) cyclically – before the election to the academic post and at the end of the election period; 2) annually. The annual assessment of teaching staff is based on the student and graduate surveys and secondly in an "Individual report of the staff of the Latvian Academy of Culture on the activities of scientific and artistic creativity" for each staff member. "In individual reports, lecturers provide detailed information on the results of scientific and artistic creativity, some information of which (e.g. scientific publications published in editions indexed in SCOPUS and Web of Science databases, peer-reviewed monographs, etc.) serve as the basis for the work of the teaching staff for counting hours on the load sheet in the next study year, as well as for awarding cash prizes for the most significant results of scientific activity." (SAR p. 50) In order to promote the professional development which significantly improves the professional qualification of academic staff, the LAC promotes and supports the use of academic leave for scientific research or scientific activity outside their workplace, as well as a three-month study leave for the preparation of a doctoral dissertation (Assoc. Prof. Z. Daudziņa in 2020, Assoc. Prof. I. Roga in 2022).

During site visit significant differences have been detected in financial support for researchers at the the Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies and researches at other Departments; department teachers in general have no experience of financial support for participating the international conferences or for reward for publications indexed in SCOPUS and Web of Science databases, while the Institute's researchers are familiar with the practise. The same argument goes for the possibility of reducing teaching hours, researchers at the Institute practice this possibility; distinct researchers are engaged at extensive research projects with minimal teaching hours, while teachers at different departments do not share this opportunity. The remuneration for excellence in artistic work or the amount of decreasing of teaching hours accordingly has not been detected.

The excellence of scientific and artistic activity of the LAC, especially referring to the Doctoral studies, actively used by the new generation of lecturers, play an important role in raising the qualifications of academic staff and attracting the resources. The academic doctoral study program "Arts" and the sub-programme "Audiovisual Art, Theatre and Contemporary Dance" provides the qualification and career development base for both the existing teaching staff and potential teaching staff (SAR p. 51).

The high standards in engaging academic staff can be observed from the fact that many representatives of the academic staff (especially professionals of cultural and creative industries, have started their careers at the LAC as guest lecturers and only after achieving high indicators of pedagogical, scientific and creative work have they gone on to run for elections for a vacant position (SAR p. 51).

The qualification improvement for both the academic and general personnel in foreign countries

takes place mainly using Erasmus+ mobility opportunities and other professional qualification improvement and experience exchange programs. The academic staff are also given the opportunity to attend courses and seminars organized by the Continuing Education Centre, or foreign languages courses within the Intercultural and Foreign Languages Department of the LAC. Within the framework of the project “Development of academic staff of the Latvian Academy of Culture – investment in the quality of studies”, financed by the ESF, training digital and leadership skills and was held for the 61 representatives academic and scientific staff of the LAC (SAR p. 51).

The LAC considers the exchange of experience of the academic staff of the LAC and professionals from the cultural and creative sector a particularly valuable way of strengthening professional qualifications. During the 100-hour internship with the businessmen of the industry (SIA Studija Lokomotive, SIA Mistrus Media, SIA Neputns, SIA Arkogints, SIA Pandora media, SIA Vidzemes televīzija, SIA TNS Latvia), the staff’s competence and knowledge about the operation of the industry and a deeper understanding of the specific issues of the industry were enhanced, thus promoting a closer connection of the LAC with the national economy (SAR p. 52).

Students’ evaluation of the education process are conducted semestrally per course and students consistently express receiving feedback on their evaluation results and opinions. Communication level between students, teachers and LAC administration has been extremely highly valued on more than one occasion, regarding different issues, besides evaluation of study courses. Students evaluate the school as very responsive to their needs, implementing required changes in due time, reviewing course description, modifying slightly course content (for instance in language courses, adapting to the knowledge level of the students). Teachers gave coinciding feedback, expressing high interest in students’ opinions and the dedication for student-centered learning environment stating: “we build the semester together during the site visit.”

1.3.7.

After the SAR p. 53, the academic staff of the LAC and the study direction “Arts” consists of 75 employees; 14 professors, 12 associate professors, 19 assistant professors, 22 lecturers are employed in elected positions. There have been 36 scientists elected to the Institute of Culture and Arts of the LAC, of which 9 are leading researchers, 10 are researchers and 17 are research assistants. Of the academic staff (professors, associate professors, assistant professors and lecturers), 16 have also been elected as leading researchers, researchers or research assistants and are also employed as scientists. Of the entire academic staff of the LAC, 36 (48%) employees have a doctorate degree, while 13 (15%) are nationally and internationally recognised artists. Most of the teaching staff of the Latvian Academy of Culture work full-time.

The minimum amount of academic work is set at 720 hours per year. The workload of the teaching staff consists of study work, methodical work, scientific and artistic creative work, and organizational work. The workload accounting is constantly being improved, but according to SAR p. 53, due to limited funding, not all activities are included in the workload accounting (for example, developing a new study course, developing and supplementing the course description, preparing for classes, etc.) The SAR p. 53 notices that: “Since the establishment of the Latvian Academy of Culture in 1990, the number of academic staff (teaching staff) has not grown rapidly, but guest lecturers have been hired in varying numbers. The number of elected academic staff increased by 2 academic staff positions on average per year. ” The development policy of the LAC aims at promoting internationalization and attracting foreign lecturers. They are recruited within the framework of the Erasmus+ program, on average make up 5% of the academic staff of the LAC per year, and play a significant role in the improvement of academic work. Since 2013, 300 foreign lecturers have led lectures and master classes at the LAC as a part of the Erasmus+ program (SAR p. 53).

In order to enrich the content of the study programs of the field of study and to ensure the integration of practice-based knowledge and artistic creative experience in it, academic personnel from the cultural and creative sector, namely industry professionals, are actively recruited for the

implementation of study courses. In the 2021/2022 study year, 71 guest lecturers were recruited. After the SAR p. 53-54, "when evaluating the distribution of the teaching staff's workload and the workload formation policy, it should be noted that the LAC has determined the following desired amount of hours in the workload:

1. lectures, seminars, practical work, individual lessons – no less than 256 hours per year;
2. management and examination of consultations, management and examination of student internships, independent works (assignments), management and review of coursework and final theses, acceptance of examinations, work in entrance examinations, pre-defence and assessment of coursework, commissions of special final examinations and final examinations – no more than 280 hours per year;
3. methodological work (development of study course, development of methodological materials, development of teaching aids, preparation of study programs for licensing and accreditation) – no more than 180 hours per year;
4. scientific research and/or creative artistic work (publications, participation in conferences, scientific research, creative works, work in the scientific and artistic council) – not less than 40 hours per year;
5. organizational work – not less than 20 hours per year".

The amount of scientific research work is significantly greater for teaching staff who are also elected to the IACS as scientists, which is in tune with the LAC's financial support and amount of teaching responsibilities.

The workload redistribution strategy that would analyze and evaluate the distribution of the academic, administrative and research workload of teaching staff, by including the lectures, seminars and practical classes of the overloaded staff in the workload of the less overloaded staff is of high importance. Aware of the need for a better balance of the academic, research and administrative workload and in order to improve the personnel management policy, the LAC has several tasks as priorities, including: 1) to work purposefully on salary differentiation and improved financial management policy in order to ensure a fairer remuneration system based on results and investment in the future, as well as to promote the professional development of academic staff and the improvement of the quality of the field of studies, 2) to plan the differentiation of the workload distribution proportion for professors and other academic staff; 3) to purposefully increase the composition of the academic staff with nationally and internationally recognised artists, reaching 20% of the academic staff of the LAC (in accordance with the requirements of Section 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions) (SAR p. 54). The priorities are ambitiously defined and their accomplishment would beyond any doubt improve working and organizational conditions and make the LAC more attractive for quality national and international expert teachers. Academic staff have continuously demonstrated an extremely high level of enthusiasm and attachment to the Academy and the students during site visit, despite inadequate levels of remuneration for their work. Encouraging that level of commitment with different means of support for their work is important, in order to keep the level of quality teachers, artists and researchers.

1.3.8.

Support for LAC students is based on a student-centered education approach; providing an empathetic and inclusive study environment, developing and improving the range of career development services, as well as ensuring participation in decision-making and quality management processes.

During the study process employees of the study department provide information regarding all matters related to the study process: supervising admission of students, contract signing, achievements of students, scholarship grants, preparing information regarding study payments, administering e-study environment, etc (SAR p. 56). Students of all study programs equally

emphasize availability, good communication and personalized approach of both teachers, program Director and administration regarding various students' issues. Emphasizing different levels of support, students mention assistance during illness in a form of consultations even for practical lessons (for instance acting) as a benefit of working in small groups.

The SAR p. 56-57 extensively describes Career support for students, states that is continuously being developed, even though career support mechanisms vary significantly between study levels, study programs and sub-programs, which is determined by the nature of the labor market and corresponds to the respective program. LAC students have the opportunity to apply for individual consultations with the LAC Career Education Project Manager to discuss internships and career plans individually. During the consultation, student's skills are analyzed, based on the student's own interests and prepared questions, the experience of studies, practice/volunteering, etc. For example, under the "Arts" sub-program "Stage Acting", students are usually admitted in close cooperation with a particular theater, e.g., Valmiera Drama Theatre, New Riga Theatre, etc., with which the students' career after graduation will be related. Students estimate career consultation very useful and appreciate the convenience of e-communication meetings to consult.

The LAC developed a flexible, practical model of internships that is differentiated between different programs and sub-programs of the same program. Internships are excellent support for career building, as often students continue to work there after graduation. The students choose and implement the time period for internship individually.

"LAC works with numerous companies that offer internships. Employers include institutions, organizations, associations and enterprises of the Latvian cultural and creative sector (public and private), including creative industries, media, advertisement companies, etc. Students happily choose internships not only in theater, film, dance industry organizations or projects and memory institutions (museums, libraries, archives), but also in music (including LNOB, LNSO, regional concert halls, music festival projects, etc.) and visual arts (galleries and art centers) organizations, as well as in state and local government institutions (programs/sub-programs related to cultural management). It is also possible to take internships in social business, advertising and marketing agencies, as well as banks, such as Swedbank (Creative Industries program). Public administration and local government agencies, regional cultural centers, as well as several NGOs and various foundations regularly offer to cooperate with LAC students. LAC students can provide their own placements by setting up their own company or implementing their own project, to which other LAC students are drawn, thus working in a team and developing leadership qualities. Often LAC students choose to do internship abroad, acquiring contacts during ERASMUS studies, as well as cooperating with EUNIC and other European representative institutions in Latvia." (SAR p 56-57)

Students of Audiovisual and Performing Arts often participate in extracurricular projects (theater, TV and other), conveying support and mentoring advice from their teachers and successfully balancing extracurricular activities with students' obligations.

Since 2021 there is a new initiative to support students' careers and studies called the "LAC Mentoring program". The program is voluntary and involves around 25 students each year, to whom the LAC, as program coordinator, offers cooperation with industry professionals; to broaden the student's perspective on work and/or business opportunities in the sector, to explore the professional environment; to develop competences and improve the skills for setting and achieving the objectives of the student; and finally to help a student make contact with people in respective industry. Although the program does not directly aim at finding a workplace for students, it has demonstrated highly positive results; the successful cooperation initiated during the program often was continued after it's completion (SAR p. 57).

Support to students with special needs is a particular issue; different venues are in various modes adapted for students with disabilities, the problem mostly refers to the Main building at the Ludzas iela 24 and to the Film School that are unsuitable for students or teachers with reduced mobility

issues. Understanding that the premises of the NFS are rented and that the School is planned to move next Autumn in the new venue, which is currently under construction, it is to be expected that the new building would be much more inclusive. Special attention should be paid to training the staff and sensitizing them to work with students with special needs, even though the relationships between students and program/sub-program managers, heads of departments, administration representatives are based on empathy and mutual trust, which allows to discuss current issues and, if necessary, recommend the assistance of a specialist. The Student Association of LAC students also provides significant support in the adaptation of students and in the study process.

Financial support for students during their studies is provided through scholarships. Students may apply for a monthly, one-off or increased scholarship at budget places each semester in the Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral study programs of the LAC (140 /160 EUR per month). Since 2021, students with specific socio-economic status of students Group I and II disabilities can apply for a "Studēt gods" scholarship (160 EUR per month). Within the framework of the calendar year, the LAC Study Financing Allocation Council grants scholarships to support research and research-based creativity on the basis of proposals from representatives of the Pre-Advocacy Commission for Bachelor's and Master's works. Grants are available for students in Doctoral Studies too, for project-funded research prospects. Students have the opportunity to apply for study fee reliefs. Two types of study loans are available to students: 1) study loan (to cover study fees); 2) student loan (for day-to-day needs of a student during studies) (SAR p.57-58).

Some study programs imply higher studying cost than others do, the Film School is probably the most clearly visible example. Students have at their disposal appropriate equipment and studio spaces, final graduates' films are customary financially supported by the Culture Cultural Foundation of Latvia and others. Additional funds for undergraduates' short films per semester are not available, students are encouraged to attract funds for more ambitious projects on their own, which has proved to be successful and adequately prepares them for the professional market.

Mobility support for LAC students during the mobility study period is provided by the head of the mobility program and the international cooperation specialist, providing support to LAC students: organize seminars and individual consultations before mobility, assist in the document preparation or registration of courses after mobility. Substantial mobility support is evident in high rate of outgoing mobility (70 – 80 students per year, which is more 10 % of all enrolled students)

Incoming full time and mobility period students are supported by an international cooperation specialist: that helps to complete documents (study contracts, certificates), find a place of residence, navigate study information and daily life (SAR p. 58). Incoming ERASMUS+ students (30-50 per year) as well as international students studying at LAC, have expressed difficulties during study process, the LAC's openness to internationalization is obvious, but more attention to adapting availability of information (web page) and study material to the international students would be favorable. The LAC is increasing courses offered in English continuously, with the intent to attract more foreign students.

Support in technical and IT matters is provided by an IT service specialist and a party responsible for technical provision of the digital environment that is necessary for studies, as well as to solve issues related to the maintenance of infrastructure (IT, maintenance of premises, provision according to the needs of the training process, etc.) (SAR p. 58).

Students are supported by LAC's communications department in organization of extracurricular activities: dissemination of information to the media, informative support on social media platforms, and services of the LAC photographer. "The department of communications also regularly offers students to practice at the department, allowing students to develop marketing, communication and management skills. Implementation of the creative projects of the LAC is ensured by the Centre for creative activity." (SAR p. 58)

The LAC promotes students' creative activities, while making cultural impact to the community by organizing "The Autumn of the Patriarch " the annual performing and audiovisual arts festival since

2010 in the first week of October. The festival stages the creative works of students in the form of a week's marathon and projects often the result of interdisciplinary cooperation between the students of creative performing specialities and students of theoretical specialities, who ensure translations of plays, performance reviews and newspaper articles as well as help with the event management. The cooperation is also established with the students of other higher education institutions in Latvia or internationally.

The LAC supports students' participation in different international festivals (especially for Contemporary dance students, as reported during site visit), supports travel expenses for groups of students through projects and offers assistance in organization and logistics.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions: High level of enthusiasm and dedication to the study processes and the Academy on all levels (students, academic staff, administration, management) are definitely one of the greatest strengths of the LAC. Good cooperation with the stakeholders and professional institutions in the field are also of high importance, enabling LAC to be in tune with the job market and produce adequately educated professionals. Provisions and technical support regarding theoretical study programs and film studies are substantial, albeit the panel of experts was under the impression that the space at the building at 24 Ludza Street is used mostly for dance rehearsals and the rest of the week for theatre rehearsals, therefore, students are required to adapt and rearrange the space for theatre or dance lessons or performances, which interferes with smooth development of the study process. Extensive workload of the academic staff and insufficient financial support for research and publishing should be addressed by the announced workload redistribution strategy.

Strengths:

- 1) Good communication and personalized approach to students;
- 2) High level of enthusiasm and commitment to the Academy of both students and teacher;
- 3) Established strong communication connections and intensive cooperation with professional institutions in the field;
- 4) Detected high level of contribution to the development of museum sector;
- 5) Provisions and technical support regarding study programs based on theoretical study and research are adequate;
- 6) The facilities, resources and provisions of the Film School are adequate and substantial, the studying standard is higher than for theater or contemporary dance study programs (no need for adjusting/transforming spaces for different courses), and according to the development plans should be significantly improved upon moving to the new building.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The building at 24 Ludza Street is heavily occupied and also used for theatre rehearsals, therefore, students are required to adapt and rearrange the space for theater or dance lessons or performances, which interferes with smooth development of the study process
- 2) Extensive workload of teaching and research obligations and inadequate remuneration;
- 3) Varying and uneven financial support for researchers' and teachers' participation at different international conferences;
- 4) More substantial Erasmus + sources would be favorable to attract more foreign expert teachers, especially taking into account students' enthusiasm and level of internationalization it brings to the study programme .

1.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation

Analysis

1.4.1.

The scientific and artistic research are the integral part of the educational process at LAC and they are in line with all study fields. Undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students are included in different research, as well as most of the academic staff. SAR (p. 59) states that the “strategic specialization is closely related to the three pillars” of LAC’s activities, “educational programs, scientific research and expression of artistic creativity”. The list of the main areas of the research to confirm such statement presented in SAR (p.p. 60-63) and at the LAC website (<https://lka.edu.lv/en/research/research-projects/>) is extensive, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary. Scientific standards and methodologies on each study programme exist under the LAC umbrella. There are well established methods to evaluate the results of the research. Significant efforts in strengthening research capacities and important steps have been made. Research topics are connected and relevant to the courses and the connection between research and teaching is well established. The expert group praises the LAC for the efforts in strengthening research capacities through the Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies and also through Creative Activity Centre as the conceptual and institutional framework which could shape individual actions by aligning them to overarching research objectives. SAR (p. 59) stresses that: “The IACS had 36 scientists working in elected academic positions at the end of 2021: nine leading researchers, nine researchers and 18 research assistants by making a total of almost 17 FTE.” what seems as a respectable base for executing current and developing further researches. From SAR (pp. 58-71), Annexes 2.4.4.-1 and 2.4.4.-2, Annex 8, LAC website (<https://lka.edu.lv/en/research/research-projects/>) and discussions during the site visit, expert group has been informed that the scientific research is well established and measurable through the lists of the academic staff’s published scientific articles and list of the implemented research projects. The evaluation of the projects within the framework of the research activities is assured through the assessment by the Ministry of Education and Science and it is based on the criteria research quality, impact on the scientific industry and economic and social impact. Table 12 in the SAR (p. 60) states 128 different implemented research projects from 2015 to 2022. Table 11 in SAR (p.60) states 295 different scientific articles published by LAC staff from 2015 to 2022. Scientific researches show a high level of social relevance, most of them are closely connected with practice of the cultural and arts industry and make impact on knowledge development in the field. The academic staff has already demonstrated that it is capable of producing significant scientific publications. The expert group praises such scientific achievements of the academic staff.

However, the whole area of the artistic researches in SAR (p.61- 62, p.64, p.67, p.70) and in the listed projects in Annex 2.4.4.-1 still seems to be rather generally formulated, and the types of the research are not strictly defined. It is not clearly defined the role of practice in knowledge which makes the crucial distinction between artistic research and artistic practice, nor in which case and at which level of study programs the artistic researches are “practice-based”, “research-led practice”, “practice-led research”, “transdisciplinary research”, “research through performance” or “participatory research”. Without such classification it is hard to define exact methodologies, data collection and analysis methods, the outcomes, and to provide the comparability between the projects. To assure further development of the the international criteria for higher education artistic research it might be helpful to follow in each and every project the guidelines pointed in the framework of “Vienna Declaration 2020”(<https://societyforartisticresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Vienna-Declaration-on-Artistic-Research-Final.pdf>)

Doctoral studies

Academic doctoral study programme “Arts” is well established on rigorous scientific principles, and the methodology of the scientific researches presented in the Annexes Study course description and Annex 5 of the programme meets high standards of the scientific researches in terms of planning,

structuring and developing the researches. From SAR and related documents, as well from the teachers CV, it is clear that there is sufficient competences, expertise and capability to assure a high level of the scientific research relevant for the study field and the industry.

As for artistic doctoral researches, in addition to what has been mentioned before for the whole field of the artistic researches, the choices of the researches still do not assure the rigor in creative practice, artistic research methodology, the production and advancing of knowledge which clearly distinct innovative artistic research on doctoral level from other artistic researches and artistic practices already present at BA and MA level. Non-linear, iterative and exploratory researches, mixed methods of data collection and analysis, and transformative, participatory and action research frameworks, as the most challenging and most demanding types and models of the artistic research projects as the “research in the arts”, “research for the arts” or “research of the arts” are not explicitly stated as a standard, leaving the space for lower ranks of the researches suitable for MA and BA studies (eg. “community-based research”, “case studies”, “research driven by artistic practice” etc.). The main criteria of the “Frascati Manual 2015” already included in educational process at LAC and research methodology might be refreshed with the proposals for the Manual’s updates 2022 (https://aec-music.eu/media/2022/06/Cover-Letter-to-OECD_NESTI.pdf) in order to consider the most recent changing trends in the field of the artistic research.

1.4.2.

In the SAR, and during assessment visit, the expert group has been informed about very strong attempts of LAC to link theory to practice, and to respond to the concrete cultural market demands. Separate action plan directions stated in SAR (p.11) stresses such intention. As stated in SAR (p.62-63) the integration of research results carried out by the lecturers of the LAC and the IACS into the content of study courses exists. There is also a mechanism to ensure a close connection of scientific and applied research with the study process by the involvement of students in the research projects.

However, according to Annex 3.2.1-4 and 3.2.1.-2._9 compared to the course descriptions in the Annexes, these intentions do not seem to be fully integrated in a systematic way into the entire research programme yet. The Development Strategy 2023-2027 (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pLPD08ZbMW7nRtVaSQZhvTCJLxiaie/view>) offers solid base to do so in short time period. LAC provides research infrastructure and encourages students and teachers to participate in a variety of research projects. During the site visit expert group has been informed that many of the research projects are planned and executed through collaboration with partner institutions.

Scientific and applied research are well connected with the industry and contribute significantly both to the industry development and research developments at LAC. Expert group praises the LAC’s intentions to further integrate teaching, learning and research in terms of research-guided didactics and to strengthen the linkage between teaching and research. During the meeting with the LAC management and the presentation expert group learned that the allocation of financial, logistic and human resources to achieve these objectives are among the management priorities.

1.4.3.

LAC holds several conferences annually and some of them are international. Teaching staff attends international conferences on a regular basis, and LAC is included in high level European international projects. For instance, LAC is an active partner in Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, Creative Europe and other international projects covering regional and broader international cooperation, which aims at fostering the research culture in higher education in Latvia. The benefits of these projects are obvious in terms of capacity building at LAC and can be expected to become even more effective in the near future.

Academic staff and student mobility show frequent short term exchanges with international

universities. SAR (p.67) states the LAC's strategic plans for international cooperation for 2023-2027 period in four clearly points: "Participation in one consortium of the "European Universities" initiative organized within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme , Participation in "Horizon Europe" research projects (at least four during the planning period), Membership in one international cooperation consortium of universities of arts and culture and Individual or collective awards (at least two per year) won in national and international artistic creativity competitions." Expert group praises such specific and achievable goals in achieving excellence and their compliance with available resources. Development of this framework is a predominant task of the faculty. At the meeting during the visit an expert group has been informed that institutional support for teachers and students participation at the international conferences exists even though the strategy for international research funding is not fully developed yet. Still some of the students in interviews stated to be unaware of such possibilities. Transparent information (e.g. in form of newsletter or at the LAC website news section) about the international conferences, international projects and especially funding possibilities through Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies as well as Creative Activity Centre would be more than helpful. Regional cooperation is strategically important, as well as the stronger integration in EU research and higher education systems.

The intercultural component of the research and studies is integrated in LAC educational philosophy. Collaboration with European partners shows measurable impact on the programs. Therefore further active participation in relevant international networks in fields of dance, film, performing arts, visual arts, cultural management and cultural studies would bring new knowledge, new collaboration opportunities and impact on institutional reputation. However, the criteria and methodology of choosing partner cultures out of Europe (e.g. such as Japan or Brazil) are not clearly grounded in existing curricula and therefore seem rather random.

1.4.4.

As can be learned from the SAR and related documents as well as from the information obtained during the site visit, there is a significant level of research activity the academic staff carries out. Teachers participate in the research and a significant percentage of the working time is allocated to the research. Expectations for inclusion of teaching staff in research and academic activities are defined in several regulations such as the number and quality standards of publications the academic staff is supposed to achieve. Also, the expert group praises the relevance of research outputs for academic positions at LAC. There is also a strategic plan for research participation as a part of academic staff development (The Development Strategy, p. 43).

As stated in SER (p.68) most of the academic staff carry out either scientific or artistic research. Academic staff publish their research results in research papers and conferences, or present their artistic productions publicly. Annexes 2.4.4.-1 and 2.4.4.-2, SER and teachers CV, proves the information of developed and extended scientific or artistic activities of teachers in terms of research, publishing, presenting artistic work and participating in various creative artistic projects. Among the articles published, however, there is a relatively small number of peer reviewed scientific publications in SCOPUS/WoS and ERIH databases. Of 1015 articles listed in Annex 2.4.4.-1 from 2013 to 2021 there are 22 in WoS and SCOPUS and 17 in ERIH. Works categorized as "other publications" , "articles" ' or "sections" ' are the most frequent form of the publication type stated in Annex 2.4.4.-1. More precisely with the recent data the scientific publications are stated in SAR. Table No. 11 in SAR (p.60) lists 295 scientific articles published in the editions included in internationally cited databases in the period 2015-2021. Table 14 in SAR (p. 68) states the same data. Such a record is satisfactory, even though there is still room for improvement in targeting better quality, i.e. higher ranking, publishing media or international publications. There is also room for better balance of publishing records among the teachers since some of them show significantly better records than others.

The artistic presentations were publicly presented in distinguished cultural institutions and

significant venues, such as theaters, radio, television, cultural centers and site specific spaces. Among the conferences attended by the academic staff almost all are international conferences, national and international wide. Domestic conferences were organized in Latvia by LAC itself or other Latvian universities or cultural institutions. The list of conferences in Annex 2.4.4.-2 indicates also many European countries and a few non-European but their organizers are not mentioned. Majority (almost all) the conferences attended belong to the field of humanities and art sciences, and minority of them are History and archeology. During the site visit an expert group has been informed that there is institutional financial support at LAC for such activities. It was also noticed that the academic staff would need more time to allocate for such activities. However there is still room for the improvement in conference participation and publishing in internationally recognised journals.

1.4.5.

LAC ensures systematic involvement of students in research activities and continuous development of the research skills of students. Students organize an annual research conference “The-Art-of-Knowing” promoting serious student engagement in scientific and artistic research. During the on-site visit expert group was impressed with the level of the enthusiasm of both students and teachers for the research projects and their willingness to participate. Expert group praises the student’s initiatives and is eager to produce even more artistic projects than programs officially demand and the high level of support they get from teachers for such efforts. How the students will be concretely engaged in the research projects as a part of the learning process is not clearly visible from all the syllabuses. Expert group praises membership of LAC National Film School in CILECT as a support to the implementation of the highest standards in high school film education. The same can be said for the memberships in IFTR as a huge resource of information about the world performing arts research. Besides that, expert group would like to mention that strong encouraging and promoting of the the institutional and individual membership and links to the resources of the other most important organizations in contemporary performing arts, dance and cultural management such as IETM, EASTAP, EDN, Aerowaves and ENCATC could bring significant benefits for the individual researchers and for the institutional research visibility.

1.4.6.

The SAR (p. 71) reports the efforts to involve new techniques and new methodologies including the technologies. As can be learned from the information obtained during the site visit the teachers have already planned innovative practice-based and practice-led research as a part of their activities. The VR and AR technologies mentioned a few times during the meetings are also a good opportunity for high technology research projects development and to contribute directly to the creation of intellectual property in arts, entertainment and media. Moreover, there are multiple and diverse relevances of the research using technology outputs for the study process as interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approach to contemporary arts. Expert group praises the plans and intentions of the teachers to promote more research processes which incorporate new technologies, most likely through digital means. Yet there was no elaborate explanation on the plan to integrate such innovative teaching, learning and research in terms of research-guided didactics. Although the LAC National Film School is well equipped with high quality contemporary technology, it is not clear whether the other studies are equipped to successfully apply new technologies in their research. Modest technical equipment at LAC Theatre House “Zirgu pasts” and slightly better technology in LAC Main building raises concerns that performing art and dance studies are still not sufficiently equipped for innovative types of contemporary high technology research.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

In general, LAC allocates significant resources on research. Moreover, the scientific and artistic researches are strategically and conceptually defined as the integral part of the education process and artistic practices conducted on studies from undergraduate to the doctoral level. Both students and teachers are highly motivated to participate in the research. Number of publications and artistic presentations shows continuous engagement of the teaching staff in the research. The scope of the topics, themes and fields is very broad and diverse. The results are applicable to the content of courses and study programme development. There is always a room to improve their stronger connections with the learning process and cultural market demands. Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies as well as Creative Activity Centre, as the specific hubs for the research at LAC presents a good framework for coordination and support for both students and teachers. Although the significant financial resources allocated to research are stated in SAR (p. 40, p. 60, p. 388), a more assertive approach to international funding seems necessary considering the ambitious range of the planned activities. There is noticeable unbalance between scientific and artistic research in terms of number, resources, structure and relevance in acquiring new knowledge. Intensifying efforts on developing artistic researches presents one of the priority challenges for fully implementation of the Development Strategy 2023-2027 (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pLPD08ZbMWe7nRtVaSQQZhvTCJLxiaie/view>). In the SAR, (p. 62) the LAC refers to close collaboration with the employers and cultural market as attempts to link theory to practice. International aspect of the research is recognised as important for the institutional excellence, study programs and developing educational process at LAC. Mechanisms of the involvement of students in the research process are well established, and the students annual research conference “The-Art-of-Knowing” is just the most complex example of such involvement. There is a room for improvement in implementation of research practices and research collaboration with partner institutions through all curriculum and in all syllabus systematically. Research projects realized with partner institutions shows social relevance and importance for the dynamic reactions on the cultural market demands and changes.

Strengths:

- 1) Internationalization of the researches raises institutional and individual visibility in the Region, EU and broader;
- 2) Interdisciplinarity of the researches strengthens ability to answer quick and flexible to the dynamic changes in cultural sector;
- 3) High motivation of students and teachers to participate in researches present a valuable resource.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Lack of academic rigor in artistic researches definition reduces possibilities of international collaboration and decrease the relevance of the research results;
- 2) Imbalance between artistic and scientific researches could attenuate the artistic component of the institution;
- 3) Absence of the newest technologies limits the scope of the researches and their ability to catch up with newest researches in EU.

Assessment of the requirement [2]

- 1 R2 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the level of development of scientific research and artistic creation (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LAC meets the goals of higher education level of scientific and artistic research. Teachers and students participation in the research is high, and the research results are implemented in the educational process. Weaknesses mentioned do not affect LAC research programs in general and they are listed as the recommendations for the improvement needed to achieve the goals stated in Development Strategy 2023-2027.

1.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation

Analysis

1.5.1.

According to SAR p.72, LAC has established close cooperation in study work with Riga Technical University in the development of joint programmes - Bachelor's ("Creative Industries") and Master's ("Creative Industries and Growth Management") study programmes. The study programme developed has been based upon their common strategic interests. As stated by the LAC during onsite visit, this cooperation greatly benefits both of the HEI and students as well as they provide and effectively develop the interdisciplinary dimension of the direction and expand the range of knowledge, skills and competences acquired by the direction students. Expert group believes that this is a unique set of combination of skills and both - material and technical base, which is a great benefit.

The second study work cooperation that LAC has developed with Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music in the development of a joint professional doctoral study programme in arts "Arts" (LAC sub-programme "Audiovisual art, theater and contemporary dance"). As specified in the SAR p.72, this collaboration ensures cross-disciplinary value flows in professional doctoral studies and the exchange of creative, academic and research experiences of professionals from various art sectors. Expert group believes that this formation of cooperation has been necessary as both of HEI are the leaders in the cultural sector of preparation of cultural specialists in various specialties and taking into account the necessity of following the industry trend of implementation of a professional doctoral study programme.

According to SAR p.72, LAC has stated that the choice of these cooperation partners is closely related to the specific partners' contribution to the improvement of study content and the promotion of graduate employment, as well as to the partners' motivation to cooperate with LAC in various aspects of human resources and knowledge exchange. Expert group agrees and believes that this is a positive trend to expand the study work network and cooperate instead of competing among each other. The priority for students is good quality studies and learning new skills, thus, cooperation is the key.

As specified in the SAR p.72, mechanisms for attracting partners are different - they can be based on the initiative of LAC management, structural units, or students, or on the proposal of partners. This is how cooperation with specific theaters, film studios, municipalities, Latvian National Centre for Culture, UNESCO National Commission, and many other partner organizations has developed. As clarified during onsite visit, a substantial base of cooperation partners is linked with the "Intercultural Relations" sub-programme of Bachelor's programme "Arts". A substantive amount of cooperation is formed with embassies as those of Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Japan, China, Great Britain, Canada, Ireland, USA, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands as well as the Danish Cultural Institute, the Goethe-Institute, French Institute in Latvia, and the Honorary Consulate of Belgium in Riga. According to SAR p.72, there are various benefits that arise from cooperation with external partners, for example, financial support is provided for the implementation of specific specializations as the Italian Embassy partially covers the salary of language lecturers or the Spanish Embassy in cooperation with the Intercultural Relations and Foreign Languages sub-programme "Latvia-Spain" organizes a Spanish film festival and culture days.

According to SAR p.73, there are specific selection criteria of cooperation partners, which is based

and related to the development goals of the study programme, sub-programmes and specializations. It ensures the effective achievement of study results related to the acquisition of language skills. A relevant part of the cooperation mechanism is formed based upon student internships. As stated in the SAR p.73, the LAC has concluded internship cooperation agreements with 37 institutions/organizations /companies in Latvia.

According to SAR p.73, LAC has a diverse range of Latvian cooperation partners, also in the field of scientific research such as scientific institutions, state and local government institutions and policy makers and cultural organizations. The main partners in the field of scientific research are Art Academy of Latvia, Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music, National Library of Latvia and Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art of the University of Latvia. In accordance with SAR p.75, partners in other national research programs are Rezekne Academy of Technologies, Liepaja University, Institute of Mathematics and Computer Science of the University of Latvia, University of Latvia Livonian Institute, Latvian Language Institute of the University of Latvia, Riga Technical University. The second group of partners in scientific research consists of state and local government institutions. The number of such partners has systematically increased during the reporting period, because since 2015 Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies has implemented almost 40 research and development projects at the request of the industry, including developing cultural development programs for several municipalities.

Expert group believes that the established cooperation contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field and the relevant study programmes. The cooperation partners are selected in view of the specific features of the study field and the relevant study programmes in the field of "Arts".

1.5.2.

According to SAR p.74, the LAC has established active cooperation with various foreign partners as universities, non-governmental organizations, scientific institutes and professional organizations. According to SAR p.75, a large circle of partners is created by concluding cooperation agreements within the framework of the ERASMUS + programme. During the reporting period, the number of ERASMUS mobility agreements has increased from 75 cooperation agreements with exchange universities to 130 partner universities in 2020/2021. They represent the EU, the EEA and Turkey, a total of 32 countries. 26% of the contracts have been concluded for the study fields "Arts" (within the framework of the Erasmus+ program it is understood as audiovisual arts, theater art and contemporary dance) and "Business and administration".

The LAC, in accordance with SAR p.75, are partners with the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre (Eesti Muusika- ja Teatriakadeemia), University of Tartu Viljandi Culture Academy (Tartu Ülikool, Viljandi kultuuriakadeemia), Tampere University (Tampereen Yliopisto), Aalto University School of Art, Design and Architecture (Aalto Yliopisto), Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (Academia Musicae et Theatri Lithuaniae) and University of Gothenburg Academy of Music and Drama (Högskolan för scen och musik) in the cooperation network NORTEAS, which is a platform of Baltic and Nordic performing arts universities that unites 17 universities and is part of the Nordic Council of Ministers lifelong learning programme Nordplus.

A large circle of partners has been formed thanks to the international dimension of the scientific activities carried out by Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies, where in the last five years, LAC has worked in research consortia of numerous partners while implementing the Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe projects. The biggest benefit of several cooperations is that the forms of cooperation with specific partners multiply and are transferred to other areas. What regards cooperation in the context of scientific research, it is analyzed under the Scientific Research part.

Expert group believes that the established cooperation contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field and the relevant study programmes. The cooperation partners are selected in view of the specific features of the study field and the relevant study

programmes in the field of "Arts".

1.5.3.

In accordance with SAR p.76, it is set in the LAC strategy that LAC uses various mechanisms for attracting foreign students and teaching staff. As stated by the LAC, it has been very successful in attracting guest lecturers to the bachelor's programme "Contemporary Dance", the Bachelor's programme "Intercultural relations" and all Master's level programmes.

Based on the SAR pp.76-77, the LAC has been participating in the Erasmus programme since 2000. The number of student and staff mobilities has increased from 6 mobilities in 2000 to 126 mobilities in academic year 2018/2019 (including both outgoing and incoming mobility of students and staff). For the number of mobilities (both outgoing and incoming mobilities) since academic year 2013/2014, there is a tendency to slowly increase, but the COVID19 pandemic and the restrictions naturally affected the number of both outgoing and incoming mobilities. The relatively large number of outgoing mobilities (not within the ERASMUS+ programme) is mainly directly related to the LAC programmes "Audiovisual Art" and "Contemporary Dance", as well as the master classes of students of the "Arts" sub-programme "Stage Acting", participation in various theater and film festivals. Study mobility of the Erasmus+ programme (one semester or one year) is mainly realized by the students of the LAC study direction "Arts" (mainly students of the sub-programs "Intercultural relations", "Sociology and Management of Culture", "Culture and Arts Studies"), while internships and internship opportunities for graduates are more in demand among students in other LAC programmes ("Creative Industries", "Audiovisual Art", "Contemporary Dance"). As specified in the SAR p.79, the COVID-19 pandemic and its resulting restrictions on faculty mobility during the period 2020-2022 influenced even more than student mobility. In the academic year 2020/2021, the mobility of teaching staff was mainly virtual (12 foreign lecturers were recruited) and such virtual mobility was also realized by several LAC teaching staff.

Expert group concludes that teaching staff and students participate in both outgoing and incoming mobility, which provides added value to the implementation of the study process and the quality of studies.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions

The LAC cooperates with higher education institutions in Latvia and abroad within the framework of the study field, and such cooperation contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field and the relevant study programs. The cooperation partners are selected in view of the specific features of the study field and the relevant study programmes. The teaching staff and students participate in both outgoing and incoming mobility, which provides added value to the implementation of the study process and the quality of studies.

Strengths:

- 1.The LAC has signed 2 cooperation agreements in the development of joint study programmes including 3 universities in Latvian context;
2. There are established cooperation in various projects with institutions abroad;
- 3.The LAC is active in student and teaching staff involvement in mobilities.

Weaknesses:

- 1) None.

Assessment of the requirement [3]

- 1 R3 - The cooperation implemented within the study field with various Latvian and foreign organizations ensures the achievement of the aims of the study field.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Cooperation with local and international organisations on all levels is fully compliant with the requirements.

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

Analysis

1.6.1.

According to (SAR, p.79), in the previous evaluation of the study field, no expert recommendations were given for improving the quality of the study field or the study process. The experts had concluded that the LAC's study field "Arts" and its study programs the academic bachelor's programme "Arts", the academic master's programme "Arts", and the doctorate programme "Arts" are sustainable, and the panel had recommended LAC to receive state funding in proportion to match its growing influence.

The report also states that, according to the positive assessment provided in the expert report, the development of the LAC study field "Arts" was to further improve the content of the study programs and to develop new study programs at the bachelor's, master's and doctorate levels, while promoting the sustainability of the study direction and integrating the existing study programs with the employment model specific to the cultural and creative sector and labor market demands.

With respect to the recommendation to launch new programs, six new programs have been launched: the academic bachelor study programme "Audiovisual Art" in 2017, the academic bachelor's study programme "Creative Industries" in 2017, the academic master's study programme "Audiovisual and Performing Art" in 2018, the academic master's study programme "Creative Industries and Growth Management" in 2020, the academic master's study programme "Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication" in 2020, the Joint Professional Doctoral Study programme "Arts" in 2020. The report also lists the academic bachelor's study programme "Contemporary Dance" as the seventh new programme, however, the programme has been licensed in 2015, outside the scope of the six year reporting window.

All the recommendations during the licensing period are given in Annex 2.6.1. Most short term recommendations have been satisfied, although some long-term recommendations are outstanding such as (a) in MA programme "Audiovisual and Performance Art", the recommendation "Consider the possibility of providing a sufficient number of study courses that are taught in English, so that for at least one semester during the academic year, exchange students are provided with the learning process", can be regarded as outstanding, since it is listed "can be provided upon request" but the curriculum does not state which semester is taught in English only (the English stream has not been launched, yet), (b) in BA programme "Audiovisual Art", the recommendation to implement courses with concepts and technologies (e.g., movement tracking, projection mapping, live compositing, Augmented Reality, etc.), is listed as only partially achieved, (c) in MA programme "Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication", the internalization of the programme recommended as a requirement in order to establish an international profile, is still in progress, and (d) in the joint professional doctoral programme "Arts", the recommendation to evaluate the programme content in the long term to avoid placement of the "Choreography" and its genre "Contemporary Dance" in separate sub-programs, resulting in fragmentation of the programme, has been listed as "in evaluation".

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions: Within the previous evaluation of the study field, no expert recommendations were given for improving the quality of the study direction or the study process but the experts had stressed improve the content of the study programs and to develop new study programs at the bachelor's, master's and doctorate level, which resulted in six new programs launched. Meeting the key recommendation has been very aggressive and so far, with minor shortcomings, appears to be a successful strategy by LAC, as it gives the incoming students good choices and positions the institution nationally and internationally.

Most recommendations given to individual programs upon licensing, some short term recommendations have been satisfied. There is a tendency for overlap in recommendations with respect to recommendation to increase international enrollment and gravitate towards the mixed model instructions, where at least a semester is taught exclusively in English, or to reconsider the impact of immersive technologies on the curriculums. Furthermore, some recommendations appear to need to be extended.

For instance, for MSP "Audiovisual and Performing Art" (Annexes 3) the need for a specialized computer programme for accounting and management of audiovisual equipment is still in progress, by the academic year of 2026/2027, there is an expectation to have a permanent foreign teaching staff, the request for a short course in Music is expected to be launched in the fall of 2023. For BSP "Audiovisual Art", the request to consider using audiovisual infrastructure from partner universities in sound engineering courses, post-production and color correction lectures, which could be technically more advanced for specific purposes, to avoid overloading at the National Film School's sound studio or professional recording studios is still slated for the end of 2024, the opportunity to integrate the acting and directing techniques of prominent US theorists and practitioners such as S. Meisner, U. Hagen, S. Adler, E. Kazan, A. McKenzie, or R. Benedetti, is still in process, while the suggestion to advance the professional development course offerings to industry professionals and interested LAC individuals in order to redirect the profits towards acquiring technical equipment for the BSP "Audiovisual Art" is in the midst of implementation, whereas JPDSP "Art", the experts' recommendation to evaluate the content of the programme in the long term to avoid the placement of the Choreography and its genre Contemporary Dance in separate sub-programmes, resulting in fragmentation of the programme, JVLMA, AAL and LAC continue to work on improving the content of the study programme and also still evaluate the possibility of implementing these recommendations.

Strengths:

1. Good track record of meeting short and long term objectives;
2. Six new programs have been launched during the reporting period;
3. LAC makes a conscious effort to comply with the recommendations.

Weaknesses:

1. Recommendation to increase international enrollment is still in progress, and thus, outstanding;
2. Some long-term recommendations given during the reporting period are somewhat overdue and need extension;
3. Readjusting the curriculums to meet the challenges of immersive technologies is still in progress;
4. The experts' recommendation to evaluate the content of the programme in the long term to avoid the placement of the Choreography and its genre Contemporary Dance in separate sub-programmes, resulting in fragmentation of the programme is still under evaluation.

Assessment of the requirement [4]

- 1 R4 - Elimination of deficiencies and shortcomings identified in the previous assessment of the study field, if any, or implementation of the recommendations provided.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Most recommendations have been met but some still in progress (see Conclusion section for details).

1.7. Recommendations for the Study Field

Short-term recommendations

1. Consider the options to define more rigorously the field of the artistic researches and standards to BA, MA and doctoral level of the artistic researches, following the widely accepted general framework of the “Vienna Declaration 2020” or the guidelines and the main criteria listed in the “Frascati Manual 2015” which is already included in the educational process at LAC (its research methodology might be refreshed with the proposals for the Manual’s updates 2022 focused on the artistic research);
2. Consider a more assertive approach to the international resources in order to encourage artistic research by being not only a part of CILECT and NORTEAS but other important organizations in contemporary performing arts, dance and cultural management such as IETM, EASTAP, EDN, Aerowaves and ENCATC that could bring significant benefits for the individual research quality and for institutional international visibility;
3. Visibly expand collaboration amongst the departments and advance interdisciplinary approach by implementing joined learning activities across the bachelor’s level programs (to somewhat match those on the MA level), particularly paying attention to cooperative activities in the following directions: programs in audiovisual and performing arts (Film, Theater, Dance) and supporting arts (Arts); programs in audiovisual and performing arts (Film, Theater, Dance) and Cultural and Arts Management, Creative Industries; programs of cultural sustainability (Cultural Heritage and Communication, Cultural and Arts Management, Creative Industries);
4. Conduct experience sharing seminars where the teachers partaking in ERASMUS+ disseminate the residuals of “know how” to impacts the strategic goals of LAC;
5. Centralize all rehearsal and performance studios in one location and implement an efficient scheduling system;
6. Readjusting the curriculums to meet the challenges of immersive technologies;
7. Even out the distribution of resources and provisions for other LAC divisions to match those of the Film School;
8. Continue to satisfy the recommendations that are outstanding, still in process, and are cited under the conclusions on the set of criteria in chapter 1.6 of this section of SAR.

Long-term recommendations

1. Internationalization strategy could be prepared and integrated as a part of the institutional strategy paying attention not only to international programs (or language of instruction in English) but also to internationalization at home trajectory which represents approach to curriculum of studies as well as the level of internationalization dimension regarding invited foreign lectures and used mobility in the Erasmus framework;

2. Ensure adequate space organization; perhaps a misunderstanding, but while visiting the premises at 24 Ludza Street and talking with students during the meeting, the panel of experts was under the impression that the space is used mostly for dance rehearsals and the rest of the week for theatre rehearsals, therefore, students are required to adapt and rearrange the space for theater or dance lessons or performances,
3. Reassess the extensive workload of teaching and inadequate remuneration for instructor so that a different financing model encouraged elected and external faculty to spend more time in the academy;
4. Conduct the analysis of financial and infrastructure issues that are crucial for strategic development of the field, particularly on doctoral level and in research units of LAC;
5. Mitigate the varying and uneven financial support for researchers' and teachers' participation at different international conferences and in research publishing;
6. Even out the imbalance between artistic and scientific research in order to attenuate the artistic component of the institution;
7. Consider expanding the courses conducted in English to meet the need of the international market and in view of the national demographics;
8. Expand international enrollment of student body;
9. Consider the applications on the local and international grants that provide the most recent contemporary technologies for sophisticated high-tech research.

II - "Contemporary Dance" ASSESSMENT

II - "Contemporary Dance" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1.

Based on the information provided in the SAR (p.122) the academic bachelor's study programme "Contemporary Dance" (code 43212) (BSP "Contemporary Dance") of the LAC fully complies with the overarching goal of the LAC study direction "Arts" - to ensure sustainable, successor, interdisciplinarity-based higher and postgraduate (doctoral studies) education in the field of culture, art and creative sector, to prepare competent professionals of the field of culture and art (theatre, dance and audiovisual arts), to deepen the implemented education, research, and artistic creation process integration into the national and international cultural, artistic and creative ecosystems. The programme code 43212 complies with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 322 "Regulations on the classification of the Latvian education", where it is determined that the thematic group of education "Humanities and Arts" includes the thematic area of education "Arts", which includes the group of educational programs "Music and Performing Arts".

2.1.2.

The title of the academic bachelor study programme is "Contemporary Dance" in the study field of "Arts" with education classification code 43212 with the last 3 numbers (212) standing for "Music and Performing Arts" according to the classification of Latvian education 322 which is available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju> . Degree awarded "Bachelor of Arts in Contemporary Dance". It was recommended by AIKA to revise

the title of the degree "Bachelor of Arts in Music and Performing Arts" or "Bachelor of Arts in Performing Arts" in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 240, paragraph 12 (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/266187-noteikumi-par-valsts-akademiskas-izglitiba-standartu>), but the LAC has decided to retain the title of the degree as formulated in the application and accepted during the programme licensing process (May 15, 2015 (license No. 04066-4)) because of several reasons: in order to stress the identity of dance art as specific art form as indicated in the structuring of thematic groups of creative sectors (<https://www.km.gov.lv/lv/deja>)

Dance sector and contemporary dance in particular has high degree of specialisation in knowledge, skills and competences, so "music and performing arts" or "performing arts" would be misleading. It is important to ensure a consistency and continuity in defining the degree awarded as the programme was licensed in 2015 and several "generations" of the graduates have been integrated into the labour market.

The expert group accepts the argumentation of the LAC regarding reasons to award the degree "Bachelor of Arts in Contemporary Dance" and understands the political importance of dance being identified as a special art form in the current structuring of educational thematic groups. However current regulations don't permit that. Considering the changes in arts field, the regular reviewing of thematic groups is necessary, however separating "contemporary dance" out of the group "Music and Performing Arts" would carry along review of autonomy of other performing arts genres within the regulations, also according to the experts' group opinion internationally the most common structuring is having Dance as a specialisation of performing arts.

The goal of the BSP "Contemporary Dance" as stated in SAR (p.118) is to prepare "contemporary dance arts specialists (choreographers, dancers, researchers) who would be competitive in the professional field of dance arts and its academic research environment in Latvia and abroad".

Admission requirements - secondary education and an entrance examination / "creative competition" organised in four rounds (dance technique, dance improvisation, dance composition and general negotiations) are reasonable and result in selection of students with high motivation and skills in the field of dance.

According to the opinion of the expert group the title, code and degree to be obtained as well as aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements are interrelated.

The BSP "Contemporary Dance" is implemented in a period of 6 semesters (3 years), in the amount of 120 CP / 180 ECTS. The language of the studies is Latvian. According to the SAR (p.123) and information gathered during the on site visits the duration of the studies is sufficient, however some graduates expressed slight doubts about the 3 year programme, mentioning examples from other countries where after several years of try out contemporary dance programs returned to 4 year format. The faculty stressed that shorter time is more appropriate due to the fact that the students come more and more prepared as dancers, so it takes shorter time to prepare them in this aspect. Also most of the students entered the labour market during the 4th year. However, based on the information gathered during onsite visit, an opinion of the expert group is that it is convincing that 3 years are enough to achieve strong BSP "Contemporary Dance" results also in the skill of choreography and research.

The duration and scope of the BSP "Contemporary Dance" implementation, as well as the implementation language, are reasonable and justified. According to the conclusions of the expert group specializing in dance, the strong connection with the field which is internationally oriented would allow having also English as an implementation language strengthening diversity among the students.

2.1.3.

As stated in SAR (p.121) since the issue of the programme licence on May 15, 2015 (licence No. 04066-4), the main parameters of the Latvian Academy of Culture's (hereinafter - LAC) academic bachelor's study programme "Contemporary Dance" (code 43212) - name, form of implementation,

language and code - have not been changed.

However during the self-evaluation period, the objectives, tasks and results of the study programme have been specified. Changes in the study course planning are made "taking into account the feedback and recommendations of students, lecturers and programme graduates, with the aim of making the content of the programme more relevant to the specifics of today's work environment and dynamic art development processes, as well as to balance the content between semesters" (SAR, p.121). Echoing a need for strong thinkers in the contemporary dance field, the arts theory subjects of the study programme are made more specific and structured and include extra 2CP (from 10 to 12 CP). Part A study course "Theory, Methodology, Techniques and History of Contemporary Dance"(13 CP) is divided into two separate study courses – Part A study course "Methodology and Techniques of Contemporary Dance"(13 CP) and part B study course "Theory and History of Contemporary Dance" (2 CP). The sovereign teaching of the theory and history of contemporary dance is crucial to know and the context and latest theories in the field to be ready for the international dance market. Slight changes are made into the content planning by semesters. Part B study course "Fundamentals of Law" has been replaced by Part B study course "Employment of a Creative Person and Project Management"(1 CP) which is important to provide knowledge, competences and skills to act as self employed creative persons in the cultural field, however based on the information gathered during the on the site visits 1 CP seems not to be enough to prepare the students to independently engage in project management and attract funding for their creative activity.

According to the SAR (p.121-122) "at the request of the students and by taking into account the interdisciplinary development trends of contemporary dance, the offer of elective part C courses of LAC has been supplemented with the study courses "Speech in Motion"(2 CP) and "Drawing and Composition"(2 CP)"

The specifications in the study programme are justified and would be supported. They demonstrate that the programme attempts to follow the latest developments in the field and listen to the opinion of the students and graduates to improve the programme.

2.1.4.

According to SAR (p.125) the economic and social justification of the LAC's academic bachelor's study programme "Contemporary Dance" is based on the study of the Latvian performing arts as a whole and specifically on the creative environment and labour market of dance, the analysis of the employment of current graduates and related problems.

According to SAR and information gathered during onsite visits the lecturers of the programme are well acquainted with the performing arts market in Latvia, carefully follow the development and requirements of this market, by closely cooperating with industry institutions and artists' associations (Choreographers' Association, Riga Ballet School, LAC Latvian College of Culture, Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music, New Theatre Institute of Latvia, Latvian Dance Information Center, associations "Party", "Tuvumi", "LAUKKU", Latvian institutional and non-governmental dramatic theatres, professional dance schools, dance studios and folk dance collectives).

The contemporary dance industry in Latvia does not always provide permanent employment, so the graduates themselves establish creative associations and successfully enter the labour market as an independent artist (freelanced). Therefore, when evaluating the compliance of graduates' employment with the goals and expected results of the programme, the specifics of the employment of dance artists are taken into account - not only the permanent workplace, but also regular involvement in dance art processes in the form of individual creative projects. Therefore, it is all the more important to maintain high quality requirements during the implementation of the program so that graduates are competitive in the labour market.

Based on the information provided in the SAR p.(127) students in the study programme "Contemporary Dance" are admitted once in 3 years and "the optimal number of students in the

group is up to 20 students". In each three-year study cycle at LAC, only one course of the programme "Contemporary Dance" studies to ensure a completely student-centred education. Dynamics in the number of students are analysed in SAR (p.127) and Annex 5 and it is based on three admissions (2015, 2018, 2021) that have taken place since the licensing of the "Contemporary Dance" programme. In 2015, 21 students, contemporary dance artists, so-called "Fifth Generation", were admitted to the programme (10 – with state budget funds; 11 – with personal funding). In 2018, 13 students graduated from this course (9 – with state budget funds; 4 – with personal funding). The reasons for the relatively high dropout rate (35 %) according to SAR is related to the need to cover study fees and therefore combine studies with work, which is mostly impossible due to the specifics of the study process of the programme (intense load of practical classes). In 2018, 24 students, contemporary dance artists, so-called "Sixth Generation", were admitted to the programme (9 – with state budget funds; 14 – with personal funding). In 2021 and 2022, a total of 21 students graduated from this course (10 – with state budget funds; 11 – with personal funding). Drop out rate of only 12 % during the Covid-19 pandemic shows a high level of motivation and support from the faculty to complete the studies despite challenges. In 2021, 16 students, contemporary dance artists, so-called "Seventh Generation", were admitted to the program (11 – with state budget funds; 5 – with personal funding).

In general, the number of students in the programme can be assessed as stable. Discontinuation of studies is mostly related to individual students' incomplete understanding of the programme's goals, tasks and the large amount of practical work, as well as socioeconomic factors - students who study with personal funds sometimes have difficulty paying the tuition fees.

According to SAR (p.126) 45% of graduates of the "Contemporary Dance" programme are already employed upon graduation, and 36% of graduates become employed within 1-3 months after graduation, which can be considered a positive trend. The majority of graduates work in the industry - 41% of graduates work as choreographers (movement consultants, movement artists, show creators, etc.) and 24% as performers (dancers, performers, actors) in various fields of performing arts (dramatic and musical theatre, music concerts of various genres, in the circus, etc.). 12% of graduates work in the field of cultural education. Graduates of the programme also work in the leisure, entertainment and/or tourism (6%) industry, cultural centres and creative centres (6%) in the capital and regions, as well as in the audiovisual arts industry (cinema, video, etc.) (6%).

2.1.5.

N/A

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The academic bachelor's study programme "Contemporary Dance" (code 43212) of the LAC complies with the overarching goal of the LAC study direction "Arts". In 2015 the programme was licensed as a separate study programme and since then students have been admitted three times. However the history of the contemporary dance programme stretches back to 1999 as a sub-programme of four year bachelor study programme "Arts" (mentioned in SAR, p.257 as part of history of BSP "Arts"). Due to the strong identity of the programme besides creation of a separate programme, the LAC is also aiming at having a study programme name "Contemporary Dance" opposed to the recommended by AIKA titles "Music and Performing Arts" or "Performing Arts". The employment rate of the graduates is high however due to the situation in the labour market it is mostly project based, freelance or within other performing arts fields or education.

Strengths:

1. A student focused education due to the admission of students once in 3 years;

2. Strong identity of the programme and demand of the graduates in the labour market;
3. Low drop-out rate even in the year of pandemic indicating motivation of the students and dedication of the faculty.

Weaknesses:

1. Considering the high proportion of freelancers in dance field 1 CP in "Employment of a Creative Person and Project Management" course is not sufficient;
2. Duration of the programme is not able to provide equally strong skills in the three pillars mentioned - dance, choreography, research - the last one gets the least attention;
3. Implementation language is only Latvian;
4. According to the "Regulations on the National Standard of Academic Education" (240) by the Cabinet Minister, the obtained degree does not comply with the standard.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1.

The chief objectives of the BSP "Contemporary Dance" is to train contemporary dance art specialists (choreographers, dancers, researchers) who would be competitive in the professional field of dance art and its academic research environment in Latvia and abroad; the BSP "Contemporary Dance" has been created in accordance with the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers on the standard of state academic education (MK Regulations No. 240, Riga, May 13, 2014, available: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/266187-noteikumi-par-valsts-akademiskas-izglitiba-standartu> (Latvian only)) (SAR, pp.128-132). In this respect, LAC has provided the Annex "Compliance of the Study Programme "Contemporary Dance" with the State Education Standard, in the form of a table, which presents evidence to the previously cited regulation that ensures the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and research skills of students appropriate to the 6th level knowledge, skills and competencies of European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the scientifically sound achievement of comprehensive study results.

With respect to LAC's request to award the degree "Bachelor of Arts in Contemporary Dance" in the program, the panel of experts understands the political importance of dance being identified as a special art form in the current structuring of educational thematic groups, but the current regulations by the Ministry of Education do not permit a liberal use of titling in the awarding degrees without proper adherence to classification. Under the Regulations on Latvian education classification (Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 322, Appendix 4 to the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers (CB) of June 13, 2017, no. 322, amended by CB, as of 09.11.2021 regulations No. 737), the award should be "Bachelor of Arts in Music and Performing Arts". The university reserves the right to record "Majoring in Contemporary Dance" as a part of the official transcript accompanying the diploma.

The structure of the curriculum consists of the compulsory part (A) with 72 credit points, of which 4 credit points are intended for the development of the coursework in the 4th semester, while 10 credit points are for the bachelor's thesis, the compulsory choice (B) part with 44 credit points, including internship in the amount of 2 credit points, which provides the necessary theoretical and practical knowledge and skills for in-depth study of contemporary dance specialisation, and the elective (C) study courses that must be taken by a student in the amount of 4 credit points to acquire knowledge and skills that complement the specialty.

Within the framework of the BSP "Contemporary Dance", the international mobility of academic staff and students is being heavily promoted, whereby international residencies usually take place once during the study year (since 2015, residencies have been held in Georgia, twice in Albania and twice in Spain)

As a part of the thesis, according to the Regulations on creative works of the LAC, the students create both a creative work and its theoretical write-up.

2.2.2.

n/a

2.2.3.

In assessing the BSP "Contemporary Dance" study course implementation methods and their contribution to the achievement of the learning outcomes, chiefly but not limited, to the ability to see a potential of creativity in different fields and situations, by working successfully in a team, e.g., of various capacities (choreographer, dancer, movement consultant, etc.) and by being included in a dramatic or musical theatre performance and influencing its artistic solutions, as well as the ability to see and critically evaluate the cultural and political context of the field of performing arts and use the strengths and weaknesses of the professional market, by attracting funding for their creative projects in various Latvian and international competitions, the following methods have been identified: (a) lectures (mostly theoretically oriented study courses) where students are presented with theoretical questions, supplemented with practical examples, visual material, statistical data, (b) seminars where the works of dance, literature and other branches of art and culture are analysed, (c) work in groups that strengthen students' ability to argue and justify their individual opinion in the process of making a collective decision, and (d) extracurricular activities where students attend dances, theatre performances, art exhibitions, concerts, films, etc., write reviews, essays, assist in the organisation of festivals and other dance industry and cultural events, participate in artistic residencies, master classes, performances, master workshops and other creative projects.

The principles of student-centred education, in turn, are reflected in an individual approach to each student, by promoting and developing the individual artistic potential and professional autonomy. To that end, specific courses such as "The Composition and Choreography of Contemporary Dance" (10 CP), "Methodology and Techniques of Contemporary Dance"(13 CP), "Improvisation and Contact Improvisation"(11 CP), "Theories of Epistemology of the Body and Movement, Methodologies and Techniques in the Discourse of Contemporary Dance"(10 CP), and "Feldenkrais Method"(4 CP) directly contribute to the achievement of program's results - the ability to professionally perform innovative creative work as a choreographer and dancer.

Furthermore, independent and individual tasks performed independently, independent practicing of dance and other techniques, research activities and preparation of dance technique training classes, development of improvisational exercises, writing and self-reflections on the study process, contribute to the objectives set above.

2.2.4.

Description of the organisation of the internships of the students is supplied by the annex 3.2.4. (SAR, p.133). It is a general policy applied across the departments. In practice, internship providers regularly send the internship offers to the LAC's internship coordinator, who sends them to students through the LAIS system, as well as publishes them on the LAC's website in the internships section, whereas the director of the program, professor Olga Žitluhina, and other lecturers of the programme, who are actively working professionals in the field, also provide consultations to the students about internship opportunities. The compliance of the program with the trends and requirements of the industry's labour market is evidenced by the fact that most of the Latvian dance industry institutions that provide internships are places for the implementation of creative projects of students already during their studies and often become permanent workplaces for graduates. The internship must be completed by the end of the 5th semester. The students most often complete their internships within the projects offered by LAC (e.g. at the LAC's student stage and audiovisual

arts festival "Patriarha Rudens", etc.) and in projects organised outside of LAC, in which the leading state and non-state institutions of the Latvian dance industry invite the students to participate in (e.g. Choreographers Association, Riga Ballet School, LAC Latvian College of Culture, Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music, Latvian New Theatre Institute, Latvian Dance Information Center, associations "Party", "Tuvumi", "LAUKKU", Latvian institutional and non-governmental dramatic theatres, etc.).

2.2.5. n/a

2.2.6.

The final thesis is the student's independently created and publicly presented creative work - a contemporary dance performance (play, film, performance, etc., length ~ 30 min.), as well as the theoretical write-up of this creative work. The student can also choose a bachelor's thesis - a theoretical study, the topic of which is related to the art of contemporary dance, in accordance with the "Regulations of the Academy on Examinations in Academic Bachelor's and Master's Study Programmes at the Latvian Academy of Culture" (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VQO-ky9inAKysD1hmjj7Go-55NFCb97o/view?fbclid=IwAR2GjgHu43hlzyGeUe-fS-OG_cYoTCXURxV9-DRUlsaygmCWxFrvszhU2UI).

The topics of the bachelor thesis depend on individual artistic and professional, as well as social interests, with an emphasis on visual aesthetics or bodily expression within the means of contemporary dance and new forms in the interdisciplinary experiments: for example, the synthesis of contemporary dance and contemporary circus ("Faux pas", choreographer Jana Jacuka, 2018), the transfer of the principles of contemporary dance into folk dance (the dance performance "Garais Dancis", choreographer Laura Kuške), visual kinesthetic exhibition combining photography, video, music, scenography and live performance ("(Lei) Putrija", choreographer Kitija Geidāne, 2021), physically challenging existence in the construction of scenography (dance show-performance "Y", choreographer Laura Gorodko, 2018), mental health problems (Alise Madara Bokaldere's diploma thesis - dance show "Manu acu tulkojums", 2018) and the perception of sexual identity issues in society (Vladimirs Goršantovs' diploma thesis - dance performance "Mans skābais krējums", 2021, to name a few.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions: The BSP "Contemporary Dance" complies with the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers on the standard of state academic education to reflect the skills and competencies of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The structure of the curriculum provides the necessary theoretical and practical knowledge and skills for in-depth study of contemporary dance specialisation, while the international mobility of academic staff and students is heavily promoted at the same time. The principles of student-centred education is most evident in an individual approach to each student, by promoting and developing the individual artistic potential and professional autonomy. The compliance of the program with the trends and requirements of the industry's labour market is evidenced by the fact that most internships are places for the implementation of creative projects by students done already as a part of their studies, which somewhat guarantees their job placement after the graduation. In discussing the opportunities with the graduates, one of the criticisms, particularly amongst non-resident EU students, is the lack of the English stream which could make the program attractive on the international scene.

The teaching staff appears to be highly valued, so is the leadership and management of the program. Notwithstanding, the excessive use of valuable resources on logistics that can be used for creative work, somewhat affects creative potential. Although the program fosters close collaboration outside LAC such as collaborative choreography projects with the video production teams by RISEBA

University of Applied Sciences, there interdisciplinary collaboration with the other departments at LAC, particularly the National Film School, have quite a space for improvement.

Strengths:

1. The BSP "Contemporary Dance" displays an excellent track record of both popularity of the program and accomplishments by the teaching staff and graduates;
2. The program features a reputable teaching staff;
3. Good collaboration with creative teams outside the program in other universities.

Weaknesses:

1. The BSP "Contemporary Dance" has insufficient course instructions in English that might be of significance to exchange students and student enrollment from abroad;
2. The program suffers from insufficient and/or substandard working space for rehearsals and performances;
3. The impression from the infrastructure inspections suggests excessive resources and time wasted on logistics, which could go towards the creative projects.

Assessment of the requirement [5] (applicable only to master's or doctoral study programmes)

- 1 R5 - The study programme for obtaining a master's or doctoral degree is based on the achievements and findings of the respective field of science or field of artistic creation.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

n/a

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1.

The study process for the LAC's students of the BSP "Contemporary Dance" is organised in two LAC buildings; in the main building in Ludzas street 24, and in the "Zirgu pasts" theatre house, Dzirnavu street 46 in Riga. The SAR also mentions that: "the study process takes place and performance-creative works are created or shown at the LAC Eduards Smiļģis Theater Museum, Riga, Eduarda Smiļģa Street 37, where the Felicita 137 Ertnere's Hall is most often used, as well as at the National Film School of LAC, Riga, Elijas Street 17, where programme's "Contemporary Dance" students use the rooms of the Great Pavilion (SAR p. 136)."

The LAC's building in Riga, Ludzas Street 24 houses technically equipped auditoriums with a Library reading room for theoretical study and research and a rehearsal hall (of 209 m²) for practical dance lessons (no dressing rooms or showers).

At the LAC's Theatre house "Zirgu pasts" on Dzirnavu street 46 the study programme has at disposal the auditorium and two rehearsal halls practical lesson rooms, with appropriate dressing rooms, showers and a sauna designed for muscle relaxation after increased physical exertion. There is also a modern black box-type multifunctional hall fully equipped with sound, light and video equipment purchased as a part of various projects and State Culture Capital Fund's (SCCF) target programme. The hall is heavily occupied for it used for the needs of the study process and performances for theatre and contemporary dance study programmes. The multifunctionality of the hall is surely an advantage, but at the same time not very convenient and limiting (heavy organisation and workload of adapting and readapting the space on the weekly basis for different purposes). Working in this hall, students have at their disposal services of the technical specialist and lighting specialist of the

"Zirgu pasts" building of the Department of Performing Arts of LAC.

Similar issues can be applied for the specific rooms used by the programme at the Eduards Smiļģis Theater Museum and the National Film School; the premises are not primarily designed for dance rehearsals or performances, which means they require adaptation prior to use. Adaptation usually provides for the laying of a suitable dance floor in the room and the construction of podiums for spectators (SAR p. 136).

The location of the classrooms and rehearsal halls of the programme in different venues demands high level of organisation and is undoubtedly an obstacle for unhindered development of the study process, requiring mobility of students and teachers and the need for portable technical equipment (digital pianos, lighting systems, video projectors, dance floors, etc.). The problems are addressed by the SAR p. 137-138, assessing the infrastructural resources for the "Contemporary Dance" programme as partially adequate. "In the intensive study process of bachelor's studies, both in contemporary dance and in the sub-programmes of the academic bachelor's study programme "Arts" "Stage Acting" and "Theatre Directing", great emphasis is placed on the independent rehearsal and training process of creative works, as well as their public performance, and for this the capacity of the rooms for this purpose in the LAC's Theatre House "Zirgu pasts" is insufficient." (SAR p. 138)

The issue with inadequate space organisation is planned to be resolved in due time, when LAC moves to a new building in the former Tobacco Factory complex, Riga, Miera Street 58a, where special halls for dance classes and public performances are being designed. The projected premises in the Tobacco Factory block should be almost twice as large, which would allow more ambitious projects and unhindered study process organisation. The realisation of the plans in the shortest possible time is crucial to be able to increase the number of students and reduce the premature termination of studies, develop the offer of study programmes, provide the necessary facilities for research growth and artistic creativity, modern infrastructure and an attractive environment in contemporary dance art.

The sources and databases available in the LAC Library together with the materials published in the e-study environment are adequate to enable the students to strengthen the knowledge acquired in study courses, as well as to conduct independent research activities.

The SAR p.139 states as a problematic aspect the insufficient funding for the creation of final creative works. LAC tries to attract project funding in SCCF tenders, (with varying results) and makes efforts to raise additional funding from the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia (unfortunately without a long-term solution). The SAR concludes that by combining the resources of LAC with the funding, it has been possible to create high-quality student final works. The general impression remains that the Contemporary Dance study programme is the least favourable position at the LAC and that the important issues such as inadequate space organisation and the lack of financial support for quality performances should be addressed accordingly.

2.3.2. n/a

2.3.3.

The BSP "Contemporary Dance" is basically created on the basis of funding from the state budget, and the own revenues are directed to the maximum extent for the development of the programme and covering unexpected expenses. To the optimization of BSP "Contemporary Dance" implementation expenses, a lot of attention is devoted to for example, organizing stream lectures in professor-taught courses and providing remote lectures. The minimum number of students in the study programme to ensure the profitability of the study programme is set at 10 budget places and due to infrastructure conditions, the programme enrolls students every 3 years. The BSP "Contemporary Dance" is full-time attendance and is conducted in Latvian. (SAR p. 138-139).

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions: The issues with resources and provisions are most evident with the BSP "Contemporary Dance"; the dispersion of the classrooms and rehearsal halls in different venues demands a high level of organization and is undoubtedly an obstacle for unhindered development of the study process. It demands mobility of students and teachers and the need for portable technical equipment, which is both complicated and time consuming. The other issue is sharing the multifunctional hall with the theater study programmes that also requires adapting and readapting the space pre and after use. The lack of financial support for quality performances of final works is an additional problem and should be addressed as well.

Strengths:

1. Extremely high level of enthusiasm of both students and teachers;
2. Solid communication connections and intensive cooperation with professional institutions in the field.

Weaknesses:

1. Inadequate space organization – dispersed rehearsal and performance studios at three different venues;
2. Requirements to adapt and readapt spaces for the study process;
3. Lack of financial support for quality performances should be addressed accordingly.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

- 1 R6 - Compliance of the study provision, science provision (if applicable), informative provision (including library), material and technical provision and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The dispersion of the classrooms and rehearsal halls in different venues demands a high level of organization and is undoubtedly an obstacle for unhindered development of the study process. It demands mobility of students and teachers and the need for portable technical equipment, which is both complicated and time consuming. The other issue is sharing the multifunctional hall with the theater study programmes that also requires adapting and readapting the space pre and after use.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.

The staff engaged in implementation of the BSP "Contemporary Dance" is elected and re-elected regularly in periods of 6 years in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers' Regulations adopted in 2021 No. 129. LAC's professors' council through the LAC Senate particularly pay attention to the candidates' creative work experience, their contribution to Latvian artistic culture and international achievements. As stated in SAR (p. 139) open classes and presentations are organized in order to analyze candidates' skills and competences in live contact with the audience.

The specificity of the BSP "Contemporary Dance" as a combined practice-theory study requires also the artistic-scientific mix of lecturers. Such a combination is achieved mostly with permanent staff with some guest lecturers. SAR states (p. 140) that of 17 elected lecturers at the programme, 9 have a doctoral degree, and of 5 guest lecturers 4 have a doctoral degree. That shows an excellent level

of qualification, even though for the artistic education at BA level scientific doctorates are not the priority. The artistic staff, composed of contemporary and classical dance professionals, as well as theater directors, can offer broad perspectives on dance practice. The elements of the martial arts, provided by guest lecturer's engagement, contribute to wideness of the skills and competences. Diversity of expertise of the teaching staff enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcome of the BSP "Contemporary Dance".

2.4.2.

SAR states minimal changes in the composition of the teaching staff during the reporting period. The elected staff as well as guest lecturers remain unchanged. The composition stated in the SAR (p. 142) seems well balanced since the teaching staff of the programme in the specialized theoretical and practical study courses is based on the work of the lecturers of the Department of Performing Arts (36%), while the study courses dedicated to the general theory of arts, history and contemporary processes are taught in an interdisciplinary aspect by the teaching staff of the Department of Theory and History of Culture (32%). Other lecturers are engaged from the LAC's departments and researchers of the Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies of the Latvian Academy of Culture (9%), and invited guest lecturers make up 23% of the teaching staff. Such composition provides stability and continuance in the implementation of the BSP "Contemporary Dance".

The changes are relatively frequent and permanent in the structure of the masterclasses, seminars and workshops of foreign teachers organized through the short-time mobility programme. The SAR (p. 142) states 60 artists from 24 countries in such exchanges in the period 2015-2022. Such changes make no visible negative impact on the quality of the BSP "Contemporary Dance". On the contrary, constant involvement of the foreign practitioners, with different styles and methods opens the possibility for programme improvement and for comparability with contemporary trends in dance and movement teaching.

2.4.3. n/a

2.4.4.

Anex 2.4.4.-2 shows that in the last 6 years there were 44 artistic public presentations in the field of contemporary dance, either dance or choreography, and theater direction. 39 of them were authors work of the active teachers at the programme. SAR (p.140) states that 37% of the academic staff programme are nationally or internationally recognised artists.

From SAR and discussions on site visit it is visible that there are artistic researches and projects on contemporary dance, ongoing or planned. As stated in SAR (p. 68) most of the academics engaged in theoretical courses publish their research results in research papers and conferences, or present their artistic productions publicly. Annexes 2.4.4.-1 and 2.4.4.-2, as well as teachers CV, proves the information of developed and extended scientific or artistic activities of teachers in terms of research, publishing, presenting artistic work and participating in various creative artistic projects.

The artistic presentations were publicly presented in distinguished cultural institutions and significant venues, such as theaters, radio, television, cultural centers and site specific spaces.

Among the conferences attended by the academic staff almost all are international conferences, national and international wide. Domestic conferences were organized in Latvia by LAC itself or other Latvian universities or cultural institutions. During the site visit an expert group has been informed that there is institutional financial support at LAC for such activities. It was also noticed that the academic staff would need more time to allocate for such activities.

2.4.5.

According to the SAR (p.143) all the communication in the department goes through the directrice of the programme and one associate professor, both responsible for coordination of staff and

communication with students. Student's evaluations are discussed and analyzed among the staff in order to implement changes in the program according to students' feedback. There are regular individual and group meetings among teachers and students.

As the character of the study does not allow formal regular meetings of all the staff, the communication is executed through permanent individual meetings and digital correspondence. Practical dance and movement courses are opened to all lecturers and the discussion about the content and outcomes is usual. Teachers from the programme discuss course descriptions at the Department of Performing Arts once in two months. Any changes in courses or study programmes are made through the cooperation among all the teachers and according to the students' feedback. During the site visit, an expert group learned that students are satisfied with personal communication, but digital communication through Moodle is not very popular and commonly accepted. Concerning the type of the BSP "Contemporary Dance" and the specific artistic mindset among the students, such an approach is understandable.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by indicating strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions: Qualifications and artistic presentation record of the academic staff is satisfactory. There is a good balance between artistic practitioners and theoreticians in the composition of teaching staff which allow complex and diversified learning. The combination of elected teachers and guest lecturers is good and does not pose risk to continuance.

Including short-term mobility guests at the LAC in the educational process through masterclasses, seminars, workshops or lecturing provides fresh points of view and opportunities to implement adaptations in courses. Lifetime learning among the staff is implemented through doctoral studies at LAC and other universities, as well as through educational programmes at LAC offered to the staff (e.g. digital skills or English language proficiency).

The public presentation record is certainly affected by the COVID19 crisis but it shows permanent artistic engagement of the teachers in high-ranked productions. There are many formal and informal channels and forms of communication and collaboration established.

Strengths:

- 1) Unique programme in Latvia for higher education in dance;
- 2) Distinguished artists engaged and included in the programme;
- 3) The programme can be easily internationalized and attract foreign students.

Weaknesses:

- 1) None.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

- 1 R7 - Compliance of the qualification of the academic staff and visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The staff is adequately composed, competent and complies with all the requirements of the BSP "Contemporary Dance".

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

- 1 1 - The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Annex 3.2.1. provides information that generally is in Compliance of the Study Programme with the State Education Standard (1).docx and confirms that the study programme complies with Regulations No. 240 of the Cabinet of Ministers as of 1 May 2014 "Regulations on the National Standard for Academic Education" <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=266187> (Available only in Latvian).

However, it has to be indicated that currently the degree awarded after graduation is "Bachelor of Arts in Contemporary Dance" and it has to be revised to be in accordance with Regulations No. 240 of the Cabinet of Ministers as of 1 May 2014 "Regulations on the National Standard for Academic Education" <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=266187> and that would be to rename the title of the degree to "Bachelor of Arts in Music and Performing Arts" or "Bachelor of Arts in Performing Arts".

- 2 2 - The study programme complies with a valid professional standard or the requirements for the professional qualification (if there is no professional standard required for the relevant occupation) provided if the completion of the study programme leads to a professional qualification (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 3 3 - The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 561 , Paragraph two and Section 562 , Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study course descriptions are prepared in Latvian that can be accessed under 3.2.-4.Course description_LDM.zip comply with regulations set forth in Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 4 4 - The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure according to which state recognised documents of higher education are issued.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The provided Diploma sample in the annex 3.1.2._diploms_bLDM.zip partially complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued according to Cabinet Regulation No. 202 "Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību as the degree obtained is included in the diploma and at this moment it does not comply with the Regulations No. 240 of the Cabinet of Ministers as of 1 May 2014 "Regulations on the National Standard for Academic Education" <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=266187> and has to be revised.

- 5 5 - The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The annex provided by LDM.zip certifies that the academic staff involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 6 6 - Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 7 7 - At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 8 8 - The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

This is identified in the annex 2.3.-2_CV_EN.zip. It can be concluded that the state language proficiency is compliant with Cabinet Regulation Nr. 733 "Regulations Regarding the Extent of the Knowledge of the Official Language, the Procedures for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language and the State Fee for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language".

- 9 9 - The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 10 10 - The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Sample of attached study agreement "2.1.4.-3 study agreement example.pdf" complies with Cabinet Regulation. Nr. 70 "Studiju līgumā obligāti ietveramie noteikumi".

- 11 11 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LAC has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another higher education institution if the implementation of the study programme is terminated. The agreements are specified in the annex 4_translation_LAC JVLMA agreement 2023-. It is specified that in case of discontinuation of this study programme, students are to be able to continue their studies at Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music Bachelor's study programme "Music and Performing Art" (42212) sub-programme "Choreography" to obtain Bachelor's degree in arts.

- 12 12 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LAC has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked. It is ensured by the document certifying it - 1_translation_Arts RI 2023 that includes LAC confirmation no. 1.10e/35 from 24.01.2023. The documents provided are pursuant to paragraph 13.4 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 795 "Regulations Regarding Licensing of Study Programmes"

- 13 13 - The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 55.(1), Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 14 14 - Compliance with the requirements specified in other regulatory enactments that apply to the study programme being assessed (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

- 1 R8 - Compliance of the study programme with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

BSP "Contemporary Dance" partially complies with regulatory enactments as two criteria does not comply with the Regulations No. 240 of the Cabinet of Ministers as of 1 May 2014 "Regulations on the National Standard for Academic Education"
<https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=266187> .

General conclusions about the study programme, indicating the most important strengths and weaknesses of the study programme

It is concluded that the BSP "Contemporary Dance" programme has an excellent teaching staff, leadership, and management. However, there is an excessive use of valuable resources on logistics that could be better utilised for creative work. Despite significant collaboration with other artists outside LAC, there is not sufficient interdisciplinary collaboration with other departments. The issues with resources and provisions are most evident with the study programme Contemporary Dance, with classrooms and rehearsal halls dispersed in different venues. This demands a high level of organisation and becomes an obstacle to the unhindered development of the study process. The mobility of students and teachers, along with the need for portable technical equipment, complicates and consumes time. Additionally, sharing the multifunctional hall with theatre study programmes requires frequent adaptations before and after use. The lack of financial support for quality performances of final works is an additional problem that needs to be addressed. However, the qualifications and artistic presentation record of the academic staff are deemed satisfactory. There is a good balance between artistic practitioners and theoreticians in the composition of the teaching staff, allowing for complex and diversified learning. The combination of elected teachers and guest lecturers is considered positive and does not pose a risk to continuance. Short-term

mobility guests are included in the educational process through masterclasses, seminars, workshops, or lectures, providing fresh points of view and opportunities for course adaptations. The staff engages in lifelong learning through doctoral studies at LAC and other universities, as well as educational programmes offered at LAC, such as digital skills or English language proficiency. The public presentation record has been affected by the COVID-19 crisis, but it still shows the permanent artistic engagement of the teachers in high-ranked productions. Several formal and informal channels and forms of communication and collaboration have been established. Overall, addressing resource allocation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and financial support could further enhance the BSP "Contemporary Dance" programme.

Strengths:

1. Excellent track record of both popularity of the program and accomplishments by the teaching staff and graduates;
2. Program features reputable teaching staff;
3. Extremely high level of enthusiasm of both students and teachers;
4. Solid Communication connections and intensive cooperation with professional institutions in the field;
5. Unique programme in Latvia for higher education in dance;
6. Distinguished artists engaged and included in the programme;
7. The BSP "Contemporary Dance" can be easily internationalised and attracts foreign students;
8. A student focused education due to the admission of students once in 3 years;
9. Strong identity of the programme and demand of the graduates in the labour market;
10. Low drop-out rate even in the year of pandemic indicating motivation of the students and dedication of the faculty.

Weaknesses:

1. No English stream of instructions and that might be of significance to exchange students and student enrollment from abroad;
2. Excessive resources and time wasted on logistics;
3. Inadequate space organisation – dispersed rehearsal and performance studios at three different venues. It is considered as insufficient and substandard working space for rehearsals and performances;
4. Lack of financial support for quality performances should be addressed accordingly;
5. Considering the high proportion of freelancers in dance field 1 CP in "Employment of a Creative Person and Project Management" course is not sufficient;
6. According to the "Regulations on the National Standard of Academic Education" (240) by the Cabinet Minister, the obtained degree does not comply with the standard;
7. The impression from the infrastructure inspections suggests excessive resources and time wasted on logistics, which could go towards the creative projects.

Evaluation of the study programme "Contemporary Dance"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Contemporary Dance"

Short-term recommendations

1. The BSP "Contemporary Dance" should consider providing more instructions in English, as the program is popular amongst students and might benefit from a wider influx of foreign students;
2. The program should consider hiring a production unit coordinator to run the logistics for rehearsal schedules to alleviate the creative staff to focus more on production quality;
3. The BSP "Contemporary Dance" should consider readapting new spaces for the study processes;
4. Consider mapping out the plan for alternative funding to help the production unit;
5. LAC need to change the degree award, according to Regulations on the National Standard of Academic Education" (240) standardised by the Cabinet of Ministers;
6. The BSP "Contemporary Dance" should increase CP count in "Employment of a Creative Person and Project Management" course because the instruction time is not sufficient.

Long-term recommendations

1. Consider opening the English stream to satisfy the demand from the international pool and in view of diminishing local demographics;
2. Consider improving infrastructure and working space for rehearsals and performances so that the dispersed rehearsal and performance studios at three different venues are resolved;
3. The production unit coordinator must consider securing funding for quality performances according to the mapping of resources done in response to a short-term recommendation;
4. Remap the distribution of the three pillars mentioned, dance, choreography, research, so that the latter one gets more attention. Because the duration of the programme is not sufficient. Considering the high proportion of freelancers in the dance field it is suggested to increase CP in the courses preparing graduates for the employment situation locally and internationally.

II - "Arts" ASSESSMENT

II - "Arts" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1.

The academic bachelor study programme "Arts" 43212 (BSP Arts) fits well within the study field "Arts". The BSP Arts has six sub-programmes (Culture and Arts Studies; Sociology and Management of Culture; Intercultural Relations; Drama and Text Studies; Stage Acting; Theater Directing), that complies with the provisions of Section 55 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (Latvian only, available at <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/37967-augstskolu-likums>). The strategic goal includes an interdisciplinary approach both to the research and artistic practice and the BSP Arts encompasses art as a context not an object, within which the six sub-programmes prepare students in specific specialisations in their totality "covering all cycles of the arts product creation cycle" (quote from the faculty members during the onsite visit).

2.1.2

The title of the BSP Arts in the study field of "Arts" with education classification codes 43212 with

the last 3 numbers (212) standing for "Music and Performing Arts" and 43217 standing for "Creative Industries" according to the classification of Latvian education which is available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitibas-klasifikaciju>.

The BSP Arts has 6 sub-programmes: Culture and Arts Studies; Sociology and Management of Culture; Intercultural Relations; Drama and Text Studies; Stage Acting; Theater Directing (SAR, p. 246, table No. 2). According to the information gathered during the on site visits the number of the admitted students in each sub-programme can vary depending on the qualities of the applicants. The administration of the LAC during the on-site visits when asked about the wording "sub-programme" vs "specialisation" explained that the law doesn't stipulate the exact terminology. A word "sub-programme" is still used due to the strong identity as it was a historic term to describe specialisations in the first Bachelor of Arts "poli-programme" when LAC got established.

The degree to be obtained is "Bachelor of Arts," but AIKA recommended revising the title of the degree to "Bachelor of Arts in Music and Performing Arts" or "Bachelor in Performing Arts" according to the cabinet minister 240 "Regulations on the national standard of academic education" <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/266187-noteikumi-par-valsts-akademiskas-izglitibas-standartu>.

According to Annex of the SAR "Explanation on changes of codes and degree titles" the LAC has decided to keep the degree approved during the accreditation of the study programme "Arts" in 2013 because:

It ensures the continuity of the degree to be awarded and positioning of the graduates in the labour market,

The name of degree emphasises the interdisciplinarity of the programme,

In the annex: Explanation on changes of codes and degree titles LAC explains that the BSP Arts is designed as a group of several interdisciplinary programmes subordinated to a single study aim and objectives where the content is not reducible to the content of a single group of educational programmes - "Music and Performing Arts" or "Performing Arts".

The panel thinks that the title is appropriate for the structure of the BSP Arts, which includes a spectrum of sub-programmes. It is a highly interdisciplinary programme where part one is a general education in arts for all sub-programmes, and part two consists of specialized study subjects. Technically, all sub-programmes could be separate programmes to match existing legislation. However, this would result in the loss of the flexibility of admission among sub-programmes, which has been an advantage of the BSP Arts and has allowed it to react to demands from the industry.

As the duration of the studies is four years and all sub-programmes integrate study content relevance to the arts and creative industries, where knowledge is organised in an interdisciplinary approach, the LAC proposes to accredit the BSP Arts under two codes"one for the "Music and Performing Arts" (43212) group of educational programmes and one for the "Creative Industries" (43217) group of educational programmes according to the classification of Latvian education which is available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitibas-klasifikaciju>. The two codes are appropriate to the overall content of the study programme with "Sociology and Management of Culture", "Intercultural Relations" and partly "Culture and Arts Studies" sub-programmes specialisation subjects matching 43217 and "Drama and Text Studies"; "Stage Acting" and "Theater Directing" - 43212.

The goal of the BSP Arts is "to prepare competitive growth-oriented specialists with knowledge of interdisciplinary theories of humanitarian, artistic and creative industries, research skills in the research of specific cultural and creative sector problem issues, as well as artistic creativity skills in theatre art" (SAR, p.241). The goal of the BSP Arts is interrelated with the objectives and learning outcomes of the BSP Arts (SAR, p.242-243).

Admission requirements include secondary education and entrance examination. According to the SAR (p.251-252) given the high degree of specification of sub-programme content and outcomes and the fact that sub-programmes differ in some of the outcomes to be achieved, differences in admission requirements are also defined. Applicants for the sub-programs "Culture and Art Studies",

"Sociology and Management of Culture", "Intercultural Relations" of the bachelor's study programme "Arts" must take the entrance exam "Essay". The admission rules for the study year 2023/2024 stipulate that the score obtained by the applicants of these sub-programmes in the centralised exam in a foreign language (English, French or German) must not be lower than 30 percent after applying the coefficient of equalisation of the results of the exam levels. Applicants for the sub-programmes "Drama and Text Studies", "Stage Acting", "Theatre Directing" of the BSP Arts must take the entrance exam "Creative Competition" (in 2 parts or 4 rounds). The evaluation criteria of the creative competition for the relevant academic year are approved by the order of the Rector.

The duration of the BSP Arts is eight semesters or four years in the amount of 160 credit points. The implementation language of the BSP Arts is Latvian. The duration and scope of the BSP Arts implementation, as well as the implementation language, are reasonable and justified.

According to the opinion of the expert group the title "Arts", codes 43212 and 43217 and Bachelor of Arts degree are interrelated and they comply with the programme. However they don't comply with the structuring in Latvian education system, where study field is "Arts" which has several programmes and "Arts" is not among them. The aims, objectives, learning outcomes of the BSP Arts and its subprogrammes, and admission requirements are interrelated. In the annex: Explanation on changes of codes and degree titles LAC explains the interdisciplinarity of the study programme, tradition of awarding "Bachelor or Arts" degree and wishes to retrain it.

2.1.3.

According to the SAR (p.244) no changes have been made to the parameters of the BSP Arts since the issuance of the accreditation sheet for the "Arts" study field on May 22, 2013 (as well as the issuance of a new accreditation sheet on June 20, 2022 (accreditation sheet No. 2022/34)). Within the framework of the evaluation procedure for this study field it is planned to make changes in one parameter of the BSP Arts - to include a new code 43217 in addition to the code 43212 included in the previous accreditation pages. BSP Arts code 43217 (Creative industries) was introduced in the education classification of Latvia only in 2017. The expert groups supports the additional code as it will more precisely position the interdisciplinary content of the goals and tasks of the study BSP Arts in accordance with the educational programme groups of the thematic field of education "Arts" defined in the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 322 (Regulations Regarding the Classification of Education of Latvia (Latvian only): <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>): educational programme group with code 43212 (Music and performing arts) and educational programme group with code 43217 (Creative Industries).

Other parameters of the BSP Arts - awarded degree, direction, duration of the programme, language and admission rules are not changed.

2.1.4.

According to SAR p.252, the economic rationale of this BSP Arts is formed by the compliance of acquired knowledge, skills and competences with the general profile of the needs of the employer in the cultural and creative sector. The cultural ecosystem is broad and closely related with other sectors such as sectors such as tourism, hospitality business, thus, the field of economic impact of this programme is significantly expanded. The social impact of the BSP Arts is relatively large as the labour market of the cultural and creative sector is vastly spread as the study programme consists of various sub-programmes and allows students to specialise in various relevant sectors of their interest in the cultural hemisphere. An example mentioned where graduates can be employed symbolising the large labour market in the SAR p.252, is to work in non-governmental organisations or create ones themselves in any cultural field of their personal interest. As specified in the SAR p.252, the specificity of the demand for the study programme and the knowledge, skills and competence of the specialists prepared in it is also related to the fact that the labour market in this

field foresees both the demand of state and local government companies, the demand of art and culture organisations subsidised by the state and local governments, and the demand formed by associations and NGOs, both cultural and creative industry companies' demand for labour. Similarly, in the preparation of specialists, it has to be taken into account the wide opportunities for self-employment in this field, where the labour market does not offer "ready-made" jobs, but employment is formed in the so-called freelancer status.

As specified in the SAR p.252, the data on graduate employment is obtained through an annual graduate survey. According to the data acquired, 68% of students are already working at the time of graduation and the represented industries are similar to the studied study programmes. Generally, the numbers differ based on the sub-programmes.

As stated in the SAR p.253, in the sub-programme "Culture and Arts Studies", 57% of the graduates of the sub-programme are already employed at the time of graduation, as well as 21% of graduates become employed 1-3 months after graduation, which can be considered a positive trend. The majority of graduates work in the industry - 24% of graduates work in a museum, archive and/or library, 24% represent the cultural education/education sector, 18% work in television, radio and/or interactive media, 12% provide translation services, another 12% work in the performing arts (theatre, opera, concerts, shows, circus, etc.). These indicators reflect that graduates after finishing their studies work in the cultural sector and are closely related to their study programme with the specificities differing based on their personal interest and choice.

As specified in the SAR p.253, the "Sociology and Management of Culture" sub-programme, allows the graduates to work in influential cultural and artistic organisations and to participate in the development of cultural policy in local governments or at the state level, including the Ministry of Culture. According to the numbers provided in the SAR p.253, 58% of the graduates of the programme are already employed at the time of graduation, as well as 13% of the graduates become employed 1-3 months after graduation, which can be considered a positive trend. The majority of graduates work in the industry, which is also a good indicator.

According to the SAR p.254, the necessity of the sub-programme "Intercultural Relations" on the labour market is determined by the fact that the implementation of the international dimension in Latvian economy and administration requires specialists with knowledge of several European Union and other foreign languages. In Latvian context, this is a unique programme allowing students to specialise in understanding specific culture, learn the language and establish a relevant knowledge basis for further development in a foreign country or work on developing stronger ties between Latvia and their chosen country of specialty. The graduates are employed in very different industries, acquiring specific industry skills in practice or in master's studies. The most popular areas of master's studies for sub-programme's graduates are cultural management (including studies at LAC), translation studies, other social sciences, pedagogy in Latvian or foreign universities. Based on the data provided in the SAR p.254, 58% of programme's graduates are already employed at the time of graduation, and 18% of graduates become employed 1-3 months after graduation, which can be considered a positive trend. The majority of graduates work in the industry.

According to the SAR p.255, the sub-programmes "Stage Acting" and "Theatre Directing" are manifested in such a way that their graduates ensure the regeneration of professionals in the field of Latvian theatre. 86% of the graduates of the programme are already employed at the time of graduation, which can be considered a very positive trend. The majority of graduates work in the industry. These two sub-programmes are highly necessary and demanded for the market due to the limited number of institutions in Latvia that prepare such specialists.

According to SAR p.256, the impact of the "Drama and Text Studies" sub-programme is manifested in the way that their graduates ensure the revival of Latvian playwrights as a special profession in the field of theatre. 50% of the graduates of the sub-programme are already employed upon graduation, 13% of graduates become employed 1-3 months after graduation, but 38% of graduates become employed 4-6 months after graduation, which is comparably worse than for other

programmes but still a rather positive indicator.

According to SAR (p.257) dynamics of the number of students in BSP Arts is influenced by both contextual factors (for example, the so-called demographic "hole"), the overall study programme and sub-programme development strategy of LAC and the fact that students are not admitted to all sub programmes every year, therefore the number of admitted students varies. Until 2015, LAC implemented one bachelor's degree study programme, but as different professions and their related knowledge, skills and competences developed and differentiated in the labour market, new bachelor's study programmes were created at LAC, in which students were admitted, which simultaneously reduced the number of students for bachelor's in the "Arts" study programme (for example, 2015/2016, because a new bachelor study programme "Contemporary Dance" was created which previously used to be part of BSP Arts). The relatively large number of enrolled students in the 2017/18 and 2021/22 academic years is due to the fact that students were enrolled in five out of six sub-programmes in these years, in addition, a large number of fee-paying students are enrolled in several sub-programmes (Culture and Art Studies, Sociology and Management of Culture, also in several Intercultural Relations specialisations).

Despite a high competition ratio per study place (in some years, in some sub-programmes, up to 10-12 applicants per budget place) the drop out rate is quite significant - around 30%. As seen from Appendix no. 5 from 2013./2014 till 2021./2022 study year out of 994 admitted students 690 graduated. As stated in SAR (p.258) the dominant reasons for dropping out are inability to combine studies with work and financial considerations, personal reasons, including leaving Latvia, inability to fulfil academic obligations, as well as starting studies at another university.

Detailed analysis regarding employment indicators and how the graduates of each sub-programme affect different fields/segments of employment in the cultural and creative sector are available in SAR (p.252.-256) based on data obtained through an annual graduate survey. The graduates enter the labour market relatively quickly, 68% of students are already working at the time of graduation, and the represented industries are similar to the studied study programmes. The highest rate of 86% of the graduates already employed at the time of graduation is for the sub-programmes "Stage Acting" and "Theatre Directing". In all sub-programmes the majority of the graduates get employed the last 1-3 months after graduation and work in the industry, which is a positive trend and shows a good economic impact.

2.1.5.

n/a

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions

BSP Arts fits well within the study field "Arts". The BSP Arts has six sub-programmes that comply with the provisions of Section 55 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions. The profile of the graduates including a contextual understanding of cultural and artistic processes combined with skills and competences acquired in specialisation has a high demand in the labour market. There is a reasonable economical and social justification for each of the study sub-programmes and they are in demand in the labour market.

Strengths:

- 1.Spectrum of sub-programmes covering various aspects of arts field and ensuring high demand in labour market
2. Strong traditions of the study programme - since the establishment of the LAC

Weaknesses:

1. According to the "Regulations on the National Standard of Academic Education" (240) by the Cabinet Minister, the obtained degree "Bachelor of Arts" does not comply with the standard.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1.

The objectives of the BSP Arts are geared towards specialists with knowledge in interdisciplinary humanities, art and creative industries, research skills in specific cultural and creative sectors, who can exhibit artistic creativity skills in theatrical art and can develop a holistic understanding of cultural and artistic processes in the national and global cultural space (SAR, p.258).

The programme itself has been created as a cluster of several sub-programmes subordinated to one study goal and tasks, which has dynamically developed by improving various elements of sub-programme content, in accordance with the educational programme groups of the thematic field of education "Arts" defined in the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 322 (Regulations Regarding the Classification of Education of Latvia (Latvian only): <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>), while the sub-programmes themselves comply with the provisions of Section 55, Part 1 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (Latvian only, available at <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/37967-augstskolu-likums>). The strategic goal of the study programme "Arts" is set in accordance with Cabinet of Ministers regulations no. 240 Regulations on the standard of state academic education (Latvian only, see <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/266187-noteikumi-par-valsts-akademiskas-izglitiba-standartu>) to ensure, first of all, that all students acquire theoretical knowledge and research skills, achieving the study results specified in the study programme, which correspond to the level 6 knowledge, skills and competence of the European Qualification Framework (SAR, p.247). The report also clarifies that the BSP Arts code 43212 (Music and performing arts) must be supplemented with the educational programme group coded 43217 (Creative Industries). BSP Arts code 43217 (Creative industries) was introduced in the education classification of Latvia only in 2017 in order to ensure compliance of national statistical data with the requirements of international comparability and to adapt the educational programme to the needs and processes of creative work with the wider processes of the cultural and creative ecosystem (SAR, p.244).

The curriculum of the six sub-programs—Culture and Arts Studies, Sociology and Management Of Culture, Intercultural Relations, Drama and Text Studies, Theatre Directing, Stage Acting—consists of the compulsory Part A that ensures that interdisciplinary knowledge of the historical development and modern processes in the fields of culture and art (literature, visual arts, music, theatre and film), whereby the student also recognizes understands the theoretical approaches of cultural studies and art, compulsory choice Part B that approves the study results of the subprograms: Culture And Arts Studies, Sociology And Management Of Culture, Drama And Text Studies, Stage Acting, and Theatre Directing, and free choice Part C. The report gives a fairly detailed breakdown for the goals and study results for each of the sub-programs (SAR, pp.248-251).

In short, in terms of the educational programmes with the code 43212 (Music and performing arts) and for the group of educational programmes with the code 43217 (Creative industries) is expressed by the spectrum of sub-programmes, where the sub-programme "Culture and Arts Studies" has a relatively balanced representation of the knowledge content from both codes, in the sub-programmes "Drama and Text Studies", "Stage Acting", "Theatre Directing" the content is dominated by the Music and Performing Arts code 43212, but in the sub-programmes "Sociology and Management of Culture" and "Intercultural Relations" the content of the Creative Industries dominates (SAR, p.251).

The duration of the study programme is 8 semesters (4 years). Currently the BSP Arts is offered in Latvian only. (SAR, p.258) emphasises that such a structure of the curriculum provides the students

with a theoretical and practice based knowledge, skills and competences for further academic research and professional life as well as provides opportunities to study in related master's and doctoral study programs both in Latvia and abroad.

Furthermore, (SAR, p.259) stresses that Part A of the BSP Arts meets the needs of both the industry and the labour market, as well as the trends in humanities, arts and creative industries because in it, can the student define the concepts corresponding to the content of the program, identify and explain the theoretical connections, is able to independently acquire and critically analyse information and art research methods, can use the theoretical knowledge and empirical data in the analysis, is able to argue orally and in writing, and communicate the results of the work processes of their research.

The study plan of the curriculum as it appears in the Annex 3.2.1.-3 is coherent, and on the surface no significant shortcomings have been found.

2.2.2.

n/a

2.2.3.

The main forms of study in the BSP Arts are fairly similar to those in other departments: lectures, seminars, working in groups, independent work, individual work, and tests. (SAR, p. 262) stresses that art-based research methods are being used more and more often. Also, the teaching staff organises the opportunities to get a specific cultural and artistic experience: watching films, theatre performances, listening to concerts, followed by discussion and analysis of works of art based on interpretation. In addition, the personal artistic creation of students in all sub-programmes is highly encouraged. The report particularly stresses extracurricular activities where students can attend theatre and dance performances, art exhibitions, concerts, films, or Assist in the organisation of festivals and other dance industry and cultural events, participate in artistic residencies, master classes, performances, master workshops, in creative projects (SAR, p.264). During the institutional visit, the program's administration had supported the claim by adding that meetings with brand name artists, guest lectures by industry experts with Q and A after discussions are also highly offered.

With respect to student-centred learning examples the students have the opportunity to receive individual consultations from the academic staff by focusing on an individual approach to each student, promoting and developing each student's individual analytical and academic, as well as artistic potential and professional autonomy - the ability to independently and freely make professional decisions about the form, content, creative team, aesthetic and quality goals of their creative works and criteria (SAR, pp.262-263). At the same time, the programme develops the skills to work in a team, as well as manage and organise the creative process within the framework of predetermined duties and working conditions. Materials for content learning are selected and created according to students' prior knowledge. An essential addition to lessons and independent work is organised involvement in publicly offered cultural exchange events.

One must add, however, given the extent of the sub-programs the breakdown of the evidence for student-centred learning, (SAR) somewhat is scant and kept to minimal, which does not draw a deeper understanding how the student-centred teaching varies from sub-program to sub-program.

2.2.4.

Internships are organized in accordance with the LAC Internship Regulations (<https://lka.edu.lv/lv/prakse-un-karjeras-atbalsts/prakse/dokumenti-praksu/>); in practice that implies that and internship coordinator and career education project manager, in conversations with students, recommend most suitable internship placement. In addition, students are either informed about the progress and procedures of the internship as part of the study course Introduction to

Studies and Career Development (1 CP), the opportunity to complete those in LAC's structural units - Creative Activity Centre, Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies, LAC's Eduards Smiļģis Theatre Museum and LAC's Riga Film Museum, or they can have Specialisation internship (2 CP), a way to improve not only students' professional skills, but also social competences in their field. Such as in the sub-programme "Culture and Arts Studies", students work as production assistants, deal with project management, coordination, marketing, organize workshops and events in cultural centers and folk houses of various municipalities, students in the "Sociology and Management of Culture" sub-programme participate in research, assist producers, organizations and personnel selection managers, work with data entry, deal with marketing, organization and coordination of events in public administration institutions, in the sub-programme "Intercultural Relations" students most often perform simultaneous and written translation, organize and coordinate educational and intercultural events in various translation offices ("Nordtext", "Baltic Translations", "Linearis"), and in international organizations and institutions (Baltic-German Higher Education Office, LIAA, in the sub-programs "Theatre Directing" and "Drama and Text Studies", students direct plays, carry out the necessary organizational work for the creation of the play, and assist the directors, write and prepare dramaturgical material for plays, edit dramatizations, assist in performance rehearsals, transcribe actors' etudes during rehearsals in various theater festival programmes, at Dailes Theatre and New Theatre Institute of Latvia, Valmiera Summer Theatre Festival and non-governmental theater organizations ("Quadrifron", Dirty Deal Teatro), and, finally in the "Stage Acting" sub-program students practice in various theatres (The New Riga Theatre, Latvia Puppet Theatre, Valmiera Drama Theatre, Dailes Theatre, non-governmental theatres), as well as take part in television projects or feature films.

In short, the internships vary and they are plentiful, considering LAC faculty in most cases comes from the institutions where the internships are offered.

2.2.5

n/a

2.2.6.

Final theses (Bachelor's thesis) in all sub- programmes of the BSP Arts are included in the A or Compulsory (10 CP) part. Students choose their topics according to their interests and sub-programme. Students of the "Culture and Arts Studies" sub-programme, as well as the "Sociology and Management of Culture" sub-programme, develop their bachelor thesis as a research paper on specific art sectors such as theatre, dance, music, visual arts, film, as well as specific problems for the circus industry, cultural sector, including issues of the development of the cultural heritage sector, development, and management

In the bachelor theses of the students of the "Sociology and Management of Culture" sub-programme, main topics relate to cultural and artistic organisations but the students of the sub-programme "Intercultural Relations" choose research works related to the intended direction of professional activity, e.g., Latvian history in the context of cultural contact (work in cultural heritage institutions, tourism industry), intercultural communication (work in foreign missions in Latvia, Latvian institutions, companies, NGOs with an international dimension).

In the sub-programme "Drama and Text Studies", the bachelor's thesis can be developed either as a creative work (creating a play or other dramatic text) with a theoretical basis or as a research work. Students choose topics of creative work in close connection with personal identity, socially relevant problems and formats that are innovative and experimental in the field of performing arts.

In the sub-programmes "Stage Acting" and "Theatre Directing", the bachelor's thesis is a creative work, a production of a play or an actor's work in a stage performance. The selection of the theme of the creative work, dramaturgical material and means of artistic expression takes place in close cooperation with the chosen supervisor.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

Based on the analysis, the BSP Arts programme meets the requirements as the content of the study programme is topical and interconnected, corresponds to the objectives of the programme, and meets the needs of the industry, labour market, and scientific trends. The study plan of the curriculum is coherent, and no significant shortcomings were found, infused with some illustrious faculty members, making some sub-programs more attractive than others, such as subprograms in theatre directing or stage acting. However, more detailed evidence for student-centred learning is needed to fully understand the variation of teaching from sub-program to sub-program. The opportunities and provision of internships offered to students are effective and related to the learning outcomes achievable according to requirements. The topics of students' final theses are relevant to the field and correspond to the study programme. The implementation of study methods involves lectures, seminars, working in groups, independent work, individual work, and tests, and art-based research methods are also used, as well as art and culture-specific experiences.

Strengths:

1. BSP Arts programme offers a wide choice of subprograms, with some sub-programs more attractive than others, particularly in the areas of theatre directing or stage acting where some brand names can be found.
2. Effective internships coverage, as some of the faculty members are directly involved in arts and creative industries making the access to the industry more fluid
3. BSP Arts programme offers a good coherent and structured make-up of the study design.

Weaknesses:

1. The report did not provide sufficient evidence on how student-centred teaching methods vary from sub-program to sub-program, apart from mentioning those generally used in other programs.
2. The sub-programs exhibit an uneven distribution in its appeal, with some being more popular than others, stringent upon faculty.

Assessment of the requirement [5] (applicable only to master's or doctoral study programmes)

- 1 R5 - The study programme for obtaining a master's or doctoral degree is based on the achievements and findings of the respective field of science or field of artistic creation.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

-

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1.

The LAC provides adequate material, technical and informational resources for the implementation of the BSP Arts, consisting of technically equipped auditoriums and a Library reading room available to students for studying and research in the premises on Ludzas Street 24, as well as auditoriums and practical lesson rooms in the Theatre house "Zirgu pasts". In the LAC's Theatre house "Zirgu pasts" on Dzirnavu street 46 two rehearsal halls and a modern black box-type multifunctional hall fully equipped with sound, light and video equipment are also available to the students, with access to the consultations and services of the technical specialist and lighting specialist of the "Zirgu pasts" building of the Department of Performing Arts of LAC. LAC's Theatre house "Zirgu pasts"

accommodates the appropriate changing rooms, showers and a sauna designed for muscle relaxation after increased physical exertion. For the purposes of showing bachelor's creative works, LAC has cooperated with non-governmental theatres - Gertrude Street Theatre and "Dirty Deal Teatro", having previously concluded a mutually beneficial agreement (SAR, p. 270).

LAC's Library resources provide specialised informational resources for specific study subjects and research development. The studies of the "Intercultural relations" sub-programme supplement the archive of the library of LAC with material donations, for example, from the Italian, Irish, and Dutch embassies in Latvia, from the Swedish Institute and the Goethe Institute in Riga. The resources of the National Library of Latvia, the Goethe Institute in Riga, and the French Institute in Latvia are important resources for the study subprograms. The teachers are supported by publishing houses by providing free teaching materials, e.g., Ernst Klett Verlag, Edelsa, Anaya ELE.

The current infrastructure resource can be assessed as adequate regarding theoretically oriented study programmes and sub-programmes. The SAR, p. 271 indicates that; "in the intensive teaching process of the academic bachelor's study programme "Arts", great emphasis is placed on the rehearsal and training process of independent creative works, as well as their public performance, and the capacity of the rooms for this purpose LAC's Theatre house "Zirgu pasts" tends to be insufficient", which is an important issue. The main infrastructure problems are related to bachelor's studies in the sub-programmes "Stage Acting", "Theatre Directing" and the program in "Contemporary Dance", due to high occupancy of study rooms and the requirements of adapting and readapting the space on the weekly basis to for study processes of different subprograms). The SAR p. 42-43 also emphasizes provision limitations because "due to poor sound installation, it is not possible to hold several parallel classes at the same time", which is a significant issue, considering the premises are heavily occupied.

The issue with inadequate space organization is planned to be resolved in due time, when LAC moves to a new building in the former Tobacco Factory complex, Riga, Miera Street 58a, where special halls for dance, performing arts classes and public performances are being designed. The projected premises in the Tobacco Factory block should be almost twice as large, which would allow more ambitious projects and unhindered study process organization. Until then, it is necessary to supplement and strengthen the technical base in the existing premises, taking into account that the LAC's Theatre House "Zirgu pasts" and the LAC's Eduards Smilģis Theatre Museum will continue to operate even upon moving to the new premises of the Tobacco Factory complex. The resolving of infrastructural and space organization issues is vital to be able to increase the number of students and reduce the premature termination of studies, extend the offer of study programmes, provide more opportunities for research growth and artistic creativity in the field of contemporary dance and theatre art.

LAC Library is an accredited library to the principles of a scientific library to provide the accredited bachelor study programmes and subprograms with the latest and retrospective scientific and reference literature, periodicals and fiction, as well as ensure successful foreign language learning and research work. The collection of the library consists of literature in cultural studies, cultural history, cultural anthropology, cultural and arts sociology, cultural economy, cultural management, philosophy, theatre, cinema, dance, visual arts, literature, creative industries, heritage, sociology, politics, dramaturgy, folklore, linguistics, research methodology, history, etc., as well as fiction - translations and original literature in various languages (Spanish, English, German, French, Italian, etc.). A large number of literature sources are available in English." (SAR p. 43-44). An important information resource is also the LAC's Theses database created by the LAC's Library, which includes bibliographic descriptions of the final theses of LAC's students.

In the study process, LAC uses the e-study environment (Moodle), providing communication with students necessary for the study process and the Information System of Latvian Universities (LAIS), which ensures the flow of information with students, access to resources and information. The e-study environment is used in all study courses and its use is being intensified (SAR, p.271).

2.3.2.

n/a

2.3.3.

The financing of the BSP Arts in 2022 is 1,111,707 EUR, it was formed from the budget grant, performance financing and tuition fees. Every year, a cost calculation is carried out, after which the number of guest lecturers hired and the amount diverted for the development of study programmes are determined, which is a part of the own revenues, in the amount of 3% in 2022, which amounts to 6,581 EUR. A lot of attention is devoted to the optimization of study programme implementation expenses, for example, by organizing stream lectures in professor-taught courses and providing remote lectures. The minimum number of students in the study programme to ensure the profitability of the study programme is determined every year by looking at the needs of the programme and sub-programmes in the current year. (See Annex No. 5) The BSP Arts is full-time attendance and is conducted in Latvian. (SAR, p. 272).

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The LAC provides adequate material, technical and informational resources for the implementation of the theoretically based study programmes and sub-programmes. The main infrastructure issues are related to bachelor's studies in the sub-programmes "Stage Acting", "Theatre Directing" and "Contemporary Dance", due to high occupancy of study rooms and the requirements of adapting and readapting the space on the weekly basis to for study processes of different subprograms).

Strengths:

1. Provisions and technical support regarding BSP Arts based on theoretical study and research are adequate;
2. High level of enthusiasm and commitment to the Academy of both students and teachers.

Weaknesses:

1. Inadequate space organisation – dispersed rehearsal and performance studios at different venues;
2. Perhaps a misunderstanding, but while visiting the premises at at 24 Ludza Street , the panel of experts was under the impression that the space is used mostly for dance rehearsals and the rest of the week for theatre rehearsals, therefore, students are required to adapt and rearrange the space for theater or dance lessons or performances, which interferes with smooth development of the study process.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

- 1 R6 - Compliance of the study provision, science provision (if applicable), informative provision (including library), material and technical provision and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The LAC provides adequate material, technical and informational resources for the implementation of the theoretically based study programmes and sub-programmes. The main infrastructure issues are related to bachelor's studies in the sub-programmes "Stage Acting", "Theatre Directing" and "Contemporary Dance", due to high occupancy of study rooms and the requirements of adapting and readapting the space on the weekly basis to for study processes of different subprograms).

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.

As stated in SAR (p. 273) due to the specificity of the BSP Arts with its six sub-programmes most of the teaching staff of LAC is engaged in the implementation of the BSP Arts, precisely 62 teachers, together with numerous creative professionals from the industry. Many, almost half of the teaching staff or 30 teachers obtain doctoral degrees. Large part of the engaged lecturers are actively productive artists in their fields. The structure of the teachers, as stated in the SAR (p.273) includes 13 professors elected to the principal work of LAC and 11 associate professors. According to the teaching staff composition the programme complies with the requirements set out in Article 55, Part One, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions

The election of the staff is in accordance with the regulatory document Cabinet of Ministers' Regulations adopted in 2021 No. 129 "The procedure for evaluating the scientific and pedagogical qualifications or artistic creative work results of an applicant for the position of professor or associate professor and an existing professor or associate professor". The SAR (p. 273) also states that the election of the recognised professionals from the artistic practice follows the criteria of excellency and visibility in the art and cultural industry. From SAR and related documents, as well as during the on-site visit, an expert group learned that the BSP Arts engages the most important artists and scientists in Latvia. Large number of them are awarded with the highest awards for their artistic works and contribution to Latvian culture. The competence, knowledge and experience of the members of the teaching staff contributes to the BSP Arts visibility and to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the relevant study courses.

2.4.2.

The changes in the composition of staff reported in SAR (p. 274) have no major negative impact on the quality of the implementation of the BSP Arts. The only substantial negative effect of the changes reported in SAR (p. 274) is the loss of the Danish, Dutch and Norwegian language and culture specialists, due to lack of the competitiveness of the Latvian labour market. As a result, the programme lost five studies in intercultural relations specialisations.

All the other changes reported have been made due to continuous renewal of teaching staff and inclusion of new lecturers with Latvian or foreign experience and doctorates. From the SAR and the interviews during the on-site visit the expert group noticed the positive impact of such changes on the quality of the BSP Arts. The changes positively affect the quality of the courses and study programme, bringing new knowledge and fresh artistic ideas in curriculum and providing more connections to the art and cultural sector.

2.4.3.

n/a

2.4.4.

As stated in the SAR (p. 273) several lecturers of the BSP Arts are actively involved in research activities, working at the Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies of the Latvian Academy of Culture. From SAR (p. 68), Annexes 2.4.4.-1 and 2.4.4.-2 and teacher's CV it is visible that the teaching staff engaged on the programme have intensive publishing, researching and artistic presentation record. Beside a good record of the scientific publications of the staff engaged in theoretical courses, in the last 6 years 19 lecturers engaged in teaching artistic practices publicly presented 183 artworks in fields directly connected with their courses. It is 9,6 presentations per teacher or total 30,5 works of programme staff per year which makes a very good record, especially given the fact that COVID19 crisis heavily affected the performing arts sector in terms of production and public presentation.

The artistic presentations were publicly presented in distinguished cultural institutions and significant venues, such as theaters, radio, television, cultural centers and site specific spaces. The number of publications of teachers engaged on theoretical courses and total engagement of staff in research projects is satisfactory. Given the fact that BSP Arts, the focus on the publicly presented art works is more important than the scientific publication record.

2.4.5.

As stated in SAR (p. 275) the BSP Arts is managed through cooperation of 4 departments at LAC. Such a structure requires close cooperation and collaboration of the teaching staff. The SAR (p. 275) reports institutional mechanisms established in order to provide functional mutual cooperation, such as department heads' weekly meetings and department staff's frequent meetings.

Teachers also cooperate through the annual Culture Crossroads conferences organized by LAC. At these conferences teaching staff can discuss current cultural and creative sector development issues, and take the opportunity to further develop their courses and the study programme. The annual experience-learning trip to cultural and art organizations in the regions of Latvia, such as the museums, municipalities, heritage objects, creative industry or quarters, promotes the cooperation, as stated in the SAR (p.275) Teaching staff also cooperate directly with different cultural institutions and organizations included in practical and theoretical research process on the BSP Arts.

There are organized supervisions of the lessons and discussions on learning outcomes. Student surveys are regularly discussed among the staff. During the on site visit expert group learned that there are also many informal and individual ways of direct communication and collaboration practiced among the staff.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by indicating strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The composition of teaching staff at the BSP Arts enables achievements of the aims of the study programme. Engaged lecturers are qualified for the specific fields of expertise they offer in the respective courses. The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements for the implementation of the BSP Arts.

The mix of elected staff and guest lecturers from the industry has an adequate rate and it is also generationally well balanced. Most of the changes of the staff composition have a positive impact on the quality of the implementation of the study programme. Publishing, researching and especially presenting records of the teaching staff is satisfactory.

There are formal and informal modes of communication providing stable cooperation. The teacher-student ratio stated in the SAR (p. 276) is 3,5 students on 1 teacher (as 82 lecturers and 289 students have been stated in the document). Concerning the fact that most of the practical artistic training demands individual approach and mentorship type of teaching the rate is understandable and acceptable.

Strengths:

- 1) Qualified and competent staff;
- 2) Direct connection to the practical productions in the industry through guest lecturers;
- 3) Mix of scientific and artistic methods in the teaching process;

Weaknesses:

- 1) None.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

- 1 R7 - Compliance of the qualification of the academic staff and visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The staff is adequately composed, competent and complies with all the requirements of the BSP Arts.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

- 1 1 - The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Annex 3.2.1. provides documentation of proof of Compliance of the Study Programme with the State Education Standard (1).docx confirming that the BSP Arts complies with Regulations No. 240 of the Cabinet of Ministers as of 1 May 2014 "Regulations on the National Standard for Academic Education" <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=266187> (Available only in Latvian). However, it has to be pointed out that there is an issue with the obtained degree indicated as the degree to be obtained is "Bachelor of Arts" but it is advised to review the title of the degree to "Bachelor in Performing Arts" or "Bachelor of Arts in Music and Performing Arts", according to the Regulations No. 240 of the Cabinet of Ministers as of 1 May 2014 "Regulations on the National Standard for Academic Education" <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=266187>.

- 2 2 - The study programme complies with a valid professional standard or the requirements for the professional qualification (if there is no professional standard required for the relevant occupation) provided if the completion of the study programme leads to a professional qualification (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

n/a

- 3 3 - The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 561 , Paragraph two and Section 562 , Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study course descriptions are prepared in Latvian that can be accessed under 3.2.1.-4_course descriptions_Arts.zip comply with regulations set forth in Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 4 4 - The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure according to which state recognised documents of higher education are issued.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The provided Diploma sample in the annex 3.1.2. BA Makslas annex LV EN generally complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued according to Cabinet Regulation No. 202 "Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību. However, it has to be pointed out that in the Diploma sample, it is necessary to indicate the

degree obtained as well, thus, it is crucial that the obtained degree is in full compliance with the Regulations No. 240 of the Cabinet of Ministers as of 1 May 2014 "Regulations on the National Standard for Academic Education" <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=266187> and adjusted accordingly to "Bachelor in Performing Arts" or "Bachelor of Arts in Music and Performing Arts".

- 5 5 - The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The annex provided -CONFIRMATION_bARTS.pdf certifies that the academic staff involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 6 6 - Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

n/a

- 7 7 - At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

n/a

- 8 8 - The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

This is identified in the annex 2.3.-2_CV_EN.zip. It can be concluded that the state language proficiency is compliant with Cabinet Regulation Nr. 733 "Regulations Regarding the Extent of the Knowledge of the Official Language, the Procedures for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language and the State Fee for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language".

- 9 9 - The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

n/a

- 10 10 - The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Sample of attached study agreement "2.1.4.-3 study agreement example.pdf" complies with Cabinet Regulation. Nr. 70 "Studiju līgumā obligāti ietveramie noteikumi".

- 11 11 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LAC has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another higher education institution if the implementation of the study programme is terminated. The agreements are specified in the annex 2_translation_ LAC LMA agreement 2023 -.It is specified that in case of discontinuation of this study programme, students are to be able to continue their studies at The Art Academy of Latvia bachelor's study programme "Arts" (43211) to obtain bachelor's degree in arts.

- 12 12 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LAC has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked. It is ensured by the document certifying it - 1_translation_Arts RI 2023 that includes LAC confirmation no. 1.10e/35 from 24.01.2023. The documents provided are pursuant to paragraph 13.4 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 795 "Regulations Regarding Licensing of Study Programmes" .

- 13 13 - The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 55.(1), Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

n/a

- 14 14 - Compliance with the requirements specified in other regulatory enactments that apply to the study programme being assessed (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

n/a

Assessment of the requirement [8]

- 1 R8 - Compliance of the study programme with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

BSP Arts partially complies with regulatory enactments as at the current stage the obtained degree does not comply with the Regulations No. 240 of the Cabinet of Ministers as of 1 May 2014 "Regulations on the National Standard for Academic Education"
<https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=266187> .

General conclusions about the study programme, indicating the most important strengths and weaknesses of the study programme

Conclusions:

BSP Arts fits well within the study field "Arts". The BSP Arts has six sub-programmes that comply with the provisions of Section 55 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions. There is a reasonable economical and social justification for each of the study sub-programmes and they are in demand in the labour market. It is believed that the composition of the teaching staff plays a crucial role in achieving the aims of the study programme. Engaged lecturers who possess qualifications in their specific fields of expertise contribute significantly to the respective courses. The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme meet the necessary requirements. The combination of elected staff and guest lecturers from the industry is considered adequate and generationally well balanced. The majority of changes in the staff composition have a positive impact on the overall quality of the study programme's implementation. The implementation of study methods involves lectures, seminars, working in groups, independent work, individual work, and tests, and art-based research methods are also used, as well as art and culture-specific experiences. The publishing, researching, and presentation records of the teaching staff are considered satisfactory.

The study plan of the curriculum is coherent, and no significant shortcomings were found, infused with some illustrious faculty members, making some sub-programs more attractive than others, such as subprograms in theatre directing or stage acting. However, more detailed evidence for student-centred learning is needed to fully understand the variation of teaching from sub-program to sub-program. The opportunities and provision of internships offered to students are effective and related to the learning outcomes achievable according to requirements. The topics of students' final theses are relevant to the field and correspond to the study programme. The implementation of study methods involves lectures, seminars, working in groups, independent work, individual work, and tests, and art-based research methods are also used, as well as art and culture-specific experiences.

The LAC provides ample material, technical, and informational resources necessary for the successful implementation of theoretically based study programmes and sub-programmes. However, there are some infrastructure challenges, particularly concerning the bachelor's studies in the sub-programmes "Stage Acting," "Theatre Directing," and "Contemporary Dance." These challenges arise from the high occupancy of study rooms and the need for constant adaptation and re-adaptation of the space on a weekly basis to accommodate different subprograms' study processes. Additionally, these sub-programmes lack sufficient financial support for ensuring high-quality performances of final works, which is another pressing issue.

Strengths:

1. Qualified and competent staff;
2. Direct connection to the practical productions in the industry through guest lecturers;
3. Mix of scientific and artistic methods in the teaching process;
4. Provisions and technical support regarding BSP Arts based on theoretical study and research are adequate;
5. High level of enthusiasm and commitment to the Academy of both students and teachers;
6. Spectrum of sub-programmes covering various aspects of arts field and ensuring high demand in labour market;
7. Strong traditions of the study programme - since the establishment of the LAC with some sub-programs more attractive than others, particularly in the areas of theatre directing or stage acting where some brand names can be found.

Weaknesses:

1. The building at 24 Ludza Street is heavily occupied and students are required to adapt and rearrange the space for theatre or dance lessons or performances, which interferes with smooth

development of the study process;

2. According to the "Regulations on the National Standard of Academic Education" (240) by the Cabinet Minister, the obtained degree "Bachelor of Arts" does not comply with the standard.

3. The report did not provide sufficient evidence on how student-centred teaching methods vary from sub-program to sub-program, apart from mentioning those generally used in other programs.

4. The sub-programs exhibit an uneven distribution in its appeal, with some being more popular than others, stringent upon faculty.

Evaluation of the study programme "Arts"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Arts"

Short-term recommendations

1. To address the issue of limited space at 24 Ludza Street, it is recommended that the school administration consider alternative options to optimise the use of the existing space and ensure a smooth development of the study process.

2. LAC needs to change degrees according to Regulations on the National Standard of Academic Education" (240) by the Cabinet Minister.

3. Review and finetune the student-centred teaching methods according to the gist and particulars of each sub-program, instead of defining those in general terms.

Long-term recommendations

1. To ensure adequate space organisation, it would be wise to consider reorganisation, for instance; centralising all rehearsal and performance studios in one location and implementing an efficient scheduling system. Additionally, partnering with other organisations to expand resources and promote a cohesive performing arts community is worth considering. Improving accessibility and organisation can have a positive impact on the artistic process.

2. Because sub-programs exhibit an uneven distribution in its appeal, with some being more popular than others, stringent upon faculty, consider to intermingle some of the course such as in theatre directing and drama and text studies intruding more stage acting component, just to name a few.

II - "Audiovisual Art" ASSESSMENT

II - "Audiovisual Art" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1.

LAC's academic bachelor's study programme "Audiovisual Art" (BASP Audiovisual Art) fully corresponds to the overarching goal of LAC's study direction Art - to provide sustainable, successive, interdisciplinarity-based higher and postgraduate (doctoral) education in the field of culture, art and

the creative sector, to prepare competitive culture and arts (audiovisual arts, theatre and dance arts) industry professionals, to deepen the integration of the implemented education, research and artistic creation process in the national and international culture, art and creative ecosystem. Programme code 43213 complies with Latvia's Cabinet of Ministers regulations no. 322 Regulations on the classification of education in Latvia, where it is determined that the thematic group of education Humanities and Art includes the thematic field of education Arts, which includes the group of educational programs "Audiovisual Art and Media Art".

2.1.2.

The title of the academic bachelor study programme is "Audiovisual Art" (BASP Audiovisual Art) in the study field of "Arts" with education classification code 43213 with the last 3 numbers (213) standing for "Audiovisual Art and Media Art" according to the classification of Latvian education which is available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>. The BASP Audiovisual Art has 5 specialisations ("Film directing", "Film Editing and Sound", "Cinematography", "Audiovisual and Performing Arts Production" and "Audiovisual and Performing Arts Theory" (SAR, p.190). According to the information gathered during the on site visits the number of the admitted students in each specialisation can vary quite extensively depending on the qualities of the applicants.

The goal of the BASP Audiovisual Art is "to provide modern, international standards-compliant studies in the field of audiovisual art, preparing academically educated and professionally competitive specialists" (SAR, p.186).

Admission requirements include secondary education and entrance examination / "creative competition" which is organised in three rounds (Annex 3.1.2._2. translation AIP 28.11.2022. Nr.1.10.69 conclusion_AVA.pdf. As a result applicants with high motivation and relevant skills are selected according to their chosen specialisation.

According to the opinion of the expert group the title "Audiovisual Arts", code 43213, degree obtained "Bachelor of Arts in Audiovisual Arts" as well as aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements are interrelated.

The duration of studies in the BASP Audiovisual Art is six semesters or three years in the amount of 120 credit points or 180 ECTS. The studies are full time in-person studies taking place in Latvia. As indicated in SAR (p.193) this volume is considered optimal for such bachelor's level studies, which combine creative and research components, practical and theoretical classes. During the one site visit it was clarified that the three year programme is seen as the first step in a five year cycle (including Master's programme) where first three years the focus is in developing craftsmanship in the chosen specialisation and during master's programme focus more on the interdisciplinarity in performing arts.

The implementation language of the BASP Audiovisual Art is Latvian. During the on site visits the question about the plans to have also English as implementation language was raised due to the programme's potential as a practice oriented study programme. The responses were not straightforward, but mostly sceptical about having English as an implementation language referring to a more complicated logistics when already in Latvia schedule is tight, and also to investment into local students.

The duration and scope of the BASP Audiovisual Art implementation, as well as the implementation language, are reasonable and justified.

2.1.3.

According to SAR (p.282) Since license No. 04066-5 issue on June 8, 2016 to the Latvian Academy of Culture for the right to implement the academic bachelor's study programme "Audiovisual Art" (code 43213), no changes have been made to the parameters of the study programme and are not planned as part of the study direction evaluation procedure.

In the academic bachelor's study programme "Audiovisual Art" since its licensing, it is possible to study in five specialisations - Film Directing, Film Editing and Sound, Cinematography, Audiovisual and Performing Arts Production and Audiovisual and Performing Arts Theory. Since the graduation of the first students in 2019, the programmes study course planning and course content have been regularly evaluated together with graduates and lecturers, as a result of which minor changes have been made.

It is important to note that until 2019, students were admitted once every 3 years, respectively, in the "Audiovisual Art" programme one group of students studied at the same time. Since 2019, students have been admitted to the programme every year, entrance exams are held in July. At the moment, this transitional stage has ended, and the programme is implemented every year in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year of studies. Therefore, from 2022, the students of the programme graduate every year. Due to the annual enrolment, changes in the workload and composition of lecturers, as well as to balance the volume of study courses in all six semesters, the semester plan of study courses has undergone minor changes since 2016.

Taking into account the number of students and lecturers' recommendations, to improve student cooperation, the curriculum of the programme's specialisations "Film directing" and "Film editing and sound" is the same, but the study content of each specialisation incorporates emphasis corresponding to the specialisation.

Changes made to the curriculum (SAR, p.190-191) include restructuring study courses by semesters and parts, specifying focus of the courses or merging courses, replacing theory courses with internships etc. The changes made to the semester plans and the offer of study courses have contributed to the unity of the program, improved the logical subordination of the studied courses and reduced the number of tests for the students. According to the expert groups the changes are reasonable, responsive to changes in environment and supporting the development of the programme.

2.1.4.

According to the SAR (p.193) the number of specialists employed in the industry of audiovisual arts is developing steadily due to the state funding for film production reaching EUR 7,455,298 in 2022, producing an average of 48 films per year (<https://www.nkc.gov.lv/lv/media/14461/download?attachment>). Observing the integration of LAC's graduates into the labour market so far, it can be seen that the majority of graduates work in the field of the obtained degree and education, and the most active generation in the field of audiovisual art (from 25 to 45 years old) are exactly LAC's graduates. The number of international film projects implemented in Latvia has increased in recent years, through that providing additional demand and opportunities for audiovisual art specialists in the market employing not only programme's graduates, but also LAC's students often work as administrative and technical support staff, sometimes also participating in film creative groups. Based on the opinion expressed by the employers during the onsite visit the the LAC prepares excellent "second level" specialists highly demanded in the labour market, i.e., good executive producers, directors etc., but very few creative producers.

According to the SAR (p.195) since the licensing of BSA Audiovisual Art licensing in 2016, 174 students have started studying in the Bachelor study programme "Audiovisual Art" (in 2016 – 54; in 2019 – 48; in 2020 – 20; in 2021 – 24; in 2022 – 28). Studies are conducted face-to-face in Latvian. Higher numbers in 2016 and 2019 are due to the admission once in three years, currently the transition period to the annual admission has ended. For 102 students whose three-year study cycle has formally ended, 73 students (72%) have graduated, 23 (22%) students have left their studies, but there are 6 (6%) students who are on a study break or have returned from a study break with a high potential to graduate the programme in the near future, thus the statistics of graduates will be 78% of those admitted. Among the reasons for drop-out difficulties in meeting academic obligations

due to their financial situation (it is not possible to combine studies with work, they are unable to pay tuition fees), family circumstances or the program's incompatibility with their interests are mentioned. Considering that the study process in BSP Audiovisual Arts requires a lot of group work (especially in the creation of creative works), Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the students. Nevertheless at least 72% of the admitted students have graduated and this is a highly positive result indicating also the motivation of the students to obtain a degree as pandemic also boosted the need for specialists with knowledge and skills in audiovisual arts.

Employment data according to SAR (p.193-194) are obtained through an annual graduate survey. The graduates enter the labour market relatively quickly, 75% of the programme's graduates are already employed upon graduation, while 10% of graduates become employed 1-3 months after graduation, which can be considered a very positive trend. The majority of graduates work in the industry - 34% represent the Audiovisual arts sector (cinema, video), 18% of graduates work in television, radio and/or interactive media platforms, 7% represent the field of cultural education. Such industries as choreography, dance industry, performing arts (theatre, opera, concerts, shows, circus) and other industries are also represented.

2.1.5.

n/a

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The academic three year bachelor study programme is "Audiovisual Art" with specialisations in Film Directing, Film Editing and Sound, Cinematography, Audiovisual and Performing Arts Production and Audiovisual and Performing Arts Theory since its licensing in 2016 has transitioned from the admission once in three years to a yearly admission. It maintains a low drop-out rate and ensures that around 85% of the graduates enter the labour market during studies or in 3 months time after the graduation.

Strengths:

1. High employment rate of the graduates in the industry;
2. A possibility to choose narrow specialisation within the general framework of subjects;
3. A link to next level education - Master studies in the MSP "Audiovisual and Performing Arts".

Weaknesses:

1. Lack of English as implementation language.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1.

The objectives of the BASP Audiovisual Art are clear, namely, to provide up-to-date, internationally recognized, studies in the field of audiovisual art by preparing academically educated and professionally competitive specialists, in accordance with the requirements of the Latvian audiovisual art field, the cultural policy of Latvia and the audience, and to provide fundamental and specialised knowledge, skills and professional competences in audiovisual and performing arts, in accordance with the level 6 knowledge, skills and competence of the framework structure determined in the Latvian education classification.

The programme offers five majors: Film Directing, Film Editing and Sound, Cinematography, and Production of Audiovisual Art and Theatre, and Theory of Audiovisual Art and Theatre. Being, in part,

under the auspices of the National Film school, the film division, in the view of the expert panel, has acquired a larger and almost both available resources in terms of infrastructure and equipment. Built on the strong traditions in theatre and film, supported by reputable faculty and brand names in the industry, the programme is set to be the engine of the BA division for years to come in attracting qualified candidates.

With respect to majors, "Film Directing" and "Film Editing and Sound" provide in-depth knowledge, skills and competences about the theory, methodology and practice of creating audiovisual works (fiction or documentary films, commercials, interviews, etc.), as well as their accompanying sound processing and editing, "Cinematography" provides in-depth knowledge, skills and competences about the theory, methodology and practice of shooting aspect of film, major in "Production of Audiovisual Art and Theatre" provides in-depth knowledge, skills and competencies about the theory, methodology and management of audiovisual work (fiction or documentary films, concert films, etc.) or stage performances (shows, dance productions, concerts, etc.) production, and, finally, "Theory of Audiovisual Art and Theatre" provides in-depth knowledge in audiovisual and performing arts research, provides the necessary skills and competences in the analytical evaluation of audiovisual work (staged or documentary films, animations, etc.) or performing arts work (shows, dance productions, concerts, performances, etc.), in the preparation of historical, theoretical studies and current critique (SAR, p.197). The Annex (3.2.1._Curriculum_AVM (1) provides a detailed breakdown of the courses offered in each of the majors.

The curriculum consists of the compulsory Part A (the same for all majors), structured in two blocks, Theoretical Insights and Current Problems of Humanities and Theory of Audiovisual and Performing Art, the compulsory elective Part B that includes those study courses that make up the set of knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for the specific specialisation of the programme , and where in-depth training of the applicant's chosen specialisation takes place, and Part C or free choice courses that include study courses from other LAC study programmes, cooperation university programs or additional study courses offered by LAC's Audiovisual Arts Department lecturers.

Part B forks into the fundamental courses such as "Theory and Praxis of Experimental Filmmaking " or "New Media: Theory and Practice", mandated for all majors, and the specialised ones per major such as "Theory and Practice of Film Editing and Sound Post Production" for Film Directing major or "Basics of the cameraman's art. Practical filming seminar" for Cinematography majors.

The provisions and resources are partially adequate, well-maintained, yet, the National Films School (NFS) appears to benefit from the infrastructure improvements more so than other units at LAC, and, in discussions with the administration of NFS, the impression one gets there is no particular encouragement of collaborative efforts with other BA programs at LAC, apart from those seen on the MA level, which, incidentally, is reflected in the curriculum: for Film Directing major, the amount of classes in theatre directing and acting is somewhat substandard; the panel of experts is of the opinion the film, particularly narrative fiction film, cannot be taught separately from theatre directing.

2.2.2.

n/a

2.2.3.

As reported in other programs, the traditional methods used in teaching are: lectures (mostly theoretically oriented study courses) - students are presented with theoretical questions, supplemented with practical examples, visual material, statistical data, seminars , in which works of audiovisual art, literature and other art and culture branches are analysed, work in groups that promotes students' ability to build skills in organising and implementing collective work, independent and individual work, individual consultations in order to reveal the individual artistic potential and develop creative research activities, practical lessons that help to integrate and test

theoretical knowledge in the practical activity of artistic and creative research, tests, and extracurricular activities such as film screenings, theatre and dance performances, art exhibitions, concerts, etc., write essays, reviews and their impressions.

(SAR, p.200) reports that a student-centred learning is based on an individual approach to each student, promoting and developing the individual artistic potential and professional skills of each student, the ability to independently and freely make professional decisions about the form of their creative works, content, creative team, aesthetic and quality goals and criteria. For instance, in study courses aimed at cultivating students' individual abilities and skills ("Theory and Practice of Film Directing" (14 CP), "Theory and Practice of Film Editing and Sound Postproduction"(11 CP), "Cinematography: Theory and Practice" (5 CP; 9 CP), "Production of Performances and Audiovisual Works: Theory and Practice" (13 CP), "Seminar of the Criticism of the Performing and Audiovisual Art" (17 CP), lessons are being organised in small groups or individually.

The practical lessons that provide the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes necessary for learning audiovisual art and improving professional competences and help to integrate and test theoretical knowledge in the practical activity of artistic and creative research, be it "The Basics of Public Speech" (2 CP), "The Fundamentals of Cinema Direction" (2 CP), or "Cinematography: Theory and Practice. Contemporary Camerawork" (5 CP), and the extracurricular activities where students attend film screenings, theatre and dance performances, art exhibitions, concerts, be it "Latvian Film History" (2 CP) or "Contemporary Theatre" (2 CP) (SAR, p.200), are of a particular benefit since many instructors involved in teaching are also brand names in the industry.

2.2.4.

According to (SAR, p. 201), an internship proposed by the students is approved by the head of the LAC's Audiovisual Art Department or the BASP Audiovisual Art director. When examining the student's application, the connection of internship tasks with the study results achievable in the study programme is evaluated. Albeit in an academic program, the internships are required as part of the compulsory elective part of the BASP Audiovisual Art.

Internships at LAC are organized in accordance with the LAC's Internship Regulations and the Rules for Internships in the academic bachelor's study programme "Audiovisual Art". The internship regulations and documents are available for students on the LAC's website (available (Latvian only): <https://lka.edu.lv/lv/prakse-un-karjeras-atbalsts/prakse/dokumenti-praksu/>), but the LAC staff is actively involved and provides various types of support in the context of the internship; while the internship coordinator provides an opportunity to receive advice on filling out documents and is a support person in cases where students have questions about the internship process, credit points and other related issues, the students are also offered an option to attend internship consultations with the career education project manager.

Internship providers regularly send internship offers to the LAC's internship coordinator, which the coordinator sends to students through the LAIS system, and also publishes them on the LAC's website. Students can also undertake internships in LAC's structural units - Center for Creative Activities, Institute of Culture and Arts, Department of Communication, National Film School, LAC's Eduards Smilģis Theater Museum and LAC's Riga Film Museum.

Assignments vary according to a chosen major; students work as editing directors, operators, sound operators, production assistants, production assistants, coordinators, director's assistants, operator's assistants in distinguished film and TV production companies (LLC "Vides filmu studija", LLC "Fenixfilm", LLC "Fa Filma", LLC "Tasse Film", etc.).

2.2.5.

n/a

2.2.6.

The final exam of the BASP Audiovisual Art - bachelor's thesis is a creative work created by the student and a study of the chosen topic, which is included in the theoretical write-up of the thesis. A creative work can be a film, the production of a stage performance or a show, while for those studying "Theory of Audiovisual Art and Theatre", the final work is a theoretical study that must be in accordance with the LAC's Methodological Instructions for the development of term papers, bachelor's and master's theses. The length of the final work - film is set at 10-30 minutes.

The topics in the BASP Audiovisual Art are chosen and developed by the students themselves during the last year of studies, within the deadlines set by LAC. The applications of students' chosen topics and the creation of filming/creative groups are evaluated and approved at the meeting of the Department of Audiovisual Art of LAC, and generally are relevant to the field and correspond to the study programme. The theme of each creative work reflects a current issue for the specific student of film directing, addressing both the problematic issues of Latvian society, the internal processes of people and models of mutual relations, or creating a film in a specific film genre.

For instance, in the bachelor's thesis "Production of the film "Nabassaitē" and its theoretical basis" (2022) the production process of the film "Nabassaitē" was analyzed and in the research part of the work the author conducted an in-depth study of the funding sources of short feature films in the Baltic States. The aim and main task of the film directing student's bachelor thesis "Short feature film "Sāc visu no jauna" and its theoretical basis" (2022) was the creation of a short feature film in the form of documentary cinema, paying special attention to the specifics of an actor's work in documentary cinema. In bachelor's thesis "Direction in the film "Putekļu sūcēju pārdevējs" and its theoretical basis" (2022), the student of film direction analysed the possibilities of comic and tragic synthesis in cinematography, in the research part of the work she expanded the historical study of the concept of comedy and tragedy, starting from the ideas that originated in Ancient Greece, until for today. The author had put forward the features of the tragic and comic modality and its application in the process of developing a creative work as the goal of the work. In the bachelor's thesis "Production of the short film "Karaļu duelis" and its theoretical basis" (2022), the author of the work produced the suspense short film "Karaļu duelis" and set as a goal to find regularities and conclusions about various ways of promoting a newly created film on the platforms of social networks Facebook and Instagram, based on its peculiarities and the latest trends, as well as made conclusions about the marketing techniques of certain Latvian films on Facebook. The evaluation of the final theses is carried out by the bachelor's final examination commission, which evaluates the bachelor's theses in accordance with the criteria included in paragraph 15 of the LAC's Regulations on creative works in the academic bachelor's study programme "Audiovisual art": student participation and activity in the process of creating a creative work, mutual cooperation of the creative group, work artistic and technical level, public speaking and argumentation skills.

The National Films School receives decent state support from State Culture Capital Foundation, and theatre students have access to the best theatre playhouses in the country.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

Upon analysis of the provided search results and the description of the BASP Audiovisual Art program, it can be concluded that the content of the study program is topical, the content of the study courses/modules is interconnected and complementary, and meets the needs of the industry, labour market, and scientific trends. The BASP Audiovisual Art also aims to provide fundamental and specialised knowledge, skills, and professional competencies in audiovisual and performing arts, and is in accordance with national regulations. The study implementation methods impart student-centred learning and teaching principles and contribute to the achievement of learning outcomes of study courses and the study program. Furthermore, internships provided during the program offer effective opportunities and tasks related to the learning outcomes achievable, comply with

regulatory enactments, and are organised well for the students. The topics of students' final theses are relevant to the field and correspond to the study program. Overall, the BASP Audiovisual Art seems to meet all the criteria mentioned above and stands as a good example of a well-structured and implemented study program in the field of audiovisual arts.

While offering five majors-Film Directing, Film Editing and Sound, Cinematography, and Production of Audiovisual Art and Theatre, and Theory of Audiovisual Art and Theatre- and being, in part, under the auspices of the National Film school, the film division, in the view of the expert panel, has acquired a larger and almost best available resources in terms of infrastructure and equipment. In discussions with the administration of NFS, it appears the collaborative efforts across LAC departments are stronger on MA level than BA, as the National Film school brands itself out almost to be an independent unit (in discussion with Contemporary Dance students, for instance, the evidence pointed to collaboration with institutions outside LAC, and not NFS).

Strengths:

1. The BASP Audiovisual Art has an excellent track record of artistic accomplishments by its teaching staff.
2. The program has good financial support for BA thesis films from state agencies and rental houses.
3. The program has a strong rapport with the best theatrical companies in the country.
4. The program has a market edge in academic competition.

Weaknesses:

1. Collaborative efforts amongst the BA programs are not as strong as they are seen on the MA level, as the National Film School somewhat brands itself out almost to be an independent unit.
2. Within the curriculum for Film Directing major, the study design has insufficient credit point and diversity of subject in relation to theatre directing and acting.
3. In the National Film school, the film division, in the view of the expert panel, has acquired a larger and almost best available resources in terms of infrastructure and equipment.

Assessment of the requirement [5] (applicable only to master's or doctoral study programmes)

- 1 R5 - The study programme for obtaining a master's or doctoral degree is based on the achievements and findings of the respective field of science or field of artistic creation.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

n/a

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1.

The LAC's BASP Audiovisual Art takes place in two LAC buildings in Riga; Ludzas street 24 and Elijas street 17 in Riga (LKA National Film School (NFS)). In some cases, classes are also held at LAC's structural units - LAC's Eduards Smilģis Theater Museum, Riga, Eduards Smilģis Street 37 or LAC's Riga Film Museum, Riga, Peitavas Street 10. Most of the theoretical and practical lessons of the programme take place at the LAC's National Film School, where "the students have access to premises with two filming pavilions, a computer classroom with eight computers for film editing, two separate video editing rooms with two workstations each (for pair group work), a film color correction work station with specific technical equipment and software, filming equipment warehouse (200 units), filming lighting equipment warehouse (150 units), filming sound recording

equipment warehouse (50 units). Students have the option and actively use digital cinema cameras Sony PMW-F5, Panasonic AU-EVA1E, SONY PXW-FS7M2, Canon EOS C200 and seven sets of Black Magic Pocket Cinema Camera 4K in the study process. Specialized filming lights are available for filming in the NFS pavilion and interiors.” (SAR p. 204) Besides the available equipment, the LAC's NFS technical manager is accessible for advice.

The NFS also houses the Cinema Library with more than 2,500 video recordings of motion pictures and theater performances. Together with an archive of student films and theater productions, as well as a collection of film recordings in DVD format. Recordings available in the Cinematheque can be used free of charge by students, academics and general staff. The collection of the Eduards Smilģis 205 Theater Museum and the Riga Film Museum is also at disposition for the students and staff for the study process and research work. The museum's qualified staff offers consultations on the history and current affairs of Latvian and world audiovisual and performing arts. (SAR p. 204)

The LAC's National Film School houses auditoriums equipped according to the needs of the study process (with computer, projector and screen, whiteboard wireless internet and other if necessary). The facilities, resources and provisions of the Film School are adequate and substantial, the studying standard is high and according to the development plans should be significantly improved upon moving to the new building as indicated by the SAR: “Improvements in the quality of the study environment are planned by fully implementing the transfer of the study process from Ludzas Street 24 to Miera Street 58a (Tobacco Factory block)” (SAR p. 43). The new building should house; a filming pavilion, computer classroom, rehearsal room, auditoriums and other necessary facilities for practical and theoretical study processes. Presentation of the project and current progress stage of the new building during site visit, indicated ambitious and successful development plans. Transferring the Department to the new, modernized and enlarged facilities would undoubtedly boost the development of study, research and artistic creativity processes, as well as increase the number of students and possibly proliferate the offer of study programmes. The compliance of LAC's resources and provision with the conditions of the study programme implementation and the achievement of the study results is sufficient and provides an attractive environment for research growth and artistic creativity.

The current premises of the NFS are not suitable for teachers or students with disabilities or reduced mobility issues. Understanding that the premises are rented and that the School is planned to move next Autumn in the new venue, which is currently under construction, it is to be expected that the new building would be much more inclusive.

2.3.2.

n/a

2.3.3.

The funding of the BASP Audiovisual Art in 2022 is EUR 313 400, it is formed from the budget grant, performance funding and tuition fees, and the own revenues are directed to the maximum extent for the development of the programme and covering unexpected expenses. To the optimization of study programme implementation expenses, a lot of attention is devoted to for example, organizing stream lectures in professor-taught courses and providing remote lectures. The minimum number of students in the study programme to ensure its profitability is determined annually by considering the needs of the programme and sub-programmes in the current year. See "3.1.4._Annex 5_statistical data on students AVM 2016_2022.pdf" (see appendix 3.1.4.) The programme is full time in-class attendance and studies are conducted in Latvian. (SAR p. 205-206).

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The LAC provides adequate resources for the implementation of BASP Audiovisual Art, consisting of technically equipped premises and resources available to students and academic staff for study and artistic creativity processes. The studying standard is high and according to the development plans should be significantly improved upon moving to the new building.

Strengths:

1. The facilities, resources and provisions are adequate and substantial;
2. High studying standard;
3. Strong base for future development of study programmes, artistic creativity and research.

Weaknesses:

1. The current premises of the NFS are not suitable for teachers or students with disabilities or reduced mobility issues.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

- 1 R6 - Compliance of the study provision, science provision (if applicable), informative provision (including library), material and technical provision and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LAC provides adequate resources for the implementation of BASP Audiovisual Art, consisting of technically equipped premises and resources available to students and academic staff for study and artistic creativity processes. The studying standard is high and according to the development plans should be significantly improved upon moving to the new building.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.

The qualification of the teaching staff members engaged at the BASP Audiovisual Art complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme. and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments. The SAR (p. 207) states that there are 24 teachers engaged in the programme. Among them 8 are professors elected to LAC and 3 associate professors. Half of the staff have a doctorate in science while 3 of them are studying art doctoral studies. The fact that younger lecturers are pursuing doctorate shows good commitment to research and self-improvement among the staff.

For the BA level such structure is more than satisfactory. As stated in the SAR (p. 206) the procedure of engagement and re-election of the teachers takes place every 6 years following the regulation in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers regulations adopted in 2021 no. 129 "Procedure for evaluating the scientific and pedagogical qualifications or artistic creative work results of an applicant for the position of professor or associate professor and an incumbent professor or associate professor". The selection process pays special attention to the applicants' artistic creativity and professional visibility on national and international level. According to the SAR (p.p. 206-208) both elected teachers and guest lecturers are involved in the important national research projects and are recognised and awarded in their professional fields. Therefore, the academic staff professional experience and educational background is well suited to the needs of the BASP Audiovisual Art.

2.4.2.

According to SAR and the discussion during the site visit there are minimal changes in teaching staff compared to the BASP Audiovisual Art licensing documents. The changes are related to the teachers personal career planning or the retirements.

As stated in the SAR (p. 208) some changes have been made due to exchange of the courses between teaching staff and engagement of new lecturers in order to ensure the development of the study courses. There are no visible negative impacts on study programmes due to changes in composition of the teaching staff. Some of the changes are a result of the usual process of the changes of generation at LAC, and others are made to approve new knowledge and fresh ideas to the artistic programme.

The minimal changes made in the composition of the academic staff did not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the study programme, and the quality of studies is ensured at an appropriate level.

2.4.3.

n/a

2.4.4.

As stated in Annex 2.4.4.-2 teachers involved in the BASP Audiovisual Art during the last 6 years presented in Annex publicly presented 53 AV artworks. According to the number of staff engaged on artistic practice courses of audiovisual art (16) it is 3,3 pro teacher in 6 years or 8,8 presented AV artistic works per year of staff engaged on BASP Audiovisual Art. Given the fact that just one of the teachers presented 20 works himself, the rate seems unbalanced. Even though some of those works achieved the most important Latvian artistic awards, the total presentational activity of the whole artistic staff seems satisfactory but not well balanced.

The picture seems better with addition of scientific publications of teachers engaged on theoretical courses stated in the SAR at Table No. 11 (p.60) and Table 14 (p. 68) and especially with the the high level of the inclusion of the whole staff in huge number of the research, creative and artistic projects, and with the list of the conference participation. It should go without saying that COVID19 crisis hardly affected production and presentation of the artistic works, even though it was generally less restrictive for AV production than for the performing arts.

According to SAR (p. 68) most of the academics in scientific fields publish their research results in research papers and conferences. Annexes 2.4.4.-1 and 2.4.4.-2, as well as teachers CV, proves the information of developed and extended scientific activities of teachers in terms of research, publishing, and participating in conferences and in various creative artistic projects. Among the conferences attended by the academic staff almost all are international conferences, national and international wide. Domestic conferences were organized in Latvia by LAC itself or other Latvian universities or cultural institutions.

During the site visit the expert group has been informed that there is institutional financial support at LAC for such activities. It was also noticed that the academic staff would need more time to allocate for such activities.

2.4.5.

A mechanism for mutual cooperation of the teaching staff in the implementation of the BASP Audiovisual Art ensures the achievement of the aims of the BASP Audiovisual Art and the interconnection of study courses within the study programme. In the SAR (p. 209) it is stated that organization and content issues at the BASP Audiovisual Art go through the programme's director and the head of department of Audiovisual Arts. The head of the department organizes regular meetings with the students during the semester and discusses their opinions, solving their problems and reflecting on the content of the courses. The SAR (p. 209) states that at the programme six formal mechanisms have been established to strengthen the cooperation. Such mechanisms are:

- 1)regular department meetings, exchange of the information about the courses content at the department,
- 2)cooperation on updating the courses in order to avoid overlapping in content,
- 3)acquiring the teacher's feedback on courses and programme,
- 4)presentations of work on some courses for all the staff and discussing it
- 5)and digital communication of the teachers through the MS Team platform.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by indicating strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The staff involved in implementation of the BASP Audiovisual Art enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the study courses. The qualification of the academic staff is at a good level, even though for the artistic studies a higher number of staff with artistic doctorates than with scientific ones would be useful. Minimal changes in staff composition did not affect the compliance of the study programme with the requirements specified in regulatory enactments.

During the visit, the expert group learned more about the good commitment to research and self-improvement among the staff. However, the average number of the publicly presented artistic projects could be better balanced. The ratio between students and lecturers is 32 lecturers to 63 students. The SAR (p. 210) states that there are no plans either to increase the number of students nor to reduce the number of lecturers significantly in order to maintain student-centered approach to study and individual development of the students. Estimated optimal range for the programme is 60-70 students and 30-35 lecturers (SAR p. 210). For the artistic and creative BASP Audiovisual Art such arguments are understandable and acceptable.

Membership in CILECT opens the possibility to ensure high standards in artistic education and to promote the students' works internationally. For teaching staff it also presents the possibility for life-long education and continuous international collaboration.

Strengths:

- 1)Committed and numerous staff;
- 2) Qualified lecturers from diverse fields of expertise;
- 3) Possibilities for the lecturer's research projects.

Weaknesses:

- 1)Relatively unbalanced record of the publicly presented artistic works.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

- 1 R7 - Compliance of the qualification of the academic staff and visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The staff is adequately composed, competent and complies with all the requirements of the BASP Audiovisual Art. Minor weakness have been identified, but they do not affect the evaluation of the requirement.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

- 1 1 - The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Annex 3.2.1.Compliance of the Study Programme with the State Education Standard (1).docx confirms that the BASP Audiovisual Art complies with Regulations No. 240 of the Cabinet of Ministers as of 1 May 2014 “Regulations on the National Standard for Academic Education” <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=266187> (Available only in Latvian).

- 2 2 - The study programme complies with a valid professional standard or the requirements for the professional qualification (if there is no professional standard required for the relevant occupation) provided if the completion of the study programme leads to a professional qualification (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 3 3 - The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 561 , Paragraph two and Section 562 , Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study course descriptions are prepared in Latvian that can be accessed under 3.2.1._AVM_ENG.zip comply with regulations set forth in Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 4 4 - The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure according to which state recognised documents of higher education are issued.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The provided Diploma sample in the annex 3.1.2. AVM diploms LV complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued according to Cabinet Regulation No. 202 “Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību.

- 5 5 - The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The annex provided -CONFIRMATION_bAVM.pdf certifies that the academic staff involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 6 6 - Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 7 7 - At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 8 8 - The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

This is identified in the annex 2.3.-2_CV_EN.zip. It can be concluded that the state language proficiency is compliant with Cabinet Regulation Nr. 733 " Regulations Regarding the Extent of the Knowledge of the Official Language, the Procedures for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language and the State Fee for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language".

- 9 9 - The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 10 10 - The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Sample of attached study agreement "2.1.4.-3 study agreement example.pdf" complies with Cabinet Regulation. Nr. 70 "Studiju līgumā obligāti ietveramie noteikumi".

- 11 11 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LCA has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another higher education institution if the implementation of the study programme is terminated. The agreements are specified in the annex 3__translation LAC RISEBA agrrement 2023 - .It is specified that in case of discontinuation of this study programme, students are to be able to continue their studies at RISEBA University of Applied Sciences bachelor's study programme "Audiovisual Media Arts" (42213) to obtain bachelor's degree.

- 12 12 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LAC has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked. It is ensured by the document certifying it - 1_translation_Arts RI 2023 that includes LAC confirmation no. 1.10e/35 from 24.01.2023. The documents provided are pursuant to paragraph 13.4 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 795 "Regulations Regarding Licensing of Study Programmes"

- 13 13 - The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 55.(1), Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 14 14 - Compliance with the requirements specified in other regulatory enactments that apply to the study programme being assessed (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

- 1 R8 - Compliance of the study programme with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

BASP Audiovisual Art fully complies with regulatory enactments.

General conclusions about the study programme, indicating the most important strengths and weaknesses of the study programme

Conclusions

The LAC provides adequate resources for the implementation of BASP Audiovisual Art, consisting of technically equipped premises and resources available to students and academic staff for study and artistic creativity processes. Yet, being, in part, under the auspices of the National Film school (NFS), the film division, in the view of the expert panel, has acquired a larger and almost best available resources in terms of infrastructure and equipment. The studying standard is high and according to the development plans should be significantly improved upon moving to the new building. The staff involved in implementation of the BASP Audiovisual Art enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the study courses. The qualification of the academic staff is at a good level, even though for the artistic studies a higher number of staff with artistic doctorates than with scientific ones would be useful. Minimal changes in staff composition did not affect the compliance of the study programme with the requirements specified in regulatory enactments. In discussions with the administration of NFS, the impression one gets there is no particular encouragement of collaborative efforts for the film division with other BA programs at LAC, apart from those seen on the MA level, which, incidentally, is reflected in the curriculum: for Film Directing major, the amount of classes in theatre directing and acting is somewhat substandard. During the visit, the expert group learned more about the good commitment to research and self-improvement among the staff. However, the average number of the publicly presented artistic projects could be better balanced. The ratio between students and lecturers is 32 lecturers to 63 students. Membership in CILECT opens the possibility to ensure high standards in artistic education and to promote the students' works internationally. For teaching staff it also presents the possibility for life-long education and continuous international collaboration.

In short, built on the strong traditions in theatre and film, supported by reputable faculty and brand names in the industry, the program is set to be the engine of the BA divisions for years to come in attracting qualified candidates.

Strengths:

1. Excellent track record of artistic accomplishments by the teaching staff and generally qualified lectures with diverse fields of expertise, who are committed to educate students.

2. Good financial support for BA thesis films from the state agencies;
3. Rapport with the best theatrical companies in the country;
4. The program features has a market edge in academic competition;
6. High studying standard;
7. Strong base for future development of study programmes, artistic creativity and research;
8. Possibilities for the lecturer's research projects;
9. High employment rate of the graduates in the industry;
10. A possibility to choose narrow specialisation within the general framework of subjects
11. A link to next level education - Master studies in the MSP "Audiovisual and Performing Arts"

Weaknesses:

1. While the facilities, resources and provisions are adequate and substantial, NFS still, in expert opinion, receives better treatment in infrastructure and support.
2. In NFS, the collaborative efforts with other BA programs are not as strong as they are seen on the MA level;
3. The current premises of the NFS are not suitable for teachers or students with disabilities or reduced mobility issues;
4. Relatively unbalanced record of the publicly presented artistic works;
5. Lack of English as an implementation language.

Evaluation of the study programme "Audiovisual Art"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Audiovisual Art"

Short-term recommendations

- | |
|--|
| 1. Ensure that the future premises of the NFS (currently under construction) are suitable for teachers or students with disabilities or reduced mobility issues. |
| 2. For NFS Improve the collaborative efforts with other BA programs at LAC, to be reflected also in modifying the curriculum. |
| 3. Improve the dissemination of the publicly presented artistic works; |
| 4. Distribution of facilities, resources and provisions should be reflected in fairness and utility. |

Long-term recommendations

- | |
|--|
| 1. Consider the strategies to encourage all the academic staff to present the artistic works publicly and contribute to the artistic research. |
| 2. Establish premises in the NFS for teachers or students with disabilities in order to reduce mobility issues. |
| 3. Consider redesigning the program to open it to the international pool of applicants where English is an implementation language. |

II - "Creative Industries" ASSESSMENT

II - "Creative Industries" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1.

Joint academic bachelor study programme "Creative Industries" 43217 (JBA "Creative Industries") is a joint three-year (120 CP) academic bachelor's study programme of the Latvian Academy of Culture (LAC) and Riga Technical University (RTU) providing an opportunity to acquire theoretical and professional knowledge in creative industries by obtaining a Bachelor's degree of Arts in Creative Industries. The main goal of the academic bachelor study program "Creative Industries" according to SAR p.216 is "to prepare creative and motivated interdisciplinary specialists for work in creative industries, namely, in various industry companies, sectors, in various business forms, with an in-depth understanding of cultural and artistic processes and the desire to promote the growth of Latvian national economy and cultural and creative industries. The programme prepares versatile, competitive creative industry professionals, combining artistic and entrepreneurial competencies to foster graduates' ability to create innovative products and services, creative content and experience in order to operate in today's challenging cultural and business environment". The goal of the programme within the study field "Arts" with the classification code 43217 standing for "Creative Industries".

The strategic goal of the programme is set in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 240 on the State Standard of Academic Education (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/266187-noteikumi-par-valsts-akademiskas-izglitiba-standartu> / Latvian only): 1) to ensure the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and research skills of students by reaching the study results set out in the study programme which correspond to the 6th level knowledge, skills and competencies of European Qualifications Framework (EQF), in accordance of the Latvian Classification of Education; 2) to ensure the ability of the graduates of the program to responsibly and safely choose and use information technologies in their professional, research and lifelong learning activities, as well as in the acquisition, creation and sharing of digital content. The content of the study programme is designed to ensure the scientifically sound achievement of comprehensive study results.

2.1.2.

The title of the academic bachelor study programme is "Creative Industries" in the study field of "Arts" with education classification code 43217 with the last 3 numbers (217) standing for "Creative Industries" according to the classification of Latvian education 322 which is available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>.

The degree to be obtained is "Bachelor of Arts in Creative Industries".

The aim of the JBA "Creative Industries" is "to provide the students with the opportunity to gain theoretical and practical knowledge in the creative industries and to train versatile, competitive professionals in the creative industries. The programme combines artistic and entrepreneurial competencies(..)" (SAR, p. 212).

Admission requirements (SAR, p.217) - secondary education, selection of the students is based on centralised examination results: 1) English, German or French centralised examination score; 2) Latvian centralised examination score; 3) Mathematics centralised examination score (with coefficient 2) in order to select students with sufficient capacity in interdisciplinary content.

According to the opinion of the expert group the title "Creative Industries", code 43217 and Bachelor of Arts in Creative Industries degree to be obtained are interrelated. Also the aims of the study programme, objectives including (SAR, p.216) providing interdisciplinary knowledge in the areas of culture; fostering personal development, creativity, and ability to see business potential in

creative practices; developing planning, presenting, cooperation, communication and research skills, learning outcomes (SAR, p, 216-217) including understanding of the specifics of creative industries, capability to develop innovative artistic products, appreciation of cultural and artistic values and understanding principles of economy and admission requirements (selection is based on the centralised examination scores of secondary education in 1) English, German or French; 2) Latvian; 3) Mathematics are interrelated.

The duration of the JBA "Creative Industries" of the LAC and Riga Technical University (RTU) is six semesters or three years in the amount of 120 credit points or 180 ECTS. The implementation language of the programme is Latvian. The duration and scope, as well as the implementation language, are reasonable and justified.

2.1.3.

As stated in SAR (p.214) according to 02.08.2017 issued license No. 04066-6. The Latvian Academy of Culture has made the following changes to the parameters of the study programme for the joint academic bachelor's study programme "Creative Industries":

1) form of study programme implementation - from full-time and part-time studies to full-time studies;

2) the language of study programme implementation - from Latvian and English to Latvian.

Evaluation of programme and study course content is also carried out regularly together with graduates and lecturers, as a result of which the changes in study courses have taken place (detailed description in SAR, p.214-215). Within those changes study courses about the world art market were combined into one course to reduce the number of tests; to the course on introduction to creative industries 2CP were added; some courses have been removed to add additional credits to the field of research methodology; the courses on E-commerce and marketing has been modified and supplemented; changes in the the planning of study courses by semesters have been implemented to improve the sequence of content mastering.

According to the information gathered during the onsite visits the changes in BSP "Creative Industries" are justified, well thought of, done in a mutual dialogue among administration, faculty, students and representatives of the industry. As stated in SAR (p.215) "The changes made have reduced the fragmentation of the programme, improved the logical sequencing of courses, reduced the number of examinations for students and strengthened the programme's focus on achieving its objectives."

2.1.4.

The programme has been in demand since its creation. It has had a large number of applicants in comparison to other LAC study programmes (in 2017, 197 applications; in 2018, 164 applications; in 2019, 141 applications; in 2020 - 212 applications; in 2021 - 180 applications; in 2022 - 231 applications). In comparison to other LAC study programmes in 2022:

✓Culture and Arts studies – 152 applications

✓International cultural relations Latvia – France / Canada – 106 applications

✓Audio-visual Arts – 79 applications

✓International cultural relations Latvia – Spain – 78 applications

✓Drama and text studies – 42 applications.

The high demand for the programme is influenced by several factors: first, the content and novelty of the programme; second, students' positive feedback about the content of the programme, including in the public space, which contributes to the programme's reputation; thirdly, interdisciplinarity, as the programme provides basic and specialised knowledge, skills and professional competence in the creative industries, combined with an in-depth understanding of culture and business, and also provides basic knowledge and skills in the specifics of various creative industries, in the creation of new products, in the following competence blocks: Creative

industries and their sectors, Arts and Culture, Business and Economics, Creative Thinking and Technologies, Marketing and Communication, Research and Praxis. Despite the great interest of the school graduates in the programme, the two universities mutually agreed to admit no more than 50 students in the future, thus ensuring the highest possible quality of the learning process and the use of the infrastructure of the universities. The programme has 10 state-funded study places (exceptionally, 12 budget places are available for the programme in the 2022/2023 academic year), provided by LAC. Student competition for budget places in the 2022 study year was 23 students for 1 state-funded study place.

Dynamic of the number of students

The number of students in the programme is generally stable. The number of admitted students in 2017 and 2018 is smaller, because the programme just started its operation and there were no students in all stages of study yet, but a larger number of students were admitted in 2020 and 2022, as 2 groups were admitted.

Student dropout rates increased during the global pandemic, when students' mental health problems and motivational difficulties increased, some students admitted that they were unable to motivate themselves to complete the study programme in a remote study format. In order to reduce the feeling of distance and promote motivation, informal meetings of programme directors with students of each course were organized once a month during the restriction period, where current problems, progress of the study process were discussed, games were played and various unifying activities were organized.

It can be concluded that by accepting a larger number of students, students with lower motivation and lower interest in creative industries also enter the programme. This is also one of the reasons why, as mentioned in point 3.1.3 of this description, universities have agreed not to admit more than 50 students, thus assembling a more motivated group of students.

Employment indicators

In order to find out the employment statistics of graduates, a unified survey of LAC's graduates of the last 3 years has been conducted. As the "Creative Industries" programme has been implemented only since 2017/2018. study year, survey data is available only for a short period of time. Analysing the data directly on graduates of the Creative Industries programme (24 respondents), it can be concluded that the majority were already employed at the time of graduating from the programme or became employed shortly after graduating from the programme.

59% of programme graduates are already employed at the time of graduation, and 21% of graduates become employed 1-3 months after graduation, which can be considered a positive trend. The majority of graduates work in the industry - 28% of graduates work in the public relations/marketing industry, 20% - in the advertising industry, 9% - in the field of cultural education/education, 8% - in business. Sectors such as cultural administration (5%), cultural houses/creative centres (4%), television, radio and/or interactive media (4%) and other sectors are also represented. Most often, graduates hold positions such as public relations, marketing specialist, project manager, and manager of cultural projects/organizations. The majority of graduates (n=60) believe that the theoretical knowledge acquired at LAC has been useful in the context of professional activity, and also that the study process has prepared the student for the performance of professional duties/ the labour market in general. There is an ambiguous opinion on whether the fact that the education was obtained at LAC has contributed to the chances of being hired.

In the personal communication of the programme director with the graduates of the programme, the following workplaces have been identified: Creative Industries Department of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania, Department of Cultural Education and Sports of Riga City Council, Municipal Culture and Youth Centres, Event Agency Untitled, Dzintari Concert Hall, several work in advertising, marketing and digital technology companies (White, White Label, Accenture Latvia, etc.), in the fashion industry - model agency (Vacatio), in the field of tourism (Vanilla Travel), in the field of media (TrueSix, TV3 group), in the field of design (Design studio TEIKA), in the entertainment

industry (Bowling centre "Bowlero"), have created their own company (DartaVisuals, Avalion), or work as a self-employed creative person or producer, etc.

2.1.5.

According to SAR (p.221) the Latvian Academy of Culture, wishing to develop a creative industries study programme, approached Riga Technical University (RTU), one of Latvia's largest and best universities, as a potential partner for a joint study programme. RTU positions itself as an internationally important centre of knowledge and innovation. RTU was interested in cooperation, and work started in 2016. Such a partner enhances the programme's prestige and provides an opportunity to provide studies relevant to the interdisciplinarity of the creative industries. The cooperation between LKA and RTU is significant in the Latvian education system, where the share of joint and highly interdisciplinary study programmes is small.

The two universities have signed an agreement on cooperation in the implementation of the joint programme (Agreement on the Implementation of the Joint Bachelor Study Programme "Creative Industries" of 13 March 2017 - LAC Contract Reg. No 1-25/008; RTU contract Reg. No. 01000-4.1/10), see annex 3.1.5._4). LKA covers the study courses of the cultural and creative sector while RTU provides ensures courses in entrepreneurship and technologies. As the creative industries are an interdisciplinary field, the acquisition of different competencies was an essential prerequisite for the development of such a programme. RTU's experience in providing entrepreneurship competencies, the university's infrastructure and resources are an important contribution to the interdisciplinarity and quality of the programme. The cooperation between the two universities provides students with more opportunities: students can use the resources of both universities (libraries, databases, activities offered by the structural units - LAC museums, Centre for Creative Activity of LAC, RTU Design Factory, RTU Career Centre etc.); consult with the teaching staff of both universities; use the opportunities offered by both universities (RTU career days, LAC mentoring programme); participate in events organised by both universities (conferences, seminars, attend cultural events), including graduations.

The joint study programme of LAC and RTU complies with the conditions for the development of joint study programs defined in the Law on Higher Education (see attachment Nr. 3.1.5._4. Compliance of the joint study programme with the requirements of the Higher Education Act).

The joint study programme of LAC and RTU forms a coherent and consecutive joint study programme, covering the study courses offered by both universities. The two universities coordinate all issues related to the implementation of the study programme and students at both universities have equal opportunities:

- 1) in both universities, the study programme is managed by directors who cooperate and coordinate with each other the matters related to the implementation of the programme, communicate with the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the programme at their university;
- 2) the Joint Study Programme Council has been established (see below).
- 3) the schedule of lectures is planned and mutually coordinated - students have 2 - 3 lecture days at the premises of LAC and 1 - 2 lecture days at RTU, so that they do not have to change location within the same day;
- 4) students can choose and take elective courses at both universities;
- 5) students can use Erasmus+ programme mobility possibilities at both universities;
- 6) common methodological guidelines for the development of course paper and bachelor theses have been developed, which harmonise the approaches and requirements of both universities. They are published on the websites of both universities (LAC e-study environment and RTU e-study environment, available to authorised users - students and teaching staff);
- 7) the teaching staff of both universities cooperate in the development of bachelor theses. Each bachelor thesis has 2 supervisors - one from LAC and one from RTU, there are regular meetings between both supervisors and students. Programme directors organise seminars for thesis

supervisors from both universities to facilitate a unified process of thesis development. The teaching staff of both universities participate in the work of the bachelor thesis defence committee (see more in 3.2.6);

8) the timetable for the submission of the most important works of the programme is agreed and published on the e-study environment of both universities for the subsequent study year;

9) joint formal and informal meetings of the teaching staff involved in the programme take place (see 3.4.5)

10) a joint diploma and a diploma appendix is issued.

In order to ensure the supervision and quality of the programme, the Council of Joint Study programmes of LAC and RTU has been established. The Council is a collegial body and is composed of programme directors and representatives of the two universities nominated by the Vice-Rectors. One student of the programme participates as an observer in the meetings of the Council. The Council's competencies include: monitoring the implementation of the programme and approving changes to the study programme; requesting and receiving information from both universities on issues relevant to the implementation of the study programme; Council approves the topics of the bachelor theses, assigns the supervisors of RTU, reviewers, Council decides the procedure and commission for bachelor theses defence as well as discusses the financial settlements between the institutions. Determines the amount of tuition fee and other charges related to the study process; coordinates the joint marketing activities of the study programme. The meetings of the Council are protocolled and they take place once per month. The work of the Council is described in the Regulations of the Council of Joint Study Programmes of LAC and RTU. Programme directors regularly communicate with each other, and discuss and coordinate topical issues. Meetings of the programme staff of both universities are also organised. Each year, the faculty members of both programmes meet to discuss and evaluate the Bachelor thesis process (see also section 3.4.5. on cooperation).

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

Joint academic bachelor study programme "Creative Industries" 43217 (JBA "Creative Industries") is a joint three-year (120 CP) academic bachelor's study programme of the Latvian Academy of Culture (LAC) and Riga Technical University (RTU) providing an opportunity to acquire theoretical and professional knowledge in creative industries by obtaining a Bachelor's degree of Arts in Creative Industries.

Strengths:

1. Well thought out changes to the study courses and distribution of CP.
2. Large number of applications.

Weaknesses:

none

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1.

The objective of the JBA "Creative Industries" is to train versatile, competitive professionals in the creative industries by enhancing one's ability to create innovative products and services, creative content and experience. By joining both JBA "Creative Industries" of LAC and RTU, the program aims

to allow its graduates to excel in various industry organisations with a deep understanding of cultural and artistic processes and the desire to promote the growth of Latvia's national economy in artistic sectors. The JBA "Creative Industries" combines arts and business competencies within the seven blocks forked into (a) art, culture and humanities, where students learn the history and development of art, literature, performing arts and audio-visual arts, (b) entrepreneurship and economy where students learn the full-cycle business processes, company management, company finance, business modelling, (c) entrepreneurship and economy to hone their knowledge of various legal norms and procedures, company management, personnel management, learning the philosophy and operating principles of start-ups, and financing models, (d) marketing and communication, (e) creative thinking and technologies to hone their teamwork and cooperation abilities, public speaking skills, and critical thinking, (f) research, and (g) internships. In Part A, study courses on arts, culture and humanities, such as "Introduction to Conception of Culture and Arts" or "Contemporary Performing and Audiovisual Art" are being realised by LAC, and distributed throughout five semesters, whereas courses in business and economy such as "Business and Labor Law" and "Social Responsibility and Business Ethics" by the teaching staff from RTU, also dispersed throughout the five semesters. In the professional specialisation study courses (Part B) on Creative Thinking and Technologies, the distribution is evenly mixed, while on Marketing and Communication, relies on RTU faculty (Annex 3.2.1-3). For more detailed decoding, please, see the breakdown in the previously cited annex.

According to (SAR, pp.223-225), the content of study courses is periodically updated in line with the industry, labour market and scientific trends. For example, the study course "Event Management and Technical Production" (3 CP) due to global changes in the field caused by Covid-19 has been supplemented with a topic on the organisation of hybrid and virtual events, the content of risk management, while the content of the study course "Cultural Management and Practical Cultural Policy" (4 CP) is regularly updated, incorporating the latest regulations of the cultural sector and the latest research in line with the National Cultural Policy Guidelines 2021-2027 and the latest data from culture consumption study (Study of the Impact of Cultural Consumption and Participation 2018, 2020, 2022).

The JBA "Creative Industries" provides basic and specialised knowledge, skills and professional competence in the creative industries according to the level 6 knowledge, skills and competence of the framework structure determined in the Latvian education classification. The program, furthermore, complies with the Cabinet Regulation No. 240 "Regulations Regarding the State Academic Education Standard", adopted on 13 May 2014. See: <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=266187>, and the Provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, section 55.1 (Annex 4).

2.2.2.

n/a

2.2.3.

(SAR, pp.226-227) reports that a variety of methods are used for achieving the results of the JBA "Creative Industries". The combination of theoretical lectures and practical seminars ensures that the JBA "Creative Industries" produces knowledgeable, creative and logical-thinking professionals with a good theoretical background and a practical understanding of the processes in the creative industries. Group work trains the ability to cooperate, while both logical and creative thinking teach how to find, select and critically evaluate information, and draw conclusions.

With respect to the student-centred learning methods, on one hand, the teaching methods such as lectures, seminars, studies and analysis of the theoretical literature, practical work both individually and in groups, tests, laboratory works, project and product development, creative tasks, group discussions, guest lectures by industry professionals, study tours to organisations, are offered throughout the course of the studies, which ensures that the program delivers knowledgeable,

creative and logical-thinking professionals who are able to integrate the gained competencies in the exploration and analysis of creative industries (SAR, p.226). On the other hand, a student-centred approach is also evident by the fact that every LAC lecturer and professor is easy to reach and available for consultations and informal conversations. Tasks of increased complexity are also offered according to the student's level of preparation; students can freely choose a topic of their interest in the development of the annual paper and bachelor's thesis. During the university visit, the faculty has indicated that the lecturers update course content after a feedback loop to include topics and assignments of interest to specific student groups, and in conjunction with the board of the program.

2.2.4.

The JBA "Creative Industries" offers one internship in the amount of 6 CP, whereby RTU is responsible for coordinating it. Internship allows students to get to know the specifics of creative business sector and apply the theoretical knowledge learned in the various competency blocks of the programme as well as to develop practical skills by using them in a real work scenario. Internship also allows students to expand their network among industry professionals. Students can carry out internships in organisations and companies of their own choosing, as well as those offered by LAC and RTU. The internship opportunities comply with the requirements of regulatory enactments and cooperation agreements issued by LAC and RTU, and are within the topicality of specialised areas, namely.

In one of the initial introductory courses of the program "Introduction to Studies and Creative industries" students are introduced to internship opportunities and requirements, and provided with the information about the internship placement. The annex of section 2.5., and methodological guidelines (see Mandatory annexes, annex 2.5.1. (List of cooperation agreements, including the agreements for providing internships), explain the procedures for securing the space in the creative marketplace.

Internships opportunities are wide - both in public and municipal sector (Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia, Valmiera Tourism Board, Vecumnieki City Council, Olaine Municipality, Sigulda Municipality Culture Centre, Ogre Municipality Culture Centre, Jūrmala Culture Centre), in private sector (Arena Riga, VFS FILMS, Publishing house MicRec, Printful Latvia, Apollo cinema, venue - Hanzas Perons, event agency Pasākumu Meistari, Brain games), in non-governmental sector (Initium Foundation, Club House for the youth, Tarba Society), and in cultural organisations (Lielais Dzintars, Liepāja Theatre, Memorial Museum Association, Liepāja Museum, Latvian Puppet Theatre), etc., (SAR, p.228).

2.2.5.

n/a

2.2.6.

A BA thesis is developed in the 6th semester, by attaching 2 scientific supervisors - one from LAC and one from RTU. It ensures the integration of the interdisciplinary knowledge acquired within the JBA "Creative Industries" and the cooperation of teaching staff from both universities. The bachelor thesis consists of 3 parts - theoretical, empirical and business design, thus requiring students to demonstrate the practical application of theoretical knowledge and appropriate terminology in the chosen field of creative industries research. Methodological guidelines for the development of the bachelor thesis have been developed and they are binding for both students and supervisors:

([https://lka.edu.lv/media/cms_page_media/1228/MN%20kursa%20un%20bakalaura%20darba%20izstradei%20\(03.10.2022\).pdf](https://lka.edu.lv/media/cms_page_media/1228/MN%20kursa%20un%20bakalaura%20darba%20izstradei%20(03.10.2022).pdf) (Latvian only)).

The topics of the bachelor's theses reflect current problems and topics of the creative industries, although a number of topics can be considered innovative, for example: "The role of the creative

intermediaries in creative industries development in Cesis region", "The meaning of bricolage in creative communities' development in the context of creative industries", "Competitiveness of Creative Industry Sectors in the Context of Experience Economy: Case of Gastronomy and Music Industries", "Synergy of Stakeholders In Place Branding: Case Study of Valmiera", "The role of sound and music in brand identity and communication", "The role of the creative intermediaries in creative industries development in Cesis region", "Transforming forms of employment in the creative industries: digital nomads", "Crypto art in the art market and its risk assessment", etc.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

JBA "Creative Industries" offers topical, interconnected, and complementary content with clear objectives and learning outcomes that are in line with industry needs and scientific trends. The programme covers various interdisciplinary topics such as arts, culture, humanities, entrepreneurship, economics, marketing, communication, creative thinking, research, and internships. The methods used in the programme contribute to the achievement of the course's aims and learning objectives, with a student-centred approach consisting of theoretical and practical methods. The JBA "Creative Industries" also provides effective internship opportunities for its students, and the topics of the final theses are relevant to the field and correspond to the study programme. JBA "Creative Industries" meets this requirement, as the bachelor's thesis topics are reflective of current problems and innovative approaches in the creative industries, demonstrating the practical application of theoretical knowledge and appropriate terminology.

Strengths:

1. JBA "Creative Industries" offers topical, interconnected, and complementary content with clear objectives and learning outcomes;
2. The program provides effective internship opportunities for its students.

Weaknesses:

JBA "Creative Industries" currently does not offer the English stream of instructions.

Assessment of the requirement [5] (applicable only to master's or doctoral study programmes)

- 1 R5 - The study programme for obtaining a master's or doctoral degree is based on the achievements and findings of the respective field of science or field of artistic creation.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

n/a

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1.

The JBA "Creative Industries" is held in main building of LAC at Ludzas street 24, Riga and Elijas street 17, as well as in the Faculty of Engineering Economics and Management of RTU at Kalnciema iela 6. Students use the premises and resources of both universities; the auditoriums for the study programme are adequately equipped with the necessary technical equipment for live or remote/online lectures (a computers, projector and screen, blackboard, wireless internet and other if necessary). Computer labs and rooms with transformable tables are available that can be adapted for seminars, round table discussions, etc. (SAR, p. 232)

The JBA "Creative Industries" is financed from the state budget grant awarded to the LAC (planned budget places in the program are provided by LAC) and students' study fees. Mobility and internships of the academic staff and students is financed from funds awarded through tenders from the European Union and from funds and programs that support science, education and creativity..

During the study process, both universities use an e-study environment (LAC - Moodle and Latvia's Higher Education Information System (LAIS), RTU - ORTUS), which ensures communication with the students, access to resources and information. Moodle provides a useful information channel for communication with the students enabling course descriptions, lecture materials and additional sources, instructions for tasks, tests and assessment books available for each study course. The use of the e-study environment takes place in all study courses and its use is intensified along with the provision of the study process remotely. (SAR, p. 232)

Library resources are available for students at both universities that also regularly supplement the library funds by purchasing both books and by subscribing to databases relevant to the field. The LAC's Library uses the free trials of databases, OPEN ACCESS databases (core.ac.uk, openresearchlibrary.org , ijsrp.org), the digital resources of the National Library of Latvia and the database resources included in the National Electronic Resource Package: EBSCO Academic Search Complete + MasterFILE Premier, Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition+Consumer Edition, Newspaper Source, ERIC, GreenFILE, LISTA, MEDLINE.

In the RTU library, students also have at their disposal libraries of methodical offices to familiarize themselves with the latest periodicals, statistical materials, books, conference materials on economic and business issues. The students and the academic staff have access to a wide and modern scientific library of RTU (available 24/7), with access to "electronic subscription databases, as well as temporary trial databases: SpringerLink, IEEE/IET Electronic Library (IEL) , Web of Science, Latvian standards database content: Latvian national standards (LVS); European standards (EN) adapted to Latvian standard status; International standards adapted to Latvian standard status (ISO), EBSCO database, Academic Search Complete, Business Source Complete, MasterFile Premier, Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts (LISTA), ScienceDirect, SCOPUS (published by Elsevier), news available in the National News Agency database LETA , archive, reviews and nozare.lv, educational materials repository - MERLOT, films.lv. RTU ensures that Firms.lv and Amadeus database are also available to students of the joint programme, which can be used for both study and research purposes. In addition, as a result of international cooperation, Harvard Business Publishing provides access to electronic resources.

These resources help to ensure the achievement of study results by ensuring the availability of premises, technical resources, literature for students when carrying out study assignments and developing the final thesis." (SAR; p. 233)

2.3.2.

n/a

2.3.3.

The funding of the JBA "Creative Industries" in 2022 is 373,287 EUR, it was formed from the budget grant, performance-based funding and tuition fees. The JBA "Creative Industries" is a joint programme and all revenues are shared between two universities. Every year, a cost calculation is carried out, after which the number of guest lecturers hired and the amount diverted for the development of study programmes are determined.

A lot of attention is devoted to the optimization of the study programme realization expenses, for example, by organizing flow lectures in courses taught by professors. In order to ensure the profitability of the study programme the minimum. In order to ensure the profitability and optimization of the JBA "Creative Industries", the minimum number of enrolled students is determined every year by looking at the needs of the programme. (SAR, p.234) The JBA "Creative

Industries" provides 10 study places financed from the state budget (the exception is the 2022/2023 study year, when 12 budget places are available for the programme). The programme is organized in a form of a full time attendance and studies are conducted in Latvian.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The JBA "Creative Industries" is adequately organized and takes place in appropriate conditions; the material, technical and informational resources are appropriate for the implementation of the JBA "Creative Industries". As a joint programme of LAC and RTU the programme has strong interdisciplinary dimension. The Libraries at the both universities are adequately equipped and in tune with the needs of the students.

Strengths:

1. Provisions and technical support regarding JBA "Creative Industries" are adequate;
2. Strong interdisciplinary dimension responsive to the job market.

Weaknesses:

None

Assessment of the requirement [6]

- 1 R6 - Compliance of the study provision, science provision (if applicable), informative provision (including library), material and technical provision and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The JBA "Creative Industries" is adequately organized and takes place in appropriate conditions; the material, technical and informational resources are appropriate for the implementation of the JBA "Creative Industries" programme. As a joint programme of LAC and RTU the programme has strong interdisciplinary dimension. The Libraries at the both universities are adequately equipped and in tune with the needs of the students.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.

The academic, scientific and professional qualifications of the academic staff of the JBA "Creative Industries" comply with the conditions of the study programme implementation and regulatory framework. Among 26 teachers involved in the programme there are 9 professors, 8 associate professors, 4 assistant professors, 3 lecturers, 1 guest lecturer and 1 lead researcher.

As a "responsible teaching staff" they engage other guest lecturers from the different fields of science, industry or cultural practice. The SAR (p.p. 235-237) states that 14 lecturers participated in the important research projects. Some of the teachers take part in the very complex and advanced national and international research, which shows good commitment to research and self-improvement among the staff and makes a positive impact on the quality of the JBA "Creative Industries".

As visible from Anex 2.4.4.-2 and 2.3.-2_CV_EN, teachers actively participate at different conferences and publish their works. Considering that programme is a bachelor programme, the average education level of staff is excellent. Such composition of the teaching staff provides recent

data, contemporary competences and skills in accordance to the art and cultural market.

2.4.2.

As stated in SAR (p. 237) the changes, totally 7, have been the result of students evaluation feedback and needs to find the most appropriate lecturers for the specific fields of expertise. Therefore, the changes in the composition of the teaching staff do not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the JBA "Creative Industries". On the contrary, all changes were made in order to improve the educational process, bring new knowledge and meet students' needs.

Also, the changes have been made as the result of the LAC human resources policy. For the reasons of employment relation, balancing workload, individual career planning or competence and experience assessment, some lecturers were changed. In general, all changes are well explained in SAR (p.p. 237-238) and show only positive impact on the JBA "Creative Industries".

2.4.3.

n/a

2.4.4.

As stated in SAR (p. 68) most of the academic staff carry out either scientific or artistic research. Academic staff publish their research results in research papers and conferences, or present their artistic productions publicly. Annexes 2.4.4.-1 and 2.4.4.-2, as well as teachers CV, proves the information of developed and extended scientific or artistic activities of teachers in terms of research, publishing, presenting artistic work and participating in various creative artistic projects.

Among the articles published, however, there is a relatively small number of peer reviewed scientific publications in SCOPUS/WoS and ERIH databases. Of 1015 articles listed in Annex 2.4.4.-1 from 2013 to 2021 there are 22 in WoS and SCOPUS and 17 in ERIH. Works categorized as "other publications", "articles" or "sections" are the most frequent form of the publication type stated in Annex 2.4.4.-1. More precisely with the recent data the scientific publications are stated in SAR. Table No. 11 in SAR (p.60) lists 295 scientific articles published in the editions included in internationally cited databases in the period 2015-2021. Table 14 in SAR (p. 68) states the same data.

Such a record is satisfactory, even though there is still room for improvement in targeting better quality, i.e. higher ranking, publishing media or international publications. The artistic presentations were publicly presented in distinguished cultural institutions and significant venues, such as theaters, radio, television, cultural centers and site specific spaces.

Among the conferences attended by the academic staff almost all are international conferences, national and international wide. Domestic conferences were organized in Latvia by LAC itself or other Latvian universities or cultural institutions. The list of conferences in Annex 2.4.4.-2 indicates also many European countries and a few non-European but their organizers are not mentioned. Majority (almost all) the conferences attended belong to the field of humanities and art sciences, and minority of them are History and archeology.

During the site visit the expert group has been informed that there is institutional financial support at LAC for such activities. It was also noticed that the academic staff would need more time to allocate for such activities.

2.4.5.

From SAR and information during the site visit, the expert group understands that predominant communication culture in LAC philosophy is frequent individual communication, and information exchanges on a daily basis. The SAR (p. 239) states the same. Beside that, staff organize meetings in smaller or larger groups whenever an important issue related to the programme should be addressed.

Formal and informal communication at the JBA "Creative Industries" takes place not only between

the LAC staff but also with teachers at RTU. Such communication includes personal meetings, group discussions, formally organized different seminars e.g. on managing bachelor's theses or on improving the terminology of creative industries in Latvian. Beside that, institutional cooperation evaluation meetings between LAC and RTU have been organized (SAR, p.239).

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by indicating strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The qualification and research record of the academic staff on Bachelor's Study Programme Creative Industries is on a satisfactory level. It enables the achievement of the learning outcomes of the programme and the relevant courses. Teachers' research and publishing activities meet the requirements more than necessary for the bachelor programme. Teachers participate in the short-term mobility programmes and attend scientific conferences. Sufficient mechanisms to conduct the quality review and evaluate academic staff exist. During the site visit, the expert group learned about the opportunities provided for additional professional development of the teaching staff. Continuous improvement of teaching strategies and improvement of teaching materials can be accounted as a strength from the statement in SAR (p. 235, p. 237), and the impression during the site visit approved such state. There are formal and informal mechanisms for cooperation which are functional.

Strengths:

- 1) Synergy of LAC and RTU in knowledge and resources;
- 2) Permanent staff and guest lecturers from variety of different fields of science and art.

Weaknesses:

None

Assessment of the requirement [7]

- 1 R7 - Compliance of the qualification of the academic staff and visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The staff is adequately composed, competent and complies with all the requirements of the JBA "Creative Industries"

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

- 1 1 - The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Annex 3.2.1. Compliance of the Study Programme with the State Education Standard (1).docx confirms that the JBA "Creative Industries" complies with Regulations No. 240 of the Cabinet of Ministers as of 1 May 2014 "Regulations on the National Standard for Academic Education" <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=266187> (Available only in Latvian).

- 2 2 - The study programme complies with a valid professional standard or the requirements for the professional qualification (if there is no professional standard required for the relevant occupation) provided if the completion of the study programme leads to a professional qualification (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 3 3 - The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 561 , Paragraph two and Section 562 , Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study course descriptions are prepared in Latvian that can be accessed under 3.2.1-4._course descriptions_RI.zip comply with regulations set forth in Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 4 4 - The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure according to which state recognised documents of higher education are issued.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The provided Diploma samples accessible in the annexes 3.1.2._RI.zip comply with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued according to Cabinet Regulation No. 202 "Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību.

- 5 5 - The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The annex provided -CONFIRMATION_bRI.pdf certifies that the academic staff involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 6 6 - Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 7 7 - At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 8 8 - The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

This is identified in the annex 2.3.-2_CV_EN.zip. It can be concluded that the state language proficiency is compliant with Cabinet Regulation Nr. 733 " Regulations Regarding the Extent of the Knowledge of the Official Language, the Procedures for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language and the State Fee for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language".

- 9 9 - The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 10 10 - The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Sample of attached study agreement "2.1.4.-3 study agreement example.pdf" complies with Cabinet Regulation. Nr. 70 "Studiju līgumā obligāti ietveramie noteikumi".

- 11 11 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LAC has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another higher education institution if the implementation of the study programme is terminated. The agreements are specified in the annex1_translation_ RI 2023. -.It is specified that in case of discontinuation of this study programme, students are to be able to continue their studies at Latvian Academy of Culture's academic bachelor's study programme "Arts" (43212) sub-programme "Sociology and Management of Culture".

- 12 12 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The Academy has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked. It is ensured by the document certifying it - 1_translation_Arts RI 2023 that includes LAC confirmation no. 1.10e/35 from 24.01.2023. The documents provided are pursuant to paragraph 13.4 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 795 "Regulations Regarding Licensing of Study Programmes" .

- 13 13 - The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 55.(1), Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The JBA "Creative Industries" complies with the requirements prescribed in the legal regulations based on the annexes provided 3.1.5._4. RI joint programme.zip

14 14 - Compliance with the requirements specified in other regulatory enactments that apply to the study programme being assessed (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

- 1 R8 - Compliance of the study programme with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

JBA "Creative Industries" fully complies with regulatory enactments.

General conclusions about the study programme, indicating the most important strengths and weaknesses of the study programme

Conclusions:

JBA "Creative Industries" offers topical, interconnected, and complementary content with clear objectives and learning outcomes that are in line with industry needs and scientific trends. The programme covers various interdisciplinary topics such as arts, culture, humanities, entrepreneurship, economics, marketing, communication, creative thinking, research, and internships. The methods used in the programme contribute to the achievement of the course's aims and learning objectives, with a student-centred approach consisting of theoretical and practical methods. The JBA "Creative Industries" also provides effective internship opportunities for its students, and the topics of the final theses are relevant to the field and correspond to the study programme. JBA "Creative Industries" meets this requirement, as the bachelor's thesis topics are reflective of current problems and innovative approaches in the creative industries, demonstrating the practical application of theoretical knowledge and appropriate terminology.

The program is adequately organised and takes place in appropriate conditions. The qualification and research record of the academic staff on JBA "Creative Industries" is on a satisfactory level. It enables the achievement of the learning outcomes of the JBA "Creative Industries" and the relevant courses. Teachers' research and publishing activities meet the requirements more than necessary for the bachelor programme. Teachers participate in the short-term mobility programmes and attend scientific conferences. Sufficient mechanisms to conduct the quality review and evaluate academic staff exist. During the site visit, the expert group learned about the opportunities provided for additional professional development of the teaching staff. Continuous improvement of teaching strategies and improvement of teaching materials can be accounted as a strength from the statement and the impression during the site visit approved such a state. There are formal and informal mechanisms for cooperation which are functional.

Strengths:

1. Provisions and technical support regarding JBA "Creative Industries" are adequate;
2. Strong interdisciplinary dimension responsive to the job market;
3. Synergy of LAC and RTU in knowledge and resources;
4. Permanent staff and guest lecturers from variety of different fields of science and art
5. Existence of the compatible MA joint study programme as a benchmark and guide mark;
6. Well thought out changes to the study courses and distribution of CP;
7. Large number of applications;

Weaknesses:

No English stream is offered;

Evaluation of the study programme "Creative Industries"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Creative Industries"

Short-term recommendations

Long-term recommendations

1. BA "Creative Industries" ought to consider opening the English stream since it is a joint program and RTU is particularly open to the international pool of applicants.

II - "Audiovisual and Performing Art" ASSESSMENT

II - "Audiovisual and Performing Art" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1.

The LAC's academic master's study program "Audiovisual and Performing Art" 45213 (MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art) fully complies with the LAC's study field "Arts" as "it aims to provide unique interdisciplinary studies focused on research and creative excellence, which provide expanded theoretical knowledge of audiovisual and performing arts in the context of the humanities, provide in-depth insights into the fields of audiovisual and performing arts and their interactions" (SAR, p.283). The MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art corresponds to the codes 45212 and 45213 which comply with the Cabinet regulation No. 322 "Regulations on the classification of the Latvian education", where it is stipulated that the thematic group of education "Humanities and Arts" includes the thematic area of education "Arts", which includes the groups of educational programs "Music and Performing Arts" and "Audiovisual and Media Arts". Based on the information gathered during the onsite visit the interdisciplinarity is very strong and highly appreciated by the students.

2.1.2.

"The title of the study program is "Audiovisual and Performing Art" in the study field of "Arts" with education classification codes 45212 with the last 3 numbers (212) standing for "Music and Performing Arts" and 45213 with the last 3 numbers (213) standing for "Audiovisual Art and Media Art" according to the classification of Latvian education 322 which is available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>.

Degree awarded "Master of Art in Audiovisual and Performing Art". It was recommended by AIKA to revise the title of the Master's degree program "Audiovisual and Performing Arts" or "Master in Arts of Performing Arts" in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 240, paragraph 12 (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/266187-noteikumi-par-valsts-akademiskas-izglitiba-standartu>) where it would be more appropriate "Master of Arts in Audiovisual and Media Arts" or "Master of Arts in Audiovisual Arts". The LAC has decided (according to Annex of the SAR "Explanation on changes of codes and degree titles") to keep the degree as defined in the application "Master of Arts in Audiovisual and Performing Arts" because "It is in line with the content and intended outcomes of the study program (..) - to train professionals whose labour market covers both the audiovisual/film arts sector and theatre and dance (performing arts) sector". To ensure that the program parameters

are consistent with each other rather than changing the wording of the degree to be awarded (as reducing the degree to audiovisual arts partially/inaccurately reflects the content of the program) LAC is suggesting to add a second code (45212) to the program, which substantiates the relevance of its content.

The aim of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art is “to provide unique interdisciplinary studies focused on research and creative excellence, which provide extended theoretical knowledge of audiovisual and performing arts” (SAR, p.278). Students have an opportunity to choose one of the thematic areas of the program (Audiovisual Arts, Theater, Contemporary Dance, Dramaturgy and Theory) and learn in depth on the specialisation of research a artistic creation (theory, dramaturgy, theatre direction, film direction, choreography, film operator art, acting). As concluded by the expert team the goal of the study MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art is interrelated with the objectives and learning outcomes (SAR, p.279-280).of the study program however experts expressed doubts about how realistic it is to achieve the mentioned amount learning outcomes in the theory (see 2.2.1.of the analysis).

Admission requirements are: bachelor’s degree or second level professional higher education, or equivalent higher education in the following thematic fields of education: humanities, arts, social, human behaviour and humanities sciences, information and communication sciences, teacher education and educational sciences.

According to the opinion of the expert group the title “Audiovisual and Performing Arts”, codes 45212 and 45213 and Master’s degree in Audiovisual and Performing Arts to be obtained as well as aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements are interrelated.

The duration of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art is four semesters or two years in the amount of 80 credit points. The implementation languages of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art are Latvian and English (the level of proficiency is at least B2 level, The program in English is expected to be announced in the period from 2024 to 2026, mainly focusing on potential applicants from the Baltic and Nordic countries.). The duration and scope of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art implementation, as well as the implementation language, are reasonable and justified.

2.1.3.

Based on the information provided in the SAR (p.282.) since the issue of license No. 04066-7 on 8 August 2018 to the LAC for the right to implement the academic master’s study program "Audiovisual and Performing Art" (codes 45213, 45212) the Latvian Academy of Culture has not undertaken any changes to the parameters of the study program and no changes are planned within the framework of the course assessment procedure.

However, since the licensing of the program in 2018, several clarifications have been made in the LAC academic master's study program in "Audiovisual and Performing Art", based on the analysis of the program's implementation (including the feedback and recommendations of students and graduates), to make the structure of the program clearer, more comprehensible for applicants, less fragmented into narrow specialisations. The former structure of the program consisted of three thematic areas (audiovisual arts, theatre, and contemporary dance) and eight specialisations (theory, dramaturgy, theatre direction, film direction, choreography, cinematography, acting, and production) of which several covered multiple thematic areas. Taking into account the fact that interdisciplinarity in the arts are becoming more and more relevant nowadays, since 2022 the structure of the program has been clarified, rejecting narrow specialisations and defining four thematic areas of the program: Audiovisual art, Theatre art, Contemporary dance, and Dramaturgy and theory. Entrance exams and the creative competition are organised according to these thematic areas.

Some changes have also been made to the study course plan of the program following the recommendations of students and lecturers (SAR, p.282-283). The changes are relevant to the study program.

2.1.4.

"Based on the information provided in the SAR (p.284) the economic and social justification of the academic master's study program "Audiovisual and Performing Art" is based on the research of the creative environment and labour market of audiovisual and performing arts, the analysis of the employment of LAC graduates so far and related problems. During the onsite visits it was obvious that the faculty, lecturers and administration are well aware and strongly linked with the professionals of the audiovisual and performing art labour market in Latvia and follows its developments and requirements in close cooperation with industry institutions (National Film Centre of Latvia, institutional and independent theatres, film studios, contemporary dance organisations, Film Producers Association of Latvia, Latvian Theatre Workers Association, Latvian Filmmakers Union etc.). The graduates and students are satisfied with the interdisciplinarity of the program, they value highly the interactions with the specialists from other fields. Thus in a comparatively short time students acquire a significant amount of new knowledge, competences and methods to the film industry and the performing arts sector, increasing the excellence and international competitiveness of the achievements of these sectors. From the information gathered during the onsite visit one of the main tasks is to provide the next level education for the graduates of the three year Bachelor programs "Audiovisual Arts" and "Contemporary Dance" creating a 5 year cycle education where first three years are narrow specialisation and developing craftsmanship and next two years are to provide interdisciplinary studies focused on research and creative excellence echoing a strong trend in the arts market.

To increase international competitiveness it is planned to implement the program also in English. The program in English is expected to be announced in the period from 2024 to 2026, mainly focusing on potential applicants from the Baltic and Nordic countries. According to the SAR (p.287) the initial goal of implementing the program in English is to create it as an interdisciplinary platform for young audiovisual and performing arts professionals from the Baltic and Nordic countries, who are interested not only in acquiring knowledge, competences and skills in the thematic areas and specialisations of the program, but also in international cooperation and the labour market of the region.

The number of admitted students since the program was established in 2018 is stable - between 18 and 25 students. As stated in the SAR (p. 286) the total number of students enrolled in the "Audiovisual and Performing Art" study program (codes 45213 and 45212) since its licensing in 2018 in total 79 students have enrolled (most for the film - 32 students; theatre - 23 students, contemporary dance - 3 students; dramaturgy and theory - 20 students). As analysed in the appendix 3.1.4., for 58 students the two-year study cycle has formally ended (41 - state funded, 17 - own funding). The drop-out rate was significant - 27 students (47%) have graduated (26 with state funding and 1 with own funding), 26 students (44%) have left their studies, and 5 students (9%) are on an academic break. The majority of students dropping out were the ones paying for their studies. Based on the information provided in SAR (p.286, 287) the high dropout rate was caused by the pandemic and health problems following that. Also an inability to combine studies with work and the time consuming fundraising and production process especially in the film industry makes it hard for students to complete the final creative work within the specified deadlines for submitting and defending the master's thesis" (SAR, p.286). During the onsite visits the focus of the film programs at the LAC was discussed, several graduates and employers mentioned that focusing more on documentaries instead of fiction or arts house cinema would lower the production costs and through that not only ease tension to find funding but also strengthen the documentary genre.

Regarding employment indicators according to SAR (p.285) out of 27 graduates from the program, 22, i.e., 81%, are actively working in the relevant industries (41% are connected to the audiovisual arts industry or the film industry, 30% work in the theatre industry, 4% in the contemporary dance

industry, and 7% are regularly published in the industry media and engaged in research). Five graduates, or 19%, continue their studies at the doctoral level. Three graduates are lecturers at the higher education level, but in total five graduates or 19% are involved in pedagogy. Out of 27 graduates, nine (33%) were nominated or won the nationally important award "Lielais Kristaps" in the cinema industry or "Spēlmaņu nakts" award in the theatre industry, which is the highest professional recognition.

According to the SAR (p.285) when evaluating the compliance of graduates' employment with the goals and expected results of the program, LAC takes into account not only the permanent job, but also regular involvement in audiovisual and performing arts processes, as this is the specificity of employment in these fields where only in rare cases there is permanent employment in the direct specialisation of the thematic field (for example, the film industry is unthinkable without film directors, but there is no such institution or organisation where it is possible to work permanently as a film director). Therefore, often graduates' basic workplace (if any) can be, for example, in the education system, the advertising industry or some other field, where their basic specialisation knowledge, competences and skills can be useful and make a contribution outside of the directly applicable industries. Graduates of the program also contribute to audiovisual and performing arts education (currently three of the current graduates are lecturers at LAC).

2.1.5.

n/a

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The study program is "Audiovisual and Performing Art" in the study field of "Arts" with education classification codes 45212 with the last 3 numbers (212) standing for "Music and Performing Arts" and 45213 with the last 3 numbers (213) standing for "Audiovisual Art and Media Art" according to the classification of Latvian education 322 provide "unique interdisciplinary studies focused on research and creative excellence, which provide extended theoretical knowledge of audiovisual and performing arts" (SAR, p.278). Students have an opportunity to choose one of the thematic areas of the program - Audiovisual Arts, Theater, Contemporary Dance, Dramaturgy and Theory. Despite recommendation by AIKA to revise the title of the MSP "Audiovisual and Performing Arts" to appropriate "Master of Arts in Audiovisual and Media Arts" or "Master of Arts in Audiovisual Arts" matching the codes (45213) , LAC wants to retain the title which combines codes 45212 standing for "Music and Performing Arts" and 45213 standing for "Audiovisual and Media Art". As the aims, tasks and learning outcomes of the study program are appropriate to both codes content-wise it is appropriate.

Strengths:

1. The contents, students and graduates are well aware and strongly linked to the professional of the audiovisual and performing art labour market in Latvia.
2. The program provides clear and necessary continuation studies for the graduates of the bachelor programs, being particularly valuable for the three year bachelor programs "Audiovisual Arts" and "Contemporary Dance" providing interdisciplinary studies focused on research and creative excellence echoing a strong trend in the arts market.

Weaknesses:

1. High drop-out rate;
2. According to the "Regulations on the National Standard of Academic Education" (240) by the Cabinet Minister, the obtained degree does not comply with the standard.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1.

(SAR, pp.282-291) expounds on that main objectives of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art as a unique interdisciplinary complex focused on research and creative excellence in audiovisual and performing arts within the context of humanities, by giving the students an opportunity to choose one of the thematic areas of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art (Audiovisual Arts, Theater Art, Contemporary Dance, Dramaturgy and Theory) and learn in depth one of the specialisations of research and artistic production (theory, dramaturgy, theatre direction, film direction, choreography, film operator, art, acting).

The strategic aims of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art in the study direction "Arts" is set in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 240 on the State Standard of Academic (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/266187-noteikumi-par-valsts-akademiskas-izglitiba-standartu> / Latvian only), and correspond to the 7th level knowledge, skills and competencies of European Qualifications Framework. In addition, (SAR, pp.283-284) stresses that the programme corresponds to the codes 45212 and 45213 which comply with the Cabinet regulation No. 322 "Regulations on the classification of the Latvian education", where it is stipulated that the thematic group of education "Humanities and Arts" includes the thematic area of education "Arts", which includes the groups of educational programs "Music and Performing Arts" and "Audiovisual and Media Arts", but in view of the experts the programme does not comply with the standard, i.e., upon successful completion of their studies, students obtain a master's degree in audiovisual and performing art (SAR, pp.283-284).

However, the interpretation of the Cabinet regulation No. 322, given in (SAR, pp.283-284), is incorrect. The last edition of the valid "Regulations on Latvian Education classification" (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>), as of 12.11.2021 does not specifically spell the 7th level knowledge, skills and competencies of European Qualifications Framework for academic master degrees, but in cross checking with relevant state authorities, the Appendix 2 to the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of June 13, 2017 No. 322, the table, applies to the 7th level as well, i.e., the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art can have either Master of Arts in Music and Performing Arts (45212) or Master of Arts in Audiovisual arts and Media Arts (45213), or until the Cabinet Regulation No. 322 is modified to include a new ruling.

The curriculum is topical, interconnected and complementary, corresponds to the objectives of the programme and ensures the achievement of learning outcomes, such as, but not limited to, obtaining an extensive knowledge and understanding of current research in the humanities and arts, being well versed in the latest discoveries and achievements in the professional fields of audiovisual, theatre and contemporary dance arts, being able to innovate and apply new approaches in the humanities and arts sector, and being able to independently formulate and critically analyse complex scientific and professional problems in audiovisual and performing arts research and artistic creativity. For this purpose, according to annex: 3.2.1.-valsts standarts_AVSM.docx, the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art consists of Part A (compulsory), structured in two blocks, theories and current problems of the humanities and theories of audiovisual and performing arts, Part B (compulsory choice), and Part C (elective courses) gives students the opportunity to choose either study courses from other LAC or cooperation university programs, or additional workshops within the "Audiovisual and Performing Art" programme, or international workshops (3 CP). In addition, in the Part B the study courses "Civil Protection" (1 CP) and "Environmental Protection" (1 CP) are offered for students who have not acquired such courses at the previous level of study or in other master's studies (in accordance with the 21st paragraph of the Cabinet regulation No. 240 "Regulations on

the state standard of academic education"), But according to annex: 3.2.1.-3._curriculum_mAVSM.xlsx, in view of the fact that the study programme is also implemented in English, the course "Latvian as a Foreign Language" in the amount of (2 CP ensures the acquisition of language skills, in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Depending on the thematic area and specialisation of a student, in several joint study courses, tasks are differentiated, such as, in the study course "Narrative Techniques and Montage in Art" (2 CP), when completing practical tasks, students can choose a medium appropriate to their specialisation (i.e. work with narrative and montage in dramaturgy, film, performance, etc.).

According to (SAR, p.290), the content of study courses is regularly updated in accordance not only with the development trends of industries, the labour market and science, but also in accordance with the individual needs of the academic and professional career of the members of a specific student group, for instance, in the study course "Seminars in Theory of the Thematic Fields", which promotes an individual approach to the academic and creative trajectory of each student, the lecturers of the programme are mostly industry-recognized researchers and artists who, in their research and artistic activities, continuously follow the development trends of industries, but in the study course "Artistic Research and Academic Writing" both the specific interests of students and the latest research and approaches in artistic research are considered, to name just a few.

While LAC has submitted for accreditation also the English stream of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art, it has not been piloted as of now. When implementing the programme in English, (SAR) projects that the part B of the compulsory electives will include the study course "Latvian as a Foreign Language" (2 CP) in the 1st semester, reducing the volume of the study course "Practical workshops" (6 CP) in the 1st semester from 3 to 1 CP, in order to meet the requirement for learning the national language, in accordance with Article 56, Subparagraph 7 of the Law on Higher Education.

In spite of a coherent curriculum structure, one must admit that some of the learning outcomes are quite a stretch. The MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art realistic course of studies is three semesters. It is highly peculiar how in one and a half years it is possible to acquire extensive knowledge and understanding of current research in the humanities and arts and to orient oneself in the historical development processes of audiovisual and performing arts in Latvia and globally.

2.2.2.

The awarding of the degree in the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art is based on the achievements and findings of audiovisual and performing arts creative works, by passing successfully the tests in the study courses of the programme in the amount of 60 CP or 90 ECTS, the content of which includes current theoretical knowledge of the field, academic and artistic research methodologies, approved and innovative creative work methods, and defending a master's thesis (20 CP or 30 ECTS) in accordance with the LAC's Regulations on master's theses in the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art.

The master's thesis consists of a creative work and its theoretical justification (in theory specialisation it is an original theoretical study), the essential evaluation criteria of which are the creative artistic, research, theoretical and technical level and degree of novelty of the work (Article 18 of the Regulations), whereby the whole process is ensured by highly qualified teaching staff of LAC, most of whom are LAC's professors and associate professors, and invited high-quality Latvian and foreign professionals. The residual of the student's creative work and its theoretical write-up must meet the requirements of the master's study programme, upon which the thesis examination committee decides on awarding the degree (SAR, pp-159-160).

2.2.3.

The implementation methods of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art are based on the stated goal to provide unique interdisciplinary studies focused on research and creative excellence in audiovisual and performing, to promote the learning and application of the diverse methodology of artistic research in creative work, and to promote students' intercultural competence and international cooperation, as well as ensure horizontal (non-hierarchical) cooperation between the programme lecturers and students and among the students themselves (SAR, p.292). The report also mentions that a student-centred approach is manifested in the fact that every LAC teaching staff is easy to reach, available for consultations and informal conversations, and the tasks of increased complexity are also offered according to the students' level of preparation, whereby the students can also freely choose a topic of their interest in the development of their master's thesis..

As it has been uniformly repeated in other sections of (SAR) with respect to other academic programs at LAC, the methods used are generally (a) lectures (mostly theoretically oriented study courses) where students are presented with theoretical questions using practical examples, visual material, etc., (b) work in groups, which builds skills in organising and implementing collective work, strengthens students' ability to argue and justify their individual opinion in the process of making a collective decision, (c) independent and individual work. (d) individual lessons, where the study process includes individual lessons with a mentor and provides knowledge, competences, abilities and skills necessary for practising audiovisual and performing arts, (e) tests, (f) extracurricular events where students attend dances, theatre performances, art exhibitions, concerts, films, etc., integrating the acquired experience into the study process (knowledge of the context of audiovisual and performing arts, ability to analyse cultural and artistic processes, etc.), and seminars.

The benefit of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art is small size and with that a more individual approach to the study process, as well as improved, almost exclusive, access to infrastructure at LAC (SAR, pp.293-294).

2.2.4.

According to (SAR, pp.295-296), within the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art internships are offered in the amount of 3 CP or 4.5 ECTS, in accordance with the Internship regulations available on the LAC's website (<https://lka.edu.lv/lv/prakse-un-karjeras-atbalsts/prakse/dokumenti-praksu/>) (Latvian only). LAC's staff is actively involved and provides various types of support with Career education project manager Leonarda Kestere. During the consultations, students' skills are evaluated and analysed and, according to the students' interests and wishes, the internship consultant recommends the most suitable internship places for the students. The director of the program and other lecturers of the programme also provide consultations to students about internship opportunities. Students have the opportunity to complete internship in LAC's structural units - Creative Activity Centre (organisation of events), Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies (participation in research), LAC's Eduards Smilgis Theatre Museum and LAC's Riga Film Museum - as well as in international projects organised by LAC.

Considering that most of the students in the master's programme are also active artists and professionals working in their specialisation, there are no issues with the placement. Students choose, most often choose to complete their internship in film and television production companies (LLC "Fenix Film", LLC "Tasse Film", LLC "Gumennikovfilms", etc.) or in theatres (Latvian Operetta Theatre, Latvia Puppet Theatre, Dirty Deal Teatro, etc.). At the Academy, students choose internships in the projects of LAC's National Film School or LAC's Creative Activity Center.

The report gives a hypothetical scenario when it will carry the English stream of instructions, by which the international students will be placed with the Riga International film festival Riga IFF

(association "Riga International Film Festival"), International Documentary Film Festival "Artdocfest/Riga" (association "ArtdocFest & Media"), Riga International Short Film Festival 2ANNAS (association "Virtual Studio Urga"), theatre and film producer organisations, to name just a few.

Since LAC has a good track record of job placements, there are no indications the international students would be shortened in opportunities.

2.2.5.

n/a

2.2.6.

The topics of the final theses of the students of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art depend to the greatest extent on their own academic and professional interests, which they are asked to define already when applying to the programme. The final thesis of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art consists of a creative work (film, performance, screenplay, play, etc.) and its theoretical write-up, which can be created as an academic study, raising the research question related to one of the aspects of the creative work (SAR, p.296).

The final theses is evaluated by the master's final examination committee, which evaluates them in accordance with the criteria included in point 18 of the LAC Regulations on Master's Theses in the Academic Master's Study programme "Audiovisual and Performing Art". As of now, 11 films and 3 cinematographic works, 5 theatre performances, 1 contemporary dance performance, 1 acting work, 3 plays, 1 screenplay and 3 theoretical studies have been delivered. In most cases, the creative work and its theoretical write-up are also a valuable contribution to the expansion of means of expression and thematic spectrum of audiovisual art, theatre and contemporary dance, by the introduction and development of new approaches and methods. For example, in the field of audiovisual art, a film has been made in the practically non-existent science fiction genre in Latvia, or made about the topics that have not been touched upon in Latvia, such as the issues of abortions, as the consequences of war from the perspective of Georgian children, to name just a few (SAR, p.297).

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

Based on the analysis, the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art meets the criteria specified in sections 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 2.2.4 and 2.2.6. The MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art provides a coherent structure with a topical content and interconnections between study courses/modules, with a focus on research and creative excellence in audiovisual and performing arts within the context of humanities. The MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art also meets industry needs and scientific trends and complies with national regulations.

Student-centred learning and teaching principles are considered, and the implementation methods of the programme are based on the stated goals of the program to promote unique interdisciplinary studies, promote the application of the diverse methodology of artistic research in creative work, and promote international cooperation and students' intercultural competence. Students have varied opportunities for internships and the final theses are relevant to the field.

The programme overall is solid with impressive potential to be one of the most popular in the country amongst academic master degrees. Notwithstanding the quality and significant accomplishments, two aspects need to be addressed.

First, it is crucial to ensure that study results are not stretched beyond their original meaning. The MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art realistic course of studies is three semesters, and nor all the

cited study results may be reached in this short period of time, particularly if formulated in general terms, such as acquiring extensive knowledge and understanding of current research in the humanities and arts and to orient oneself in the historical development processes of audiovisual and performing arts in Latvia and globally.

Second, the obtained degree does not comply with the standard. The interpretation of the Cabinet regulation No. 322 is incorrect. The last edition of the valid "Regulations on Latvian Education classification" (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>), as of 12.11.2021 does not specifically spell the 7th level knowledge, skills and competencies of European Qualifications Framework for academic master degrees, but in cross checking with relevant state authorities, the Appendix 2 to the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of June 13, 2017 No. 322, the table, applies to the 7th level as well, i.e., the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art can have either Master of Arts in Music and Performing Arts (45212) or Master of Arts in Audiovisual Arts and Media Arts (45213), or until the Cabinet Regulation No. 322 is modified to include a new ruling. The panel of experts advise the programme director of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art to issue Master of Arts in Audiovisual Arts and Media Arts (45213), or until the Cabinet Regulation No. 322 is modified to include a new ruling.

Strengths:

1. MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art exhibits coherent curriculum structure;
2. The programme is popular amongst the professionals already working in the creative sector;
3. A good infrastructure to support individual approach to each student;
4. The programme appears to have a good alumni and internship support.

Weaknesses:

1. Some of the study results somewhat stretched beyond the capacity of limited time frame in studies;
2. The obtained degree does not comply with the standard, as the interpretation of the Cabinet regulation No. 322 is incorrect. The MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art is advised to issue Master of Arts in Audiovisual Arts and Media Arts (45213).

Assessment of the requirement [5] (applicable only to master's or doctoral study programmes)

- 1 R5 - The study programme for obtaining a master's or doctoral degree is based on the achievements and findings of the respective field of science or field of artistic creation.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The award is based on the achievements and findings of audiovisual and performing arts creative works, as well as, more broadly, in the humanities and arts, in the amount of 60 CP or 90 ECTS and developing and defend a master's thesis (20 CP or 30 ECTS) in accordance with the LAC's Regulations on master's theses, ensured by highly qualified teaching staff of LAC, most of whom are LAC's professors and associate professors, and invited high-quality Latvian and foreign professionals (SAR, p. 292).

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1.

The study process of the LAC's MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art is organized in three LAC

buildings in Riga; Ludzas Street 24, Dzirnavu Street 46, Riga (Theatre house "Zirgu Pasts") and Elijas Street 17, Riga (National Film School of LAC (NFS)). In some cases, classes are also held in the structural unit of LAC - LAC Eduards Smiļģis' Theater Museum, Riga, Eduarda Smiļģa Street 37.

In the building in Ludzas Street 24, there are technically equipped auditoriums and a library reading room available for students. The auditoriums are equipped according to the needs of the study process (a computer, projector and screen, blackboard, wireless internet and other if necessary). The auditoriums and practical lesson rooms, including two rehearsal halls and a modern black box-type multifunctional hall fully equipped with sound, light and video equipment are housed at the LAC Theatre house "Zirgu pasts", Dzirnavu street 46. Working in this hall, students can consult with the technical specialist and lighting specialist. The hall is heavily occupied for it used for the needs of the study process and performances for contemporary dance study programs too. The multifunctionality of the hall is surely an advantage, but at the same time not very convenient and limiting (heavy organization and workload of adapting and readapting the space on the weekly basis for particular demands of the theatre or dance study process or performances).

The premises in NFS, Elijas street 17, are also available for students; "including two filming pavilions, a computer classroom with eight computers for film editing, two separate video editing rooms with two workstations each (for pair group work), color correction of films workstation with specific technical equipment and software, filming equipment warehouse (200 units), filming light equipment warehouse (150 units), filming sound recording equipment warehouse (50 units). Academy students have access to and actively use digital cinema cameras Sony PMW-F5, Panasonic AU-EVA1E, SONY PXW-FS7M2, Canon EOS C200 and sets of seven Black Magic Pocket Cinema Camera 4K in the study process. Specialized filming lights are available for filming in the NFS pavilion and interiors. Using these resources, the NFS's technical supervisor consultations are available to students." (SAR p. 298)

Another important resource for study and research process is the Cinematheque with more than 2,500 video recordings of motion pictures and theater performances that operates in the premises of NFS. It houses an archive of student films and theater productions, as well as a collection of film recordings in DVD format and it is available free of charge to the students, academics and general staff, with consultations of the director of the Cinematheque, if necessary. The Eduards Smiļģis Theatre Museum and Riga Film Museum collections are also at disposition for the study process and research work.

During site visit, significant variations in studying standards between study programs of Audiovisual and Audiovisual and

Performing Arts have been detected, detachment between study programs of Audiovisual and Audiovisual and Performing Arts have been detected, programs are in general taking place in separate buildings, even though the teachers and students emphasize the collaboration projects between departments. The differences in the studying standard are obvious; the NFS has at disposal larger and more functional working space within the same building and it is at the same time the first study program to move to the new premises, while Contemporary Dance and Audiovisual and Performing Arts study programs continue to struggle with infrastructural and financial issues.

The location of the auditoriums, rehearsal and performance halls in different venues demands high level of organization and is undoubtedly an obstacle for unhindered development of the study process, requiring mobility of students and teachers and the need for portable technical equipment (digital pianos, lighting systems, video projectors, dance floors, etc.). The problems of insufficient provisions are addressed by the SAR p. 299, noticing "that the available rooms are primarily occupied, providing the needs of the students of undergraduate study programs and sub-programs, therefore the availability of rooms suitable for the needs of master's students is limited and insufficient. The increase in the number of students in the academy as a whole and the development of programs exceeds the capacity of the available space resource." Inadequacy of the space

organization and insufficient place for rehearsal and performance is an important issue, especially at the master study program. Plans for the future consider resolving the issue, upon moving to the new premises in the former Tobacco Factory, Miera Street 58a, providing the space for bachelor's study process and enabling the master students to work in LAC's Theatre House "Zirgu pasts" together with the Joint Professional doctoral study program "Arts" of art universities. The plans are ambitious and promising, but seem to be still on the project level. The realization of the plans in the shortest possible time is crucial to be able to increase the number of students and reduce the premature termination of studies, provide the necessary facilities for research growth and artistic creativity.

The second problematic aspect is the available funding for the creation of final creative works. Even though the LAC awards an Achievement Scholarship to students who have successfully pre-defended their master's theses, this does not cover the costs of producing the final theses. LAC tries to attract project funding in SCCF tenders, (with varying results) and made efforts to raise additional funding from the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia (unfortunately without a long-term solution). The SAR p. 300-301 concludes that by combining the resources of LAC with the funding, it has been possible to create high-quality student final works. The general impression remains that the Audiovisual and Performing Arts study program is not in the favorable position at the LAC and that the important issues such as inadequate space organization and the lack of financial support for quality performances should be addressed accordingly.

2.3.2.

n/a

2.3.3.

The funding of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art in 2022 is 151,722 EUR, it is formed from the budget grant, performance funding and tuition fees, and the own revenues are directed to the maximum extent for the development of the program and covering unexpected expenses. To the optimization of study program implementation expenses, a lot of attention is devoted to for example, organizing stream lectures in professor-taught courses and providing remote lectures. The program is additionally financed from the funds awarded by the European Union and Latvia's educational and creative funds for the support of "the mobility of academic staff and students, internships, master workshops, creative works, etc. The state budget grant covers the costs of permanent lecturers, infrastructure and technical support. The performance funding partially covers the costs of the hired guest lecturers and the preparation and presentation of the final creative works. The mobility costs of teachers and students are mostly covered by the available funding of the Erasmus+ and Nordplus programs. In addition, funding is attracted from the State Culture Capital Fund, Project Bank and other sources for the preparation of creative works, attracting guest lecturers for workshops, etc." (SAR p. 300-301)

The minimum number of students in the study program to ensure its profitability is 15 budget places. The program is full time in-class attendance and studies are conducted in Latvian, with plans for future implementation of the program in English. (SAR p. 301)

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The issues with resources and provisions are evident; the dispersion of the classrooms and rehearsal halls in different venues demands a high level of organization and is undoubtedly an obstacle for unhindered development of the study process. It demands mobility of students and teachers and the need for portable technical equipment, which is both complicated and time consuming. The other issue is sharing the multifunctional hall with the BA sub-programmes "Stage Acting" and "Theatre Directing" and the programme "Contemporary Dance" that also requires adapting and readapting

the space pre and after use. The lack of financial support for quality performances of final works is an additional problem and should be addressed as well.

Strengths:

- 1) High level of enthusiasm of both students and teachers;
- 2) Solid Communication connections and intensive cooperation with professional institutions in the field.

Weaknesses:

1. Inadequate space organization – dispersed rehearsal and performance studios at three different venues;
2. Requirements to adapt and readapt spaces for the study process;
3. Lack of financial support for quality performances should be addressed accordingly.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

- 1 R6 - Compliance of the study provision, science provision (if applicable), informative provision (including library), material and technical provision and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The issues with resources and provisions are evident; the dispersion of the classrooms and rehearsal halls in different venues demands a high level of organization and is undoubtedly an obstacle for unhindered development of the study process. It demands mobility of students and teachers and the need for portable technical equipment, which is both complicated and time consuming. The other issue is sharing the multifunctional hall with the Contemporary Dance study programs that also requires adapting and readapting the space pre and after use. The lack of financial support for quality performances of final works is an additional problem and should be addressed as well.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.

The academic, scientific and professional qualifications of the academic staff engaged on implementation of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art comply with the conditions of the study program implementation and regulatory framework. The MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art meets the requirements set out in the third paragraph of the first part of Article 55 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

As stated in SAR (p.301) the specificity of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art requires a balanced mix of the lecturers from the artistic and scientific fields, as well as recognised specialists from the industry. Guest experts from Latvia and abroad are also engaged for workshops or lectures directly connected with the study program and particular courses. The evaluation of the candidates for lecturers and docents takes place in the Senate of LAC meetings, while professors and associate professors are evaluated at the Professors Council of LAC, according to Cabinet of Ministers' Regulations adopted in 2021 No. 129 "The procedure for evaluating the scientific and pedagogical qualifications or artistic creative work results of an applicant for the position of professor or associate professor and an existing professor or associate professor", and with LAC regulatory documents.

The SAR (p.p. 301- 302) states that there are 19 permanent lecturers out of which 7 have doctoral degrees, including 5 with a Doctor of Arts degree. Also, 4 more lecturers are attending the professional doctoral study program in art. The prevalence of artistic doctorate in the composition of staff complies with the content of the study program and conditions of its implementation. Among the teachers there are distinguished national artists with high awards for their artistic work. As stated in SAR (p. 303) the efforts to improve English language proficiency are ongoing regularly as a part of preparations for implementation of the program in English. Therefore, the qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study program and the relevant study courses.

2.4.2.

The changes reported in SAR (p.p. 303-304) are minimal compared to the staff announced in the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art licensing documents. As the reasons for changes three basic reasons are reported: the staff's workload, improvements in study courses and better meeting of the students' needs. None of these changes have a negative impact on the study program. On the contrary, changes have been made to affect positively particular courses and the program in total. As reported in SAR (p.302) the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art has a policy to hire staff with a good knowledge of an English language, to attract the teachers with highly recognised experience in industry and to continuously improve English skills of the engaged teaching staff. Such changes have had positive effects on the implementation of the study program. Also, the problem of staff aging is already answered by involving young lecturers in doctoral studies and including them in the research projects.

2.4.3.

n/a

2.4.4.

The SAR (p.302) states that the selection of the staff highly depends on their creative work experience and contribution to Latvian and international art. As stated in Annexes 2.4.4.-1 and 2.4.4.-2 members of the artistic staff engaged on the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art publicly presented 47 artistic projects as authors, while scientific staff published 45 works in the last 6 years. That makes 4,8 works pro teacher or 15,3 works pro year on program. Some of the teachers are awarded with high national awards for their artistic creation.

More precisely with the recent data the scientific publications are stated in SAR. Table No. 11 in SAR (p.60) lists 295 scientific articles published in the editions included in internationally cited databases in the period 2015-2021. Table 14 in SAR (p. 68) states the same data. Such a record is satisfactory, even though there is still room for improvement in targeting better quality, i.e. higher ranking, publishing media or international publications.

Given the fact that COVID19 crisis hardly influenced performing arts production and presentation, such productivity seems satisfactory. According to SAR (p. 68) most of the teachers are involved in research projects and attend the conferences. The SAR, Annexes 2.4.4.-1 and 2.4.4.-2, as well as teachers CV, proves the information of developed and extended scientific and artistic activities of teachers in terms of presenting, research, publishing, and participating in conferences and in various creative artistic projects.

Among the conferences attended by the academic staff almost all are international conferences, national and international wide. Domestic conferences were organized in Latvia by LAC itself or other Latvian universities or cultural institutions. During the site visit the expert team has been informed that there is institutional financial support at LAC for such activities. It was also noticed that the academic staff would need more time to allocate for such activities.

2.4.5.

As four departments of LAC are providing the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art the communication and collaboration is of particular importance. As stated in the SAR (p.p. 304-305) institutional mechanisms are established in order to assure permanent exchange of information. The program director is coordinating collaboration between four several different departments on LAC and guest lecturers from the industry. The same person is responsible for harmonizing the content and updating the courses according to students evaluation and new demands from the industry.

Established mechanisms assures the achievement of the aims of the study program and the interconnection of study courses within the study program. According to SAR (p.305) there are 4 main types of communication in the program's collaboration process:

- 1) regular staff meetings,
- 2) cooperation of several teachers on the same course,
- 3) attending the student's creative works by all teachers and discussing them
- 4) and transparent exchange of the course descriptions.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by indicating strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The qualification of the academic staff is on a satisfactory level, enabling the achievement of the learning outcomes of the program and the relevant courses. The combination of permanent staff guest lecturers and visiting artists brings new knowledge to the program and keeps direct contact with industry. The changes in staff have had positive effects and are towards improvement according to LAC policy.

Distinguished artists as elected professors or guest lecturers give national visibility to the program and open the possibility of its internalization. Artistic production and scientific research record of the staff is satisfactory even though it can be more balanced. Majority of younger lecturers involved in doctoral studies provide the pool for the future staff after elected teachers retire.

There are formal and informal mechanisms of communication and collaboration on the program, with LAC and the industry. The ratio of 19 lecturers to 26 students at the study program gives no relevant information about staff's workload because most of the teachers are simultaneously teaching at different programs and departments.

Strengths:

- 1) Interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinary of the program;
- 2) Dynamic implementation of the new knowledges due to mix of permanent staff and industry specialist;
- 3) The MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art can be easily internationalized and attract foreign students.

Weaknesses:

- 1) None.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

- 1 R7 - Compliance of the qualification of the academic staff and visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The staff is adequately composed, competent and complies with all the requirements of the MSP

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Annex 3.2.1.-state standard_mAVPA.docx confirms that the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art partially complies with Regulations No. 240 of the Cabinet of Ministers as of 1 May 2014

“Regulations on the National Standard for Academic Education”

<https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=266187> (Available only in Latvian).

But the awarded degree does not comply with Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 240, paragraph 12 (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/266187-noteikumi-par-valsts-akademiskas-izglitiba-standartu>) where it would be more appropriate “Master of Arts in Audiovisual and Media Arts” or “Master of Arts in Audiovisual Arts”. More details in chapter 2.1.2. of this report.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 3 - The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 561, Paragraph two and Section 562, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study course descriptions are prepared in English and Latvian that can be accessed under 3.2.1.-4_Course description_mAVSM.zip comply with regulations set forth in Law on Higher Education Institutions.

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The provided Diploma sample in the annex 3.1.2._mAVSM_EN.zip LV partially complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued according to Cabinet Regulation No. 202 “Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību.

See justification in the first point (above) about a degree awarded while a code describes possible title of degree.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The annex provided -CONFIRMATION_bAVM.pdf certifies that the academic staff involved in the implementation of the study program complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 6 6 - Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 7 7 - At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 8 8 - The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

This is identified in the annex 2.3.-2_CV_EN.zip. It can be concluded that the state language proficiency is compliant with Cabinet Regulation Nr. 733 " Regulations Regarding the Extent of the Knowledge of the Official Language, the Procedures for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language and the State Fee for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language".

- 9 9 - The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

According to the information provided in the annex 2.3.-2_CV_EN.zip. The teaching staff has the necessary English language skills to ensure a good level of quality during the studies with implementation of the study programme in English.

- 10 10 - The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Sample of attached study agreement "2.1.4.-3 study agreement example.pdf" complies with Cabinet Regulation. Nr. 70 "Studiju līgumā obligāti ietveramie noteikumi".

- 11 11 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Annex 2.1.4. _1 Appendix no. 3 LAC has provided confirmation "If implementation of the academic master's study programme "Audiovisual and Performing Art" (45213) of the LAC is discontinued, RISEBA shall ensure that master students from this study programme can continue studies in RISEBA master's study programme "New Media and Audiovisual art" (45213) to obtain master's degree."

- 12 12 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The Academy has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study program is not accredited or the study program's licence is revoked. It is ensured by the document certifying it - 1_translation_Arts RI 2023 that includes LAC confirmation no. 1.10e/35 from 24.01.2023. The documents provided are pursuant to paragraph 13.4 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 795 "Regulations Regarding Licensing of Study programs" .

- 13 13 - The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 55.(1), Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 14 14 - Compliance with the requirements specified in other regulatory enactments that apply to the study programme being assessed (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

- 1 R8 - Compliance of the study programme with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art partially complies (see justification of points 1 and 4) with regulatory enactments.

General conclusions about the study programme, indicating the most important strengths and weaknesses of the study programme

Conclusions:

The MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art provides a coherent structure with a topical content and interconnections between study courses/modules, with a focus on research and creative excellence in audiovisual and performing arts within the context of humanities. The student-centred learning and teaching principles are considered, and the implementation methods of the program are based on the stated goals of the program to promote unique interdisciplinary studies, promote the application of the diverse methodology of artistic research in creative work. Yet, it is crucial to ensure that study results are not stretched beyond their original meaning. The MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art realistic course of studies is three semesters, and nor all the cited study results may be reached in this short period of time, particularly if formulated in general terms, such as acquiring extensive knowledge and understanding of current research in the humanities and arts and to orient oneself in the historical development processes of audiovisual and performing arts in Latvia and globally.

The MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art in the study field of "Arts" with education classification codes 45212 with the last 3 numbers (212) standing for "Music and Performing Arts" and 45213 with the last 3 numbers (213) standing for "Audiovisual Art and Media Art" according to the classification

of Latvian. Students have an opportunity to choose one of the thematic areas of the program - Audiovisual Arts, Theater, Contemporary Dance, Dramaturgy and Theory. Despite recommendation by AIKA to revise the title of the MSP "Audiovisual and Performing Arts" to appropriate "Master of Arts in Audiovisual and Media Arts" or "Master of Arts in Audiovisual Arts" matching the codes (45213) , LAC wants to retain the title which combines codes 45212 standing for "Music and Performing Arts" and 45213 standing for "Audiovisual and Media Art". As the aims, tasks and learning outcomes of the study program are appropriate to both codes content-wise it is appropriate.

Second, the obtained degree does not comply with the standard. The interpretation of the Cabinet regulation No. 322 is incorrect. The last edition of the valid "Regulations on Latvian Education classification" (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>), as of 12.11.2021 does not specifically spell the 7th level knowledge, skills and competencies of European Qualifications Framework for academic master degrees, but in cross checking with relevant state authorities, the Appendix 2 to the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of June 13, 2017 No. 322, the table, applies to the 7th level as well, i.e., the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art can have either Master of Arts in Music and Performing Arts or Master of Arts (45212) in Audiovisual arts and Media Arts (45213), or until the Cabinet Regulation No. 322 is modified to include a new ruling. The panel of experts advise the program director of the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art to issue Master of Arts in Audiovisual Arts and Media Arts (45213), or until the Cabinet Regulation No. 322 is modified to include a new ruling.

The dispersion of the classrooms and rehearsal halls in different venues demands a high level of organisation and is undoubtedly an obstacle for unhindered development of the study process. It demands mobility of students and teachers and the need for portable technical equipment. Sharing the multifunctional hall with the BA sub-programmes "Stage Acting" and "Theatre Directing" and the programme "Contemporary Dance" also requires adapting and readapting the space pre and after use. The qualification of the academic staff is on a satisfactory level, enabling the achievement of the learning outcomes of the program and the relevant courses. The combination of permanent staff guest lecturers and visiting artists brings new knowledge to the program and keeps direct contact with industry. The changes in staff have had positive effects and are towards improvement according to LAC policy. Distinguished artists as elected professors or guest lecturers give national visibility to the program and open the possibility of its internalisation. Artistic production and scientific research record of the staff is satisfactory even though it can be more balanced.

There are formal and informal mechanisms of communication and collaboration on the program, with LAC and the industry. The ratio of 19 lecturers to 26 students at the study program gives no relevant information about staff's workload because most of the teachers are simultaneously teaching. Formal requirements of Law's and National regulations are fully met according to criteria.

Strengths:

- 1) Solid communication and strong links to the professionals of the audiovisual and performing art labour market in Latvia;
- 2) Interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinary of the program: clear and necessary continuation for the graduates of the bachelor program, being particularly valuable for the three year bachelor programs "Audiovisual Arts" and "Contemporary Dance" providing interdisciplinary studies focused on research and creative excellence echoing a strong trend in the arts market;
- 3) Dynamic implementation of the new knowledges due to mix of permanent staff and industry specialists;
- 4) The program can be easily internationalised and attract foreign students.

Weaknesses:

1. According to the "Regulations on the National Standard of Academic Education" (240) by the Cabinet Minister, the obtained degree does not comply with the standard.
2. Inadequate space organisation – dispersed rehearsal and performance studios at three different venues;
2. Requirements to adapt and readapt spaces for the study process;
3. Lack of financial support for quality performances;
4. High drop-out rate;
5. Some of the study results somewhat stretched beyond the capacity of limited time frame in studies.

Evaluation of the study programme "Audiovisual and Performing Art"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Audiovisual and Performing Art"

Short-term recommendations

- | |
|--|
| 1. MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art needs to reformulate its study results to match the realistic expectations of what students can achieve in a short period of time. |
| 2. LAC needs to change the degree according to "Regulations on the National Standard of Academic Education" (the Cabinet Regulation No. 240) and "Regulations on Latvian Education Classification" (the Cabinet Regulation No. 322), i.e., the MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art should offer a Master of Arts in Audiovisual Arts and Media Arts (45213) in order to comply with the current statutes. |
| 3. MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art needs to optimise space organisation – dispersed rehearsal and performance studios at three different venues. |

Long-term recommendations

- | |
|---|
| 1. The MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art should develop an investment plan in order to improve facilities and infrastructure of the program. |
| 2. MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art needs to map out the funding scheme to aid in financial support for quality performances. |
| 3. MSP Audiovisual and Performing Art should limit high drop-out rate and develop strategy to mitigate the rate. |

II - "Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication" ASSESSMENT

II - "Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1

Academic master study programme Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication 45217 (MSP

Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication) is a new study programme in the study field "Arts" focusing on the cultural heritage. The study programme fits within the study field "Arts" as it provides expanded knowledge about the theory and practice of cultural heritage industry in wider context of humanities and creative industries (SAR, p.308),

The development of the programme was carried out within the framework of the European Social Fund project "Development of new study programmes for the labour market of culture and creative industries" (No. 8.2.1.0/18/A/018). At the time of the self-assessment report development, the programme is implemented based on the Latvian Academy of Culture Strategy for 2023-2027, its defined goals and priorities, in accordance with the LAC accredited study direction "Arts". The strategic goal of the programme is set in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 240 on the State Standard of Academic Education (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/266187-noteikumi-par-valsts-akademiskas-izglitiba-standartu> / Latvian only): 1) to ensure the acquisition of in-depth and broad theoretical knowledge and research skills of students by reaching the study results set out in the study programme which correspond to the 7th level knowledge, skills and competencies of European Qualifications Framework (EQF), in accordance of the Latvian Classification of Education; 2) to ensure the ability of the graduates of the program to perform highly skilled professional functions in changing environments, integrate knowledge from different fields, innovate, contribute to the creation of new knowledge and critically and creatively analyse complex scientific and professional problems proficiently using information technologies in their professional activities, research and lifelong learning, as well as in the acquisition and creation of digital content.

2.1.2.

The title of the study programme is "Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication" in the study field of "Arts" with education classification code 45217 with the last 3 numbers (217) standing for "Creative Industries" according to the classification of Latvian education which is available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>.

Degree to be acquired is "Master's Degree in Creative Industries".

The aim of the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication is "to train competent industry professionals who are familiar with the different areas of cultural heritage, the specifics and capabilities of their management and communication, and who are able to hold leadership and creativity oriented positions in a wide range of industry-related institutions. (...) developing a critical and creative approach to management, interpretation and communication" (SAR, p.307).

Admission requirements are bachelor's degree or second level professional higher education, or equivalent higher education in the following thematic fields of education: humanities, arts, social, human behaviour and humanities sciences, information and communication sciences, teacher education and educational sciences. Additional condition for persons who have a bachelor's degree or second level professional education, or equivalent higher education in other thematic areas: at least 2 years of documented work experience in a cultural heritage institution.

According to the opinion of the expert group the title "Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication", code 45217 and "Master's Degree in Creative Industries" to be obtained are interrelated. Aims, admission requirements, objectives stated in SAR (p.308) including acquiring expanded knowledge about the theory and practice of cultural heritage industry; cooperation with potential employers and learning outcomes (SAR, p.309) including being well versed in the latest discoveries, developments, theories and trends in the field of cultural heritage; having extensive knowledge and understanding of current research fields of humanities, arts and cultural heritage and tools of effective and sustainable management and communication of cultural heritage; ability perform creative work and research in complex, unpredictable conditions are interrelated.

The duration of the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication is four semesters or two years in the amount of 80 credit points. The implementation languages of the MSP Cultural Heritage

Governance and Communication are Latvian and English (the level of proficiency is at least B2 level). The duration and scope of the study programme implementation, as well as the implementation language, are reasonable and justified.

2.1.3.

According to SAR (p.312) at the Study Quality Commission session of the Latvian Higher Education Quality Agency on April 27, 2022, the inclusion of the academic master's study programme "Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication" (45217) of the Latvian Academy of Culture into the LAC study direction "Arts" took place. Since the inclusion of the study programme in the LAC study direction "Arts" accreditation sheet (accreditation sheet No. 2022/34, issued on June 20, 2022), no changes have been made to the parameters of the study programme and are not planned as part of the study direction evaluation procedure.

Most of the recommendations for the long-term improvement of the study programme received as part of the procedure during the inclusion of the study programme in the accreditation page of the study direction, which have been completed until the accreditation of the LAC study field, are implemented or are planned to be implemented in short time and are analysed in Appendix 2.6. They include reinforcing cooperation with different departments within the LAC and other institutions to strengthen interdisciplinarity; involvement of academic staff in supporting students in finding internship possibilities; offering part time studies using hybrid learning methods in order to attract and make possible admission to students from more remote regions; internationalisation.

2.1.4.

As stated in SAR (p.315-316) the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication was created in response to the labour market demand of the heritage industry, including memory institutions, which outlines the social and economic basis of the study programme, but the Cultural Policy Guidelines 2022-2027 "Cultural State" emphasise the wider relevance and importance of cultural heritage. The social basis of the study programme is marked by the Cultural Policy Guidelines 2022-2027 "Cultural State". The guidelines state that in the conditions of increasing globalisation and multiculturalism, it is essential to strengthen Latvia's unique cultural values, which are the core of the nation's identity, and to enrich Latvia's cultural space as a set of various elements and artefacts of the existence of the Latvian people rooted in history and valued today, formed by the Latvian language, culture heritage and cultural environment, social memory and lifestyle (see Order of the 316 Cabinet of Ministers no. 143 On the Cultural Policy Guidelines for 2022-2027 "Cultural State").

According to SAR (p.315) when starting their studies, the students of the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication are mostly already employed in organisations related to the field of cultural heritage in different areas of Latvia. The students are museum employees and managers of museums (for example, Cēsis, Olaine, Madona, Jēkabpils, Gulbene); representatives of organisations in the field of cultural heritage of various specialised sciences (for example, museums of medicine, history, art, music and writing, as well as owners, managers or employees of other cultural heritage objects (Āraiši Lake Castle, Jaunpils, Padures manor, etc); employees of other memory institutions - libraries and archives and other employees in fields related to cultural heritage in private or public sectors (the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia, tourism development centres etc.).

Thanks to the international nature of the programme, the participating foreign teachers and specialisation practice, students are encouraged to participate in local and international projects that contribute to the growth of the industry. The programme was also chosen by students who graduated from bachelor's studies at LAC and are interested in studying specifically in the field of cultural heritage. It has also been possible to attract students who have returned from studying

abroad.

Taking into account the generational change in cultural heritage objects taking place during this period (in 2020-2021 three competitions for directors of museums of national importance, competitions for directors of several municipalities and autonomous museums were announced), as well as the existing tendency for private individuals and companies to purchase and start manor buildings and complexes, as well as the restoration and development of other cultural heritage objects, employment prospects can be assessed as high. Graduates of the programme will be cultural heritage specialists who are oriented in the diverse field of cultural heritage, able to adapt and apply their knowledge, skills and competences in a rapidly changing work environment. Such specialists are in demand in cultural heritage sites in their home countries, in local and foreign organisations representing the industry, and in related cultural industries.

According to SAR (p.315) a trend can be observed when the graduates of the programme develop their careers, for example, two directors of the municipal museums have become directors of large national museums. It can also be observed that during their studies, students already start to work in the field of cultural heritage, for example in the Rundāle Palace and the Žanis Lipke Memorial, and also change their careers. For example, a theatre producer started work at the Museum of Literature and Music, while a private sector project manager started work at the National Library of Latvia.

According to SAR (p.316) and appendix 3.1.4. the dynamics of the number of the students has been stable with a drop down during 2021 online admission due to Covid-19. Although a smaller number of students were enrolled than before the pandemic, all of them have continued their studies 100% without dropping out and are currently writing their master's theses. In the following enrolment year, the enrolment results increased again, which confirms the importance of the programme in the industry.

In December 2021, when the programme was submitted for accreditation, 29 students studied in it. In 2022, 13 more new students were admitted to the programme. In the licensing application of the "Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication" programme, it was planned to enrol an average of 20-23 students. In the 2020/2021 study year with the LAC Senate meeting of June 15, 2020 no. 6 decision no. 7, 12 budget study places were approved for the study programme "Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication". With the minutes of the meeting of the LAC Admission Commission of August 31, 2020 no. UK-2020-5 decision no. 1, it was decided to increase the number of study places financed by the state budget in the study programme "Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication" in 2020/2021 from 12 to 14 study places per study year. In the study year 2020/2021, a total of 20 students were enrolled in the programme. In the 2021/2022 study year with LAC Senate meeting of March 15, 2021 no. 3 decision no. 15, 8 budget study places were approved for the study programme "Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication". With the minutes of the meeting of the LAC Admission Commission of July 17, 2021 no. UK-2021-2 decision no. 1 It was decided to increase the number of study places financed by the state budget in the study programme "Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication" in 2021/2022 from 8 to 9 study places per study year. In the 2021/2022 study year, a total of 12 students were enrolled in the programme.

As stated in SAR (p.317) although in the 2022/2023 academic year the applications were also announced for foreign applicants and it was planned to implement the entire content of the Programme also in English, unfortunately, no applications from foreign countries were received. In the future, it is planned to fix this issue with a much more intensive and targeted marketing campaign of the Programme in English on international educational platforms and social networks.

2.1.5.

n/a

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

After analysing the given MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication, it can be concluded that the programme is aligned with the study field "Arts" and provides expanded knowledge about the theory and practice of the cultural heritage industry in the context of humanities and creative industries. The MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication is developed within the framework of the European Social Fund project and is implemented based on the Latvian Academy of Culture Strategy for 2023-2027. The admission requirements are reasonable and justified, which includes a bachelor's degree or equivalent higher education in specific thematic areas. The MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication duration is two years, with an implemented language of Latvian and English.

The economic and social justification of the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication is marked by the Cultural Policy Guidelines 2022-2027 "Cultural State" highlighting the importance of cultural heritage in Latvia's cultural individuality and identity. The graduates of the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication will be cultural heritage specialists who are ideal for performing highly skilled professional functions in the cultural heritage sector in their home countries and abroad, including in related cultural industries.

The dynamics of the number of students have remained stable since the inception of the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication, with an average enrollment of 15 students each year. The interest in the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication in the industry remains high, with a diverse range of students' working backgrounds. The enrolment results have decreased due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, but the interest has increased again in the following year, confirming the importance of the programme in the industry.

Strengths:

1. The MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication has an economic and social justification as it is created to respond to the labor market demand in cultural heritage industry which outlines the social and economic basis of the study programme.
2. The graduates of the programme will be cultural heritage specialists who are oriented in the diverse field of cultural heritage, able to adapt and apply their knowledge, skills and competences in a rapidly changing work environment.

Weaknesses:

none

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1.

As it has been indicated in (SAR, pp. 313-317), the objectives of MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication is to prepare competitive specialists for the cultural and arts industry sector, competent industry professionals who are familiar with the different areas of cultural heritage and are able to hold leadership and creativity-oriented positions in a wide range of industry-related institutions, with a deep understanding of cultural and artistic processes in the national and global cultural space, in line with the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia no. 240 "Regulations on the State Academic Education Standard", and based on the Latvian Academy of Culture strategy for 2023-2027.

The programme itself was developed within the framework of the European Social Fund project "Development of new study programmes for the labour market of culture and creative industries" (No. 8.2.1.0/18/A/018) to ensure the acquisition of in-depth and broad theoretical knowledge and research skills of students by reaching the study results set out in the study programme which

correspond to the 7th level knowledge, skills and competencies of European Qualifications Framework (EQF) (SAR, p.312).

The learning outcomes are geared towards the support of the students in their independent and in-depth learning of the methodological and ethical basic principles of research of cultural and artistic phenomena, in developing knowledge, skills and competence in planning, managing, evaluating and comparative analysis of complex cultural and artistic research problems, and in developing the digital skills specifically required for the culture and art sector, provide a favourable study environment for the dissemination of technological and non-technological innovations of the culture and art.

In terms of topicality, the interconnectedness of the study courses with the objectives of the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication is reflected in the students' experience of an integrated study process on the theory and practice of the cultural heritage field in the wider context of humanities and creative industries (SAR, p.317).

The curriculum, rooted in the cultural heritage and its protection, governance, and in interpretation and communication, is comprised of compulsory Part A, which is 52 CP, clustered around the succession of courses in Cultural heritage and its Protection such as "Types of Cultural Heritage and Their Safeguarding", "Digitisation of Cultural Heritage and Data Systems in the Heritage Sector", "Current discussions in museum theory", to name a few, as well as the development of a master's thesis (20 CP), limited compulsory Part B in the amount of 24 credits, including internship in speciality (2 credits), and optional Part C (optional), where students must take study courses of total 2 CP in Civic and Environmental Protection (Appendix 3.2.1.-3. KMPK EN (1) (1).xlsx).

Considering that the study programme is also implemented in English, "Latvian as a Foreign Language" course ensures the acquisition of language skills, in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions, in the amount of 2 CP and is offered in the 3rd semester (Appendix 3.2.1.-3. KMPK EN (1) (1).xlsx).

In reviewing the previously cited documentation only the study course "Entrepreneurship in cultural and creative industries" might be deemed as business oriented, hence, the curriculum has insufficient number of business acumen clusters that is a part of a good curriculum on governance issues.

2.2.2.

The awarding of the master's degree in "Creative Industries" in the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication is based on successfully passing exams in the study courses in the amount of 60 CP (90 ECTS) and defending a master's thesis (20 CP). In the fourth semester of the programme, each student develops a master's thesis - an individual and independent research work in the amount of 20 credit points, which is the final examination of the study programme and a part of its development is the pre-defence and public defence of the master's thesis before the commission. The master's thesis is a written, independent, interdisciplinary study that proves the student's ability and skill to identify and analyse topical problems related to the theoretical aspects of cultural heritage, governance or communication relevant to the programme, as well as to develop reasonable and original recommendations for their solution. The development of the student's master's theses in the programme is supervised and reviewed by the teaching staff of the programme who are competent in the subject of the specific master's thesis topic. For additional evaluation, both pre-defence and defence commissions are created by an order, so the evaluation is performed by more than one examiner (SAR, p.320).

The MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication has a solid following with a fairly large pool of students. The MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication is currently offered in Latvian, with the English stream to be expected after the decision on the accreditation is made.

2.2.3.

(SAR, pp.321-321) indicate various methods, the combination of theoretical lectures and practical seminars, discussions, and extracurricular events such as visits to museums and cultural heritage objects, all of which ensures a good theoretical base and practical understanding of cultural and artistic processes in the national and global cultural sector, especially in Part B study courses feature interactive learning methods (group discussions, learning knowledge in a practice-based way, lots of independent do-it-yourself tasks, students sharing their experience, attending guest lectures in industry organisations, etc.), while in Part A, passive teaching methods (lectures, work with the text in seminars, extensive use of Moodle, Zoom, etc.) allow students to acquire fundamental knowledge and understanding of the regularities of historical development and modern processes in cultural studies and art.

In terms of the student-centred approach, the programme emphasises the principle of diversity of assessment methods, which manifests itself in several forms, be it students being involved in the evaluation process as part of study courses, evaluating each other's contributions within group works, or reviewing the study works of group members, etc., in addition to the lecturers of the study courses being responsible for the public availability of received feedback and justification for the obtained assessment.

A student-centred approach is also emphasised by means of communication with students, regularly discussing the course of the programme and the study processes. A student-centred approach is also manifested in the fact that every LAC teaching staff and administration are easy to reach, available for consultations and informal conversations (SAR, p.322), while depending on the level of preparation of students, the tasks may be increased in complexity. This has been evident also in conversation with the employers and students, who have positively characterised openness of the staff and the speed at which urgent issues have been resolved. Finally, a student-oriented approach is also supported by the various activities offered by the LAC, such as ERASMUS+ study or traineeship exchanges, the LAC mentoring programme, etc.

One must admit that the information and translation into English provided by SAR has been somewhat incoherent. The expert had to cross check the original in Latvian. Also, some of the study implementation methods are similar in other programs; while logically required to be synchronised by all the departments, the impression one gets is that certain SAR sections had followed a “cut-and-paste” approach in compiling the report.

2.2.4.

The internships at LAC form a compulsory choice part of the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication, the purpose of which is to provide students with opportunities to supplement the knowledge acquired in the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication and to develop professional skills and abilities in accordance with the specifics of the development of the culture and art sector. Internship at the LAC is organised in accordance with the Internship Regulations and rules but documents (agreement form, internship diary-report form, internship manager's feedback form) are available to students on the LAC website. The LAC staff is actively involved and provides various types of support in the form of consultations, where students' skills are evaluated and analysed and, according to the students' interests and wishes, the internship consultant recommends the most suitable one. The information is also disseminated through the LAIS system, as well as on the LAC website. The compulsory choice part of the programme includes Internship in speciality in the amount of 2 CP (SAR, p.323). Students can do internship both in the LAC (in its projects) and at the institutions with which the LAC has concluded a cooperation agreement, as well as other institutions with which a cooperation agreement is concluded for the provision of internship for a particular student, be memory institutions (museums, archives, libraries), cultural heritage sites (e.g. castles, manors), cultural centres, or cultural heritage management institutions and organisations (e.g. National Cultural Center of Latvia, Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia) as the main places for internship.

2.2.5.

n/a

2.2.6.

(SAR, pp. 323-324) clearly state that the topics of the developed master's theses generally reflect current problems and themes in the creative industries (i.e., how to ensure public cooperation in the operation of museums and other cultural heritage objects and how to prove the value and influence of cultural heritage anew in the 21st century, as well as actualize the importance of intangible heritage), and refer either to the industry as a whole, or to a specific organisation, field, and genre. Because master's level studies are mostly chosen by professionals already working in the industry, whose aim is to supplement their knowledge, competences and skills, the topics of their master's favour important organisations for Latvia - the Latvian National Art Museum, Lūznava Manor, which was recognized as the cultural site of the year, Āraiši Museum Park, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia, Riga City Council, Riga History and Shipping Museum, Cēsis History and Art Museum and others. As of June 21, 2022, the main topics of theses were on the role of manors' heritage in the regeneration of rural areas, such as Latgale Exhibition as a tool for developing intercultural competence: the example of the Art Museum RIGA BOURSE, promoting public participation in museums, sustainable management of sacred architectural monuments, and problematics and significance assessment of museum memorial collections, to name just a few (SAR, p.324).

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

Based on the analysis of the given information, the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication at the LAC complies with the national regulations and state education standards or professional qualification requirements. The MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication offers a coherent and relevant curriculum and provides learning outcomes that meet the needs of the industry, labour market, and scientific trends. The MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication also emphasises a student-centred approach to learning and teaching and offers a wide range of effective study implementation methods, including theoretical lectures, practical seminars, and extracurricular events. The MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication provides opportunities for internships related to the learning outcomes that comply with the requirements of regulatory enactments. The topics of the students' final theses are relevant to the field and correspond to the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication. However, the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication needs to improve its specificity in certain areas, particularly in business format modelling in practical settings, to enhance its effectiveness.

Strengths:

- 1.Responsive administrative staff;
- 2.Good student support;
- 3.Excellent internship opportunities within the field;
- 4.Strong rapport with the employers.

Weaknesses:

- 1.The study programme in English is piloted but not realised, yet;
- 2.Business acumen module in the curriculum is not comprehensive enough;
- 3.Substandard translation of the report into English.

Assessment of the requirement [5] (applicable only to master's or doctoral study

programmes)

- 1 R5 - The study programme for obtaining a master's or doctoral degree is based on the achievements and findings of the respective field of science or field of artistic creation.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The awarding of the master's degree in "Creative Industries" in the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication is based on successfully passing exams in the study courses in the amount of 60 CP (90 ECTS) and defending a master's thesis (20 CP) in the fourth semester (SAR, p.320).

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1.

The study process of the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication mainly takes place in the LAC buildings at Ludzas street 24 and Dzirnavu street 46, as well as in the LAC Cinema Museum and the premises of the LAC's structural unit - Theater Museum in limited capacity. In LAC's premises in Ludzas Street 24, there are auditoriums, rooms for practical classes and a library reading room. The auditoriums designed for the study programme is adequately equipped with the necessary technical equipment for live or remote/online lectures. Provisions and technical support are appropriate; the classrooms are fully equipped with computerized workplaces and an interactive whiteboard and available wireless internet connection. The SAR observes that: "the facilities available to LAC and its structural units are smaller than it should be", but upon moving to the Tabakas Fabrika creative quarter at Miera Street 58a, most of the programme will be implemented there, in larger more comfortable premises - library and spacious student co-working spaces, etc. The project proposes that the combined cinema and photo museum move to the quarter, which would provide an additional material and technical base for the implementation of the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication.

The issue of limited available spaces for study process, coincides with the interest for the programme from actively working professionals from different parts of Latvia, employed at the various museums, cultural heritage institutions, municipalities or similar attracted to the programme by the possibility of remote study process (information gathered during site visit). Thus, adapting to the student needs and organising the classes both completely remotely and in a hybrid form, with some students being in person, and others – online, the programme attracts a significant number of students. Also, by further educating active professionals in the field, the programme builds a strong collaboration network and high impact to the cultural heritage sector.

The library resources are regularly replenished and subscriptions to databases related to the field, approved by the Council of the LAC Library, are regularly renewed. Students of the "Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication" study programme actively use the LAC library resources and "the EBSCO National Electronic Resource Package, which includes database resources such as EBSCO Academic Search Complete + MasterFILE Premier, Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition+Consumer Edition, Newspaper Source, ERIC, GreenFILE, LISTA, MEDLINE." (SAR p. 325) The compilation of the inventory is organized in cooperation with the academic staff - the department and programme lecturers, the collection is supplemented on a yearly basis and students are informed about the latest available literature in classes or during programme director's meetings with students.

"The Library also uses the free trials of databases, OPEN ACCESS databases (core.ac.uk, openresearchlibrary.org , ijsrp.org), as well as the digital resources of the National Library of Latvia, implemented within the framework of the LAC study field "Arts", corresponding to the specifics of

the study programmes and sub-programmes (SAR p. 325).

The LAC Library also maintains the LAC Thesis database that includes bibliographic descriptions of the final theses of LAC graduates, as well as full versions of the final theses in person at the Library. As a large number of students are at the same time working professionals in the museum or cultural heritage sector, their working experience supplemented with extensive theoretical research of the field, independent research activities, enables them to better understand theoretical connections and critically analyze the problems of the field. The study process also enables in-depth acquaintance with the theoretical sources and research to be able to apply the latest scientific research methods to their independent research projects, thereby contributing to the cultural heritage sector.

During the study process, The LAC uses an e-study environment (LAC - Moodle and Latvia's Higher Education Information System (LAIS), RTU - ORTUS), which ensures communication with the students, access to resources and information. Moodle provides a useful information channel for communication with the students enabling course descriptions, lecture materials and additional sources, instructions for tasks, tests and assessment books available for each study course. The use of the e-study environment takes place in all study courses and its use is intensified along with the provision of the study process remotely. (SAR, p. 235).

2.3.2.

n/a

2.3.3.

The MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication is financed from the state budget grant and performance funding awarded to LAC, students' tuition fees, as well as from the funds awarded through the European Union fund competition procedure for the mobility of academic staff and students, internships, workshops, creative works, etc. Additional funding has been attracted from various sources for the implementation of creative and educational projects: Financing of foreign cooperation projects EUR 47,439.76; Riga City Municipality EUR 41,757.08; Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia EUR 57,029.89; State Cultural Capital Foundation 217,020.00 euros (SAR, p. 327). Every year, a cost calculation is carried out, after which the number of guest lecturers and the amount diverted for the development of study programmes are determined, which is a part of the own revenues. The minimum number of students in the study programme is 20 budget places. Currently, the programme is full-time attendance in hybrid format and is conducted in Latvian with plans to be implemented in English.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication is adequately organized and takes place in appropriate conditions; the material, technical and informational resources are appropriate for the implementation of the study programme. The Library is adequately equipped and in tune with the needs of the students. Good cooperation with the professional institutions in the field is of high importance, enabling LAC to be in tune with the job market and produce adequately educated professionals.

Strengths:

1. Provisions and technical support regarding MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication are adequate;
2. Solid communication connections and intensive cooperation with professional institutions in the

field;

3. Strong interdisciplinary dimension responsive to the job market.

Weaknesses:

None

Assessment of the requirement [6]

- 1 R6 - Compliance of the study provision, science provision (if applicable), informative provision (including library), material and technical provision and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication is adequately organized and takes place in appropriate conditions; the material, technical and informational resources are appropriate for the implementation of the study programme. The Library is adequately equipped and in tune with the needs of the students. Good cooperation with the professional institutions in the field is of high importance, enabling LAC to be in tune with the job market and produce adequately educated professionals.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.

The qualifications of the teaching staff members of the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication complies with the requirements of the study programme implementation. As stated in the SAR (p.p. 327-328) the courses are provided by 22 lecturers, including elected teachers and guest lecturers. Among the eight elected lecturers there are seven teachers holding doctorate degrees. The MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication complies with the requirements set out in Clause 3 of the first part of Article 55 of the University Law since eight lecturers elected to LAC academic positions are involved in the implementation of the programme. Of those eight lecturers, seven have a doctorate degree.

Election process for the period of 6 years follows the regulation in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers regulations adopted in 2021 No. 129. The evaluation of the scientific and pedagogical qualifications as well as the importance of the creative artistic work takes place at the LAC Senate meetings., of which five are professors elected in the main work of LAC and one is an associate professor. Academic level is satisfactory among guest lecturers and foreign lecturers as well. Beside the academic lecturers the industry specialists are also engaged due to multidisciplinary of the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication.

LAC assures measures for evaluation and reevaluation of teachers' work in the process of election and re-election. The LAC Senate assures that the election process follows academic criteria in accordance with actual regulations. The combination of academic theoreticians and cultural field experienced practitioners enables the achievement of the specific learning outcomes of this study programme. SAR elaborates the digital and English proficiency training, and during the visit, the expert group learned more about the other plans for lifelong learning and professional development of the academic staff.

2.4.2.

As stated in SAR (p.327) the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication was from the

beginning developed in collaboration of different academic specialists working as an interdisciplinary working group. Creating the program and selecting the staff already counted with dynamics in cultural practices and possible mobility of teaching staff. The needs of the programme, closely connected with the cultural market and broader society, requests flexibility in engaging different specialists and experienced professionals according to the demand of new knowledge.

During the on-site visit, an expert group has been informed that LAC provided training for teachers in the field of digital skills, and that Moodle platform for distant learning is widely accepted. The implementation of Moodle, however, depends on each particular course, teacher and content offered through the platform to the students. Recruiting alumni and younger professionals from doctoral studies, LAC provides a pool for the possible new guest lecturers. There are no visible negative effects due to changes in the staff. On the contrary, as stated in SAR (p.329) all the changes have been made in order to engage more professionals recognised in the industry. Other changes are mostly the result of the balancing among social sciences, arts and humanities, and some of them are the result of the engagement of the new experts in different fields.

2.4.3.

n/a

2.4.4.

As stated in SAR (p. 68) most of the academic staff carry out either scientific or artistic research. Academic staff publish their research results in research papers and conferences, or present their artistic productions publicly. Annexes 2.4.4.-1 and 2.4.4.-2, as well as teachers CV, proves the information of developed and extended scientific or artistic activities of teachers in terms of research, publishing, presenting artistic work and participating in various creative artistic projects.

Among the articles published, however, there is a relatively small number of peer reviewed scientific publications in SCOPUS/WoS and ERIH databases. Of 1015 articles listed in Annex 2.4.4.-1 from 2013 to 2021 there are 22 in WoS and SCOPUS and 17 in ERIH. Works categorized as "other publications", "articles" or "sections" are the most frequent form of the publication type stated in Annex 2.4.4.-1. More precisely with the recent data the scientific publications are stated in SAR. Table No. 11 in SAR (p.60) lists 295 scientific articles published in the editions included in internationally cited databases in the period 2015-2021. Table 14 in SAR (p. 68) states the same data. Such a record is satisfactory, even though there is still room for improvement in targeting better quality, i.e. higher ranking, publishing media or international publications.

The artistic presentations were publicly presented in distinguished cultural institutions and significant venues, such as theaters, radio, television, cultural centers and site specific spaces. Among the conferences attended by the academic staff almost all are international conferences, national and international wide. Domestic conferences were organized in Latvia by LAC itself or other Latvian universities or cultural institutions. The list of conferences in Annex 2.4.4.-2 indicates also many European countries and a few non-European but their organizers are not mentioned. Majority (almost all) the conferences attended belong to the field of humanities and art sciences, and minority of them are History and archeology. During the site visit ET has been informed that there is institutional financial support at LAC for such activities. It was also noticed that the academic staff would need more time to allocate for such activities.

2.4.5.

During discussions at the site visit expert group learned that mutual cooperation between all the lecturers at LAC is the core concept of the institutional philosophy and necessary precondition for developing such a big number of programmes and sub-programmes at the LAC. The same is stated in SAR (p.p. 330-331) with specification of the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication leader and various departments responsibilities in terms of communication and

collaboration with members of the teaching staff.

The collaboration between permanent and visiting staff is additionally developed through the practical work and research projects. There are formal and informal mechanisms of permanent cooperation established and practiced, primarily through individual communication. During the interviews at the site visit students expressed the opinion that their feedback on content is taken into account, and teachers stressed flexibility in meeting the needs of both students and cultural market.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by indicating strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The qualifications and professional profiles of the teaching staff engaged in MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication is on satisfactory level. Guest lecturers are recognised professionals in the industry. The staff is very competent and can enable the achievements of learning outcomes of the particular courses and programme in general. There is a good balance between permanent staff and guest lecturers. There is a room for engaging temporary guest lecturers with expertise in some specific sub-areas connected with the programme. Academic staff would need more time to allocate into research and publishing activities. Formal and informal, group and individual communication is well established and makes a positive impact on programme development and achieving the educational goals.

Strengths:

- 1) Good and efficiency communication and collaboration among the lecturers;
- 2) Diverse staff with expertise and experience in different complementary fields;
- 3) Openness to professionals from the field and to engaging young lecturers.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Lack of the time for more research and publishing activities.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

- 1 R7 - Compliance of the qualification of the academic staff and visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The staff is adequately composed, competent and complies with all the requirements of the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication. Minor weakness have been identified, but they do not affect the evaluation of the requirement.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

- 1 1 - The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Annex 3.2.1.-1 KMPK EN (4).docx confirms that the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication complies with Regulations No. 240 of the Cabinet of Ministers as of 1 May 2014 "Regulations on the National Standard for Academic Education"

- 2 2 - The study programme complies with a valid professional standard or the requirements for the professional qualification (if there is no professional standard required for the relevant occupation) provided if the completion of the study programme leads to a professional qualification (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 3 3 - The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 561 , Paragraph two and Section 562 , Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study course descriptions are prepared in English and Latvian that can be accessed under 3.2.1.-4 Course descriptions CHGC.zip comply with regulations set forth in Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 4 4 - The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure according to which state recognised documents of higher education are issued.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The provided Diploma sample in the annex 3.1.2._mKMPK.zip LV complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued according to Cabinet Regulation No. 202 "Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību.

- 5 5 - The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The annex provided CONFIRMATION_mKMPK.pdf certifies that the academic staff involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 6 6 - Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 7 7 - At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 8 8 - The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

This is identified in the annex 2.3.-2_CV_EN.zip. It can be concluded that the state language proficiency is compliant with Cabinet Regulation Nr. 733 " Regulations Regarding the Extent of the Knowledge of the Official Language, the Procedures for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language and the State Fee for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language".

- 9 9 - The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

According to the information provided in the annex 2.3.-2_CV_EN.zip. The teaching staff has the necessary English language skills to ensure a good level of quality during the studies with implementation of the study programme in English.

- 10 10 - The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Sample of attached study agreement "2.1.4.-3 study agreement example.pdf" complies with Cabinet Regulation. Nr. 70 "Studiju līgumā obligāti ietveramie noteikumi".

- 11 11 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LAC has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another higher education institution if the implementation of the study programme is terminated. The agreements are specified in the annex 5__translation LAC ViA agreement 2020 - .It is specified that in case of discontinuation of this study programme, students are to be able to continue their studies at Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences Master's study programme "Strategic Communication and Governance (45321) to obtain Master's degree.

The LAC has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's licence is revoked. It is ensured by the document certifying it - 2__translation KMPK 2023. The documents provided are pursuant to paragraph 13.4 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 795 "Regulations Regarding Licensing of Study Programmes" .

- 12 12 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LAC has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's licence is revoked. It is ensured by the document certifying it - 2__translation KMPK 2023. The documents provided are pursuant to paragraph 13.4 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 795 "Regulations Regarding Licensing of Study Programmes" .

- 13 13 - The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 55.(1), Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 14 14 - Compliance with the requirements specified in other regulatory enactments that apply to the study programme being assessed (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

- 1 R8 - Compliance of the study programme with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication fully complies with regulatory enactments.

General conclusions about the study programme, indicating the most important strengths and weaknesses of the study programme

Conclusions:

After analysing the given MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication, it can be concluded that the programme is aligned with the study field "Arts" and provides expanded knowledge about the theory and practice of the cultural heritage industry in the context of humanities and creative industries. The MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication offers a coherent and relevant curriculum and provides learning outcomes that meet the needs of the industry, labour market, and scientific trends. The MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication also emphasises a student-centred approach to learning and teaching and offers a wide range of effective study implementation methods, including theoretical lectures, practical seminars, and extracurricular events. In reviewing the curriculum, some study courses such as "Resource Rising" and "Strategic Management" could be considered as business-oriented courses, as their content is related to financial resource mobilisation and organisational and business management, yet, the majority responses from the students was that the business modules could be expanded to fit the needs of the industry pressures and realities of the market.

only the study course "Entrepreneurship in cultural and creative industries" might be deemed as business oriented, hence, the curriculum has insufficient number of business acumen clusters that is a part of a good curriculum on governance issues.

With respect to the admission requirements are reasonable and justified, which includes a bachelor's degree or equivalent higher education in specific thematic areas. The dynamics of the

number of students have remained stable since the inception of the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication , with an average enrolment of 20-23 students each year. The interest in the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication in the industry remains high, with a diverse range of students' working backgrounds. The MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication is adequately organised and takes place in appropriate conditions. The qualifications and professional profiles of the teaching staff engaged in MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication is on satisfactory level. The staff is very competent and can enable the achievements of learning outcomes of the particular courses and programme in general. There is a room for engaging temporary guest lecturers with expertise in some specific sub-areas connected with the programme. Academic staff would need more time to allocate into research and publishing activities. Formal and informal, group and individual communication is well established and makes a positive impact on programme development and achieving the educational goals. Formal requirements of Law's and National regulations are fully met according to criteria. However, the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication needs to improve its specificity in certain areas, particularly in business format modelling in practical settings, to enhance its effectiveness.

Strengths:

1. Good and efficient communication and collaboration among the lecturers;
2. Diverse staff with expertise and experience in different complementary fields;
3. Openness to professionals from the field and to engaging young lecturers;
4. Provisions and technical support regarding study programmes are adequate;
5. Strong interdisciplinary dimension responsive to the job market;
6. Responsiveness of the program to the labour market demand in the cultural heritage industry is evident and outlines the social and economic contribution.

Weaknesses:

1. Lack of the time for research and publishing activities; The MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication in English is piloted but not realised, yet;
2. Business acumen module in the curriculum is not comprehensive enough;
3. Substandard translation of the report into English.

Evaluation of the study programme "Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication"

Short-term recommendations

- | |
|--|
| 1) MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication program must perform analysis of time dedicated to research and publishing activities; |
| 2) The program should expand the business acumen module in the curriculum; |
| 3) The program should continue working on the study programme being attractive to the foreign students and implement a more intensive and targeted marketing campaign of the Programme in English. |

Long-term recommendations

1. To start implementation of the program in English after the first cycle of testing and performing analysis of the potential markets for recruiting students.
2. Allocate sufficient time for the faculty to conduct research and publishing activities.
3. Open the English arm of the MSP Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication, instead of a pilot.
4. In the next reporting period hire a professional translator to make the self-assessment report easier to read and comprehend.

II - "Cultural and Arts Management" ASSESSMENT

II - "Cultural and Arts Management" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1.

The academic master's study programme "Cultural and Arts Management" (45217) (MSP Cultural and Arts Management) fits well within the goal of the study direction "Arts" as the study program prepares professionals in the cultural and arts management which is a crucial component of the arts ecosystem. The compliance of the study field "Arts" with MSP Cultural and Arts Management is achieved via "the courses included in the programme, which promote a deeper understanding of culture and arts and examine current trends in various sectors of culture and the creative sector, introduce the activities of cultural organisations and the management of cultural events, promoting interdisciplinary knowledge and promoting understanding of the cooperation possibilities of different sectors"(SAR, p.91). During the assessment visit students, graduates, employers and faculty confirmed that the content of the MSP Cultural and Arts Management with a significant focus on arts subjects makes graduates competitive and demanded in the arts and cultural management labour market. The MSP Cultural and Arts Management is chosen also by arts professionals to continue their professional development as freelance artists and/or curators.

2.1.2.

The title of the study programme is "Cultural and Arts Management" in the study field of "Arts" with education classification code 45217 with the last 3 numbers (217) standing for "Creative industries" according to the classification of Latvian education which is available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>. In 2022, according to the decision of the LAC Senate session 19.12.2022 (Minutes of the Senate session, no.10) it was decided to eliminate the sub-programmes in the LAC academic master's study programme and change the name of the programme to "Cultural and Arts Management", which practically means - transforming a previously dominant sub-programme into a programme (SAR, p.90). Changes made in the master study programs are well depicted in Image no.1, p.90 in SAR.

The title of the degree awarded is "Master of Arts in Creative Industries".

The goal of the MSP Cultural and Arts Management is "to prepare competitive specialists for the cultural and arts industry labour market, with a deep understanding of cultural and artistic processes in the national and global cultural space and the management skills for cultural and artistic organisations. The aim of the programme is to provide students with the opportunity to acquire in-depth theoretically and practically oriented knowledge, skills and competences demanded by the labour market of modern culture and creative sector" (SAR, p.91)

Admission requirements - bachelor's degree or second level professional higher education, or

equivalent higher education (according to the SAR, p.87 in the following fields of education: humanities, arts, social, human behaviour and humanities sciences, information and communication sciences, teacher education and educational sciences) and entrance exam combining previously submitted letters of motivation and interview, including a part in English to test language skills are reasonable and support the selection of motivated students.

According to the opinion of the expert group the title "Cultural and Arts Management", code 45217 and Master of Arts in Creative Industries degree to be obtained, as well as aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements are interrelated.

The duration of studies in the MSP Cultural and Arts Management is four semesters or two years in the amount of 80 credit points or 120 ECTS. This amount is appropriate for master's level studies for students, especially with arts and cultural backgrounds. The interdisciplinary learning of theoretical and practical knowledge of humanities and social sciences combined with a research component and internship, for a shorter study period would not be suitable for learning the full study content. According to SAR (p.93) "the programme should provide time for all students to gain an equivalent understanding of the principles of culture and the creative sector as the LAC bachelor study programme graduates with a humanities degree in the arts has". As this regards mostly to the students who have obtained previous education in other thematic areas. According to the information gathered during the onsite visits it is not convincing that graduates from the bachelor's programmes of the LAC or other arts education institutions would benefit equally, leaving students with an arts degree not satisfied with the learning outcomes.

As the main focus of the MSP Cultural and Arts Management is to prepare specialists for the public sector in Latvia, it is justified to have Latvian as the implementation language with one course in English for the graduates to be able to work also internationally when necessary.

After the pandemic the study process in this MSP Cultural and Arts Management since the study year 2021/2022 takes place in a combination of in-person and online classes. On average, out of the four evenings in which studies take place, 1-2 evenings (25-40%) of each semester in each group take place in an online format. Considering the fact that most of the students are full time employed the format is justified. Also as indicated in SAR (p.97) in the beginning of the semester the proportion is discussed with students and faculty.

2.1.3.

According to SAR (p.89) no changes have been made to the parameters of the academic master's study programme "Arts" (the MSP "Cultural and Arts Management" until 2022 was a sub-programme in MSP "Arts". See 2.1.2.) since the issuance of the accreditation sheet for the study direction "Arts" on May 22, 2013 (as well as the issuance of a new accreditation sheet on June 22, 2020 (accreditation sheet No. 2022/34)).

As a part of this study evaluation procedure, the LAC has planned to change three of the parameters of the study programme: name of the study program, the programme code and the awarded degree.

1)The new name of the study program previously a sub-programme of the study programme "Arts", SAR, p.90) is planned to be "Cultural and Arts Management" - it matches the focus and contents of the study sub-programme which used to be named "Cultural Management".

2)The programme code 45212 (educational programme group "Music and performing arts") will be changed to 45217 (educational programme group "Creative industries").

3)The title of the awarded degree is to be changed from "Master of Arts" to "Master of Arts in Creative Industries".

According to the opinion of the expert group the changes in three parameters are reasonable and would be supported, they more accurately correspond to the current content of the programme and the specifics of the industry.

Study direction, language of implementation and other parameters are not planned to be changed.

2.1.4.

Based on the information provided in the SAR (p.93) and gathered during onsite visit, the expert group has concluded that the economic and social justification of the MSP Cultural and Arts Management is very clear and based on the knowledge of the lecturers and regular research of the cultural and artistic work market of Latvia. One of the main target groups of the MSP Cultural and Arts Management are the heads of cultural centres all around Latvia. As stated in SAR (p.93) "the economic and social justification of the programme in the long term is also formed by the "Cultural Centers Law" adopted in 2022 (entered into force on 11.10.2022), which determines the necessary qualifications for heads of cultural centres". Thus the MSP Cultural and Arts Management is expected to be compelling for the cultural managers all around Latvia providing prospective students to the programme, filling the niche in educating culture workers. As regards the graduates of bachelor's study programmes in the thematic areas of culture and arts based on the information gathered during onsite visits their satisfaction with the programme seemed to be lower.

Dynamics of the number of students of the MSP Cultural and Arts Management in SAR (p.95) is analysed taking into the consideration the changes in the sub-programmes since 2013. As Table no. 1. Indicates between 2013 and 2022, the total number of students in the programme (sub-programme) has decreased. The decrease in the number of students can be explained both by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic (especially in the 2021/2022 study year) and by the development of new study programmes at LAC. The newly created joint master's study programme of LAC and Riga Technical University "Creative Industries and Growth Management" attracts part of the students who previously might enter the "Cultural Management" sub-programme. In both programs together the total number of students for 2020/2021.academic year was 44 students. Following it is 18% more in total then before. Upcoming study years will show the dynamics but already initial tendencies show that having 2 programs with more specific specialisations/emphasis will increase the number of students in both programmes.

As stated in SAR (p.93) 85% of the graduates of the MSP Cultural and Arts Management are already employed upon graduation. They work in various different cultural sectors (SAR, p.93) - 18% work in the field of cultural education, 11% work in the field of performing arts (theatre, opera, shows, circus, etc.) and music, 8% work in the field of public relations, marketing and another 8% represent audiovisual art industry (cinema, video, etc.) Also represented are such industries as museums, archives, libraries (7%), recreation, entertainment and/or tourism sector (6%), business (6%), cultural administration (6%) and other industries. The most popular position is project manager. A positive tendency is also the fact that quite many graduates of the programme continue their relationship with the LAC through collaborations and even more important through teaching and research activities at the LAC and through that "the programme ensures the regeneration of LAC academic staff (since a large part of LAC teaching staff and researchers are LAC graduates themselves)" ((SAR, p.94).

2.1.5.

n/a

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The academic master's study programme "Cultural and Arts Management" (45217) (MSP Cultural and Arts Management) is a formally new programme (LAC's senate decision from 19.12.2022) as a continuation of MSP Arts sub-programme "Cultural Management". The structural changes in masters' programmes led to eliminating sub-programmes due to creating the separate study programmes or ceasing admission in some sub-programmes. The economic and social justification, as well as content of the study programme is strongly linked to the "Cultural Centers Law" entered

into force on 11.10.2022) which determines qualifications for heads of cultural centres. The clear focus and the demand of the labour market strongly justifies the MSP Cultural and Arts Management. Qualified cultural managers who are well educated in broad arts context support the whole arts field and overall vividness of cultural life around the country.

Strengths:

1. The MSP Cultural and Arts Management has a clear target audience and follows the need of the job market;
2. The students of the MSP Cultural and Arts Management come from different regions of Latvia (programme fills the niche to prepare the heads of cultural centres according to the demands stated in recently issued "Cultural Centers Law" adopted in 2022 (entered into force on 11.10.2022)). Thus the programme addresses the important issue of decentralisation.

Weaknesses:

1. Focusing on providing all students to gain an equivalent understanding of the principles of culture and the creative sector, i.e., ensuring that the graduates of other thematic areas are as competent as the graduates of the LAC poses a question of how the graduates from the bachelor's programmes of the LAC would benefit equally from the programme as they already have a significant portion of the knowledge.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.1.1.

The objectives of the MSP Cultural and Arts Management is to prepare competitive specialists for the cultural and arts industry labour market, with a deep understanding of cultural and artistic processes in the national and global cultural context and the management skills for cultural and artistic organisations. To support the developing trends of industries, the labour market and science, while responding to the individual needs of the academic and professional career of the members of the specific student group, the curriculum is aligned with the achievement of results as cited in Appendix 3.2.1.-2. The content of study courses is regularly updated to reflect that, and the study planning of the programme is also regularly reviewed with teaching staff, taking into account feedback from students. A more detailed description of particular examples of the changes made in the programme, taking into account the feedback from students and graduates, is indicated in the Appendix "Analysis of the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers" (SAR, p.99).

For such a purpose, the MSP Cultural and Arts Management provides basic and specialised knowledge, skills and professional competence in the cultural and arts management in accordance with the level 7 knowledge, skills and competence of the framework structure determined in the Latvian education classification. In addition to the program, and, according to the regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers no. 240 Provisions on State Academic Education Standards, Clause 21, which mandates that if the student has not completed the requirements specified in the Civil Protection Law in a lower-level study program, then in addition to the program, the "Civil Protection" (1 CP) and "Environmental Protection" (1 CP) study courses become compulsory.

The MSP Cultural and Arts Management plan consists of three parts and seven thematic blocks: Part A (compulsory) with 47 CP, including the development of a master's thesis (20 CP), with its 3 blocks, as well as Part B (compulsory choice) with 29 credits, including "Specialization Practice" (5 credits).

The compliance of the MSP Cultural and Arts Management content with the requirements of the labour market is determined by the students' active involvement in the labour market already during his or her studies, as well as during the specialisation internships. At the end of the 3rd study semester, students participate in the defence of the internship, sharing their experience, reflecting

on their ability to integrate into the internship organisations.

In reviewing the required appendices, namely, Compliance of the study program with the national education standard, namely, Mapping of study courses/modules for achieving study results of the study program, Study program plan, Descriptions of study courses/modules (Appendix 3.2.1.-1; 3.2.1.; 3.2.1.-3.;3.2.1.-4.), no formal shortcomings have been identified, with the exception of insufficient segmentation and real life scenario based business acumen courses that target specific cultural disciplines (SAR, pp.99-100).

The shortcoming of the program is the lack of offering its English arm,i.e., in terms of sustainability the international pools of applicants appears to be missing.

2.2.2.

The awarding of the master's degree in the MSP Cultural and Arts Management is based on the achievements and knowledge of humanities and arts and is obtained by (a) passing exams in the study courses of the program in the amount of 60 CP (90 ECTS) and (b) a master thesis (in accordance with the Latvian Academy of Culture Regulations about final examinations of bachelor and master studies), with the latter being carried out in the fourth semester of the program, whereby each student develops an individual and independent research work in the amount of 20 credit points, therefore, 80 CP in total, the standard in academic master's programs.

The master's thesis is a written, independent, interdisciplinary research, which proves the student's ability and skill to identify and conduct investigations into topical issues related to the theoretical aspects of culture, arts and creative industry, and not limited to cultural management, cultural policy, cultural economy, and marketing. The student's master's theses in the program are supervised and reviewed by the teaching staff of the program who are competent in the subject of the specific master's thesis topic. The criteria for evaluating master's theses are available to students on the LAC's website (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aBRafU0uVK6Qa-Lzy6PtQgmzbfQtOv2i/view>) (Latvian only) (SAR, p.101).

2.2.3.

As explained in (SAR, pp.102-103), learning outcomes such as, but not limited to acquiring knowledge and understanding of the regularities of the historical development and modern processes of the cultural and artistic sectors and their relationship with cultural and artistic process management approaches, ability to independently obtain information and critically analysing industry problems, knowing and applying the latest scientific research methods of cultural studies and art; ability to argue about cultural studies, the art industry and arts management or other professional aspects of the cultural and creative sector with both specialists and non- specialist, learning the basic principles of cultural and artistic organisation and project management, classic and digital marketing, branding, knowing how to apply them in practice, or managing cultural projects, making independent decisions, creatively and conceptually using theoretical knowledge and empirical research data, demonstrate entrepreneurship skills and a civically active position in their messages, are obtained via following: lectures, seminars, working groups, independent and individual works, extracurricular activities, and tests, and attending cultural events.

Student-centred approach in the MSP Cultural and Arts Management is promoted by the significant proportion planned of seminars, practical classes, and individual choices in specific topics, and by means of the transition to a reduced number of contact hours per credit point (from 16 to 12), thus a gradual transition to a study format that is closer to the module principle has also taken place. The student-centred approach is also supported by various activities offered by LAC (e.g. ERASMUS+ study or internship experience exchange trips, LAC mentoring program). Every year at least one of the students of the program takes the opportunity to participate in each of the mentioned programs. Each course has a group leader who is in regular communication with the program director and vice versa. Students have the opportunity to receive individual consultations from the academic staff,

including communication through the e-study environment, e-mails, ZOOM, Microsoft Teams. If the particular teacher allows it, then also by phone and on social networking sites Whatsapp, Facebook Messenger, etc.

The master students have been overall satisfied with the quick response from the faculty and any changes to the curriculum are updated quickly.

2.2.4.

(SAR, p.104) has indicated that internships at the LAC are organised in accordance with the Internship Regulations in accordance with the program's internship rules. Internship regulations, rules and documents (agreement form, internship diary-report form, internship manager's feedback form) are available to students on the LAC website, but the LAC staff is actively involved and provides various types of support in the internship context. Students of the program during the internship period assist the heads of organisations, heads of departments, write texts, prepare information and communication materials about exhibitions, performances and other events, work with the media, organise events, work on the implementation of new projects in organisations, perform management jobs. In the last two years (since the sub-program "Cultural Management" was launched), students have chosen internships in museums and theatres (National Art Museum of Latvia, Latvian Contemporary Art Center, Tukuma Museum, Latvian National Theatre), in various projects and festivals (in the "Rail Baltica" project, the international film festival "Riga IFF", the conversation festival "Lampa"), at the structural units of the Latvian Academy of Culture and at the events organised by them (at the LAC festival of performing and audiovisual arts "Patriarha Rudens", at the international scientific conference "Cultural Crossroads", in the professional development courses organised by LAC and the State Educational Content Center), as well as elsewhere.

"Specialisation Practice" (core internship) is provided in the 3rd semester in the amount of 5 CP (Appendix 3.2.1.-3_Curriculum_KMP)

The Regulations on the national standard of academic education Nr. 240 (https://likumi-lv.translate.google.com/ta?id/266187-noteikumi-par-valsts-akademiskas-izglitiba-standartu?_x_tr_sl=lv&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=en&_x_tr_pto=sc) do not require the academic programs to provide internships but LAC has chosen to make them mandatory in the program so that students could supplement the knowledge acquired in the study program with professional skills and abilities in accordance with the specifics of the development of the culture and art sector, the current conditions of the labour market structure and environment, and also, the needs of employers.

2.2.5.

n/a

2.2.6.

Self-Assessment Report (SAR, pp. 105-107) has indicated that students in the MSP Cultural and Arts Management develop a full-scale theoretical study in accordance with the LAC Methodical Regulations for the development of course, bachelor's and master's thesis. Between 2013 and 2022, a total of 123 master's theses have been developed in the program with an average rating of 8.00 points and with focus on the issues that vividly demonstrated the integration of the interdisciplinary factor within the current problems and themes of creative industries (including marketing, branding, audience engagement and development), analysis of marketing strategies, organisation operation and management in various sectors (state, municipal, nongovernmental, private), and the analysis of demand and supply of specific cultural products. The breakdown of the table supplied has shown a variety of topics for the theses, from topics relevant to various cultural organisations (including cultural centres and cultural sector research in general), performing arts and music, cultural economy, cultural and digital marketing, and career research.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The program is well positioned nationally with some promise to expand internationally, featuring certain qualities, especially in the field of course preparation and composition of its curriculum. However, the programme might face challenges if it stays within the national scope (offering the program in Latvian only). In view of the reputable staff and assessment of the curriculum, switching to English might be a logical step forward. The management proportion of the curriculum (including not limited to financing, accounting, marketing, strategic planning) appears insufficient particularly with respect to the market segmentation.

Strengths:

1. MSP Cultural and Arts Management exhibits a well structured curriculum.
2. The program has a strong link with the labour market.

Weaknesses:

1. Having the program in Latvian only is limiting.
2. Business and strategic planning cluster in the curriculum is not sufficiently provided.

Assessment of the requirement [5] (applicable only to master's or doctoral study programmes)

- 1 R5 - The study programme for obtaining a master's or doctoral degree is based on the achievements and findings of the respective field of science or field of artistic creation.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The awarding of the master's degree in the MSP Cultural and Arts Management is based on the achievements and knowledge of humanities and arts and is obtained by (a) passing exams in the study courses of the program in the amount of 60 CP (90 ECTS) and (b) a master thesis (in accordance with the Latvian Academy of Culture Regulations about final examinations of bachelor and master studies), with the latter being carried out in the fourth semester of the program, whereby each student develops an individual and independent research work in the amount of 20 credit points, therefore, 80 CP in total, the standard in academic master's programs.

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1.

The main building of LAC at Ludzas street 24, Riga houses the study process of the MSP Cultural and Arts Management. The auditorium designed for the MSP Cultural and Arts Management is adequately equipped with the necessary technical equipment for live or remote/online lectures. Provisions and technical support are appropriate; the classrooms are fully equipped with computerized workplaces and an interactive whiteboard and available internet connection. In certain cases lectures as the MSP Cultural and Arts Management, can be held in the LAC Theatre House "Zirgu Pasts" at Dzirnavu Street 46, Riga (foreign lecturers for instance), enabling attendance to wider number of students and students with disabilities (SAR p. 109), because the main building has limited access for students and teachers with reduced mobility. The classes are organized live, remotely or in hybrid format enabling students to connect to the class online in the auditorium. The library resources are regularly replenished and subscriptions to databases related to the field, approved by the Council of the LAC Library, are renewed. "The LAC Library uses the database

resources included in the National Electronic Resource Package: EBSCO Academic Search Complete + MasterFILE Premier, Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition+Consumer Edition, Newspaper Source, ERIC, GreenFILE, LISTA, MEDLINE.” (SAR p. 110) The compilation of the inventory is organized in cooperation with the academic staff - the department and programme lecturers, the collection is supplemented on a yearly basis and students are informed about the latest available literature in classes or during programme director's meetings with students.

“The Library also uses the free trials of databases, OPEN ACCESS databases (core.ac.uk, openresearchlibrary.org , ijsrp.org), as well as the digital resources of the National Library of Latvia, implemented within the framework of the LAC study direction "Arts", corresponding to the specifics of the study programmes and sub-programmes (SAR p. 110).

The LAC Library also maintains the LAC Thesis database that includes bibliographic descriptions of the final theses of LAC graduates, as well as full versions of the final theses in person at the Library. As a large number of students are at the same time working professionals in the cultural field, their working experience supplemented with extensive theoretical research of the field, independent research activities, enables them to better understand theoretical connections, critically analyze industry problems, as well as apply the latest scientific research methods of cultural studies and art, which are also the most important results of study courses.

2.3.2.

n/a

2.3.3.

The MSP Cultural and Arts Management is created on the basis of funding from the state budget, and the own revenues are directed to the maximum extent for the development of the programme and covering unexpected expenses.

The programme is organized in a form of a full time in-class attendance and studies are conducted in Latvian. In order to ensure the profitability and optimization of the study programme, the minimum number of students in the study programme is 20 students, the classes are mostly held live, certain lectures are provided remotely and organized flow lectures in professor-taught courses. Hybrid format is also applied enabling students to connect to the class online in the auditorium.(SAR p. 110-111)

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The LAC provides adequate material, technical and informational resources for the implementation of the study programme of MSP Cultural and Arts Management. The limited access for students and teachers with reduced mobility to the auditoriums in the main building is partly surmounted by hybrid format of the classes. The Library is adequately equipped and in tune with the needs of the students. Good cooperation with the professional institutions in the field is of high importance, enabling LAC to be in tune with the job market and produce adequately educated professionals.

Strengths:

1. Provisions and technical support regarding study programmes are adequate;
2. Solid communication connections and intensive cooperation with professional institutions in the field.

Weaknesses:

- 1.Limited access for students and teachers with reduced mobility to the auditoriums in the main building.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

- 1 R6 - Compliance of the study provision, science provision (if applicable), informative provision (including library), material and technical provision and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The MSP Cultural and Arts Management is adequately organized and takes place in appropriate conditions, except for the limited access for students and teachers with reduced mobility to the auditoriums in the main building which is partly surmounted by hybrid format of the classes. Even minor weaknesses have been identified, they do not affect the evaluation of the requirement.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.

The MSP Cultural and Arts Management involves 26 elected teachers and guest lecturers, including elected academic staff in research. As stated in SAR (p. 111), 16 teachers are elected professors or lecturers, of which 12 with a doctorate degree. Among 8 guest lecturers 3 have a doctoral degree. A large number among the lecturers without doctoral degree are either on doctoral studies or the candidates for one. That number shows good balance between elected and guest staff, and also high qualifications and academic level of all teachers in general.

As 75% teachers engaged in this MSP Cultural and Arts Management have doctoral degrees, and legal regulation stipulates a minimum of 40%, it is obvious that the number of teachers with doctoral degrees is almost double compared to the number stipulated by The Law of Universities. According to the documents provided, there are established standards for the engagement and evaluation of the academic staff. Election process for the period of 6 years follows the regulation in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers regulations adopted in 2021 No. 129. The evaluation of the scientific and pedagogical qualifications as well as the importance of the creative artistic work takes place at the LAC Senate meetings.

The MSP Cultural and Arts Management complies with the requirements set out in Clause 3 of the first part of Article 55 of the University Law. During the site visit expert group has been informed about the flexibility in engagement of distinguished practitioners in the cultural field in order to provide students with sub-specialist knowledge and enrich their competences.

2.4.2.

The changes made mostly in the individual study courses are minimal and show no negative impact on the study quality. As stated in SAR (p. 113) the composition of the teaching staff of the MSP Cultural and Arts Management is based on the engagements of the lecturers from the Department of Sociology and Management of Culture (50% of the elected academic staff in the programme) and guest lecturers already engaged by that department. At the same time, the second largest proportion (31% of the elected teachers in the programme) come from the Department of Theory and History of Culture.

The changes to the composition of teaching staff made a positive impact on the programme. Engaging new teachers and collaborators in addition to recent members of the academic staff brought to the programme new practical knowledge and skills from the cultural practices and the most recent theory. Also, the changes needed to improve the balance between social sciences, arts and humanities have been made.

Based on the analysis, it can be stated that all the changes affected positively the quality of the

implementation of the study programme. After such, as stated in SAR “necessary changes”, the composition of the teaching staff remains stable remaining the number of teachers in range 24-27. (SAR p.116).

The SAR (p.p. 115-116) explains the motivation and reasons for the proportion of 26 lecturers to 25 students. It is clear that such proportion contributes to the achievements of the high quality of the programme, even though it seems somewhat unbalanced.

2.4.3.

n/a

2.4.4.

As stated in SAR (p. 68) most of the academic staff carry out either scientific or artistic research. Academic staff publish their research results in research papers and conferences, or present their artistic productions publicly. Annexes 2.4.4.-1 and 2.4.4.-2, as well as teachers CV, proves the information of developed and extended scientific or artistic activities of teachers in terms of research, publishing, presenting artistic work and participating in various creative artistic projects. Among the articles published, however, there is a relatively small number of peer reviewed scientific publications in SCOPUS/WoS and ERIH databases. Of 1015 articles listed in Annex 2.4.4.-1 from 2013 to 2021 there are 22 in WoS and SCOPUS and 17 in ERIH. Works categorized as “other publications”, “articles” or “sections” are the most frequent form of the publication type stated in Annex 2.4.4.-1. More precisely with the recent data the scientific publications are stated in SAR. Table No. 11 in SAR (p.60) lists 295 scientific articles published in the editions included in internationally cited databases in the period 2015-2021. Table 14 in SAR (p. 68) states the same data. Such a record is satisfactory, even though there is still room for improvement in targeting better quality, i.e. higher ranking, publishing media or international publications.

The artistic presentations were publicly presented in distinguished cultural institutions and significant venues, such as theaters, radio, television, cultural centers and site specific spaces. Among the conferences attended by the academic staff almost all are international conferences, national and international wide. Domestic conferences were organized in Latvia by LAC itself or other Latvian universities or cultural institutions. The list of conferences in Annex 2.4.4.-2 indicates also many European countries and a few non-European but their organizers are not mentioned. Majority (almost all) the conferences attended belong to the field of humanities and art sciences, and minority of them are History and archeology. During the site visit ET has been informed that there is institutional financial support at LAC for such activities. It was also noticed that the academic staff would need more time to allocate for such activities.

2.4.5.

In accordance with LAC general policy and communication philosophy mechanisms are various, different and rather individual than collective. The responsible to coordinate and to facilitate the collaboration is the director of the programme. The frequency and regularity of communication is assured and monitored, so the cooperation of the teaching staff is part of the programme’s dynamic. Communication and collaboration among all five departments at LAC is necessary in order to obtain quality of the courses. Collaboration is also a very important condition for meeting the students needs and answering to demands from the employers and cultural environment. Also, some of the courses are designed as a collaborative work of more lecturers. That requires collaboration between the permanent staff and guest lecturers, partner institutions and representatives of the cultural and art industry literally on a daily basis and at a multitude of different levels.

During the on site visit expert group learned that students and teachers are fully satisfied with the level and quality of the collaboration at the MSP Cultural and Arts Management. The same states the SAR (p.p. 115-116).

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by indicating strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

Generally, the teaching staff engaged in the MSP Cultural and Arts Management is composed of different specialists with high achievements in their field. The lecturers of all LAC departments are involved in the implementation of the programme, with the guest lecturers recognised in the cultural and art industry, cultural management and cultural policies.

Flexibility in engagement of the lecturers with fresh and new knowledge in the field present the most important change made in the composition of the staff. Other changes are mostly the result of the balancing among social sciences, arts and humanities. The total workload of the academic staff is divided to reach different goals and objectives in personal development, teaching, research and counseling.

The aspects of the social engagement and community service of the academic staff are incorporated into the MSP Cultural and Arts Management. Participation of the staff members in developing the programme has been assured. Academic staff have the opportunity to visit scientific conferences and to develop further scientific and teaching skills. The number of teachers and their qualifications cover a completely extensive and diverse programme.

However, the proportion of 26 lecturers to 25 students still raises the question of possible more careful balancing of the teacher/student ratio at the MSP Cultural and Arts Management.

Strengths:

- 1) Qualified and competent teaching staff from different fields;
- 2) Direct links to the important cultural institutions;
- 3) Interdisciplinarity of the competences related to variety of market needs.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Disproportion of number of teachers comparing to number of students.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

- 1 R7 - Compliance of the qualification of the academic staff and visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The staff is adequately composed, competent and complies with all the requirements of the MSP Cultural and Arts Management. Minor weakness have been identified, but they do not affect the evaluation of the requirement.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

- 1 1 - The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Annex 3.2.1.-1_State Standard KMP.docx confirms that the MSP Cultural and Arts Management complies with Regulations No. 240 of the Cabinet of Ministers as of 1 May 2014 "Regulations on the National Standard for Academic Education" <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=266187> (Available only in Latvian).

- 2 2 - The study programme complies with a valid professional standard or the requirements for the professional qualification (if there is no professional standard required for the relevant occupation) provided if the completion of the study programme leads to a professional qualification (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 3 3 - The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 561, Paragraph two and Section 562, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study course descriptions are prepared in English and Latvian that can be accessed under 3.2.1.-4_Course descriptions CAM.zip comply with regulations set forth in Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 4 4 - The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure according to which state recognised documents of higher education are issued.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The provided Diploma sample in the annex 3.1.2._diploms_mKMP.zip LV complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued according to Cabinet Regulation No. 202 "Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību.

- 5 5 - The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The annex provided CONFIRMATION_mKMP.pdf certifies that the academic staff involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 6 6 - Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 7 7 - At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 8 8 - The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

This is identified in the annex 2.3.-2_CV_EN.zip. It can be concluded that the state language proficiency is compliant with Cabinet Regulation Nr. 733 " Regulations Regarding the Extent of the Knowledge of the Official Language, the Procedures for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language and the State Fee for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language".

- 9 9 - The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 10 10 - The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Sample of attached study agreement "2.1.4.-3 study agreement example.pdf" complies with Cabinet Regulation. Nr. 70 "Studiju līgumā obligāti ietveramie noteikumi".

- 11 11 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LAC has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another higher education institution if the implementation of the study programme is terminated. The agreements are specified in the annex 2__translation LAC LMA agreement 2023.pdf. It is specified that in case of discontinuation of this study programme, students are to be able to continue their studies at the Art Academy of Latvia.

- 12 12 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LAC has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked. It is ensured by the document certifying it - 1_translation_Arts RI 2023 that includes LAC confirmation no. 1.10e/35 from 24.01.2023. The documents provided are pursuant to paragraph 13.4 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 795 "Regulations Regarding Licensing of Study Programmes".

- 13 13 - The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 55.(1), Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 14 14 - Compliance with the requirements specified in other regulatory enactments that apply to the study programme being assessed (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

- 1 R8 - Compliance of the study programme with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

MSP Cultural and Arts Management fully complies with regulatory enactments.

General conclusions about the study programme, indicating the most important strengths and weaknesses of the study programme

Conclusions:

The academic master's study programme "Cultural and Arts Management" (MSP Cultural and Arts Management) is a formally new programme as a continuation of MSP Arts sub-programme "Cultural Management". The structural changes in masters' programmes led to eliminating sub-programmes due to creating the separate study programmes or ceasing admission in some sub-programmes. The economic and social justification, as well as content of the study programme is strongly linked to the "Cultural Centers Law" entered into force on 11.10.2022 which determines qualifications for heads of cultural centres. The clear focus and the demand of the labour market strongly justifies the MSP Cultural and Arts Management. Qualified cultural managers who are well educated in broad arts context support the whole arts field and overall vividness of cultural life around the country. Generally, the MSP Cultural and Arts Management is adequately organised and takes place in appropriate conditions. The teaching staff engaged in the MSP Cultural and Arts Management is composed of different specialists with high achievements in their field. Flexibility in engagement of the lecturers with fresh and new knowledge in the field present the most important change made in the composition of the staff. Other changes are mostly the result of the balancing among social sciences, arts and humanities. The aspects of the social engagement and community service of the academic staff are incorporated into the MSP Cultural and Arts Management.

However, the proportion of 26 lecturers to 25 students still raises the question of possible optimising the resources and more careful balancing despite the explanation in SAR (p.p. 115-116) about the motivation and achievement of the high quality of the programme. Formal requirements of Law's and National regulations are fully met according to criteria.

Strengths:

1. Clear target audience and following the need of the job market;
2. Provisions and technical support regarding study programmes are adequate;
3. Solid communication connections and intensive cooperation with professional institutions in the field;
4. Qualified and competent teaching staff from different fields;
5. Direct links to the important cultural institutions;
6. Interdisciplinarity of the competences related to a variety of market needs.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Disproportionate number of teachers compared to number of students.

Evaluation of the study programme "Cultural and Arts Management"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Cultural and Arts Management"

Short-term recommendations

- 1) MSP Cultural and Arts Management must reconsider different needs of the target groups of the study programme particularly for graduates of the bachelor studies who already acquired understanding of the principles of culture and the creative sector in studies of the LAC.
- 2) The management team of MSP Cultural and Arts Management is advised to perform a cost effectiveness analysis in order to calculate a reasonable ratio of teachers and students in the program.
- 3) In terms of the curriculum make-up, the business related courses that address specific cultural and creative industry segments as well as its diversity must be seriously expanded.

Long-term recommendations

- 1) MSP Cultural and Arts Management should develop a long term investment plan in order to make the infrastructure of studies available and accessible for students and teachers with reduced mobility and other types of disabilities.
- 2) The management team of MSP Cultural and Arts Management should consider opening the program in English to match the economic performance of Latvia, demographics, and a potential attractiveness of the program to the international pool of applicants.

II - "Creative Industries and Growth Management" ASSESSMENT

II - "Creative Industries and Growth Management" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1.

Joint academic master study programme "Creative Industries and Growth Management" 45217 (JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management") of the LAC and Riga Technical University (RTU) was created in accordance with the development strategy of the LAC for years 2015-2020 (available: https://lka.edu.lv/media/cms_page_media/925/APST_LKA_Attistibas_Strategija_2015_2020_Labojumi_16.04.2018.pdf)(Latvian only)) and implemented during the self-evaluation report, based on the LAC strategy for years 2023-2027 (available: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pLPD08ZbMWe7nRtVaSQQZhvTCJLxiaie/view>) and the strategy of RTU for 2021-2025 (available: https://www.rtu.lv/writable/public_files/RTU_strategy_for_2121_2025_eng.pdf), and is in line with the LAC-accredited study field "Arts" and the RTU-accredited study field "Management, Administration and Property Management".

The strategic goal of the programme is set in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 240 on the State Standard of Academic Education (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/266187-noteikumi-par-valsts-akademiskas-izglitiba-standartu> /Latvian only):

- 1) to ensure the acquisition of in-depth and broad theoretical knowledge and research skills of students by reaching the study results set out in the study programme which correspond to the 7th level knowledge, skills and competencies of European Qualifications Framework (EQF), in accordance of the Latvian Classification of Education; 2) to ensure the ability of the graduates of the

program to perform highly skilled professional functions in changing environments, integrate knowledge from different fields, innovate, contribute to the creation of new knowledge and critically and creatively analyze complex scientific and professional problems proficiently using information technologies in their professional activities, research and lifelong learning, as well as in the acquisition and creation of digital content.

2.1.2.

"The title of the study programme is "Creative Industries and Growth Management" in the study field of "Arts" with education classification code 45217 with the last 3 numbers (217) standing for "Creative Industries" according to the classification of Latvian education which is available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>.

The degree to be obtained is "Master of Arts in Creative Industries".

The aims of the JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" is "to prepare leaders of change (...), to equip the students with a set of knowledge and competences that develop their growth thinking, to promote interdisciplinary collaboration in the development and research of the creative industries..." (SAR, p.333).

Admission requirements are bachelor's degree in arts, humanities, social sciences, engineering and technology or equivalent higher education. Entrance exam - interview (SAR, p.334).

According to the opinion of the expert group the title "Creative Industries and Growth Management", code 45217 and Master of Arts in Creative Industries degree to be obtained are interrelated. Admission requirements, aims, objectives described in SAR (p.333) including implementation of interdisciplinary integrated study programmes including students with various backgrounds and diverse perspectives; providing in depth understanding of the processes of cultural and creative industries; promoting students professional and personal growth; development of students' cooperation and management skills etc. and learning outcomes (SAR, p.334) including ability to independently formulate and critically analyse the processes and challenges of the creative industries globally and locally; ability to integrate the theories and methods of humanities and social sciences in an interdisciplinary manner, to contribute to the creation of new knowledge, to develop their research and professional competence; ability to identify formal and informal collaborative opportunities, to fully utilize and develop them in creative industry ecosystems, to form and manage interdisciplinary teams; ability to independently manage their professional and personal growth, to reflect on the development of their competencies and career goals and to understand the connection with the broader development trends of the creative industries are interrelated.

The duration of the JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" is four semesters or two years in the amount of 80 credit points. The implementation languages of the JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" are Latvian and English (the level of proficiency is at least B2 level). The duration and scope of the JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" implementation, as well as the implementation language, are reasonable and justified.

2.1.3.

In a meeting on June 8th, 2022, the Study Quality Commission of the Quality Agency for Higher Education approved the inclusion of the academic Master's programme "Creative Industries and Growth Management" (45217) of the Latvian Academy of Culture (hereinafter - LAC) and Riga Technical University (hereinafter - RTU) in the study field "Arts" in LAC and in the study direction "Management, Administration and Property Management" in RTU. Since the inclusion of the programme in "Arts" of LAC accreditation page (accreditation page No. 2022/34, issued on June 20th, 2022), no changes have been made to the programme parameters and no further evaluations of the programme are planned. In the process of inclusion in the accreditation page of the discipline, recommendations for the long-term improvement of the programme were received on June 6th, 2022, which were implemented by the time of the accreditation in LAC.

2.1.4.

According to SAR (p.341) as of December 2022, there are 28 students enrolled in the programme, 13 in the first year and 15 in the second year, of which 4 are on study break. Since the study year of 2022/2021 the study programme is implemented in English and 13 students study in English in the 1st year. It is planned that from 2022/2023, studies will be provided in both Latvian and English. In order to successfully attract foreign students from third countries to the study program "Creative Industry and Growth Management", the promotion of the programme in these countries is carried out by the International Cooperation and Foreign Students Department of RTU (RTU SSĀSD), using RTU Study and Information Centers abroad, the services of educational agencies, with the participation of international education at exhibitions and performing other activities to attract students. In the study year 2022/2023, a total of 13 students were enrolled in the programme, of which four were foreign students (Germany, Russia, Sri Lanka).

The results of the 2021 admissions were greatly affected by the remote study process in the 2020/2021 academic year due to the situation of COVID-19. Due to pandemic induced fatigue, there was a decrease in interest in Master's studies among Bachelor's programme graduates, several informative events were postponed, which required modifying the study communication plans to adapt to addressing potential students in an online format. Statistics on the students in the reporting period are available at the study programme annex 3.1.4._5. The programme is pretty new so analysis of dynamics of the students at the moment is just starting, however an interesting tendency is obvious - among the students dropping out there are only students studying in the state budget places. It demonstrates the motivation of the students and their profile matching the programme aims. At the same time it is worth looking at the admission criteria to see whether they are fully appropriate to admit the best candidates for the programme.

2.1.5.

According to SAR (p.342-343) the development of the JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth management" was conducted within the framework of the European Social Fund Project "Development of New Study Programmes for the labour market of the cultural and creative industries sector" (No. 8.2.1.0/18/A/018). The necessity of the new study programme is in line within the Appendix No. 1 of the LAC development strategy "Educational Programme Development Plan 2016-2020" in the addition "Development and Consolidation Plan of Study Programmes of the Latvian Academy of Culture". The addition indicates the reoccurring renewal of the content of study programmes, as well as the plan to create 5 new (including joint) study programmes by 2020. The study programme "Creative Industries and Growth Management" is one of these programmes.

The development of joint programme promotes interdisciplinary cooperation between LAC and RTU, which is a prerequisite for the development of creative industries. Since 2016, both universities have already had a successful, functioning, and in-demand bachelor's degree programme of "Creative Industries", and a logical next step was to offer education at the next level.

Within the framework of the RTU study direction, the goal is to provide students with sustainable, multi-level education in the field of management and business, promoting the development of competitive and prosperity-enhancing careers and preparing internationally recognized, highly qualified specialists in various areas of management, administration, and industry management that are also essential for the successful implementation of the joint study programme. The Development Strategy of the Latvian Academy of Culture 2023-2027 projects to ensure the provision of study, research and creative work results that allow the creation, development, preservation and popularization of national cultural values, traditions and cultural heritage within the Latvian cultural space, ensure openness to cultural diversity and loyalty-based intercultural communication, contribute to the development of the film and performing arts (theatre and dance) sectors, audio-visual arts, creative and cultural industries, including promoting the export potential of these sectors and industries (available:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pLPD08ZbMWe7nRtVaSQQZhvTCJLxiaie/view>).

The Joint Master's degree programme of LAC and RTU, combining the competences of the accredited study directions of both universities, promotes interdisciplinary cooperation in the development of leaders of creative industries. The programme is designed to prepare growth-oriented, creatively and strategically thinking, diversity-appreciating and capable change leaders who are growth and collaboration-oriented and can see the laws of the creative industries in a broader context. The interdisciplinary knowledge of the programme graduates allows for a deeper understanding of the opportunities for cooperation between different sectors, the need for change and the mechanisms for its implementation, furthermore, promoting the application of business and cultural competencies for development. The cooperation agreement on the implementation of the joint study program is available in the appendix (see annex 3.1.5._4).

The joint study programme of LAC and RTU complies with the conditions for the development of joint study programmes defined in the Law on Higher Education (see annex 3.1.5._4).

The parts of the joint study programme of LAC and RTU form a coherent and sequential joint study programme covering the study courses offered by both universities. The two universities mutually coordinate all issues related to the implementation of the study programme, and students in both universities have equal opportunities:

- 1) in both universities, the study programme is managed by directors who cooperate with each other and coordinate the issues related to the implementation of the programme and cooperate with the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the programme in their university;
- 2) the council of joint study programmes of LAC and RTU has been established (see below);
- 3) the lecture schedule is planned and mutually agreed upon - LAC or RTU lecture days are planned for students, so that they do not have to change location within one day;
- 4) students can choose and learn freely optional courses at both universities;
- 5) students from both universities can go on Erasmus mobility;
- 6) unified methodological instructions for the development of master's theses have been created, which harmonize the approaches and requirements of both universities for the development of final theses and they have been published on the websites of both universities (LAC e-study environment and RTU e-study environment, available to authorized users – students and teaching staff);
- 7) the teaching staff of the two universities cooperate in managing master's theses, which is an essential prerequisite for achieving the interdisciplinary results of the programme. Each master's thesis has 2 supervisors - one from LAC and one from RTU, there are regular meetings of both supervisors and students. Seminars of the supervisors of the final theses of both universities are held in order to promote a unified development process. The teaching staff of both universities participate in the work of the master's theses defense commission;
- 8) the timetable for the submission of the most important works of the programme is agreed and published on the e-study environment of both universities for the subsequent study year;
- 9) there are joint formal and informal meetings of teaching staff involved in the implementation of the programme.

In order to ensure programme supervision and quality, a joint study programme council of LAC and RTU has been established. The Council is a collegial institution and the programme directors of both universities and representatives of the universities nominated by vice-rectors work in it. A student of the programme also participates in the council meetings as an observer. The competence of the council is to monitor the implementation of the programme and to approve changes to the study programme; to request and receive information from universities on issues relevant to the implementation of the study programme; to decide on the topics of the final theses, to approve the scientific supervisors, reviewers and defense procedures, etc. issues related to study work; discuss mutual financial settlements and their procedures; determine the amount of study fees and other payments related to the study process; coordinate the common marketing activities of the study

programs. Council meetings are held once a month, they are recorded. The activity of the council is regulated by the regulations of the joint study programme council of LAC and RTU (See annex 3.1.5._4).

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The Joint academic master study programme Creative Industries and Growth Management, with the code 45217 representing "Creative Industries" (JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management"), was created as per the development strategy of the LAC and RTU for 2021-2025. This study programme is in accordance with the LAC-accredited study field "Arts" and the RTU-accredited study field "Management, Administration and Property Management". The programme is designed as a logical extension of bachelor studies in creative industries in both universities. The JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" programme complies with the study fields and is in line with the development strategies of both universities. The programme's title, code, degree, professional qualification, aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are all interrelated. The development and implementation of this joint study programme is justified, and it ensures a quality study process.

Strengths:

1. Creating a quality based on collaboration next level education for graduates from bachelor programmes in creative industries both in LAC and RTU;
2. Implementation languages are both Latvian and English.

Weaknesses:

1. Among the students dropping out there are only students studying in the state budget places.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1.

One of the most interesting master programs (JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management") potentially, which combines the resources and expertises of two universities, LAC and RTU, has listed two goals in its indicators, with the first one to be a clear and concise, that is, to train competent industry professionals equipped with a set of knowledge and competencies to promote the understanding of the potential of creative industries and the importance of cultural values in the changing environment of the global economy as well as to promote interdisciplinary collaboration in the development and research of the creative industries. (SAR, p.337), while the second goal being more general and superfluous, somewhat repetitive in the definition to have been already stated in the first. Notwithstanding the indicators, the tasks are clearly set.

The programme had been created in accordance with the development strategy of the LAC for years 2015-2020 (available: https://lka.edu.lv/media/cms_page_media/925/APST_LKA_Attistibas_Strategija_2015_2020_Labojumi_16.04.2018.pdf/(Latvian only) and implemented during the self-evaluation report, based on the LAC strategy for years 2023-2027, and RTU, 2021-2025, respectively.

The strategic goal of the programme is set in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation Nr. 240 on the State Standard of Academic Education in order to ensure the acquisition of in-depth and broad theoretical knowledge and research skills of students by reaching the study results set

out in the study programme which correspond to the 7th level knowledge, skills and competencies of European Qualifications Framework (EQF), in accordance with the Latvian Classification of Education (SAR, p.337).

The report underlines the learning outcomes such as the ability to critically analyse the processes and challenges of the creative industries globally and locally under the leadership of various types of organisations, to integrate the theories and methods of humanities and social sciences in an interdisciplinary manner, to contribute to the creation of new knowledge, to develop their research and professional competence, and to form and manage interdisciplinary teams, creative industry organisations by foster collaborative growth (SAR, p.339).

To that end, JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" has been implemented in Latvian and also in English since the academic year of 2021/2022, whereby the 1st-year students of the program study only in English, and 2nd-year students in Latvian, which strengthens internationalisation, as attracting students from different countries allows to prepare professionals who are more open to cooperation.

It also meets the needs of the industry and labour market within the context of global business environment by specifically tailoring the curriculum to contain a range of courses such as "Arts conceptualization strategies and contexts" (4 CP) aimed at enabling students to critically analyse the operations of creative industry as a basis for implementing changes, "Creative Industries Development"(4 CP) aimed at mastering the main concepts and theoretical models that allow understanding the most important processes of culture and the creative sector as a complex, mutually related unified system, or a number of courses oriented towards different aspects of organisational management, be it "Strategies and Integrated Talent Management"(6 CP), "Business Modeling"(4 CP), or "Branding and Reputation Management in Creative Industries"(4 CP).

(SAR, pp.344-345) also asserts that MSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" is updated in accordance with the trends in the industry, labour market and scientific development related to the significance of a rapidly changing context, creativity and flexibility through a selection of entrepreneurship courses such as, but not limited to, "Social, Economical and Political Processes of Cultural Sector"(4 CP), "Development of Creative Industries"(4 CP), "Marketing and Digital Transformation"(4 CP), "Branding and reputation Management in Creative Industries" (4 CP), "Lifestyle Financial Management"(6 CP) "Strategy and Integrated Talent Management"(6 CP) "Business Modeling"(4 CP).

The description of the content of the JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" in the self-assessment report has not been explicit as to how the different academic environments complement each other and why, apart from the fact that certain modules are taught in respective universities, and there is a stacking approach in selecting instructors. While there is little doubt the quality of instruction can stand on its own in each respective institution, the rationale for a particular order in the curriculum is not sufficiently explained.

With respect to the compliance with Article 56 of the Higher Education Law, which mandates the foreign students to have the compulsory scope of study courses to include the acquisition of the state language, this option is formally offered as a part of Module "Arts" in the very first semester, in the amount of 2CP.

2.2.2.

The description given by (SAR, p. 320) with respect to the achievements and findings of the relevant field of science or artistic creation is very scant and general. It suffices to point out that each student develops a master's thesis - an individual and independent research work in the amount of 20 credit points, related to the theoretical aspects of cultural heritage and governance, where "methodical instructions for the development and criteria for evaluating a master's theses have been defined and are available to students on the LAC's website (LAC Methodical Regulations for the development of course, bachelor and master's thesis)". The section of the SAR, in this particular

unit, appears to have been autotranslated, which makes the value of description hard to assess and at times a struggle to comprehend. At the end, the awarding of the degree still begs a more detailed description.

2.2.3.

In JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" lectures are planned in the form of modules in both Latvian and English. The lecture schedule is planned so that students can focus on a thorough understanding of the topic and ensuring additional time studying it in-depth study implementation methods are composed of lectures (mostly in theoretically oriented study courses) where students are presented with theoretical questions, supplemented with practical examples, visual material, statistical data, seminars that strengthen students' independent information analytical skills, and promote acquiring knowledge and skills, independent and individual works to develop the topics related to the field of study, individual lessons in order to develop and improve creative research activity, by using consultations from academic staff in person and in on Moodle or Zoom, exams and extracurricular events. ...

Both in Latvian and English, the implementation of student-centred education principles in the joint study programme is promoted by the planned significant proportion of seminars, practical lessons, and individual choices in specific topics. All study materials are available for students in LAC e-study environment LAIS and MOODLE (LAC) and RTU e-study environment ORTUS (RTU).

(SAR, p. 347) underlines that in order to meet the goals of the programme, the lecturer of each study course discusses the methods with the director of the programme at LAC or RTU. The main method that contributes to the achievement of the goals of the joint programme is the involvement of the heads of both universities in the development of the master's thesis. Each study course in the semester is concluded with an examination. The A and B parts of the programme are completed by fulfilling the requirements set by the course lecturer, which are defined in the course description. A positive evaluation is obtained and the course is passed if a passing grade (from 4 to 10) is received. The C part or elective courses are completed by passing the examination.

In addition, a student-centred approach is manifested via focus on the individual approach to the provision of the study process, by adapting the study format (face-to-face/distance learning) according to the needs. Both the program director, lecturers, and the study department provide personalised approach and find appropriate, effective solutions to students' problems, if they arise. The (SAR, p.322) emphasises the quality control mechanisms in the study processes.

One must add, however, that, perhaps, due to the mechanics of the autotranslator, the resulting English in the description of the chapter was vague, general, and hard to grasp. It is a bit ironic that in using the resources by both universities, one could not come up with a more accurate and structurally coherent formulation/ evidence for student-centred learning and teaching principles, since the JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" appears to be promising.

2.2.4.

Currently, JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" does not offer internships (SAR, p.348)

2.2.5.

n/a

2.2.6. The topics of the master theses are primarily within the field of the development of culture and creative industries. In 2022, the industry reviewers for the master's thesis were the following experts: Antra Priede, Curator, Vice-Rector of The Art Academy of Latvia, Elīna Drāke, Director of "Kim?" Contemporary Art Center, Artūrs Bernovskis, Founder and CEO of "Efektio", Zane Brikmāne, Cultural Journalist of Latvian Television, Kārlis Kivlenieks, Crypto Industry Expert, Senior Expert of

Student Innovation Grant Programme in Latvian University, Asnāte Avotniece, Owner of Abgunstes Manor, Diāna Čivle, Event Producer. In order to ensure a direct connection with industry practitioners, the master's thesis is evaluated not only by an academic reviewer but also by an industry reviewer. According to the industry reviewers, the following Master's theses were rated as excellent and driving the development of the industry: "New Artist Career Development Strategies and Business Models", "Television Show Branding in the Context of Digital Transformation", "Challenges of Latvian Artists in Cryptomedia: Business Model Analysis", "Assessment of the Impact of Creative Residencies on Local Community Development" and "Controversial Social Image and Its Relationship with Artist Brand Reputation and Artwork Value". The Master's theses "Development of Nightlife and Entertainment Industry in Riga as a Creative City" and "Social and Economic Impact of Digitalization and Digital Innovations on the Art Market in Latvia" were also considered to provide practical contribution to solving problematic issues within the industry. The program also actively involves students in research projects that will result in master's theses developed within the research projects (SAR, p.349).

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The description of the content of the JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" in the self-assessment report is not entirely clear as to how the different academic environments complement each other and why, apart from the fact that certain modules are taught in respective universities.

Strengths:

1. Joint undertaking with a reputable university;
2. Reputable teaching staff.

Weaknesses:

1. While not required in academic degrees, internships are not offered to strengthen competencies and skills.

Assessment of the requirement [5] (applicable only to master's or doctoral study programmes)

- 1 R5 - The study programme for obtaining a master's or doctoral degree is based on the achievements and findings of the respective field of science or field of artistic creation.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

(SAR, p. 346) specifies that in the fourth semester, each student develops a master's thesis - an individual and independent research work of 20 credit points, which is the final examination to be defended in front of the commission jointly created by LAC and RTU. The master's thesis is a written, independent, interdisciplinary research that attests to the student's ability and skill to identify, analyse and solve problems relevant to the programme and the creative industries, within the scope of detailed theoretical and empirical analysis, and the level of innovation in the conclusions, in accordance with the 7th level requirements of The Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF).

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1.

The JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" is held in main building of LAC at Ludzas

street 24, Riga and Elijas street 17, as well as in the Faculty of Engineering Economics and Management of RTU at Kalnciema iela 6. Students use the premises and resources of both universities; the auditoriums for the study programme are adequately equipped with the necessary technical equipment for live or remote/online lectures (a computer, projector and screen, blackboard, wireless internet and other if necessary). Computer labs and rooms with transformable tables are available that can be adapted for seminars, round table discussions, etc.

During the study process, both universities use an e-study environment (LAC - Moodle and Latvia's Higher Education Information System (LAIS), RTU - ORTUS), which ensures communication with the students, access to resources and information. Moodle provides a useful information channel for communication with the students enabling course descriptions, lecture materials and additional sources, instructions for tasks, tests and assessment books available for each study course. The use of the e-study environment takes place in all study courses and its use is intensified along with the provision of the study process remotely. (SAR, p. 250)

Through the European Social Fund project "Efficiency of Management of the Latvian Academy of Culture and the Latvian College of Culture and Modernisation of the Study Process" (2018-2021) the e-learning environment at the LAC was significantly improved, including:

- improvements in functionality in the e-learning environment Moodle, increasing the efficiency and quality of studies, transferring study course materials in digital format using e-learning environment resources (Files, URLs, Pages) and adapting students' performance testing using Task, Test and Seminar activities.
- significant improvement of LAIS functions was performed (for example, orders for term papers were created, a printout of the inter-university diploma supplement was prepared, the section "Student" was significantly improved, transitions between different sections were simplified, etc.)
- training of system administrator and lecturers (an e-learning platform specialist) who provides daily support to lecturers on e-learning environment.
- programming works have been carried out to improve the efficiency of the governance information system at the LAC study department, accounting and personnel department, ensuring the exchange of LAIS data with the Horizon system used in accounting and personnel management
- One large auditorium of the LAC is fully adapted to provide high-quality distance learning and 351 conferences, equipping it with a modern speaker, microphone, overhead projector system;
- Improved sharing tools -RTU lecturers are registered in the e-learning environment, study content is shared, students have more convenient access to information (SAR, p. 350-351)

Library resources are available for students at both universities that also regularly supplement the library funds by purchasing both books and by subscribing to databases relevant to the field. The LAC's Library uses the free trials of databases, OPEN ACCESS databases (core.ac.uk, openresearchlibrary.org , ijsrp.org), the digital resources of the National Library of Latvia and the database resources included in the National Electronic Resource Package: EBSCO Academic Search Complete + MasterFILE Premier, Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition+Consumer Edition, Newspaper Source, ERIC, GreenFILE, LISTA, MEDLINE.

In the RTU library, students also have at their disposal libraries of methodical offices to familiarize themselves with the latest periodicals, statistical materials, books, conference materials on economic and business issues. A particularly important approach to current research in the industry is during the study course "Research Design" (4 CP). The students and the academic staff have access to a wide and modern scientific library of RTU (available 24/7), with access to "electronic subscription databases, as well as temporary trial databases: Springer Link data base, The IEEE/IET Electronic Library (IEL), The Web of Science, Contents of the Latvian standards database: Latvian national standards (LVS); European standards adapted as Latvian standards (EN); International Standards (ISO) adapted as Latvian standards, EBSCO databases, Academic Search Complete, Business Source Complete, MasterFILE Premier, Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts (LISTA), ScienceDirect, SCOPUS (published by Elsevier), News, archives, reviews and nozare.lv are

available in the national news agency database LETA, Learning Materials Repository –MERLOT, Latvian film database - Filmas.lv, Firmas.lv - a data licensee of the Register of Enterprises of the Republic of Latvia. In order to achieve study results in study courses related to the overarching topic "Business" ("Lifestyle Financial Management"(6 CP) and "Business Modeling" (4 CP)), students are introduced and trained to use The Bloomberg Lab, which is very extensive data base, covering all the world's financial data, data on companies, securities, transactions, marketing activities, real estate and other taxes." (SAR, p. 351) RTU ensures that Firmas.lv and Amadeus database are also available to students of the joint programme, which can be used for both study and research purposes. In addition, as a result of international cooperation, Harvard Business Publishing provides access to electronic resources.

These resources help to ensure the achievement of study results by ensuring the availability of premises, technical resources, and literature for students when carrying out study assignments and developing the final thesis." (SAR; p. 251)

Also an important contribution to the university sharing system is the adding of the LAC to the common plagiarism control system, which promotes the improvement of academic integrity in the academic environment in Latvia. The regulations governing the development and presentation of the Master's thesis of the programme, including the procedure for pre-presentation and defense, are available on the information websites of both universities, while methodological materials are available in several of the study courses.

2.3.2.

n/a

2.3.3.

The funding of the JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" in 2022 is EUR 113 560, it was formed from the budget grant, performance-based funding and tuition fees. The programme is a joint programme and all revenues are shared between two universities. The cost calculations include all expenditure items necessary for the programme, the programme calculation is based on the following split: 53% compensation for ECC (economic classification codes) 1000, 8% ECC goods and services 2000 and 9% other ECC. Every year, a cost calculation is carried out, after which the number of guest lecturers are hired and the amount diverted for the development of study programmes are determined.

A lot of attention is devoted to the optimization of the JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" realization expenses, for example, by organizing flow lectures in courses taught by professors and providing remote lectures. In order to ensure the profitability of the study programme the minimum. In order to ensure the profitability and optimization of the study programme, the minimum number of enrolled students is determined every year by looking at the needs of the programme. The minimum number of students in the study programme is 20 budget places. The programme is full time in-class attendance and studies are conducted in Latvian and English (from 2022) at equal study costs. Foreign lecturers are recruited regardless of the language in which the study process is carried out (SAR, p.252)

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" takes place in appropriate conditions, The LAC provides adequate resources for the implementation of the programme consisting of technically equipped auditoriums, a Library reading room and resources available to students for study and research. The programme has strong interdisciplinary dimension as a joint programme of LAC and RTU and as it is conducted in English from 2020 it is attractive for both foreign students and

lectures.

Strengths:

1. Provisions and technical support regarding study programmes are adequate;
2. Strong interdisciplinary dimension of the programme responsive to the job market;
3. Attractiveness of the programme to foreign students and lectures - international aspects of the programme.

Weaknesses:

None.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

- 1 R6 - Compliance of the study provision, science provision (if applicable), informative provision (including library), material and technical provision and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" takes place in appropriate conditions, The LAC provides adequate resources for the implementation of the programme consisting of technically equipped auditoriums, a Library reading room and resources available to students for study and research. The programme has strong interdisciplinary dimension as a joint programme of LAC and RTU and as it is conducted in English from 2020 it is attractive for both foreign students and lectures.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.

Academic staff for the JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" is composed of the selection of LAC and RTU professors. As stated in the SAR (p.353) of 14 teachers from LAC engaged on the programme, 9 have doctoral degrees, as well as 4 professors from RTU. In the implementation of the study course academic staff stated in SAR as "responsible teaching staff" may engage different researchers, academics, field experts and experienced professionals as the guest lecturers or research collaborators to participate in the study courses development. Such lecturers can be domestic or foreign specialists from educational institutions, cultural institutions or NGO.

The SAR states (p. 354) that the teachers of the course "Art Discourse" organize guest lectures at the different venues important for art and cultural industry, such as the contemporary art center "KIM?", Zuzeum exhibition hall or Latvian National Art Museum. Such events contribute to implementation of the variety of perspectives, experiences and knowledge from other countries. The responsibility for the course development may also be taken by only one responsible lecturer. Such flexibility provides live contact with recent cultural practices and the cultural institutions of importance for students professional development. In addition to the main programme, and as a part of the curriculum, through the courses or independent workshops, masterclasses and lectures these guests present a variety of good practices from the cultural field, theoretically covered in the courses.

Teaching staff participates in research projects. Also, the number of visiting lecturers shows that fresh ideas and knowledge are continuously introduced to the programme and also that lecturing in the programme is seen as an interesting possibility in the professional community.

As the SAR states (p. 356) the “ratio students to teachers is one teacher per student”. That for sure brings focus on a student-centered educational approach, and opens the possibilities of individual development. Such a rate, however, seems more appropriate for artistic training rather than a theoretical scientific study program.

2.4.2.

There are no visible negative effects due to changes in the staff at JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management". As the JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" needs changes and adaptations due to dynamics in the cultural environment, the changes in the composition of the teaching staff are made in order to make a positive impact on study content. Engagement of the foreign professors from universities abroad affect the quality of the study programme positively bringing new perspectives and mindsets into the educational process.

The SAR states (p. 355) that the engagement of the foreign lecturers has been made in order to ensure a study programme in English for the 2022/23 academic year. Updating English skills of the teaching staff programme tends to develop more courses of the study programme in English in order to attract international students. The needs of the programme, closely connected with cultural market and broader society, requests flexibility in engaging different specialists and experienced professionals according to the demand of new knowledge. The changes to the composition of teaching staff made a positive impact on the JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management".

2.4.3.

n/a

2.4.4.

As stated in SAR (p. 68) most of the academic staff carry out either scientific or artistic research. Academic staff publish their research results in research papers and conferences, or present their artistic productions publicly. Annexes 2.4.4.-1 and 2.4.4.-2, as well as teachers CV, proves the information of developed and extended scientific or artistic activities of teachers in terms of research, publishing, presenting artistic work and participating in various creative artistic projects.

Among the articles published, however, there is a relatively small number of peer reviewed scientific publications in SCOPUS/WoS and ERIH databases. Of 1015 articles listed in Annex 2.4.4.-1 from 2013 to 2021 there are 22 in WoS and SCOPUS and 17 in ERIH. Works categorized as “other publications”, “articles” or “sections” are the most frequent form of the publication type stated in Annex 2.4.4.-1. More precisely with the recent data the scientific publications are stated in SAR. Table No. 11 in SAR (p.60) lists 295 scientific articles published in the editions included in internationally cited databases in the period 2015-2021. Table 14 in SAR (p. 68) states the same data. Such a record is satisfactory, even though there is still room for improvement in targeting better quality, i.e. higher ranking, publishing media or international publications.

The artistic presentations were publicly presented in distinguished cultural institutions and significant venues, such as theaters, radio, television, cultural centers and site specific spaces. Among the conferences attended by the academic staff almost all are international conferences, national and international wide. Domestic conferences were organized in Latvia by LAC itself or other Latvian universities or cultural institutions. The list of conferences in Annex 2.4.4.-2 indicates also many European countries and a few non-European but their organizers are not mentioned. Majority (almost all) the conferences attended belong to the field of humanities and art sciences, and minority of them are History and archeology.

During the site visit the expert group has been informed that there is institutional financial support at LAC for such activities. It was also noticed that the academic staff would need more time to allocate for such activities.

2.4.5.

As a JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" requests regular meetings not only between the staff at LAC but also with the staff from RTU. During the site visit expert team has been informed that regular meetings are organized alternately at both universities. SAR states that the main goals of teachers' regular meetings and communication are keeping a student-centered approach and avoiding overlap of the contents. At this JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" the predominant cooperation culture is from individual to the collective, and the combination of formal and informal communication.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by indicating strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" fosters the openness in engaging guest lecturers and including them in the educational process, avoiding the risk of continuance. Even though there are frequent changes in the composition of teaching staff in groups of guest lecturers and external specialists, there are no visible negative impacts on study quality. During the site visit the expert group has been informed that the students are interested in the possibility to learn from a variety of different professionals.

Teachers' research and publishing activities meet the requirements. Teachers participate in the short-term mobility programmes and attend scientific conferences. Sufficient mechanisms to conduct the quality review and evaluate academic staff exist.

The SAR states (p. 356) that the "ratio students to teachers is one teacher per student". That for sure brings focus on a student-centered educational approach, but raises questions about feasibility of such human resources allocation.

Strengths:

- 1) Synergy of two institutions staff and resources;
- 2) Multidisciplinarity of expertises covering very broad scope of the cultural field;
- 3) Openness to inviting guest lecturers from the national and international institutions.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The ratio students to teacher is not balanced.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

- 1 R7 - Compliance of the qualification of the academic staff and visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The staff is adequately composed, competent and complies with all the requirements of the JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management". Minor weakness have been identified, but they do not affect the evaluation of the requirement.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

- 1 1 - The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Annex 3.2.1.Compliance of the Study Programme with the State Education Standard (1).docx confirms that the JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" complies with Regulations No. 240 of the Cabinet of Ministers as of 1 May 2014 "Regulations on the National Standard for Academic Education" <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=266187> (Available only in Latvian).

- 2 2 - The study programme complies with a valid professional standard or the requirements for the professional qualification (if there is no professional standard required for the relevant occupation) provided if the completion of the study programme leads to a professional qualification (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 3 3 - The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 561 , Paragraph two and Section 562 , Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study course descriptions are prepared in Latvian that can be accessed under 3.2.1.-4._course descriptions_mRIIM.zip comply with regulations set forth in Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 4 4 - The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure according to which state recognised documents of higher education are issued.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The provided Diploma samples accessible in the annexes 3.1.2._RIIM.zip comply with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued according to Cabinet Regulation No. 202 "Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību.

- 5 5 - The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The annex provided ENG_CONFIRMATION_mRIIM.pdf certifies that the academic staff involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 6 6 - Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 7 7 - At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 8 8 - The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

This is identified in the annex 2.3.-2_CV_EN.zip. It can be concluded that the state language proficiency is compliant with Cabinet Regulation Nr. 733 " Regulations Regarding the Extent of the Knowledge of the Official Language, the Procedures for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language and the State Fee for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language".

- 9 9 - The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

According to the information provided in the annex 2.3.-2_CV_EN.zip. The teaching staff has the necessary English language skills to ensure a good level of quality during the studies with implementation of the study programme in English.

- 10 10 - The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Sample of attached study agreement "2.1.4.-3 study agreement example.pdf" complies with Cabinet Regulation. Nr. 70 "Studiju līgumā obligāti ietveramie noteikumi".

- 11 11 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LAC has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another higher education institution if the implementation of the study programme is terminated. The agreement is specified in the 6_translation_ RIIM 2023. .It is specified that in case of discontinuation of this study programme, students are to be able to continue their studies in the Latvian Academy of Culture's academic master's study programme "Arts" (45212) in the sub-programme "Management of Culture" .

- 12 12 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LAC has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked. It is ensured by the document certifying it - 1_translation_Arts RI 2023 that includes LAC confirmation no. 1.10e/35 from 24.01.2023. The documents provided are pursuant to paragraph 13.4 of the

- 13 13 - The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 55.(1), Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" complies with the requirements prescribed in the legal regulations based on the annexes provided 3.1.5._4. RIIM joint programme.zip

- 14 14 - Compliance with the requirements specified in other regulatory enactments that apply to the study programme being assessed (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

- 1 R8 - Compliance of the study programme with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" fully complies with regulatory enactments.

General conclusions about the study programme, indicating the most important strengths and weaknesses of the study programme

Conclusions

The description of the content of the JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" in the self-assessment report is not entirely clear as to how the different academic environments complement each other and why, apart from the fact that certain modules are taught in respective universities. The JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" is adequately organized and takes place in appropriate conditions. JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" fosters the openness in engaging guest lecturers and including them in the educational process, avoiding the risk of continuance. Even though there are frequent changes in the composition of teaching staff in groups of guest lecturers and external specialists, there are no visible negative impacts on study quality. During the site visit the expert group has been informed that the students are interested in the possibility to learn from a variety of different professionals. Teachers' research and publishing activities meet the requirements. Teachers participate in the short-term mobility programmes and attend scientific conferences. Sufficient mechanisms to conduct the quality review and evaluate academic staff exist.

Strengths:

1. Joint undertaking with a reputable university creating a quality based on collaboration next level education for graduates from bachelor programmes in creative industries both in LAC and RTU;
2. Reputable teaching staff;
3. Provisions and technical support regarding study programmes are adequate;
4. Strong interdisciplinary dimension of the programme responsive to the job market;
5. Attractiveness of the programme to foreign students and lectures - international aspects of the programme;
6. Synergy of two institutions staff and resources;
7. Multidisciplinarity of expertises covering very broad scope of the cultural field;

8. Openness to inviting guest lecturers from national and international institutions;
9. Implementation languages are planned to be both - Latvian and English.

Weaknesses:

1. Fairly weak English translation in the SAR, which makes the evaluation somewhat difficult;
2. The information is not sufficiently expounded on the merits of the degree award;
3. The English stream of the program has not commenced yet;
4. The ratio of students to teachers is not balanced;
5. Among the students dropping out there are only students studying in the state budget places.

Evaluation of the study programme "Creative Industries and Growth Management"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Creative Industries and Growth Management"

Short-term recommendations

1. While not required in academic degrees, the management of JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" is highly encouraged to offer internships that strengthen competencies and skills.

Long-term recommendations

1. JMSP "Creative Industries and Growth Management" should balance out the ratio of students and teachers.
2. It is recommended to analyse the admission criteria and profile of the past students. The students dropping out are only students studying in the state budget places so hypothetically the higher score during the admission gets the ones for whom the programme is less appropriate.

II - "Arts" ASSESSMENT

II - "Arts" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1.

The academic doctoral study programme "Arts" (ADSP "Arts") fits well in the study field "Arts" with the code 51212 standing for "Music and Performing Arts" (to be supplemented with the code 51217 introduced in the regulations in 2017 - "Creative Industries"). The name and code of the ADSP "Arts" both comply with the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers no. 322 "Regulations of the classification of education in Latvia". The priority of the ADSP "Arts": "interdisciplinarity methodology-based fundamental research of art phenomena and the processes of the creative sector" mentioned in the SAR (p.151) and confirmed during the assessment visit to the LAC stands well for the two codes of the study field.

2.1.2.

The title of the study programme is “Arts” in the study field of “Arts” with education classification codes 51212 with the last 3 numbers (212) standing for “Music and Performing Arts” and 51217 with last numbers (217) standing for “Creative Industries” according to the classification of Latvian education 322 which is available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>.

The degree to be obtained is the “Doctoral Degree of Science Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Humanities and Arts”, based on the Law on Scientific Activity (<https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/107337>). However, it should be noted that in different places, the degree name may vary. For example, SAR and ADSP “Arts” parameters may formulate the degree as “Doctor of Science (Ph.D.)” in Humanities and Arts, which is why it should be corrected in all information resources.

The goal of the ADSP “Arts” (SAR, p.146) is “to prepare experts of international scale in the fields of humanities and arts”. It prioritises interdisciplinary methodology-bases fundamental research of art phenomena and the processes of the creative sector. The goal of the ADSP “Arts” is interrelated with the objectives and learning outcomes of the ADSP “Arts” (SAR, p.147-148).

The admission requirements include (SAR, p.149) “successfully completed a Master's degree or any equivalent diploma that qualifies for applying to doctoral studies according to the Latvian Higher Education Act and has been issued in such fields as Sociology, Humanities, Cultural Studies, Business Management or similar specialisation”.

AIKA recommended to LAC to specify the admission requirements by indicating specific thematic areas in which students must have obtained previous education, for example “Academic or professional master's degree in social sciences or humanities and arts or equivalent higher education” and if there is an additional requirement of “entrance examination for all applicants” or in Latvian: “Akadēmiskais vai profesionālais maģistra grāds sociālajās zinātnēs, humanitārajās un mākslas zinātnēs vai tam pielīdzināma augstākā izglītība (un iestājpārbaudījums visiem reflektantiem) – ja piemērojams.”

Experts believe that changing admission requirements for the ADSP “Arts” programme is important for several reasons. By specifying the thematic areas in which students must have obtained education, the admission requirements can ensure that students applying to the programme have a strong academic foundation in the relevant fields. This can help to ensure that they are better prepared for the rigors of doctoral-level research and study. By setting clear and specific admission requirements, the programme can attract applicants from a wider range of backgrounds and experiences. This can help to create a more diverse and inclusive learning environment, which is likely to benefit all students and contribute to a more vibrant academic community. By specifying a broad set of admission requirements, and if necessary, an entrance examination for all applicants, the Academic Doctor study programme can ensure that students are prepared for its rigorous academic demands. This can improve the quality of the incoming student cohort, their research interests, and ultimately the quality and relevance of the study programme.

According to the opinion of the expert group the title, codes 51212 and 51217 and Doctoral Degree of Science Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Humanities and Arts’ to be obtained are interrelated however the formulation of degree varies in different information sources. The aims, objectives, learning outcomes and are interrelated, but the admission requirements could be more specific related to the thematic fields in order to improve the quality and relevance of the programme.

The duration of the ADSP “Arts” is 3 years (6 semesters) with 120 CP. Within the framework of the evaluation procedure of this study field, it is planned to increase the scope of the programme to 132 CP (198 ECTS), however this is not mentioned as one of the parameters to be changed as part of the evaluation procedure (see 2.1.3). The scope and structure of the programme comply with the Higher Education Law and the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers no. 1001 “Procedure and criteria for the awarding (promotion) of the doctoral scientific degree”. (SAR, p.152).

The ADSP “Arts” is implemented in the state language. According to the SAR (p.153) “this choice is existentially crucial for maintaining and developing the Latvian language, and at the doctoral level,

it provides an opportunity to develop the Latvian language as a language of science". However, the individual research work and individual approach makes it possible for foreign students to study in the ADSP "Arts". Both Latvian and foreign students are entitled to submit their theses in foreign languages, providing a detailed summary translation in the state language. The LAC is moving to a new doctoral model and establishing the LAC Doctoral School to enable wider cooperation with foreign university doctoral schools, promote mutual student mobility, and increase the volume of study courses that can be learned in foreign languages - opening up opportunities for exporting doctoral-level education.

The duration of the ADSP "Arts" and implementation is reasonable and justified, the scope of currently 120 CP is planned to be increased to 132 CP being more appropriate for the aims of the study programme. The implementation language as Latvian is reasonable and justified to continue developing Latvian as language of science, however an experts group recommends to consider providing studies in English to raise the potential of exportability of the programme.

2.1.3.

According to the SAR (p.150) since 2013, when the accreditation of the study field "Arts" last took place and based on the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of August 14, 2018 no. 522 "Amendments to the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of December 27, 2005 No. 1001 "Procedure and criteria for the awarding (promotion) of the Doctoral degree"", as well as on the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of August 14, 2018 No. 523 "Amendments to the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of April 16, 2013 No. 202 "The procedure for issuing state-recognized higher education documents"", the Latvian Academy of Culture has made the following changes to the accreditation form and its annex for the study direction "Arts" supplementing the list of degrees in the doctoral study programme "Arts" (51212) with the following degrees in Humanities and Arts: "Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Music, Visual Arts and Architecture" and "Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in the Sciences of Creative Industries". The decision to make changes was made at the meeting of the Academic Information Centre's study quality commission on May 27, 2020 (decision No. 2020/25-I). The goal, tasks and results of the academic doctoral study program "Arts" have also been specified (SAR, p.146-147). .

The ADSP "Arts" code 43217 (Creative industries) was introduced in the classification of education in Latvia only in 2017, when the classification was supplemented with the aim 1) to ensure that the national statistical data are compliant with the requirements of international comparability, 2) to adapt the educational programme groups to the actual contents of education in Latvia. The educational programme group "Creative Industries" corresponds to the developing trends in the labour market and highlights the close connection of the processes of artistic creativity with the wider processes of the creative and cultural ecosystem.

To increase the scope of the ADSP "Arts" from 120 CP (180 ECTS) to 132 CP (198 ECTS). "The planned changes are based on the need to provide doctoral students with the opportunity to develop in-depth and international academic discourse-based theoretical knowledge in humanities and arts, as well as to strengthen research competences and capacity" (SAR, p.150).

As part of this evaluation procedure, it is planned to make changes in the following parameters of the programme:

1. to supplement the study programme code 51212 with the code 51217, which in accordance with the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers no. 322 "On the classification of education in Latvia" corresponds to the thematic group of education "Humanities and Arts", which includes the thematic field of education "Arts" and the thematic group of education "Creative industries" accordingly.
2. Specify the name of the awarded doctoral degree in humanities and arts. The awarded doctoral degree is Doctor of Science (PhD) in Humanities and Arts. The need to specify the degree name is justified by the amendments to the Law on Scientific Activity, which came into force on July 29, 2022 (see <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/334347-grozijumi-zinatniskas-darbibas-likuma>). These amendments

provide that "(2-1) the name of the Latvian science doctoral degree is Doctor of Science (philosophiae doctor) and its official abbreviation is Doctor of Science (Ph.D.). The official abbreviation of the doctoral degree in science, the corresponding field of science, and the title of the doctoral thesis are indicated on the doctoral diploma." The ADSP "Arts" belongs to the educational thematic group "Humanities and Arts," which corresponds to the field of science group Humanities and Arts (see Cabinet Regulations No. 595 "Regulations on the groups, fields, and subfields of Latvian science," available at <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/335928-noteikumi-par-latvijas-zinatnes-nozaru-grupam-zinatnesnozaru-em-un-apaksnozarem>), which is also included in the degree name. The degree name is also more appropriate in terms of the content and essence of the academic doctoral study programme at the Latvian Academy of Culture, which aims to promote interdisciplinary research on cultural and artistic phenomena, as well as research on cultural theory and creative industries, including performing arts, audiovisual arts, and cultural heritage industries.

2.1.4.

Based on the information provided in the SAR (p.154) and in experts' opinion the compliance of the ADSP "Arts" with the needs of society and economic development is justified by the importance of culture and arts, as well as creative industries in strengthening the quality of society's life, sustainability and resilience, in the development of principles of humanistic-based societal values. The training of critically thinking, emotionally intelligent and digitally skilled specialists has been set as one of the priorities in the field of higher education in the National Development Plan of Latvia 2021-2027

(https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/latvijas-nacionalais-attistibas-plans?utm_source=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F) and the priority in higher education is to implement a competitive cultural and arts education that is focused on human resource development, the development of professional and academic doctoral study programmes, promotion of artistic creation and research, as well as stimulating the internationalisation of education and compliance with the needs of the cultural and creative industries are stated also in Cultural Policy documents - Cultural Policy Guidelines 2022-2027 "Cultural State"

(<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/330444-kulturpolitikas-pamatnostadnes-2021-2027-gadam-kulturvalsts>)

According to the SAR the social and economic impact of the ADSP "Arts" is also substantiated by the international evaluation of the research activity at the LAC within the framework of the international evaluation of scientific and research institutions of Latvia in the time period 2013-2019 carried out by the Ministry of Education and Science, which is based on five main evaluation criteria: research quality, impact on the industry, economic and social impact, research environment and infrastructure, development potential. The evaluation welcomed the growth of human resources employed in research and the systematic integration of doctoral students and young research fellows, as well as the extensive involvement in national and international projects, both in the field of academic and applied research. Experts have recognized the impact of the research activity by the researchers (including doctoral students and graduates of the programme) of the Latvian Academy of Culture on the development of related fields of research.

Dynamics of the number of students according to the SAR (p.155) has been stable. Every year, 4-8 students are enrolled in the programme - 3-4 students in the study places financed from the state budget and 1-4 students - for their own funds. From 2013 until January 2023, 17 doctoral degree applicants have defended their doctoral theses at the Latvian Academy of Culture and received their doctorate degrees, of which 14 are graduates of the academic doctoral study programme "Arts".

There has been an increase in the number of matriculated students in the time period from 2017/2018 to 2021/2022, when 8 students were enrolled in the programme each year. Besides the increasing interest for the enrolment in the academic doctoral study programme "Arts" the LAC also reduced the tuition fee by 100% for one 1st-year student (2017/2018 study year) and two 1st-year

students (2021/2022 study year), which was based on the quality of the submitted doctoral thesis' topics and approved by the Senate of the Latvian Academy of Culture as indicated in the "Procedure for the application of tuition fee concessions at the Latvian Academy of Culture". The small number of budget places in the programme (2013/2014 study year - 3 budget places, from 2014/2015 study year onwards - 4 budget places) was the reason for several applicants, who had submitted high-quality applications, but did not receive one of these 3 or 4 budget places, to make the decision not to start their studies due to financial restraints. Due to that the LAC besides reducing a tuition fee, has carried out several activities, in particular, 2 ESF projects, that financially supports the doctoral students (SAR, p.156) - 4 students were involved in the undergraduate and graduate study programmes of the LAC as guest lecturers and 3 more doctoral students are part of the project where a new model of funding for the doctoral students is being developed, which will make it possible in the future to provide funding for the remuneration of doctoral students for research or study work at the LAC to the development of their doctoral thesis.

During the reporting period there are 13 students who have dropped-out from the programme: 7 students did not resume their studies after a study break, while the other 6 have stated personal reasons as the motive for leaving the programme, such as, moving abroad, inability to combine studies with work, etc. (SAR, p.156) Due to the tendency of a very large number of students who are dismissed from the programme at the end of the 6th semester (have fulfilled the requirements of the programme, have passed the doctoral exams, but have not defended their thesis) the LAC is planning in the next stage of accreditation, a transition to a new doctoral model, which would stipulate that the study process of the doctoral study programme and the development of the doctoral thesis, which results in obtaining a doctoral degree, are a single process.

As regards the employment of the graduates they are purposefully involved in the academic and research work of the LAC. Since the previous accreditation of the study direction in 2013, 12 graduates of the programme have been elected to academic positions at Latvian Academy of Culture, including the Institute of Culture and Arts and five graduates are engaged as guest lecturers on a regular basis in the bachelor's and master's study programmes (Sar, p.155). Graduates of the programme also work in other higher education institutions (Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music, University of Latvia, Daugavpils University, Rēzekne Academy of Technology, etc.), other research institutes (Institute of Culture and Arts of LAC, Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art of the University of Latvia, Institute of History of Latvia of the University of Latvia, etc.).

Applicants for the academic doctoral degree, who have completed the ADSP "Arts", are also working in leading positions in cultural organisations in Latvia (e.g. Latvian National Opera and Ballet, Latvian National Museum of Art). Both the employment of graduates in the mentioned institutions and the results of individual research activities show that the study programme prepares highly-qualified specialists in their field of culture and arts, whose intellectual capacity contributes to the creation of new knowledge and research, thus contributing to the development of society and the economic growth of the country.

2.1.5. n/a

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

ADSP "Arts" complies with the study field of "Arts" codes, the aim, objectives, and learning outcomes of the program are interrelated, and the implementation language is reasonable and justified. However, there are some risks expert panel identified, like admission requirements could be more specific related to thematic fields to improve the quality and relevance of the ADSP "Arts". The planned changes to the ADSP "Arts" parameters, including supplementing the study program code and specifying the name of the awarded doctoral degree in humanities and arts, would be

supported and justified. The social and economic justification of the ADSP “Arts” is confirmed. The dynamics of the number of students have been stable, and the graduates have been employed in various academic and cultural institutions in Latvia, indicating the quality of the ADSP “Arts”.

The priority of the ADSP “Arts”: “interdisciplinarity methodology-based fundamental research of art phenomena and the processes of the creative sector” mentioned in the SAR (p.151) and confirmed during the assessment visit to the LAC stands well for the two codes of the study field and matches the aims stated in culture and education policy planning documents. Due to the high number of students completing studies but not defending thesis the LAC is planning in the next stage of accreditation, a transition to a new doctoral model, which would stipulate that the study process of the doctoral study programme and the development of the doctoral thesis, which results in obtaining a doctoral degree, are a single process.

Strengths:

1. Covering an important area of research which is supported both by the importance of culture and arts in strengthening the quality of society's life, sustainability and resilience, in the development of principles of humanistic-based societal values.

Weaknesses:

1. The implementation language is Latvian, at the same time LAC states that it is possible for foreign students to study in the ADSP “Arts”. Both Latvian and foreign students are entitled to submit their theses in foreign languages, providing a detailed summary translation in the state language. This causes an unequal situation as the study courses are in Latvian so foreign students are not able to study at full capacity plus demands and effort to create detailed summary in Latvian;
2. The lack of consistency in the information provided across different documents can create confusion and ambiguity among stakeholders, leading to possible errors in decision-making and planning;
3. Vague admission requirements indicating some fields of previous studies without particular explanation instead of indicating thematic areas in which students must have obtained education to ensure that students applying to the programme have a strong academic foundation in the relevant fields;
4. Comparatively vague number of students who drop after 6th semester - doesn't defend thesis.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. According to (SAR, pp.147-159), the doctoral student is capable to demonstrate in his or her learning outcomes the most current theories in the field of cultural theory, cultural studies and creative industries, as well as to independently choose the appropriate methods for researching the phenomena of culture in creating new knowledge by implementing original research, the results of which are tested and approved both in the national and international academic environment, research networks, professional associations and organisations, conferences, leading and participating in editorial boards of scientific publications. To that extent, the ADSP “Arts” is designed in accordance with the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 1001 "Procedure and criteria for the awarding (promotion) of a scientific doctoral degree", in the amount of 120 CP, and is regularly updated in accordance not only with the most current issues of the science sector and sub-sector, but also with the research interests of doctoral students, as well as the individual needs of the academic career

The content of the programme corresponds to the development trends and priorities of the cultural sector and creative industries, contemporary cultural and artistic processes, cultural consumption trends, social and economic impact and sustainability of culture and other areas (see

<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/330444-kulturpolitikas-pamatnostadnes-2021-2027-gadam-kulturvalsts>). Also, the content of the programme is developed and improved in accordance with the Conceptual Report of the Ministry of Education and Science "On the introduction of a new doctoral model in Latvia" (see <https://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/konceptualais-zinojums-par-jauna-doktoranturas-modela-ieviesanu-latvija>). The ADSP "Arts" administration ascertains that the content of the ADSP "Arts" corresponds to the development trends and priorities of the cultural sector and creative industries, which are included in the cultural policy guidelines for 2022-2027 "Cultural State" and which emphasise the need to continue strengthening research in the fields of culture and arts, including implementing interdisciplinary state research programmes, in accordance with the latest Conceptual Report of the Ministry of Education and Science "On the introduction of a new doctoral model in Latvia" <https://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/konceptualais-zinojums-par-jauna-doktoranturas-modela-ieviesanu-latvija>) (SAR, p.160).

With respect to that, ADSP "Arts" is planned to increase the amount of the program's CP from 120 CP to 132 CP. By implementing the transition to the new doctoral model, the Latvian Academy of Culture is also planning to establish a doctoral school, thereby responding to the development of the research environment and the international market and continuing the development of the programme in accordance with the new regulatory requirements, in order to further promote the growth of doctoral students' research results and the progress towards scientific excellence in the field of humanities and arts (SAR, p.154). This explains why there is a discrepancy and lack of consistency: in the study program parameters submitted for the accreditation the total count of credit points is 120 CP (180 ECTS) but in certain documentation provided the total CP is 132 CP (198 ECTS) (documentation provided - the file 'LKA_13.04.2023_1.10e.137_iesniegums.zip' states 132 CP, 'LAC_13.04.2023_1.10e.137_Application_translation.pdf').

By separating the research-based doctoral model from the practice-based one the LAC ensures that the new theory generating research approach is not overtaken by merely an artefact creation, which under many existing doctoral programs, runs a risk to be insufficient of the title "Doctor of Philosophy".

Furthermore, the structure of the ADSP "Arts" consists of parts A, B and C, at the core of which is the compulsory research part of the study programme with its "Development of a doctoral thesis and individual research work" (100 CP), "Seminar in culture and art research" (12 CP), as well as doctoral exams - "Doctoral examination in the discipline and sub-discipline of science" (2 CP) and "Doctoral examination in a foreign language" (2 CP), which are determined as mandatory by the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 1001 "On the procedure and criteria for the awarding (promotion) of a scientific doctorate degree', totaling to the amount of 116 CP. Whereas, Part B, or part of the compulsory choice (12 CP) consists of specialisation study courses in the field of science and sub-fields, the focus of which is on learning the theoretical approaches and methodology of the field of science and sub-fields, as well as the basic principles of planning and creating a logical structure of a doctoral thesis.

The awarded doctoral degree is Doctor of Science (PhD) in Humanities and Arts. The need to specify the degree name is justified by the amendments to the Law on Scientific Activity, which came into force in July, 2022 (see <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/334347-grozijumi-zinatniskas-darbibas-likuma>). These amendments provide that "(2-1) the name of the Latvian science doctoral degree is Doctor of Science (philosophiae doctor) and its official abbreviation Doctor of Science (Ph.D.). Currently, ADSP "Arts" is included in the study direction "Arts" with the code 51212 (eventually to be supplemented with the code 51217). The name and code of the programme both comply with the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers no. 322 "Regulations of the classification of education in Latvia", where it is determined that the thematic group of education "Humanities and Art" is included in the thematic field of education "Arts", which also includes the following groups of educational programmes: "Music and performing arts" (code 51212) and "Creative industries" (51217) (SAR, p.151).

ADSP “Arts” currently does not have a new student handbook that might assist incoming PhD candidates on procedures and other relevant information with respect to obtaining a degree.

2.2.2.

Since the priority of scientific research by LAC has focused on close synergy with the development of other study programmes in order to prepare the competitive professionals in the field of culture and art, its interdisciplinary research direction gravitates towards cultural heritage, management of creative work processes, commercialization, the process of audience formation, formation of cultural policies, cultural and creative industries, intercultural communication, based on entire cultural and creative ecosystem in order to impact the three educational aspects: (a) ensuring the succession of study programmes, (b) promoting the integrity of studies and scientific activities, 3) promoting the renewal of academic staff (SAR, p.160). To this end, the awarding of the scientific doctorate degree is based on the achievements and findings of the humanities and arts sciences, rooted in the mandatory part of scientific research and doctoral exams. In order to obtain a degree, the PhD candidates are systematically involved in the research projects implemented by the LAC, develop their own scientific publications, report on the results of their research at scientific conferences, are being elected to academic positions at Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies of LAC, thus ensuring the direct influence of the ADSP “Arts” on the research work carried out by LAC (SAR, p.161).

The curious aspect is an option for the degree being awarded based on a thematically unified set of scientific publications, rather than a separate original dissertation, but the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers Nr. 1001 permits such an option, in addition to having a monograph as the third option for getting a PhD.

2.2.3.

According to (SAR, pp.160-161), the aim of ADSP “Arts” is to prepare experts of international scale in the field of humanities and arts, demonstrating interdisciplinary methodology-based fundamental research of art phenomena and the processes in the creative sector as well as the learning outcomes rooted in the ability to convincingly communicate his/her scientific ideas in the academic community in the form of discussions, lectures, scientific conference reports and anonymously reviewed publications, and to develop scientific projects and conducting expertise in the field of humanities and arts, are interconnected, by means of the student-centred approach.

The student-centred approach is being implemented through a series of lectures, seminars, individual consultations, particularly in Part A, as well as independent and individual work that ensures the individual cooperation of the doctoral student with the thesis supervisor. The doctoral thesis supervisor advises each doctoral student in the development of his or her doctoral thesis, specifies the tasks given to the doctoral student according to proposed research topic, provides recommendations on the topicality of the choice and the development of the theoretical justification of the doctoral thesis, as well as on other issues related to the development of the doctoral thesis and the approval of the research results. Whereas the parts B and C use the format of both lectures and seminars, in addition, discussions where the lecturers involve the doctoral students in discussing problematic issues, thus promoting the discussion and argumentation skills of the doctoral students.

Additionally, the the 6-semester study course "Seminar in culture and art research" contributes to the progress of the doctoral student's doctoral thesis development, develops presentation skills, promotes discussions between doctoral students and teaching staff, interdisciplinary cooperation and exchange of opinions, strengthens the ability of doctoral students to see the innovative aspects of their doctoral thesis, and also ensures additional monitoring of the progress of the doctoral student's research work.

The students receive feedback during this study process, that is, there is an active communication between lecturers and students using e- mails and online communication platforms (especially

Zoom), while the e-study environment (MOODLE) is gaining more and more importance in the process of doctoral studies.

Finally, the study results are evaluated in a 10-point system, while collegial assessment institutions play a vital role in evaluating study results, such as the Science and Arts Council of LAC (especially in the evaluation of doctoral students' research seminars and doctoral thesis progress), as well as doctoral examination commissions established in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 1001 "Procedure and criteria for the awarding (promotion) of a scientific doctorate" (SAR, p.161).

2.2.4. Not applicable, according to SAR.

2.2.5.

The defence process for students of LAC's ADSP "Arts" and scientific degree applicants is ensured in accordance with the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 1001 "Procedure and criteria for the awarding (promotion) of a scientific doctoral degree", "Regulations of the Latvian Academy of Culture on studies in the academic doctoral study programme "Arts".

Based on the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 1001, the chairman of the The Promotion Council of LAC is approved by the LAC rector upon the proposal of the vice-rector. The proposal for the composition of the Council is prepared by the Chairman of the Council. The council includes at least five scientists who have the right of an expert of the Latvian Council of Science (hereinafter - LCS) in the field of science, two of them - in the sub-field of science in which the doctoral thesis is defended. Necessary changes in the composition of the Council (in order to fulfil the requirements of Regulation No. 1001 of the CM on the presence of two experts from the science sub-sector relevant to the work in the council, on restrictions on the composition of the council and the invitation of work reviewers or if the applicant objects to the composition of the established council (Regulation No. 1001 Clauses 5, 17, 18 and 19)), as well as reviewers for each promotion are approved by the rector of LAC on the proposal of the Chairman of the Council. The term of office of the Council shall not exceed six years.

The "Regulations on promotion at the Latvian Academy of Culture" stipulate that the Promotion Council of LAC accepts the doctoral thesis submitted for defence for public defence if it meets the following criteria, but not limited to, the doctoral thesis being a completed original research, the results of which are of significant importance in the relevant branch and sub-branch of science (in the sub-branch of Music, visual arts and architecture science "Cultural theory" or the science branch of Creative Industries), the volume of the thesis is not less than 216,000 and not more than 360,000 characters (without spaces), the results of the doctoral thesis have been published in scientific publications or a monograph or the related intellectual property is patented, and the results of the doctoral thesis have been approved at international scientific conferences or seminars.

When accepting the work for defence, the Council appoints 3 reviewers for the doctoral thesis, of which 1 is an expert of the Council in the relevant scientific branch and sub-sector, and 2 - sub-sector experts from other scientific institutions or organisations. The applicant for a scientific degree, in turn, submits a prepared doctoral thesis to the SAC for evaluation of its scientific quality and compliance with the requirements set by LAC. In the case of a positive evaluation of the doctoral thesis, the SAC forwards it to the defence of the doctoral thesis. All doctoral theses developed by LAC and submitted to the LAC's Promotion Council have been defended and their authors have been awarded a scientific doctorate degree (until 2018 - Doctor of Arts degree Dr. art., in the following period, in accordance with the amendments made on August 14, 2018 to the regulations of the Ministry of Education No. 1001 "Procedure and criteria for the awarding (promotion) of the scientific doctor's degree" - Doctor of Science Ph.D.) (SAR, p.164).

If one must mention shortcomings applicable to the internships opportunities, students are not always aware of conference and publishing opportunities, whereby the dissemination of the research

activities has still a room for improvement, and the school does not provide grants that would allow students to travel to conferences including covering publishing fees.

2.2.6.

(SAR, pp.165-168) clearly defines the confirmation of the degree with the focus of the ADSP “Arts” strategic specialisation in research: theatre, dance, audiovisual arts industry,, cultural heritage, creative industries development, the use of language and communication models in the cultural and creative industries sector, linking cultural phenomena with social, economic and political factors.

The topics of doctoral theses of the ADSP “Arts” vary and are determined by two factors: the research, academic and professional interests of the doctoral student, as well as the relevance of these interests and the topics of the intended doctoral thesis to the research strategy of LAC and, therefore, to the cultural and creative industries.

The LAC has a good track record of graduates; during the study year of 2013/2014 until January 2023, 17 scientific doctoral degree applicants have defended their doctoral theses at the Latvian Academy of Culture and obtained a doctorate degree, of which 14 are applicants for a doctorate degree from LAC's ADSP “Arts”. While it is out of scope of this evaluation report to name all the topics by doctoral graduates, three notable mentions give a glimpse into the variety of issues in research:

Dāvis Šīmanis' doctoral thesis "Structuring Historical Narrative in Films: The Model of Southern Renaissance" (2015) deals with the discursive differences between the academic historical narrative and the historical narrative created by cinema, the research tradition related to the representation of the Renaissance today is identified, as well as the most common types of Renaissance representations are identified in motion pictures. Whereas, Zane Daudziņa's "Actor's Speech in 21st Century Latvian Theatre" (2022), delves into the speech of a Latvian actor, its transformations under the influence of the post-dramatic era, and the changes caused by technology in the art of theatre; the results of the doctoral thesis are integrated into the LAC's study programmes, as well as into the professional activities of Latvian theatre actors. Zane Balčus' doctoral thesis, in turn, "Texts and Contexts of Documentary Films: Themes, Styles and Systems in Latvian Cinema" (2022) examines the development of Latvian documentary films in the context of socio-economic, cultural and technological changes in the period from the end of the 20th century until the 20s of 21st century, the principles and conditions of documentary film production, film themes, and artistic language.

It is important to note that Balčus had used a second option under the Regulations Nr. 1001, as set by the Cabinet of Ministers, and her thesis was defended as a thematically unified set of publications.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The LAC ADSP “Arts” fulfills the criteria for content, promotion opportunities, and relevance of the final theses. The ADSP “Arts” is designed to encourage a research-based doctoral model in cultural and creative industries. The ADSP “Arts” is interdisciplinary, and the emphasis is on the student-centred approach. The study implementation methods promote the objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme. The awarding of a scientific doctorate degree is based on achievements and findings of humanities and arts sciences. The topics of students' final theses are broad and cover various issues related to culture and the arts. The promotion opportunities of students are well-defined, and the defence process complies with standard regulatory enactments. However, there is a lack of awareness among students about conference and publishing opportunities, the absence of seed funding for student works and publishing in reputable journals can be detrimental to a student's research ambitions and lastly, the dissemination of research

activities can be significantly improved. This underscores the importance of enhancing communication channels, both within and outside the academic community.

Strengths:

1. Distinguished supervising team;
2. Thesis committee in place;
3. A good track record of graduates obtaining a degree.

Weaknesses:

1. Students are not always aware of conference and publishing opportunities
2. No seed funding for student works and publishing in reputable journals
3. Dissemination of the research activities can be improved.
4. No student handbook provided.

Assessment of the requirement [5] (applicable only to master's or doctoral study programmes)

- 1 R5 - The study programme for obtaining a master's or doctoral degree is based on the achievements and findings of the respective field of science or field of artistic creation.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Any negative issues identified do not impair the quality of ADSP "Arts", and the program awards the doctoral degree based on the achievements and theoretical findings in the humanities and arts sciences - specifically cultural theory and cultural studies, as well as creative industries, while supported by the content of the study courses included in the the state examination, the development and defence of the doctor's theoretical research.

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1.

The LAC provides adequate resources for the implementation of the ADSP "Arts", consisting of technically equipped auditoriums and a Library reading room available to students for studying and research in the premises on Ludzas Street 24, as well as the auditoriums and practical lesson rooms in the Theatre house "Zirgu pasts". The spaces for creative classes and Cinematheque's film collections are situated at the LAC National Film School (NFS) at Elijas Street 17.

The resources of the LAC's library - the EBSCO National Electronic Resource Package are an important source for research for doctoral students; it includes database resources such as EBSCO Academic Search Complete + MasterFILE Premier and NLL online databases. The Theses database of LAC created by the Library of LAC is also an important source of information. "Doctoral students in the LKA library also use databases and resources whose availability is restricted due to copyright, for example the programme Latvian films in Latvian libraries (https://www.filmas.lv/filmu-katalogs/?tab=movies&sub_tab=movies-all&mp20=&watch=library) (SAR p. 168). Making accessible the materials for PhD students of international background in English would be a useful step in internalization of the ADSP "Arts".

The Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies of LAC is an important resource for the implementation and development of the doctoral study programme. The institute promotes integration between study and research process on every level; "involves doctoral students in research projects and promotes participation in local and international scientific conferences, discussions, promotes the development of scientific publications, as well as the involvement of doctoral students in thematic

research groups and collective projects designed also for peer review of research results, are closely integrated into the practice of LAC's scientific conferences - both as conference audience and as speakers" (SAR p. 169). Excellent example is the programme of LAC's annual conference cycle "Culture Crossroads" (<https://lka.edu.lv/en/research/conferences/annual-conferences/international-research-conference-culture-crossroads/>) that is part of the doctoral study process and is included in the semester plan. The annual student conference "The Art-of-Knowing" (<https://lka.edu.lv/en/research/conferences/annual-conferences/student-research-conference-art-knowing/>) is dedicated to the communication of students' research works, and every year its main theme is subordinated to the current affairs of the cultural and creative sector. The development of doctoral students' research competencies is also financially stimulated. The concept of internal research projects of LAC (see <https://lka.edu.lv/en/research/research-projects/internal-research-grants/>) and the research project of the Latvian Academy of Culture the regulations of the contest "Development of scientific activity in the Latvian Academy of Culture" provide that the research project team must necessarily include students of various study levels, especially those studying in the doctoral programme. In recent years, doctoral students have also independently applied for project grants. "Also, an example of good practice that contributes to the development of a doctoral study programme project is the LAC UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Policy and Law Department, which was established with the aim of developing international academic and research cooperation in the field of Intangible Cultural Heritage policy and law research. The activity of the UNESCO department is focused on the development of master's and doctoral studies, as well as the development of research projects, focusing on the implementation of the UNESCO Convention on the Preservation of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) in international cooperation, as well as at the national level in various countries of the world. The focus of the UNESCO Department is the analysis of experiences, challenges and solutions that address the connection between different areas of policy-making and law creation related to the Intangible Cultural Heritage" (SAR p. 169).

In the study process, LAC uses the e-study environment (Moodle), providing communication with students necessary for the study process and the Information System of Latvian Universities (LAIS), which ensures the flow of information with students, access to resources and information. Although the use of the e-study environment among doctoral students has not been very active during the self-assessment review period, its use is being intensified. (SAR p. 168).

2.3.2.

An important factor in promoting the research work of doctoral students is LAC's cooperation with other universities and scientific institutions. The cooperation in the field of research is supported, organized and coordinated by the Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies of LAC. "The main cooperation partners from the environment of scientific institutions are Art Academy of Latvia (AAL), Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music (JVLMA), the National Library of Latvia (NLL) and the 170 Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art of the University of Latvia (ILFA LU). This partnership is based on common or similar research strategic priorities, the connection of the research topic with the cultural and creative ecosystem, the need to create a unified humanities and arts sciences, as well as an interdisciplinary network of researchers, which promotes the integrity and inclusion of the scientific knowledge of the mentioned branches of science in the study content." (SAR p. 169-170) The State research programme project "Cultural Capital as a Resource for Sustainable Development of Latvia"/CARD (No. VPP-KM-LKRVA-2020/1-0003) is a successful example of cooperation between the aforementioned partners. "The project was financed by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia under the state research programme "Latvian Culture – a Resource for National Development" (2020-2022) (Project partners: LAC – leading partner, JVLMA, AAL, NLL, ILFA LU) (see <https://lka.edu.lv/en/research/research-projects/state-research-programmes/cultural-capital-resourc>

e-sustainable-development-latviacard/).”(SAR p. 170) Other state research programmes have included the following partners: Rezekne Academy of Technologies, The Institute of Mathematics and Computer Science of the University of Latvia, The University of Latvia Livonian Institute, Latvian Language Institute of the University of Latvia, Riga Technical University etc. The LAC as a leading partner, also cooperates with other Latvian universities of art and culture “in the ESF project “Approval of doctoral grants and attracting foreign academic staff to LAC” (8.2.2.0/20/I/002), which aims to provide support to LAC and its partners AAL and JVLMA for the development of academic personnel, including the regeneration of scientists, internationalization, international competitiveness, as well as for the cooperation of three partner universities and the sharing of resources.” (SAR p. 170) The project is dedicated to a new funding model and provides funding for the remuneration of doctoral students for research or study work at LAC, related to the development of a doctoral thesis. The result of the project is the renewal of the academic staff of LAC is promoted, an investment in the improvement of academic work and the improvement of quality, an increase in the proportion of academic staff with a doctorate degree will be promoted, as well as the attraction of doctoral students to LAC. The project involves 4 doctoral students and received ESF support will enable them to develop their academic and scientific careers, to make a significant contribution to the creation of new knowledge and the active dissemination of research results, (see (Latvian only) [https://www.lka.edu.lv/lv/aktuali/jaunumi/latvijas-kulturas-akademija-pieskirusi-petniecibas-grantus\[1\]4-doktorantiem-danielai-zacmanei-zanetei-eglitei-ditai-pfeiferei-un-ivaram-steinbergam/](https://www.lka.edu.lv/lv/aktuali/jaunumi/latvijas-kulturas-akademija-pieskirusi-petniecibas-grantus[1]4-doktorantiem-danielai-zacmanei-zanetei-eglitei-ditai-pfeiferei-un-ivaram-steinbergam/)).

The LAC has established strong communication connections and intensive cooperation with professional institutions in the field (museums, cultural centres and various other institutions and agencies) and their representatives generally express a high level of appreciation for competitive advantages of the Academy’s PhD students and LAC’s impact on the cultural life of Riga. During the site visit, the representatives of the museum and cultural heritage sector expressed appreciation for LAC’s high contribution to the field, emphasizing the number of researchers studying at doctoral studies at LAC and while professionally working in the sector.

2.3.3.

The ADSP “Arts” is basically created on the basis of funding from the state budget, and the own revenues are directed to the maximum extent for the development of the programme and covering unexpected expenses. To the optimization of ADSP “Arts” implementation expenses, a lot of attention is devoted to for example, organising stream lectures in professor-taught courses and providing remote lectures. The minimum number of students in the ADSP “Arts” to ensure the profitability of the study programme is set at 12 budget places and students have only been admitted to the Latvian language stream. (SAR p. 171).

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The LAC provides adequate resources for the implementation of the ADSP “Arts”, consisting of technically equipped auditoriums and a Library reading room and resources available to students for study and research. An important factor in promoting the research work of doctoral students is LAC’s cooperation with other universities, scientific and cultural institutions, which largely is supported, organised and coordinated by the Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies of LAC.

Strengths:

1. Integration between study and research process on every level;
2. Strong cooperation with other universities and scientific institutions in the field;
3. Funding model for the remuneration of doctoral students for research or study work at LAC, related to the development of a doctoral thesis.

Weaknesses:

1. Making accessible more materials for PhD students of international background in English would be a useful step in internalisation of the ADSP “Arts”.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

- 1 R6 - Compliance of the study provision, science provision (if applicable), informative provision (including library), material and technical provision and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LAC provides adequate resources for the implementation of the ADSP “Arts”, consisting of technically equipped auditoriums and a Library reading room and resources available to students for study and research. An important factor in promoting the research work of doctoral students is LAC's cooperation with other universities, scientific and cultural institutions, which largely is supported, organized and coordinated by the Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies of LAC. The resources and provisions of the study programme can be assessed as fully compliant, with minor suggestions for improvements.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.

The academic, scientific and professional qualifications of the academic staff of the ADSP “Arts” comply with the conditions of the study programme implementation and regulatory framework. In the implementation of the programme 15 elected teaching staff at LAC and 2 emeritus professors are engaged (SAR p. 171). All of them have a scientific doctoral degree. The SAR (p.p. 172-175) states that all of them have extensive publication practice and conference attendance record. From the Annexes 2.4.4.-1 and 2.4.4.-2 it is visible that the teachers at this programme are among the most active and most productive scientists and researchers at LAC. The SAR (pp. 172-175) contains the elaborate explanation on how their fields of expertise and publishing records are optimized in focusing their teaching and mentoring activities on the particular topics and how they can contribute the most to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses. Language proficiency levels of academic staff declared in teachers CV and approved through their research records show that most of them can efficiently and fluently teach in English. Sufficient mechanisms to conduct the quality review and evaluation of the academic staff exist, using mix of the external laws and LAC internal regulation such as “On academic positions in the Latvian Academy of Culture” and “Procedures for the Creation and Operation of the Council of Professors of the Latvian Academy of Culture” documents. (SAR p. 172, Annex 2.3.5.).

2.4.2.

The changes stated in SAR (p.175) have been made in the composition of the teaching staff since 2013/2014. The changes are mostly the result of expanding the teaching staff according to an expanding number of topics and fields of research. As stated in SAR (p.175) the inclusion of the teachers from different new fields of expertise makes a positive impact on students' variety of choices in research topics and on interdisciplinarity of the ADSP “Arts”. The changes and the flexibility of the composition of the teaching staff do not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the ADSP “Arts”. On the contrary, such changes positively impacts the scientific research and the content of courses, strengthening the importance of the ADSP “Arts” for the Latvian art and cultural market and its visibility nationwide and abroad.

2.4.3.

The teaching staff engaged at the ADSP “Arts” have an extensive and continuous research and publishing record visible in the Annex 2.4.4.-1. The SAR (p. 176) states a significant number of publications produced by teaching staff engaged in the programme and supports such statements. Precisely, 39 individual and collective scientific monographs and about 125 articles in peer reviewed scientific journals and collections of articles, of which 26 are in SCOPUS/WoS and 9 ERIH databases. As the most important both for the staff and the ADSP “Arts” in the last 6 years SAR (p.p. 176-178) emphasizes 26 works in range from SCOPUS and ERIH indexed works to published conference papers. The list proves national and international research record as well as the direct connection of the teachers’ researches with the specific courses and programme in total. As almost all the scientists from LAC are included in implementation of this ADSP “Arts”, the synergy and cumulative effect of all the researches and publications at LAC contribute significantly not only to the positive image of the publishing record but also to the quality of the doctoral programme.

The list shows a good balance between all the teachers engaged in the ADSP “Arts” in terms of research and publishing activities. From the interviews with the teaching staff expert group learned that the implementation of different new teaching strategies and further development of teaching materials on doctoral studies are planned. Paying attention to this aspect can promote the university doctoral programs and increase its research impact significantly, and from the interview with the academic staff it is clear that they are well aware of that.

2.4.4.

The SAR (p. 68, p.p. 178-182), Annexes 2.4.4.-1 and 2.4.4.-2, as well as teachers CV, proves the information of a variety of the very developed and extended scientific and artistic activities conducted by teachers on ADSP “Arts” in terms of presenting, research, publishing, and participating in conferences and in various creative artistic projects.

The SAR (p.p. 178-182) particularly emphasizes 4 international and one state (national) research projects of the highest level, and 10 sub-projects within these enlisted. Five complex fundamental and applied research and 3 postdoctoral projects also mentioned (SAR p. 182). Among the teachers engaged in the programme 11 of them are elected at academic positions at LAC.

Majority of the academic staff regularly visits scientific conferences and develops further scientific and teaching skills. Among the conferences attended by the academic staff almost all are international conferences, national and international wide. Domestic conferences were organized in Latvia by LAC itself or other Latvian universities or cultural institutions. During the visit, more plans for international exchanges and training have been reported. General plans for staff mobility exist, and most of the staff participate in short-term exchanges. In staff interviews it was pointed out that the motivational system supports research and that LAC supports researches financially. It was also noticed that the academic staff would need more time to allocate for such activities, because it is hard for academic staff to allocate time for more intensive research, because a teaching process with individual approach and administration work is time-consuming.

2.4.5.

The concept of the ADSP “Arts” is directly linked to various BA, MA and doctoral studies at LAC. Collaboration and communication is, therefore, the core condition for the successful achievement of the aims. The SAR (p.183) states that IAC serves as a central point for facilitation the communication and collaboration process at the programme, also functioning as a central point for the coordination of all the cooperation in the development of both local and international research project applications.

Special focus is on internationalization of the research and project participation. Complements to regulation and institutional framework are monitored by SAC which resolves issues related to doctoral studies and the scientific and creative activities of LAC’s academic staff. Five points of the

SAC's responsibility stated in the SAR (p. 183) are in the fields of the admission procedure, thesis approvals, evaluations of the students achievements, thesis evaluation and regulatory documents. Regular self-evaluations are conducted with academic rigor. One of the seminars at the study programme is organized as the platform for discussion, debate and peer evaluation of the research projects.

Cooperation exists among the teaching staff and the students. Formal and informal, collective and individual forms of meetings and exchanging the information are established and functional.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by indicating strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions: The qualification and research record of the academic staff involved in the implementation of the ADSP "Arts" complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and enables the achievement of its aims and learning outcomes. From the information obtained during the site visit and from the SAR (p. 178) it can be concluded that the professional development of the academic staff is assured through different research projects, seminars, training courses, public presentations, publications, international collaborations and communication with external experts. High qualified staff declare high commitment to continuous improvement of teaching strategies and production of teaching materials.

Publishing activities meet the requirements of the ADSP "Arts" implementation. There is room for improvement in targeting higher ranking publishing media. There are formal mechanisms for cooperation which are functional and supported by informal interaction of staff members. During the site visit, the expert group learned about the opportunities provided for continuous additional professional development of the teaching staff. The ratio of 16 lecturers to 19 students is mostly the result of the individual mentorship approach to the doctoral research and as such can be accepted as appropriate.

Strengths:

- 1) Highly qualified staff;
- 2) Links of the staff to the most important state and industry institutions;
- 3) Interdisciplinary and international activities of the staff.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Very high demands on the teachers in terms of workload.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

- 1 R7 - Compliance of the qualification of the academic staff and visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The staff is adequately composed, competent and complies with all the requirements of the ADSP "Arts". Minor weakness have been identified, but they do not affect the evaluation of the requirement.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

- 1 1 - The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The degree to be obtained is the "Doctoral Degree of Science Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Humanities and Arts" and Annex "Eng_The compliance of the study programme with regulatory requirements, if a doctoral study programme is implemented.docx" shows that the ADSP "Arts" partially complies with the Law on Scientific Activity (<https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/107337>). The title, codes 51212 and 51217 and degree Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Humanities and Arts' to be obtained are interrelated however the title of degree varies in different information sources.

- 2 2 - The study programme complies with a valid professional standard or the requirements for the professional qualification (if there is no professional standard required for the relevant occupation) provided if the completion of the study programme leads to a professional qualification (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 3 3 - The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 561 , Paragraph two and Section 562 , Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study course descriptions are prepared in Latvian and English that can be accessed under 3.2.1. _Course description_ENG (1).zip and 3.2.1_Kursu apraksti (2).zip comply with regulations set forth in Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 4 4 - The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure according to which state recognised documents of higher education are issued.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The provided Diploma sample in the annex 3.1.2._akad.dok.zip LV EN partially complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued according to Cabinet Regulation No. 202 "Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību.

It should be noted that in different places, the degree name varies, e.g. SAR and ADSP "Arts" parameters may formulate the degree as "Doctor of Science (Ph.D.)" in Humanities and Arts, which is why it should be corrected in all information resources.

- 5 5 - The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The annex provided CONFIRMATION_dARTS.pdf certifies that the academic staff involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

- 6 6 - Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 7 7 - At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

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

- 8 8 - The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

It can be concluded that teaching staff that is listed in the annex CONFIRMATION_dARTS.pdf and presents CV in other programs the state language proficiency is compliant with Cabinet Regulation Nr. 733 " Regulations Regarding the Extent of the Knowledge of the Official Language, the Procedures for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language and the State Fee for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language".

- 9 9 - The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 10 10 - The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Sample of attached study agreement "2.1.4.-3 study agreement example.pdf" complies with Cabinet Regulation. Nr. 70 "Studiju līgumā obligāti ietveramie noteikumi".

- 11 11 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Agreement of LAC and The Art Academy of Latvia (LMA) no. 1.20/5 on 28.03.2023 in Appendix No2 (see 2.1.4._1 ENG.zip) provides (2_translation_LAC LMA agreement 2023 .pdf) confirmation that if the doctoral study programme "Arts" (51212) of the LAC is discontinued, LMA shall ensure that doctoral students from this study programme can continue studies in LMA doctoral study programme "Arts" (51211) to obtain degree "Doctor of Science (Ph.D.)

- 12 12 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LAC has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's licence is revoked. It is ensured by the document certifying it - 1_translation_Arts RI 2023 that includes LAC confirmation no. 1.10e/35 from 24.01.2023 (2.1.4.-2_ENG.zip) . The documents provided are pursuant to paragraph 13.4 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 795 "Regulations Regarding Licensing of Study Programmes" .

- 13 13 - The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 55.(1), Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 14 14 - Compliance with the requirements specified in other regulatory enactments that apply to the study programme being assessed (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

- 1 R8 - Compliance of the study programme with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Study programme partially complies with regulatory enactments (see points 1 and 4 in the table 2.5 chapter) .

General conclusions about the study programme, indicating the most important strengths and weaknesses of the study programme

Conclusions:

ADSP "Arts" the title, codes 51212 and 51217 and Doctoral Degree of Science Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Humanities and Arts' to be obtained are interrelated; however the formulation of degree varies in different information sources, e.g SAR and ADSP "Arts" parameters may formulate the degree as "Doctor of Science (Ph.D.)" in Humanities and Arts, which is why it should be corrected in all information resources. The aims, objectives, learning outcomes and are interrelated, but the admission requirements could be more specifically related to the thematic fields in order to improve the quality and relevance of the programme. The LAC provides adequate resources for the implementation of the academic doctoral ADSP "Arts". An important factor in promoting the research work of doctoral students is LAC's cooperation with other universities, scientific and cultural institutions, which largely is supported, organized and coordinated by the Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies of LAC. From the information obtained during the site visit and from the SAR it can be concluded that the professional development of the academic staff is assured through different research projects, seminars, training courses, public presentations, publications, international collaborations and communication with external experts. High qualified staff declare high commitment to continuous improvement of teaching strategies and production of teaching materials. Publishing activities meet the requirements of the programme implementation. There is room for improvement in targeting higher ranking publishing media. There are formal mechanisms for cooperation which are functional and supported by informal interaction of staff members. Formal requirements of Law's and National regulations are partially met according to criteria.

Strengths:

1. Covering an important area of research which is supported both by the importance of culture and arts in strengthening the quality of society's life, sustainability and resilience, in the development of principles of humanistic-based societal values;
2. Distinguished supervising team and highly qualified staff;
3. Thesis committee in place;
4. A good track record of graduates obtaining a degree;
5. Integration between study and research process on every level;
6. Strong cooperation with other universities and scientific institutions in the field;
7. Links of the staff to the most important state and industry institutions;
8. Interdisciplinary and international activities of the staff.

Weaknesses:

1. Students are not always aware of conferences and publishing opportunities;
2. No seed funding for student works and publishing in reputable journals;
3. Dissemination of the research activities is not visible;
4. The implementation language is Latvian, at the same time LAC states that it is possible for foreign students to study in the ADSP "Arts". Both Latvian and foreign students are entitled to submit their theses in foreign languages, providing a detailed summary translation in the state language. This causes an unequal situation as the study courses are in Latvian so foreign students are not able to study at full capacity plus demands and effort to create detailed summary in Latvian;
5. The lack of consistency in the information provided across different documents can create confusion and ambiguity among stakeholders, leading to possible errors in decision-making and planning;
6. Vague admission requirements indicating some fields of previous studies without particular explanation instead of indicating thematic areas in which students must have obtained education to ensure that students applying to the programme have a strong academic foundation in the relevant fields;
7. Comparatively vague number of students who drop after 6th semester - doesn't defend thesis.

Evaluation of the study programme "Arts"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Arts"

Short-term recommendations

- | |
|---|
| 1) To ensure access to all study relevant information in English for PhD students of international background, particularly in the form of PhD "Student Handbook"; |
| 2) LAC should review and verify the accuracy and consistency of information in all documents and sources, such as the name of the degree, the amount of ADSP "Arts" in CP or ECTS, and other details; |
| 3) LAC should provide clear and comprehensive admission requirements that indicate the necessary thematic areas in which students must have obtained education to ensure that they possess a strong academic foundation in the relevant fields; |

4) It is recommended that LAC ensures consistency of information across all documents and sources. From the experts' side, please ensure a full description of any changes, compliance with regulations, and industry standards, as well as ensuring matching information between chapters;

5) It is recommended that the students are more aware of conference and publishing opportunities and improve the dissemination of research activities.

Long-term recommendations

1. To reorganise the workload of academic staff involving more doctoral students and short-term guest lecturers in the work process in order to leave more room for the academic staff for research and publishing activities and personal development;

2. LAC should implement a robust tracking and monitoring system to keep track of the progress of all students enrolled in the programme. This will help identify and address students who are struggling or at risk of dropping out and enable the programme administrators to provide the necessary support and interventions to help such students successfully complete the ADSP "Arts". Additionally, the ADSP "Arts" should conduct regular assessments to identify reasons why students drop out after the sixth semester, and use this information to enhance the ADSP "Arts" and reduce dropout rates;

3. LAC should consider offering study courses in English or other widely spoken languages to allow foreign students to study at full capacity. Additionally, the LAC should provide language support services and resources to facilitate communication and comprehension. The option to submit theses in a foreign language with a detailed summary translation in Latvian should continue to be available to ensure that foreign students are not at a disadvantage in the thesis evaluation process. This could attract a wider pool of international students and provide greater opportunities for knowledge exchange and collaboration between different cultures;

4. LAC should establish seed funding for students to publish in reputable journals as well as conference travel grants.

II - "Arts" ASSESSMENT

II - "Arts" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1.

The joint professional doctoral study program "Arts" (JPDSP "Arts") fits well within the study field "Arts". According to the SAR (p.362) and in experts' opinion, the program's compliance with the educational field of "Arts" is confirmed by the study modules and courses implemented in the JPDSP "Arts".

2.1.2.

The title of the study program is "Arts" in the study field of "Arts" with 4 education classification codes 51211 with the last 3 numbers (211) standing for "Visual Arts", 51212 with the last 3 numbers (211) standing for "Music and Performing Arts", 51213 with the last 3 numbers (213) standing for "Audiovisual Art and Media Art", 51214 with the last 3 numbers (214) standing for "Design" according to the classification of Latvian education no.322 which is available at:

<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>.

As stated in SAR (p.362) according to the issued license for the JPDSP "Arts" implemented by the LAC, Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music (JVLAM) and the Art Academy of Latvia (AAL) and structured in three sub-programs: "Music and Performing Arts", "Visual Arts and Design" and "Audiovisual Arts, Theatre and Contemporary Dance" four codes have been assigned - 51211, 51212, 51213, 51214. Partner universities provide the following sub-programs in the study program:

1. LAC implements the sub-program "Audiovisual Arts, Theatre and Contemporary Dance" (code 51213) - artistic areas of Audiovisual Arts, Theatre Arts, Contemporary Dance Arts. However the code 51213 stands for "Audiovisual Arts and Media Art" the sub-program focuses on audiovisual art, theatre arts, and contemporary dance, following it would fall under two codes - 51212 ("Music and Performing Arts") and 51213 ("Audiovisual Arts and Media Art").

2. JVLAM implements the sub-program "Music and Performing Arts" (code 51212) - artistic areas of Music, Choreography;

3. AAL implements the sub-program "Visual Arts and Design" (code 51211, 51213, 51214) - artistic areas of Visual Arts, Audiovisual and Media Arts, Design.

The degree awarded is "Professional Doctor's Degree in Arts" which also corresponds to the four program codes (51211, 51212, 51213, 51214) and the requirements of the Cabinet Regulation No. 617 of 02.10.2018 "Regulation on the national standard of professional higher education at level of doctoral degree and a procedure for granting a professional doctoral degree in arts" (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/301992-noteikumi-par-profesionalas-augstakas-izglitiba-valsts-standartu-doktora-grada-iegusana-un-kartibu-kada-pieskir-profesionalo>)

SAR (p.358) states that the aim of the JPDSP "Arts" is "to organise professional studies meeting cultural, public and societal needs based in artistic creativity and science, as well as applicable in artistic practice." The expression "to organise professional studies" (SAR, p.358) is not accurate, as well as formulation of the research methods (for details see 2.2.1.).

The goal of the JPDSP "Arts" is interrelated with the objectives and learning outcomes of the study program (SAR, p.358-359).

Admission requirements: High-level art professionals who have a master's degree in humanities, social sciences, or an equivalent higher education degree, or a professional master's degree in music or choreography, can apply for studies in one of the sub-programs. At least a B2 level of English language proficiency is required for studies in English. However, experts have noticed that admission requirements are not consistent across partner universities (JVLAM and AAL). It is important to have the same admission requirements in all universities for joint study programs to ensure a fair and standardized application process. This helps to maintain consistency and fairness for all applicants across different universities. Additionally, having the same admission requirements ensures that students in the joint program have similar academic backgrounds and can meet the JPDSP "Arts" academic standards. The universities (JVLAM, AAL and LAC) should work together to establish a common set of admission requirements and ensure that all applicants are evaluated under the same standards. This can help to create fairness and equal opportunities for all applicants. According to the expert group's opinion, the title, code, and degree to be obtained, as well as the aims, objectives, and learning outcomes, are interrelated. However, admission requirements need to be updated to ensure consistent information across all universities (LAC, AAL, JVLAM)..

The duration of the JPDSP "Arts" is six semesters or three years in the amount of 132 credit points. The program is licensed both for Latvian and English (the level of proficiency is at least B2 level). The duration and scope of the JPDSP "Arts" implementation, as well as the implementation language, are reasonable and justified.

2.1.3.

Since the issuance of licence number 2020/05K on September 30th, 2020, the LAC has not made any changes to the parameters of the JPDSP "Arts", and no changes are planned within the

assessment procedures of the study field.

On the basis of the "Agreement on the Implementation of the Sub-programs "Music and Performing Arts", "Visual Arts and Design" and "Audiovisual Arts, Theatre and Contemporary Dance" of the Joint Professional Doctoral Study program in "Arts" in the study field Arts" concluded on 6 September 2019 (see Annex No. 18, included in annex: Compliance of the study program with the requirements set for a joint study program.zip), the following sub-programs shall be provided in the study program of the above educational institutions:

1. The JVLAM implements the sub-program "Music and Performing Arts" (code 51212) - fields of artistic activity: Music, choreography;
2. The AAL implements the sub-program "Visual Art and Design" (code 51211, 51213, 51214) - fields of artistic activity: Visual Arts, Audio Visual and Media Arts, Design;
3. LAC implements the sub-program "Audiovisual Art, Theatre and Contemporary Dance" (code 51213) - artistic fields of Audiovisual Art, Theatre Art, Contemporary Dance Art.

2.1.4.

According to the SAR (p.365-366) the LAC has provided research in the field of art corresponding to the program, including the environment of the creative sphere and labour market of audiovisual and performing arts. The foundation for the development and implementation of the doctoral study program in arts "Arts" is a research conducted by the Scientific Research Center of the Latvian Academy of Culture titled "Research on the Succession of the Implementation of Cultural Education in Professional Orientations, Professional Secondary Education, Higher Education programs, and the Number of Prepared Specialists Corresponding to the Requirements of the Cultural and Creative Industries Labor Market" (2017). The document reflects a set of skills and qualities (SAR, p.366) expected from those working in the sector, both locally and internationally, such as communication skills, creative thinking, ability to work in a group, decision-making, motivation etc., according to the opinion of the expert group they relate to general skills and competencies the study program's of the LAC provide, but are not directly linked to the motivation of implementation of the JPDS "Arts". The program economically and socially through a good understanding of the labour market for audiovisual art, theatre, and contemporary dance in Latvia and closely following developments and demands in this market, collaborating closely with industry institutions (National Film Center, institutional and independent theatres, film studios, contemporary dance organisations, Latvian Film Producers Association, Latvian Theatre Workers Union, Latvian Cinematographers Association, etc.). The demand for the study program is indicated by the stable and targeted interest of the applicants. Since the launch of the study program in 2021, 3 to 4 PhD students were enrolled in the first year of the sub-program "Audiovisual Art, Theatre, and Contemporary Dance" each year. The license for the implementation of the program was issued in September 2020, and the first enrolment was organized in the winter of 2021, when 8 applicants applied for 3 state budget places, of which 4 were enrolled; in the summer of 2021, 3 applicants applied for 3 state budget places, and 3 PhD students were enrolled; in the autumn of 2022, 4 applicants applied for 3 state budget places and 4 PhD students were enrolled. Although the competition for study places is not large, the results of the admission assignments and further studies indicate the motivation and interest of the PhD students. The decrease in the number of applicants in the summer of 2021 is explained by the short interval since the first enrolment in the winter of 2021. PhD students are mostly full-time academics. The implementation of the sub-program in English is planned in the program's license, but has not yet been started, although several potential applicants have shown interest in studying in English in the sub-program "Audiovisual Art, Theatre, and Contemporary Dance". The enrolment of students in English will depend on the interest of potential applicants both in Latvia and abroad. For example, in the sub-program "Music, Performing Arts, and Choreography" implemented by JVLMA, 1 student started studying in English in study year 2022/2023, and LAC teaching staff participate in the implementation of parts A and B of the study courses in English.

The program began in 2021, so there are no graduates as of now, but all students already actively work in their artistic field and build successful careers based on creative work and/or artistic research. There are 11 students in the program in 2022/2023 academic year - of whom 3 are successfully working and achieving great success in the field of audiovisual arts, 1 in contemporary dance, 3 in theatre arts, 3 in theatre and film dramaturgy, and 1 in directing large scale cultural event directing art.

2.1.5.

According to SAR (p.368) On April 1st, 2018, amendments to the Law on Higher Education in Latvia came into effect, changes were made to the regulations of the Cabinet Regulation No. 322 "Regulations on the classification of education in Latvia", as well as Cabinet Regulation No. 617 "Regulations on the State Standard for Professional Higher Education for Obtaining a Doctor's Degree and the Procedure for Awarding a Professional Doctor's Degree in Arts", the approved amendments allowed an opportunity to begin joint professional Doctorate program in arts "Arts".

According to the SAR (p.367-368) and as concluded by the experts group there is a strong foundation to develop and implement the JPDSP "Arts" through collaboration of three universities in the fields of art and culture - JVLMA, AAL, and LAC :

The practice and experience in the other countries. The professional Doctor's of Arts degree or a similar degree after the completion of a three-cycle art study program is awarded in several countries that have joined the Bologna Process or the European Higher Education Area. Until April 2018, Latvia was the only Baltic country where it was not possible to continue studies in the field of arts in a professional Doctoral study program after Bachelor's and Master's studies.

The focus of the three universities - The collaboration of LAC, JVLMA, and AAL universities in the development and implementation of the professional Doctoral Study program is logical as all three of the universities mentioned offer undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs in the field of Arts and regularly collaborate in scientific research, artistic creation, and developing other various projects.

and their history of collaboration,

The planning documents in the educational and culture policy: the necessity to introduce a three-cycle degree structure in studies of arts was identified in several policy planning documents: "Science, Technology Development and Innovation Basic Guidelines for 2014-2020" (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/263464-par-zinatnes-tehnologijas-attistibas-un-inovacijas-pamatnostadnem-2368%20014-2020-gadam> - Only in Latvian), "Basic Guidelines for Cultural Policy 2014-2020 "Creative Latvia"" (<https://www.km.gov.lv/lv/media/152/download> - Only in Latvian), "Strategy for the Cultural Education Sector 2014-2020" (<https://www.km.gov.lv/lv/media/160/download> - Only in Latvian), in which the section "Cultural Education and Excellence Development" (p.19) specified the Ministry of Culture's activities - promoting cooperation between AAL, JVLMA, and LAC in the development of the joint professional doctoral study programa in arts "Arts".

The JPDSP "Arts" is developed and implemented through collaboration of three universities in the fields of art and culture - JVLMA, AAL, and LAC - and is based on the agreement signed on September 6th, 2019 for the implementation of the sub-programs "Music and Performing Arts", "Visual Arts and Design", and "Audiovisual Arts, Theatre, and Contemporary Dance" within the joint professional Doctoral Study program in Arts. The collaboration of LAC, JVLMA, and AAL universities in the development and implementation of the professional Doctoral Study program is logical as all three of the universities mentioned offer undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs in the field of Arts and regularly collaborate in scientific research, artistic creation, and developing other various projects.

The development of the JPDSP "Arts" was carried out within the framework of Operational program "Growth and employment" of the European Union and its specific objective "Reduce fragmentation of study programs and strengthen resource sharing" (8.2.1.), and in accordance of the 2nd round

project "Development of Professional Doctoral Study programs in Arts" (No. 8.2.1.0/18/A/009) which apply to objectives put forth in the strategies of JVLMA, AAL, LAC and decisions made by Senates of the universities regarding the implementation and development of the study program.

The JPDSP "Arts" was developed in accordance with the goals and priorities set out in the approved strategies of partner universities - "Strategy of the Latvian Academy of Culture 2015-2020", "Development Strategy of the Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music 2016-2020" and "Strategy of Long-term Development of the Latvian Academy of Arts" - as well as in accordance with the accredited study direction "Arts" of LAC, JVLMA, and AAL. The development of the program was implemented in accordance with the strategic specialization defined in "Strategy of Development of the Latvian Academy of Culture 2015-2020" and its 2nd goal "Develop research-based art and 369 culture education, provide high-quality, internationally recognized studies in the fields of culture and arts (performing arts (theatre and dance) and film arts), audiovisual, cultural and creative industries. Create new, culturally relevant, including interdisciplinary study programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels, while continuing to improve doctoral study programs. In the development of interdisciplinary study programs, develop cooperation with art universities and other partners in education, culture, art and new technology sectors. Create joint study programs in traditional culture, cultural heritage, creative industries, audiovisual sector." At the same time, the program was developed in accordance with the 5th goal of the Strategic Specialization defined in the Strategy of Development of the Latvian Academy of Culture 2015-2020 "Develop synergy of research and artistic creation (in particular in the field of theatre, dance, film and audiovisual arts) during the study process." The implementation of the professional Doctoral Study program in arts "Arts" fully complies with the state-level normative acts and planning documents in force during the development of the selfevaluation report, including the priorities defined in the Cultural Policy Guidelines 2022-2027. "Cultural State" specifically "developing joint professional doctoral study programs in arts, as well as creating and launching a joint academic doctoral study program in arts. It is also important to continue developing and improving study programs in accordance with the needs of the cultural sector and creative industries, successfully implementing planned higher education reforms, promoting internationalization of studies, as well as strengthening cultural research and artistic creation processes, promoting innovation and developing products and services with high added value." (https://likumi.lv/ta/id/330444-kulturpolitikas-pamatnostadnes-2021-2027-gadam-kulturvalsts - Only in Latvian). The implementation of the program also complies with the strategy of LAC for 2023-2027 in force during the development of the self-evaluation report, in which one of the main attainable results and indicators for achieving during 2023-2027 is defined as the number of people who have obtained a Doctor of Science degree and a professional Doctor degree. In addition, one of the main tasks under the "Quality of Study Process" is to "Promote the development of academic and professional doctorates" (D.1.1.4.). To ensure the quality of the joint professional Doctoral Study program "Arts", a document "Regulations of the Council of Professional Doctoral Study program in Arts" (available

https://www.jvlma.lv/data/doc_studiju_procesu_reglamentejosie_ieksejie_normativie_akti/2.26-2019-10-28-prof-dok-studiju-istenosanas-nolikums.pdf (Latvian only)) has been developed and approved by the Senates of JVLMA, AAL and LAC. It states that the quality system of the study program is formed and monitored by the council of the program, the program director and the subprogram leaders. The quality of the study process is ensured by every person involved in the study process, in accordance with the procedures of the respective university implementing the sub-program, unless otherwise stated and indicated. JVLMA appoints the program director, and each partner university involved in the program appoints the head of sub-program. The program director resolves issues related to planning, implementation and monitoring of the program, as well as issues related to the common and unified requirements of the subprograms. The sub-program leaders ensure planning and monitoring of the implementation of the content of the sub-program in accordance

with the common and unified requirements of the program, while also ensuring coordination of the provision of the study process of the subprogram.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The JPDSP "Arts" implemented by the LAC, JVLAM, and AAL complies with the requirements of the study field of "Arts" and meets the aims and objectives of the study program. The title, code, and degree to be obtained, as well as the objectives and learning outcomes, are interrelated. However, admission requirements need to be updated to ensure consistent information across all universities (LAC, AAL, JVLAM). The development and implementation of the joint study program is justified and follows collaborative practices between the three universities, and the economic and social justification of the study program is supported by the stable and targeted interest of the applicants. The quality of the study process is ensured by the council of the program, the program director, and the subprogram leaders.

Strengths:

1. The JPDSP "Arts" fits well within the study field of "Arts";
2. The program's compliance with the educational field of "Arts" is confirmed by the study modules and courses implemented in the JPDSP "Arts";
3. The development and implementation of the joint study program is justified and follows collaborative practices between the three universities;
4. The economic and social justification of the study program is supported by the stable and targeted interest of the applicants;
5. The quality of the study process is ensured by the council of the program, the program director, and the subprogram leaders.

Weaknesses:

1. Admission requirements are not consistent across partner universities (JVLAM and AAL).

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1.

A new addition to the set of studies at LAC, the strategic objectives of the JPDSP "Arts", jointly with the JVLAM and AAL, are matched to the chief results of undertaking the studies, i.e., to independently enhance an artistically high-value work and develop practical skills in the implementation of unique international level ideas and artistic creativity as well as to implement research-based innovation projects, by reaching achievements meeting international criteria of the specific field, manage research-based innovation or development tasks in companies, establishments and organisations, where vast research-based innovative knowledge and skills are required.

The topicality of the program and its contents also reflect the trajectory towards the new doctoral model, planned to be implemented from September 1, 2023, which emphasises the enhanced link between the European higher education and research area to ensure that persons with a PhD are best qualified to create, implement and disseminate new knowledge and innovations in all EU states, based on research excellence and a superb accomplishments in artistic endeavours (see https://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/jaunums/saeima-konceptuali-atbalsta-jaunu-doktoranturas-modeli?utm_source=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F).

Likewise, the module structure corresponds to the program's objective of implementing large-scale

original projects of a high artistic value in order to ensure the achievement of learning outcomes by means of both the deployment of most relevant scientific theories and concepts, proficient in research methodology and contemporary research methods in the relevant sector of art as well as the creation of new theories (SAR, pp.358-359). For this purpose, according to (SAR, p. 370), the JPDSP "Arts" consists of 132 CP/ 198 ECTS, namely, Part A (compulsory) - 28CP/ 42 ECTS, which consists of two substantive parts –A1 (12 CP / 18 ECTS) and A2 (16 CP/ 24 ECTS), Part B (compulsory choice) - 22 CP/33 ECTS, the development of the Individual Artistic Project, which provides the doctorate student with the acquisition of high-value artistic creative project development, and Part C (free electives) – LV 8/ ECTS 12 CP.

Of a particular input to achieve the study results, the module under Part A, "Innovative and Interdisciplinary International Interaction of Arts ensures in-depth mastering of the most recent achievements in the areas of theory and practice of professional activity, while "Development of the Creative Artistic Project" under Part B, as well as the "Development and Defence of the Creative Artistic Project" and "Development and Defence of the Theoretical Study" ensure the trajectory of artistic, creative and project-development work in progress until its final completion. The breakdown for all the sub-programs and corresponding modules for each of the three institutions, is provided in Annex 5 under "Curriculum of the study program in professional doctoral study program "Arts"

In addition, students who have not acquired the requirements specified in the Environmental Protection Law and the Civil Protection Law in a lower-level study program must also take the course "Civil Protection" in addition to the JPDSP "Arts", under Part B, with 1 CP (total 2 CP) for each: courses "Civil Protection" and "Environmental Protection". State examinations, consisting of the development and defence of a theoretical study and a creative artistic project – 40 CP/ 60 ECTS.

According to annex Annex 5_Curriculum of the Study Programme (1) (1).docx : "Taking into account that the study programme is also implemented in English, the study course "Latvian language as a foreign language" is provided to foreign students in part B in the amount of 2 CP, reducing this number of CP in part C. Currently, only the sub-programme implemented by JVLMA implements this practice. LAC currently does not accept foreign students in the Audiovisual Arts, Theatre and Contemporary Dance sub-programme."

The structure of the curriculum is coherent and transparent for all three sub-programs: Music and Performing Arts – implemented by JVLAM , Visual Arts and Design – implemented by AAL, and Audiovisual Arts, Theatre and Contemporary Dance – implemented by LAC.

One must add, however, that, with no reflection on the quality of the curriculum, the description of the parameters in the JPDSP "Arts" are not accurately formulated: first, the strategic objective of the study program cannot be "to organise professional studies" (SAR, p.358), which is given, and, second, "research-based" innovation do not reflect professional doctoral arts programs, which generally follow a "practice-led research" model, where the artwork itself is the vortex of inquiry.

With respect to the national regulations and professional qualification requirements, JPDSP "Arts" reflects the changes made to the regulations of the Cabinet Regulation No. 322 "Regulations on the classification of education in Latvia", as well as Cabinet Regulation No. 617 "Regulations on the State Standard for Professional Higher Education for Obtaining a Doctor's Degree and the Procedure for Awarding a Professional Doctor's Degree in Arts".

In addition, the three-cycle art study program is awarded in several countries that have joined the Bologna Process or the European Higher Education Area. (SAR) notes that prior to April 2018, Latvia was the only Baltic country where it was not possible to continue studies in the field of arts in a professional Doctoral study program. Hence, the development of JPDSP "Arts" was carried out within the framework of Operational program "Growth and employment" of the European Union and its specific objective "Reduce fragmentation of study programs and strengthen resource sharing" (8.2.1.), and in accordance of the 2nd round project "Development of Professional Doctoral Study programs in Arts" (No. 8.2.1.0/18/A/009) which applies to objectives put forth in the strategies of JVLMA, AAL, LAC and decisions made by Senates of the universities regarding the implementation

and development of the study program.

The program was also developed in accordance with the goals and priorities set out in the approved strategies of partner universities - "Strategy of the Latvian Academy of Culture 2015-2020", "Development Strategy of the Jazeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music 2016-2020" and "Strategy of Long-term Development of the Latvian Academy of Arts" (SAR, pp.367-368).

LAC has provided both "Compliance of the Study Programme with the State Education Standard" (Cabinet Regulation No. 617 "Regulation on the national standard of professional higher education at level of doctoral degree and a procedure for granting a professional doctoral degree in arts", as adopted on 2nd October 2018 (see: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/301992>) as well as the Compliance with Section 551 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education (Annexes II and III under the respective program). Yet, according to the Higher Education Law (Section 7), foreign students are required to include the acquisition of the state language in the mandatory amount of study courses if the studies in Latvia are planned for more than six months or exceed 20 credit points, but there is no elective in the supplied curriculum (Annex V) to provide such an instruction. While there is no English stream opened yet, and in the Latvian stream, there are no foreign nationals, this requirement does not need to be met; when the program commences to accept the English speaking nationals at LAC (currently, only the sub-programme implemented by JVLMA implements this practice), the study course "Latvian language as a foreign language" is provided to foreign students in part B in the amount of 2 CP. LAC currently does not accept foreign students in the Audiovisual Arts, Theatre and Contemporary Dance sub-programme (see Annex 5).

2.2.2.

According to (SAR, pp.371-372), the awarding of a professional doctorate in the sub-program of "Audiovisual Art, Theatre and Contemporary Dance" within the JPDSP "Arts" is based on achievements and insights in the field of audiovisual art, theatre arts, and contemporary dance, supported by the content of the study courses included in the the state examinations, the development and defence of the doctor's theoretical research and artistic project. The award is closely related to the strategic specialisation and the priorities of artistic creation within the LAC. Doctoral students of the JPDSP "Arts" build successful careers in artistic creation and academic work, actively participate in the artistic creation and research projects implemented by the LAC as initiators, leaders and implementers, develop scientific publications, present their research results at scientific conferences, participate in both local and international masterclasses and symposiums, and participate in the LAC's undergraduate and graduate studies as a teacher or guest lecturer, therefore ensuring direct impact on the artistic creation and research work carried out by LAC. This is ensured and supported by the content of the study courses included in the JPDSP "Arts" and the state examinations, according to the specifics of audiovisual art, theatre arts, and contemporary dance, which encompass the development and defence of the doctor's theoretical research (a) and artistic project (b). While "Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions", "Mapping on Study Results", and "Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard" (Annex II, PD_Ars_mapping on study results.xlsx., and Annex III) evidences the achievements of the study results, it remains to be seen whether the write-up portion will match that of the key artistic work: this is a new doctoral program at LAC, it is of interest whether the process is sufficiently scholastic where the doctoral students focus overtly on their artwork development. The program does not have, yet, a handbook that would evidence the solution to the potential discrepancy.

2.2.3.

The implementation methods and their evaluation within the JPDSP "Arts" are: lectures (mostly in theoretical study courses), seminars – additional process for deepening the theoretical and practical knowledge, group works – developing the student's ability to work and cooperate within a team,

individual assignments, individual sessions, practical sessions, tests, and extracurricular activities. With respect to student-centred learning and teaching principles, LAC, JVLMA and ALL, they are reflected in the study process itself (e.g., creating individual study plans, individualising study course learning methods, providing individual lessons, regularly evaluating and improving study course implementation methods, trusting student's individual capabilities, and in the same time providing guidance and support from the teaching staff, including consultations).

The principles of student-centred education in the program are also promoted by the proportion of seminar classes both in the content of individual study courses and in the entire program as a whole. The form of the seminar encourages students' participation in the study process, enables sub-program heads and teaching staff the opportunity to evaluate the individual knowledge and interests of each student, promotes an adequate evaluation of students' abilities and the work invested. The 6-semester study course "Research Seminars of Doctoral Students" contributes to the development of the students' artistic project and related theoretical research, develops the student's presentation skills, promotes discussions between students and lecturers, promotes interdisciplinary cooperation and the exchange of opinions, ensuring additional control of the doctoral student's research and artistic project. (SAR, p.374) reports that a student-centred approach to the study program is also ensured in regular communication with students, the program director and sub-program heads regularly discuss the content of study programs and the study process with the students, maintaining direct personal and remote communication with each student and the course as a whole, recommending additional activities, supporting and sharing current information (SAR).

2.2.4.

The procedure for the implementation of internship in the JPDSP "Arts" is determined in the regulation approved by the Senates of JVLAM, LAC and AAL "Regulation on organising the creative artistic practice in the Professional Doctoral Study program in "Arts"".

According to (SAR, pp.374-376), the following traineeships and practices are implemented within the framework of the JPDSP "Arts" sub-program "Audiovisual Arts, Theatre and Contemporary Dance": Performing or Audiovisual Arts Practice and University Traineeship. The JPDSP "Arts" determines the volume of credits attainable from internship, its distribution by study semesters, and the methods of assessing competency. The goals, achievable results, and content of practice are defined by the descriptions of study courses and the developed practice work program. The sub-program supervisor oversees the study course, involving teachers and doctoral artistic creation work and related theoretical research supervisors according to the field of artistic activity. The practice can be carried out in the university or outside of it, in other cultural or cultural education institutions, including outside of Latvia. With respect to the latter, the selection of partner institutions in the context of creative and artistic project practices is linked both to the improvement of the potential doctoral candidate's artistic field of development and to the achievement of the strategic goals. In most cases, the choice of artistic project locations is made in accordance with the doctoral candidate's professional development plan, with doctoral candidates choosing the practice locations independently.

Performing or Audiovisual Arts Practice (film, theatre and contemporary dance productions, and other artistic projects) is carried out as an independent work by the doctoral student, while University Traineeship's implementation of the doctoral practice is primarily provided by the higher education institution implementing the sub-program with undergraduate and graduate students.

Almost all doctoral students in the "Audiovisual Arts, Theatre and Contemporary Dance" sub-program are involved in the implementation of the LAC undergraduate and graduate study programs, teaching courses or working with students in other courses taught by other instructors on themes related to the development of the doctoral thesis (artistic project and related theoretical research). Regulation on organising the creative artistic practice in Professional Doctoral Study

program in Arts"" are available on:

(https://lkua-my.sharepoint.com/personal/lka_edu_lv/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?). (SAR, p. 374) reports that during the self-assessment preparation period, agreements are signed with state organisations - the Latvian National Opera and Ballet, the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, the State Academic Choir "Latvija", the Latvian National Art Museum, the Latvian National Theatre, Latvian creative organisations - the Latvian Artists Association, the Choreographers Association; organisations - the Music and Art Support Foundation, the design bureau "H2E", "Art Gallery Daugava - MS", Latvian New Theatre Institute.

2.2.5.

State examination procedure, as well as the procedure for awarding the professional doctorate in the JPDSP "Arts" of LAC, JVLAM and AAL with the sub-programs "Music and Performing Arts", "Visual Arts and Design" and "Audiovisual Arts, Theatre and Contemporary Dance" is defined by the Cabinet Regulation No. 6 "Regulations on the State Standard for Professional Higher Education for Obtaining a Doctoral Degree and the Procedure for Awarding a Professional Doctoral Degree in Arts", as well as the Regulations on State Exams and the State Examination Commission in the Professional Doctoral Study program in Arts". (Available: https://lkua-my.sharepoint.com/personal/austra_cisa_lka_edu_lv/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Faustra%5Fcisa%5Flka%5Fedu%5Flv%2FDocuments%2F00Akredit%C4%81cija%2FAkredit%C4%81cijas%20dokumenti%202022%2FNolikumi%2FProf%5Fdok%5FNolikums%5Fpar%5Fvalsts%5Fparbaudijumiem%5FEN%2Epdf&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Faustra%5Fcisa%5Flka%5Fedu%5Flv%2FDocuments%2F00Akredit%C4%81cija%2FAkredit%C4%81cijas%20dokumenti%202022%2FNolikumi&ga=1).

The procedure for awarding the degree is clearly spelled out in (SAR, p. 377). That is, the higher education institution implementing the relevant sub-program forms a state examination commission (hereinafter, referred to as the Commission), which evaluates state exams and awards a professional doctorate degree in arts. A separate Commission is created for each field of artistic activity (e.g., each sub-program). The composition of the Commission includes members with a doctorate degree in arts, as well as representatives of professional institutions who engage in contemporary artistic creations (in the relevant industry or related cultural and creative industries). The Commission includes at least one person who has obtained a professional doctorate degree in arts abroad or at least one representative of a foreign organisation who engages in contemporary artistic creations. Additionally, the Commission may involve professors from recognized foreign universities in the relevant study programs and Latvian and foreign experts in the field of doctoral theoretical research and artistic creation. The Commission is approved by the Rector of the higher education institution implementing the relevant sub-program with an order for each academic year.

In the state examination "Development and Defence of the Creative Artistic Project" for the sub-program "Audiovisual Arts, Theatre, and Contemporary Dance" the doctoral degree candidate publicly presents one or several artistic projects, prepared in the study process according to the approved work plan and the chosen field of artistic activity. In the state examination "Development and Defence of the Theoretical Study," the doctoral candidate submits the text of the theoretical research in 2 copies to the Council no later than one month before the state examination. The reviewers evaluate the theoretical research based on the following criteria: the author has justified the choice of the theme, defined the goals and tasks of the research, characterised the research achievements in the study of the theme and the methods used. The Commission evaluates the knowledge and skills of a doctoral student using a 10-grade system in accordance with the criteria specified in the descriptions of the study courses, and makes a decision in each examination - to support / not support the awarding of a professional doctoral degree in arts.

2.2.6.

Since the JPDSP "Arts" commenced in 2021, and there are no graduates as of now. In the 2022/2023 academic year, there are 11 students in the sub-program "Audiovisual Arts, Theatre, and Contemporary Dance", of whom 3 are developing their artistic works and related theoretical research in the field of audiovisual arts, 1 in the field of contemporary dance, 3 in the field of theatre arts, 3 in the field of theatre and film dramaturgy, and 1 in the field of large-format cultural event directing (SAR, p.378).

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The formulation of the objectives needs to be restated since the strategic objective of the JPDSP "Arts" cannot be the organisation of studies itself, while "research-based innovation" is not the same as "practice-led research" (SAR, p.358). Notwithstanding, the curriculum is coherent and comprehensive. The JPDSP "Arts" is new, and there is a legitimate concern, the doctoral candidate will excessively focus on delivering their artwork instead of furnishing new theories adjacent to their art.

Strengths:

1. The consortium of three reputable institutions joining the creative and scientific acumen and potential;
2. The English stream will be offered, which will strengthen the program's international reputation. Excellent PhD mentorship pool.

Weaknesses:

1. Inaccurate formulations of the study results and chief objectives;
2. No "Student Handbook" is provided that spells out the procedures for obtaining tried and tested approaches in meeting the demands of a doctoral degree as well as practical and highly applicable tools, techniques, activities and templates and other information, which might be particularly beneficial for foreign students.

Assessment of the requirement [5] (applicable only to master's or doctoral study programmes)

- 1 R5 - The study programme for obtaining a master's or doctoral degree is based on the achievements and findings of the respective field of science or field of artistic creation.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Any negative issues identified do not impair the quality of JPDSP "Arts", and the program awards the doctoral degree is based on insights in the field of audiovisual art, theatre arts, and contemporary dance, supported by the content of the study courses included in the the state examination, the development and defence of the doctor's theoretical research and artistic project.

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1.

As the JPDSP "Arts" is a joint program of the following universities - LAC, JVLAM , and AAL, the study

process takes place at all three venues. The courses for the common doctoral studies in Part A are organized in the buildings of all three universities implementing the arts and culture programs (in different university buildings each semester for all students in the program), as well as using the resources of all three partner universities involved. Part B courses are mostly organized in the university implementing the specific sub-program. In semesters when Part A study courses are held in the LAC premises, the study process is provided using LAC buildings in Riga, Ludzas Street 24, Riga, Dzirnavu Street 46 (Theatre House "Zirgu pasts"), and Riga, Elijas Street 17 (LAC National Film School (NFS)). Classes can also be scheduled in the LAC structural unit - Eduards Smiļģis Theater Museum in Riga, Eduarda Smiļga Street 37 (SAR, p. 379).

In the building in Ludzas Street 24, there are technically equipped auditoriums and a library reading room available for students. The auditoriums are equipped according to the needs of the study process. The auditoriums and practical lesson rooms, including two rehearsal halls and a modern black box-type multifunctional hall fully equipped with sound, light and video equipment are housed at the LAC Theatre house "Zirgu pasts", Dzirnavu street 46. Working in this hall, students can consult with the technical specialist and lighting specialist. The hall is heavily occupied for it is used for the needs of the study process of BA study program "Arts" and MA program Audiovisual and Performing Art too.

The premises in NFS, Elijas street 17, are also available for students; "including two filming pavilions, a computer classroom with eight computers for film editing, two separate video editing rooms with two workstations each (for pair group work), color correction of films workstation with specific technical equipment and software, filming equipment warehouse (200 units), filming light equipment warehouse (150 units), filming sound recording equipment warehouse (50 units). Academy students have access to and actively use digital cinema cameras Sony PMW-F5, Panasonic AU-EVA1E, SONY PXW-FS7M2, Canon EOS C200 and sets of seven Black Magic Pocket Cinema Camera 4K in the study process. Specialized filming lights are available for filming in the NFS pavilion and interiors. " (SAR p. 379) Using these resources, NFS of LAC technical supervisor consultations are available to students. Another important resource for study and research process is the Cinematheque with more than 2,500 video recordings of motion pictures and theatre performances that operates in the premises of NFS. It houses an archive of student films and theatre productions, as well as a collection of film recordings in DVD format and it is available free of charge to the students, academics and general staff, with consultations of the director of the Cinematheque, if necessary. The Eduards Smiļģis Theatre Museum and Riga Film Museum collections are also at disposition for the study process and research work. (SAR p. 379)

LAC Library is an accredited library to the principles of a scientific library to provide "the accredited bachelor, master and doctoral study programs with the latest and retrospective scientific and reference literature, periodicals and fiction, as well as ensure successful foreign language learning and research work. The collection of the library consists of literature in cultural studies, cultural history, cultural anthropology, cultural and arts sociology, cultural economy, cultural management, philosophy, theater, cinema, dance, visual arts, literature, creative industries, heritage, sociology, politics, dramaturgy, folklore, linguistics, research methodology, history, etc., as well as fiction - translations and original literature in various languages (Spanish, English, German, French, Italian, etc.).

In general, the SAR (p. 379-378) assesses that the resources and facilities provided by LAC meet the 380 requirements for implementing the study program and achieving study results, except for facilities in the fields of Theatre and Contemporary Dance, where independent work and training by students is critical. The issues with of insufficient provisions are acknowledged: „The available facilities are primarily occupied, providing for the needs of undergraduate students and the availability of facilities suitable for doctoral students is limited" (SAR, p. 380) In perspective, this issue plans to be resolved when LAC moves to the renovated spaces in the former Tobacco Factory, Miera iela 58a. New premises would house the undergraduate study process, and Theatre House

"Zirgu Pasts" will become the base for the master programs in "Audiovisual and Performing Arts" and the joint professional doctorate in "Arts". Even though the SAR p. 380 states that the LAC is successful in finding various solutions to properly provide the study process, the means of resolving the problem have not been clarified.

The issue of insufficient funding for artistic projects is raised as another challenging aspect. Most doctoral program students seek funding independently (e.g., various projects, sponsor funding), LAC attracts project funding within its means through State Culture Capital Foundation competitions, etc., but with varying results. The LAC made efforts to raise additional funding from the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia (unfortunately without a long-term solution), which can undoubtedly complicate the process of developing artistic works, as well as create risks for doctoral students who cover study fees with personal funds. The general impression remains that the performing arts study programs at the LAC need better organizational strategy and that the important issues such as inadequate space organization and the lack of financial support for quality performances should be addressed accordingly.

The doctoral study program continuously emphasizes the interdisciplinary dimension of research opportunities available at LAC, intertwining scientific and artistic research. "The Latvian Academy of Culture supports, organizes, and coordinates scientific research through the LAC's Institute of Arts and Cultural Studies (KMI), which brings together scientists with the best achievements in scientific work, with the main research direction including performing arts, culture, and creative industries, film arts, and audiovisual sectors. The selection of research topics is based on the interests of the cultural sector, art industries (theatre, dance, and film arts), and creative industries. As students of the "Arts" doctoral program in LAC can also participate in research projects implemented by KMI researchers, KMI promotes cooperation between artistic practice and research in the professional doctoral program. Furthermore, KMI holds internal research project competitions available to LAC students, particularly doctoral students. Student research conference "The Art-of-Knowing" organized by the KMI is a platform for students to present their research and creative projects. On the other hand, the "Culture Crossroads" international scientific conference is an important platform for further research, covering all the themes covered by the study programs in LAC. " (SAR, p. 380) The Creative Activities Center of LAC, Riga Film Museum and Eduards Smiļģis Theatre Museum provide the basis for student research and artistic innovation, complementing the provision of student internship opportunities. During their studies, the Creative Activities Center supports students in organizing various events.

2.3.2.

The JPDSP "Arts" is a joint program of three institutions; the LAC's partners in promoting doctoral candidates' artistic creation and scientific research work are JVLMA and AAL. The LAC nourishes strong collaboration with other universities and scientific institutions and a number of important international cooperation partners involved in the art and culture field. The LAC is a part of "the Platform of European Theatre Academies (Platform of European Theatre Academies - PLETA) along with 7 other theatre academies from Brussels, Helsinki, Maastricht, Munich, Oslo, Warsaw and Salzburg. The aim of the platform is to establish new ways for future theatre artists to see a wider European theatre context with the help of masterclasses and co-studies, promote their intercultural competence and professional diversity. The platform aims to use high-quality artistic practices of various directions to promote international cooperation between future stage artists during their studies, creating new artistic values based on the interaction of various European theatre traditions." (SAR, p. 381) The LAC's participation in this project enables students with professional training and practical opportunities in the international environment through international partners and the financing of the "Creative Europe" program. At the same time it provides an opportunity to present and assess our school and achievements in a wider European context compared to other theatre academies (see: <http://pleta.eu/>). "Collaborative partners in the European Theatre Academy

platform are: Zuyd University of Applied Sciences, Zuyd Hogeschool – leading partner; University of the Arts Helsinki, Theatre Academy; The Aleksander Zelwerowicz National Academy of Dramatic Art in Warsaw; The Academy of Theatre - Oslo National Academy of the Arts; Bayerische Theaterakademie August Everding; Royal Institute for Theatre, Cinema and Sound, RITCS; Mozarteum University Salzburg, Drama/Direction - Thomas Bernhard Institute.” (SAR, p. 381)

The Latvian Academy of Culture is also included “in the Northern European Platform for Baltic and Northern Stage Arts Colleges, "NORTEAS", which brings together 17 colleges and is part of the lifelong learning program "Nordplus" of the Northern Ministerial Council. The aim of "NORTEAS" is to promote innovation and new approaches in performing arts education through the exchange of knowledge and experience. The platform initiates and supports international cooperation in theatre and dance education in the Baltic and Northern countries, ensuring student and teacher mobility and organizing special cooperation projects for participating colleges. One of the common "NORTEAS " activities is the Northern United Study Week, during which several colleges exchange students, ensuring intensive international exchange of experience for students and teachers (<http://www.nortecas.org/>). Collaborative partners in NORTEAS: Iceland Academy of the Arts – coordinating partner; 382 The Danish National School of Performing Arts The Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre University of Tartu, Viljandi Culture Academy, Performing Arts Department University of Tampere, Faculty of Communication Sciences University of The Arts, Helsinki Aalto University, School of Arts, Design and Architecture The National Theatre School of Greenland Latvian Academy of Culture Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre Norwegian Theatre Academy, Ostfold University College) Oslo National Academy of the Arts Nord-Trøndelag University College Stockholm University of the Arts, Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts Lulea University of Technology Malmö Theatre Academy The Academy of Music and Drama, University of Gothenburg.” (SAR, p. 381-382)

Another successful collaboration is the participation of the National Film School in "EUFA" (European University Film Award) or the European University Film Prize partner organization. "EUFA" is an international initiative founded in 2016 by the European Film Academy in collaboration with the Hamburg Film Festival, with a goal to promote youth involvement in cultural events, spread the "European idea", popularize European film schools among students, as well as develop film analysis and discussion culture. Every year, an expert committee selects five films nominated for the European Film Academy Prize that are viewed and discussed in the lecture courses at "EUFA" partner universities throughout Europe. Each university delegates one student to the "EUFA" jury meeting in Hamburg, where school representatives from all over Europe discuss the nominated films and choose the winner. The director of the winning film receives a special European University Film Prize at the European Film Prize award ceremony in December. The "EUFA" partner-university network comprises 23 universities from 23 countries - Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. (<https://www.eufa.org/en/>). (SAR, p. 382)

Cooperation in the field of scientific research is also crucial and based on shared or similar strategic research priorities; the connection of research themes with the cultural and creative ecosystem, creating a unified network of cooperation among humanistic, art scientists and interdisciplinary researchers, to promote the scientific knowledge integrity and inclusion in the study content. The cooperation is supported and coordinated by the Latvian Culture Academy Institute of Culture and Arts and the main cooperation partners from the scientific institutions are; the Latvian Academy of Sciences, the Latvian Academy of Music, Latvian National Library and the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art of the University of Latvia. A successful example of this partnership is the State Research program project "Cultural Capital as a Resource for Sustainable Development of Latvia" / CARD (No. VPP-KM-LKRVA-2020/1-0003) is funded by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia in the framework of the National Research program "Latvian Culture – a Resource for National Development" (2020–2022). The National Research program is administered by the Latvian Council

of Science. (Project partners: LAC - leading partner, JVLMA, AAL, LNB, LU LFMI) (see <https://lka.edu.lv/lv/petnieciba/petijumu-projekti/valsts-petijumu-programmas/kulturas-kapitals-ka-esurss-latvijas-ilgtspejigai-attistibaic/> - SAR, p. 382).

Partners in other state research 383 programs also include Rezekne Technology Academy, Liepaja University, Institute of Mathematics and Computer Science at the University of Latvia, the Latvian Institute at the University of Latvia, the Latvian Language Institute at the University of Latvia, Riga Technical University, etc.

The LAC, as a leading partner, collaborates with other Latvian art and culture universities in the European Social Fund project "Doctoral Grant Approval and Attraction of Foreign Academic Staff to LAC" (8.2.2.0/20/I/002), which aims to provide support for the development of academic staff at LAC, its partners AAL and JVLMA. The project is focused on internationalization, international competitiveness and cooperation and resource sharing among the three partner universities. The project implements a new doctoral funding model, providing funding for doctoral students' remuneration for research or study work related to the development of a thesis at LAC. The result of the project is the continuity of LAC's academic staff, contributing to the improvement and quality of academic work. (SAR, p. 383).

2.3.3.

The funding for the JPDSP "Arts" in 2022 was EUR 160 716 and was comprised of state budget grants, performance funding, and tuition fees. The cost calculation includes all the necessary expenditures for the program, the program is mainly funded by the state grants and self-generated income is maximized for program development and covering unanticipated expenses. A lot of attention is devoted to the optimization of study program implementation expenses, for example, by organizing stream lectures in professor-taught courses and in some cases providing remote lectures. The minimum number of students in the study program, in order to ensure the profitability of the study program, is determined for each admission period, according to the needs of the JPDSP "Arts" and the number of budget places - usually 3 budget places per year. The JPDSP "Arts" is full-time attendance and currently the LAC sub-program is implemented only in Latvian. (SAR, p. 383-384).

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by specifying strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

The JPDSP "Arts" has a strong interdisciplinary dimension of research and collaboration opportunities between scientists and performing arts, culture, and creative industries and film. The network of collaborative partner institutions and participation in joint platforms is impressive and enables many opportunities to learn and present artistic projects in a wider European context. Even though the general impression remains that the performing arts study programs at the LAC need better organisational strategy and that the important issues such as inadequate space organisation and the lack of financial support for quality performances should be addressed accordingly. The LAC's attempts to provide more financial support for doctoral students' remuneration for research or study work related to the development of a thesis at LAC through European funds are an encouraging approach to the issue.

Strengths:

1. Established strong communication connections and intensive cooperation with other universities and other artistic and scientific institutions in the field;
2. Elaborate network of collaborative partner institutions and intensive participation in joint platforms of European art education institutions.

Weaknesses:

1. Inadequate space organisation – insufficient space for artistic research;
2. Insufficient funding for artistic doctoral research.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

- 1 R6 - Compliance of the study provision, science provision (if applicable), informative provision (including library), material and technical provision and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The JPDSP "Arts" has a strong interdisciplinary dimension of research and collaboration opportunities between scientists and performing arts, culture, and creative industries and film. The network of collaborative partner institutions and participation in joint platforms is impressive and enables many opportunities to learn and present artistic projects in a wider European context. Even though the general impression remains that the performing arts study programs at the LAC need better organizational strategy and that the important issues such as inadequate space organization and the lack of financial support for quality performances should be addressed accordingly.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.

The competences and qualifications of the staff at the JPDSP "Arts" complies with the conditions of the study program implementation and regulatory framework. The academic staff of the JPDSP "Arts" fully complies with the requirements specified in the third point of the first part of Article 55 of the Higher Education Law. JPDSP "Arts" is developed and implemented in collaboration with three universities of art and culture: LAC, JVLAM, and AAL. The teaching staff from all of them are involved. The SAR (p. 384) states that invited domestic and foreign guest lecturers' qualifications must meet internal regulations of the universities included. Guest lecturers are mostly domestic and foreign experts in theory or practice, and cultural practitioners recognised for the excellence in their work nationwide and abroad. Some of the teachers have been awarded for their creative artistic work with the most important national awards.

During the on site visit expert group learned that LAC strategic goals include more high ranked practitioners in the educational process. From the SAR (p.385) is visible that the regulation for teaching staff election is in accordance with national legislation the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 129 adopted in 2021 named "The evaluation of the scientific and pedagogical qualifications or artistic creation results of a professor or associate professor candidate and a professor or associate professor in office". The election is also in accordance with specific LAC regulations and the Senate of the LAC criteria.

The SAR (p.386) reports institutionally planned and executed education for educators as a lifelong learning program and capacity building strategy at LAC. Teachers improve their English language proficiency, digital skills and other skills and competences.

2.4.2.

In the relatively short period of implementation of the JPDSP "Arts" there has been no changes in the basic composition of the teaching staff. Only changes reported in SAR (p.386) are enlargements of the staff responsible for the artistic and scientific research projects according to the expanded number of students, and engagement of the foreign teachers in some specific courses. Such

changes do not negatively affect the implementation of the study program, but on the contrary make a positive impact on its development and affect positively the quality of the implementation of the study program.

2.4.3.

The SAR and Annexes 2.4.4.-1 and 2.4.4.-2 state numerous articles published, artistic works presented and conferences attended by LAC teaching staff. For this particular program SAR (p.387) states 7 individual and collective scientific monographs and about 94 articles in peer-reviewed scientific journals and collections, of which 8 are in the SCOPUS/WoS and 3 in ERIH databases. The SAR (p.387-388) emphasizes 12 particular works of which 3 are indexed in WoS/SCOPUS and ERIH databases. Of those works, more than a half, precisely 7 of them have the same teacher as an author or co-author. Such a rate shows a certain unbalance in research engagement of all the academic staff in general. The works mentioned, however, present significant contributions to the program curriculum and learning materials for students.

Production of the own scientific literature for the courses provides a strong connection of learning outcomes with particular cultural environments and concrete cultural markets. It also fosters the practice of teaching staff in general to produce learning materials through the educational process. More recent scientific publications are stated in SAR. Table No. 11 in SAR (p.60) lists 295 scientific articles published in the editions included in internationally cited databases in the period 2015-2021. Table 14 in SAR (p. 68) states the same data. Such a record is satisfactory, even though there is still room for improvement in targeting better quality, i.e. higher ranking, publishing media or international publications.

As for artistic doctoral researches, Annex 5_Curriculum of the Study program (1) and course descriptions in Anex 3.2.Study course descriptions_PD do not describe clearly the level of the rigor in creative practice, artistic research methodology and the production and advancing of knowledge, the points which clearly distinct innovative artistic research on doctoral level from other artistic researches and artistic practices already present at MA level. Non-linear, iterative and exploratory researches, mixed methods of data collection and analysis, and transformative, participatory and action research frameworks, as the most challenging and most demanding types and models of the artistic research projects as the “research in the arts”, “research for the arts” or “research of the arts” are not explicitly stated, leaving the possible space for lower ranks of the researches suitable for MA and BA studies (eg. “community-based research”, “case studies”, “research driven by artistic practice” etc.).

The main criteria of the “Frascati Manual 2015” are already included and implemented in the educational process and research methodology. It might be useful to refresh it with the proposals for the Manual’s updates 2022 (https://aec-music.eu/media/2022/06/Cover-Letter-to-OECD_NESTI.pdf) in order to consider the most recent trends in the field of the artistic research.

2.4.4.

As stated in SAR (p. 68) most of the teaching staff has been involved in various research projects closely related to the areas of the study program. The LAC teaching staff were involved in some of the most important national research in Latvia in the field of cultural heritage, cultural participation, cultural capital and resources.

The SAR (p.p. 388-399) states five research projects of the highest national level. Alongside with the applied research project “Community Participation in Cultural Heritage Governance: Practices, Developments and Challenges” four researches were executed through complex National Research program project “Cultural Capital as a Resource for Sustainable Development of Latvia”.

Concerning the topics and goals of the projects mentioned, the expert group praises the efforts of the research staff to care about particular needs of the national culture, such as community

participation, cultural heritage, contemporary theater terminology in Latvian language or research on recent Latvian cinema.

Even though the COVID19 crisis affected hardly the whole cultural sector and arts especially, the teachers managed to lead or to participate in complex and important researches funded with significant amounts of money.

2.4.5.

From the SAR (p. 389) and in interviews during the on site visit the expert group learned that concerning the fact that the academic staff is a team composed from four different universities, close cooperation is crucial to the JPDSP "Arts" implementation. Cooperation between teachers in JPDSP "Arts" presents a challenge in coordinating communication among teachers from three different universities and guest lecturers. Such efforts coordinate and facilitate program directors with the heads of all sub-programs at each university.

Therefore, cooperation simultaneously happens in multiple ways. There are regularly organized study methodological meetings, brainstorming seminars, individual communication and communication in the Moodle platform. The SAR (p.389) states that there is a program's council composed of teachers from all the universities involved. Communication with the students is also frequent and the study content is formally and informally discussed regularly. The whole course in the JPDSP "Arts" is designed as a platform for the discussion and information exchanges.

Conclusions on this set of criteria, by indicating strengths and weaknesses

Conclusions:

From the SAR and related documents it is clear that the composition of teaching staff with their qualifications complies with the requirements for the implementation of the JPDSP "Arts".

The SAR, Annexes 2.4.4.-1 and 2.4.4.-2, as well as teachers CV, proves the information of developed and extended scientific and artistic activities of teachers in terms of presenting, research, publishing, and participating in conferences and in various creative artistic projects. The high qualification and research record of the academic staff enables the achievement of the learning outcomes of the joint professional doctoral study Arts program and all its courses.

The changes in staff have had positive effects and are towards improvement of the program. Publishing and artistic presentation activities meet the requirements. There is still room for the improvement in targeting higher ranking and international publishing media and balancing the activities of all the teachers engaged.

However, academic staff allocate a huge amount of time into research activities. Even though coordination between four different universities presents a challenging task, the communication and collaboration is functional on institutional and personal level, formally and informally.

Strengths:

- 1) Highly professional and experienced teaching staff;
- 2) Openness and flexibility in engagement of recognised practitioners;
- 3) Social visibility and influence of the most distinguished teachers.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Very intensive workload for most of the lecturers.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

- 1 R7 - Compliance of the qualification of the academic staff and visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The staff is adequately composed, competent and complies with all the requirements of the JPDSP "Arts". Minor weakness have been identified, but they do not affect the evaluation of the requirement.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Annex "3.2.1.Compliance of the Study Programme with the State Education Standard (1).docx" confirms that the JPDSP "Arts" complies with Regulations State Academic Education Standard.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 3 - The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 561 , Paragraph two and Section 562 , Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study course descriptions are prepared in Latvian and English that can be accessed under 3.2.Study course descriptions_PD (1).zip and 3.2.Studiju kursu apraksti_PD (3).zip comply with regulations set forth in Law on Higher Education Institutions.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The provided Diploma sample in the annex 3.1.2._prof.dipl.zip LV EN complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued according to Cabinet Regulation No. 202 "Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

- 7 7 - At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study programme in arts (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The annex provided 3.4.1._Apliecinājums.zip certifies that at least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study program, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. At least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of a professional doctoral study program in arts.

- 8 8 - The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

It can be concluded that teaching staff that is nominated in the annex 3.2.Study course descriptions_PD (1).zip and presents CV in other programs the state language proficiency is compliant with Cabinet Regulation Nr. 733 " Regulations Regarding the Extent of the Knowledge of the Official Language, the Procedures for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language and the State Fee for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language".

- 9 9 - The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language (if applicable).

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

According to the information provided in the annex 2.3.-2_CV_EN.zip. The teaching staff has the necessary English language skills to ensure a good level of quality during the studies with implementation of the study programme in English.

- 10 10 - The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Sample of attached study agreement 2.1.4.-3 study agreement example.pdf complies with Cabinet Regulation. Nr. 70 "Studiju līgumā obligāti ietveramie noteikumi".

- 11 11 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Agreement of LAC and The Art Academy of Latvia, Latvian Music Academy and Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre (see 7.translation_Prof.D.pdf) provides confirmation that "if implementation of the joint Professional Doctoral Study program in Arts by JVLMA, LKA and LMA to grant the professional doctoral degree in arts is discontinued,, EAMT shall ensure that doctoral students from this study program can continue studies in EAMT, doctoral study program Music and Theatre Arts to obtain the doctoral degree in arts" (see point 1 in the agreement of JVLMA, LKA, LMA, and EAMT).

- 12 12 - The higher education institution / college has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The Academy has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study program is not accredited or the study program's licence is revoked. It is ensured by the document certifying it - 1_translation_Arts RI 2023 that includes LAC confirmation no. 1.10e/35 from 24.01.2023 (2.1.4.-2_ENG.zip) . The documents provided are pursuant to paragraph 13.4 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 795 "Regulations Regarding Licensing of Study programs" .

- 13 13 - The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 55.(1), Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Compliance of the study program with the requirements set for a joint study program.zip provides information on ten criteria that the joint study programs comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 55, Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (Annex 2: Compliance of the Study program with the Requirements for the Implementation of the Joint Study program (1) (1) (2).docx).

- 14 14 - Compliance with the requirements specified in other regulatory enactments that apply to the study programme being assessed (if applicable)

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

- 1 R8 - Compliance of the study programme with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

JPDSP "Arts" complies with regulatory enactments.

General conclusions about the study programme, indicating the most important strengths and weaknesses of the study programme

Conclusions: The JPDSP "Arts" has a strong interdisciplinary dimension of research and collaboration opportunities between scientists and performing arts, culture, and creative industries and film. The network of collaborative partner institutions and participation in joint platforms is impressive and enables many opportunities to learn and present artistic projects in a wider European context. The JPDSP "Arts" is new, and there is a legitimate concern, the doctoral candidate will excessively focus on delivering their artwork instead of furnishing new theories adjacent to their art. The formulation of the objectives needs to be restated since the strategic objective of the JPDSP "Arts" cannot be the organization of studies itself, while "research-based innovation" is not the same as "practice-led research". Notwithstanding, the curriculum is coherent and comprehensive. Even though the general impression remains that the performing arts study programs at the LAC need better organizational strategy and that the important issues such as inadequate space organization and the lack of financial support for quality performances should be addressed accordingly. From the SAR and related documents it is clear that the composition of teaching staff with their qualifications complies

with the requirements for the implementation of the JPDSP "Arts". However, admission requirements need to be updated to ensure consistent information across all universities (LAC, AAL, JVLAM). The development and implementation of the joint study program is justified and follows collaborative practices between the three universities, and the economic and social justification of the study program is supported by the stable and targeted interest of the applicants. The quality of the study process is ensured by the council of the program, the program director, and the subprogram leaders.

Strengths:

1. The consortium of three reputable institutions joining the creative and scientific acumen and potential; The development and implementation of the joint study program is justified and follows collaborative practices between the three universities;
2. The economic and social justification of the study program is supported by the stable and targeted interest of the applicants;
3. The quality of the study process is ensured by the council of the program, the program director, and the subprogram leaders;
4. Elaborate network of collaborative partner institutions and intensive participation in joint platforms of European art education institutions;
5. Highly professional and experienced teaching staff;
6. Openness and flexibility in engagement of recognised practitioners;
7. Social visibility and influence of the most distinguished teachers.

Weaknesses:

1. Inaccurate formulations of the study results and chief objectives;
2. Inadequate space organization – insufficient space for artistic research;
3. Insufficient funding for artistic doctoral research;
4. Admission requirements are not consistent across partner universities (JVLAM and AAL).

Evaluation of the study programme "Arts"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Arts"

Short-term recommendations

1. JPDSP "Arts" must develop an investment plan in order to improve facilities and infrastructure of the program.
2. The JPDSP "Arts" should reconsider financial support for artistic doctoral research.
3. The program director for JPDSP "Arts" should reformulate the strategic objectives and the description of the parameters in the program to reflect the "practice-led research" more accurately.
4. LAC needs to change admission requirements the same as partner universities and continue to work with partner universities to establish a set of standard admission requirements that all students must meet. This will help ensure consistency between institutions and make the admissions process more transparent for everyone involved.

Long-term recommendations

1. To reorganise the workload of academic staff involving more doctoral students and short-time guest lecturers in order to provide more space for the academic staff for research and publishing activities and personal development;
2. Publish “Student Handbook” that spells out the procedures for obtaining tried and tested approaches in meeting the demands of a doctoral degree as well as practical and highly applicable tools, techniques, activities and templates and other information.

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

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

Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation			Comment
R1 - Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 2.1 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field whilst implementing its internal quality assurance system:	Fully compliant			LAC has established a quality assurance system and developed a Quality Policy and it is available to all interested parties on the LAC website. Monitoring of the implementation of the strategic plan is carried out every year, evaluating the achieved indicators. Students, graduates and employers all are a substantial part of the improvement of the study programs. LAC ensures continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field whilst implementing its internal quality assurance system.

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation			Comment
R2 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the level of development of scientific research and artistic creation (if applicable)	Fully compliant			LAC meets the goals of higher education level of scientific and artistic research. Teachers and students participation in the research is high, and the research results are implemented in the educational process. Weaknesses mentioned do not affect LAC research programs in general and they are listed as the recommendations for the improvement needed to achieve the goals stated in Development Strategy 2023-2027.
R3 - The cooperation implemented within the study field with various Latvian and foreign organizations ensures the achievement of the aims of the study field.	Fully compliant			Cooperation with local and international organisations on all levels is fully compliant with the requirements.
R4 - Elimination of deficiencies and shortcomings identified in the previous assessment of the study field, if any, or implementation of the recommendations provided.		Partially compliant		Most recommendations have been met but some still in progress (see Conclusion section for details).

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

No.	Study programme	R5	R6	R7	R8	Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)
1	Contemporary Dance (43212)	Not relevant	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Good
2	Arts (43212)	Not relevant	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Good

No.	Study programme	R5	R6	R7	R8	Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)
3	Audiovisual Art (43213)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
4	Creative Industries (43217)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
5	Audiovisual and Performing Art (45213)	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Good
6	Cultural Heritage Governance and Communication (45217)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
7	Cultural and Arts Management (45217)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
8	Creative Industries and Growth Management (45217)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
9	Arts (51212)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Good
10	Arts (51213)	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good

The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts

none