

Expert group joint opinion

Evaluation Procedure: Assessment of Study Field

Higher Education Institution: University of Daugavpils

Study field: History and Philosophy

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Summary Assessment of the Study Field

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The assembled group of experts formed to assess the study field “History and Philosophy” and the three relevant study programmes under the field at the Daugavpils University (further on - DU) analysed the provided self-assessment report (SAR) prepared by the university and participated in evaluation visit to the university. Due to the pandemic conditions, two experts took part in the visit in person, while the remaining three participated in the assessment visit using the Internet connection and provided software. As a result of the reading of the SAR, the discussions and questions raised during the on-site visit, as well as the follow up questions and explanations, the expert group prepared a joint report.

In the report the group of experts assess the compliance of the study field and study programmes with the relevant requirements and criteria for such programmes, they highlight the strengths and weaknesses of each component and suggest possible steps to be implemented to ensure the sustainability and improvement of the evaluated programmes and study field.

The overall opinion of the expert group of the analysed study field and programmes is very positive. Assessed programmes meet the need of the society on the local/regional and broader-country level. Graduates of each study programme meet the current demand of the labour market. Overall the strategic goals of higher education institution (further on - HEI) in Latvia are met on a satisfactory level.

Basic tools and mechanisms ensuring quality control of teaching, including the research criteria, basics of academic writing, as well as ethical standards of historians are addressed sufficiently, which does not exclude further development and mastery of these tools.

The programmes are based on solid foundations growing out of tradition, long-lasting practice and devoted, professional staff. At the same time attention must be paid to the existing risks, which could endanger the programmes and their sustainability, especially as some of them lie outside the direct and simple means to be applicable on the HEI level, that means they do not depend on direct actions undertaken by the university and faculty. This refers to the inadequate mechanisms of staff exchange between various age groups (ageing professors and lack of young replacements), as well as demographic/financial problems of student enrolment. All programmes discussed are relatively small, what on the one hand is the effect of demographic changes, but on the other the low financing of study places in history by the state (free, unpaid studies).

The expert group has analysed the internal quality assurance system and has come up with an opinion that the notion of “quality” itself needs to be addressed and reassessed to provide a clear road mark in the process of planning and implementation of the programmes. A clear, well-defined idea of what does the HEI wish and aspire to achieve in terms of quality needs to be developed and linked with the curriculum. Quality can be understood in at least three main ways: as excellent and wide knowledge of historical facts and processes; as perfect historian's workshop, which means a very good, professional preparation to conduct historical research and preservation of historical artefacts and memory, or as a pursuit of 'historical truth', meaning students are to focus on the methods and attributes of separating historical truth from myths and misinterpretations. The expert group suggests reflection on which quality should be pursued on each level of studies, suggesting the quality of knowledge on the BA level, quality of workshop of MA level and seeking 'historical truth' as the main goal of the doctoral programme.

HEI offers three levels of study programmes, academic bachelor (BA) level programme 'History', academic master (MA) level programme 'History' and PhD programme in 'History and Archaeology'. The BA programme is offered for graduates of high schools. It offers general historical education on the basic level. The duration of the programme is six semesters (3 years) and complies with Latvian and EU regulations for BA studies. It is well structured, balanced and taught by a competent and professional group of lecturers.

MA programme can be understood as a continuation of academic BA in 'History'. It is a Latvian and EU compatible programme. The programme itself focuses on general history (Latvian and world) with deeper insight into historians' workshops and methodology. It ends with a written MA dissertation defended at the faculty. The programme is adequately structured and executed by a well prepared, professional cadre of lecturers. The programme offers good professional knowledge for jobs connected with the history and historical knowledge, where history is the core of needed skills, but needs to be supplemented by additional training, such as teacher training, or training in the work in archives.

The doctoral programme offered by the DU has recently been changed and is being taught as a joint programme with the University of Latvia. It has a good structure and broad teaching staff from two leading Latvian universities. The programme is aimed at graduates of MA studies who want to continue their historical studies and involve in individual historical research leading to professionalism in historical research and publication of results. The aims and ramifications of the programme correspond to the Latvian and EU educational frameworks and have the potential to lead students to achieve their PhD titles. Since the programme is relatively young it cannot be fully evaluated.

The study programmes have a solid basis and provide good preparation for graduates. At the same time, the group of experts sees the need to move on with enriching the existing programmes with more specific areas of studies, such as e.g., palaeographic training for archival studies, or elements of psychology and pedagogics for future teachers.

HEI has established some useful connections and cooperation with domestic and international institutions, both in the educational spheres and other domains. Emphasis needs to be put on the further development of this cooperation, in attracting more foreign historians' visits and lectures, as well as stimulation of local students, to utilize the existing ERASMUS+ programme to experience study abroad options.

1. Management of the Study Field

Analysis

The aims of the study field are clearly defined and attainable. The study field and the study programmes within it comply with the main directions of the strategic vision of the Daugavpils University (DU) and meet the needs and the developing trends of the society, as well as Latgale regional interests. The aims of the study field are clearly and logically indicated although they are very focused on the nationalistic component of historic identity and its role in relatively new independence gained by Latvia. A more general approach and reference to general human history is weaker and its role in the development of human society calls for strengthening in the future. The way the aims of the study field are stated and taking into consideration realistic conditions (population changes, lack of jobs, tendency among young people to move to more urbanized areas or abroad), the aims and goals appear well defined and fully attainable.

The structure of the management designed for the study fields is adequate to carry out the aims of the core of the study field. The council of the study field "History and Philosophy" consists of the head of the study field, the directors of the study programmes, students and representatives of employers. These are the main structural units involved in the management of the study programmes under the study field. The main functions of the Council are related to developing study programmes within the field, providing a self-assessment and marketing analysis of the study field; to analyse student achievements; to analyse the academic work of staff and promoting the integration of scientific work into the study programmes. Meanwhile, the support provided by the administrative and technical staff of DU contributes to meeting all other needs concerning the relevant study programmes of the study field.

DU has implemented formal procedures for the admission of students, the recognition of the study period, professional experience, and the previously acquired formal and non-formal education, as well as for the evaluation of the achievements and learning outcomes of the students, and these procedures are clear and logical. However, it appears these procedures lack flexibility. DU is expected to streamline some efforts to treat courses, exams and ECTS points acquired at foreign institutions and to incorporate into the study plan of an individual student flexible so that international experience and ECTS acquired in European Universities are recognised as part of the general DU internationalisation approach.

A different, more efficient body or method to work with students towards their fuller involvement in international historical society appears to be wanted. On the one hand to explain the role of such contacts, on the other to help write proposals, look for funding, help with organization of international study exchange.

DU has developed and approved the Code of Ethics available at the website of the university. The Code of Ethics expresses the value and tasks towards academic ethics for both staff and students. There is also an internal procedure covering issues of plagiarism where the library plays an important role and contributes to the development of the internal academic culture.

Publicly available information of the study programmes is available at the website of DU and information conforms with information available in the official education registers. The publicly available information provides all necessary information for current students, but also for future students. It is worth noting that at the beginning of 2022, DU launched a new design of its website.

The SWOT analysis of the study field focuses on the strengths and opportunities that are reflected correctly. However, weaknesses and threats are internally mixed and there is no clear distinction between what threats derived from the external environment are (e.g., demography) and what are internal weaknesses (e.g., language skills of staff) that should be overcome by the decisions of DU. Thus, the current SWOT analysis is rather formal and does not provide added value for strategic decisions within the study field. Meanwhile, SWOT analyses miss such significant external issues identified during the on-site visit like vague and at the same time to the detailed system of remuneration of staff when it comes to the composition of teaching and research activities that is the issue of national policy.

History is one of the constituent components of the Faculty of Humanities. Within that faculty this study field is a small programme with relatively low numbers of staff and students. As such at times one gets the impression of history being a 'poor, smaller' brother of e.g. linguistics and other fields, which acquire more attention, more global cooperation and in effect can produce much smaller and weaker results of their work and engagement (e.g. number of Scopus and WoS citations).

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

All in all, the study field and the relevant study programmes conform with the main fields of the strategic development of the DU and meet the needs and the development trends of society. DU has designed and implemented clear administration procedures. There are procedures for academic integrity and ethics in place.

There is a well-established management system with clear responsibilities and clear distinctions of tasks. During the on-site visit, it was found out that “being a small” study field with several students - gives certain flexibility to react, to enhance the ability to interact and to create interaction and individualist approach for students (e.g., debates, discussions)

Strengths:

1. The study field and the results of its programmes that meet the needs of society, are related to the strategic vision of DU.
2. There is a well-established management system with clear responsibilities and clear distinctions of tasks.

Weaknesses:

1. Incomplete SWOT analysis, with mixed elements of external threats and weakness and lack of clear understanding of how to use SWOT for defining the development strategy of the study field.
2. Size of the programme within the Faculty of Humanities results in a lack of its visibility against larger and more 'internationally' attractive programmes such as linguistics.
3. A more efficient body or method to work with students towards their involvement in international historical society is needed. On the one hand it should explain the role of such contacts to students, on the other it is needed to help write proposals, look for funding, help with organization of international study exchange.

2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System

Analysis

The internal quality assurance system of the study field "History and Philosophy" is implemented according to the practice established in DU. In general line, the system is effective and fits the goals of the study field (SAR, p.29-30). The recent quality policy along the main elements of the quality assurance system has been improved lately in the project financed by ESF (No. 8.2.3.0/18/A/010). The project streamlined the efforts of DU to improve several internal documents tailored to upgrade the general quality of studies delivered by DU. Thus, such documents as "Quality policy", "Strategy for monitoring of internal quality assurance", "Procedures for student's surveys", "Staff performance assessment", "Communication with stakeholders", "Procedures for upgrading of study courses", "Cooperation with the local community" were designed during 2021. Meanwhile, the DU also faced recent staff changes responsible for internal quality assurance just before the on-site visit of experts. It is assumed that such rapid staff change might have a potential short-term negative impact upon the implementation of the internal quality assurance system and might endanger the institutional memory within DU. In addition, the quality policy is published in the intranet of DU, thus it limits public access to quality policy.

The development of a new study programme is started at least one study year before the beginning of the study programme as it is set by "Daugavpils University Study Programme Development and Consolidation Plan" designed in the same ESF funded project (No. 8.2.3.0/18/A/010) back in 2020. The Plan is a comprehensive document defining parties involved and their tasks in different stages.

The plan expressed a vision that method of historical research, historiographical issues and team-building skills are highly evaluated by the employers as the required future competencies. However, the plan does not outline any timeline and responsibilities related to its implementation.

Based on the inherited practice and know-how of the DU, all three programmes of the study field "History and philosophy" are constructed according to the rules set by the national government and internal procedures.

The survey is the key instrument for understanding the needs of the key stakeholders (students, employers, alumni). The most recent version of "Procedures for organising survey" provides the following surveys: a survey after the study course is finished, an alumni survey, an employers survey, an s survey in case of dropout. Within the study field once per academic year, at least once per year surveys are conducted. As the number of students is small, the personal debate is also assumed as a tool for understanding the students' expectations and needs.

As a rule, the survey results are used to improve the content of the study programmes and the courses. The head of the study field and directors of the study programmes are expected to respond to all reasonable opinions and recommendations stated expressed in the questionnaires. However, it is the discretion of the head of the study field and directors of the study programmes, what type of opinions received are discussed at the study council, and what type of recommendations are considered operational and implemented immediately. Once the improvements are introduced, again the head of the study field and directors of the study programmes are the responsible persons who should provide feedback to respondents. All in all, the process of collecting students' views is well inherited and are provided on a routine basis. Stakeholders' opinions on improvements in the study programmes are welcomed and accepted.

DU has its informative system DUIS with the main statistical data and information on study programmes, students, and academic staff members. The intranet based DUIS is an important tool for the study programme directors, faculty managers as these people are uploading all necessary information. Meanwhile, the Department of Studies verifies data and provides monitoring. At the end of each month, the data from the DUIS system are exported to State Education Information System (SEIS).

The quality assurance system of study field and programmes is based on the "DU Study Internal Quality Assurance Policy". The Quality Policy, in turn, is designed according to ESG. Within the ESF project "Improving Daugavpils University management and leadership competencies" (No. 8.2.3.0/18/A/010) the current study quality system has been improved in the light of ESG. The key challenge for DU is related to the implementation of all new improved and/or design documents and to making an internal quality assurance policy as a policy that streamlines all efforts of DU towards excellence.

The self-assessment report refers to the "Quality management system manual" (SAR, p.38). However, in the interviews, experts did not find assurance that a quality management system is implemented and operation as a full set. There are tools used on the regular basis like questionnaires and surveys. However, at the current moment, there is no assurance that different types of instruments are feeding in the unified quality management system. So far, it is hard to assess whether the QMS manual is applied in the practice of DU to improve operations. According to the information received, the staff of the Study Quality Assessment Center has changed recently, thus one of the key issues for the management of the DU is to ensure the institutional memory of the Study Quality Assessment Center to provide the smooth operation of the Center.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

The DU has defined a quality policy, which is publicly available in the internal network of the university. The quality policy contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field. All main procedures related to the development and review of the relevant study programmes and the feedback mechanisms (including opinions from the students, employers, and alumni) have been identified and properly managed. The statistical analysis of the study programmes is performed regularly. Stakeholders' opinions on improvements in the study programmes are welcomed and accepted.

Strengths:

1. Internal quality assurance system of the study field "History and Philosophy" is implemented according to the practice and know-how established in DU.
2. The head of the study field and study programme directors respond to substantiated opinions and proposals expressed in the survey questionnaires.
3. Study programmes of all levels (BA, MA, PhD) are designed based on the legal framework in Latvia and DU in particular.

Weaknesses:

1. The current internal quality assurance system has been updated very recently, yet its implementation might be a challenge due to staff changes.
2. At the moment, there is no clear view how to implement quality assurance and ESG at the DU as the university partially rely on the external service provider. In addition, there is a blurred vision on the role of quality assurance in the general process of management study field.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field

Analysis

The source of funding for the study field "History and Philosophy" is the state budget and tuition fees. The calculations of costs per one student are done by the DU Department of Finance and Accounting as well as the Department of Finance and Accounting of the University of Latvia for the joint PhD programme. The calculations per student are given to the experts in SAR Annex 4 "Izmaksu aprēķins LV" and they are logical and consistent. They are as follows: for the ABSP "History" about 1600 EUR per year, for the AMSP "History" about 1533 EUR per year and DSP "History and Archaeology" 3388 EUR per year. In the experts' opinion, the financial resources at DU disposal are sufficient for the efficient implementation of the study field.

For the development of scientific research in the DU study field "History and Philosophy," there is funding allocated from the Ministry of Education and Science. The faculty gets internal funding intended for the development of research activities based on the scientific achievements and indicators the academic staff have achieved in the previous year. It is mentioned during the onsite visit that from the faculty about 20% of the funding goes to the field of history. These results and indicators are evaluated by the DU Department of Science (SAR, p. 41). Lecturers of the study field can apply for payment for publications indexed in Web of Science or SCOPUS databases (1000 EUR – from the onsite visit), as well as receive an additional grant for the Hirsch index. There is a separate fee paid to the researchers for the translation services if needed. Overall, experts conclude that the system for financing scientific research activities is efficient.

Daugavpils University has identified the necessary infrastructure resources, material and technical provisions required for the implementation of the study field and listed those on SAR, pp. 42-44.

Although the list is comprehensive and corresponds to the real-life facts seen by the experts during the onsite visit, there are no spaces in the building (desks chairs in the hallways/a separate classroom) for students to study apart from the scarcely available desks at the library. This was also pointed out by a student as a necessity during the onsite visit. Apart from the aforementioned, it seems that the students and academic staff members have access to all of the necessary resources. The importance of the Centre of Oral History was stressed several times during the onsite visit and can be disclosed as an innovative resource used in research work and acquisition of study courses.

There is a common procedure for obtaining new materials etc. The study councils discuss the acquisition of the required literature and draft a list which is forwarded to the Vice-Rector for Studies and the Vice-Rector for Science for approval. The list is further submitted to DU Budgetary Commission. After approval of the list, the literature is purchased and included in the course descriptions. If the renewal of the infrastructure is required within a certain study direction, the director of the study direction or program may apply for consideration to DU Budgetary Commission (SAR, p. 45).

Elections to academic positions happen according to the requirements of the "Regulation on electing to academic positions at Daugavpils University". Information about the academic vacancies is published on the DU website or the official edition of the Republic of Latvia "Latvijas Vēstnesis", thus providing an opportunity for any interested person to apply to the position at DU. People who can be elected to academic positions at DU are citizens of the Republic of Latvia or foreign citizens whose academic education and professional qualification corresponds to the requirements of the field of science or art, study, and research work (SAR, p. 53).

The academic and research workload for academic staff members seems unbalanced. The research activities are involved in the workload for the academic staff member only if the person is involved in the work of the institute. Then the balance is, for example, 50:50% research: academic workload respectively. The problem is with the academic staff members who are only involved in the faculty, not also in the institute as a researcher because for those the research hours is 0 in the official workload. An example is given during the onsite visit with one professor having more than 900 h of teaching and research "is on the level of a hobby". The history programmes are mostly, however, taught by academic staff members who are researchers or involved both - in research and the faculty.

DU has elaborated internal normative acts and mechanisms that regulate the ensuring of the academic staff qualification and quality of work. These normative acts are regulation on elections to academic positions at Daugavpils University, the procedure of assessing the scientific work as well as the results of student surveys. In co-operation with the Centre for Life-Long Education, lecturers have the opportunity to participate in further education courses, improving, deepening and perfecting their knowledge. The academic staff involved in the programme regularly participates in various professional development courses (further education teacher training B courses, "Development of study courses in the e-learning environment MOODLE", "Data analysis and preparation of reports", etc.) (SAR, pp. 54-55). In experts opinion, the outgoing mobility for the academic staff is on a good level (4 academic staff members went on ERASMUS exchange in the year 2020, as well as 10 went to conferences abroad in the same year). However, the incoming mobility could be better - on average there are 1-2 foreign academic staff members coming in per academic year - increasing that number would be beneficial both for the students and for the university itself.

DU offers a wide range of support for their students regarding studies, career, and psychological

support as well as support for the students with special needs and parents. For example, if a student is not able to attend classes (due to health, family reasons, etc.), university lecturers provide on-site and online counselling upon request. DU has a Centre for Lifelong Learning, where it is possible to receive consultations from career counsellors, psychologists, youth affairs specialists and entrepreneurs on the issues of interest to them (SAR, p. 62). DU has implemented the project “Improving the quality of Daugavpils University study programmes and ensuring the accessibility of the environment”, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and modernized and adapted the DU infrastructure for people with special needs, thus improving the accessibility of the environment for people with disabilities, visual, hearing, mental impairments (SAR, p. 44). Overall, it seems to the experts that DU recognizes the needs of the students. It was mentioned, for example, (in the SAR, p. 36) that changes in the library working time were made based on students’ suggestions, however, the information available on the website still show the working time to be until 17.00 and closed on the weekend. There were also students during the onsite visit who mentioned this problem. The website in general is hard to navigate and a lot of information is not available there publicly (the quality assurance system, tuition fees etc.). The information is even more scarcely available in English.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

The resources and mechanisms for financing the study field and the scientific activities within it is transparent and efficient. DU has identified the necessary resources and infrastructure for the study field as well as there is a system in place for renewing the aforementioned, however some improvements might be in place regarding the available study places and the website. DU has a transparent system for attracting and hiring new academic staff members. There is a system for ensuring didactic and professional improvements. The outgoing mobility is on a good level, however, the incoming could use improvements. DU offers wide range of support for their students.

Strengths:

1. The Centre for Oral History is an innovative resource used in research work and acquisition of study courses in the implementation of the study field.
2. Strong support system in place for different students with different needs.

Weaknesses:

1. There are no specially designated areas in the building (e.g. desks with sockets and lamps, chairs in the hallways/a separate classroom) for students to learn, to communicate and socialise apart from the scarcely available desks at the library.
2. The academic research workload for the academic staff members not involved in the institute is unbalanced.
3. Improvement is needed on the amount of incoming mobility per year for academic staff members.
4. Some important information to the students and DU staff is missing from the website, even less information is available in English. The website is being redesigned recently, and it lacks substantial information.

4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation

Analysis

Since DU is the largest regional university in Latvia and is in Latgale – a region with the historical background of a multilingual, multi-ethnic society with a diverse confessional composition, it determines also a track of research. The scientific research within the study field comply with the development aims of the DU and they are relevant to the study field.

At present, history research, together with other humanities, is part of the research programme "Regional Studies, Literature and Art" established in 2015. The programme was designed with the goals to promote the development of the Latgale and Selia region and Latvia and to increase the development potential through international academic research. The objective of the research programme is to create and make available to the public high-quality international research. The programme unites such spheres as identity studies, comparative studies, history, studies of population groups and subcultures, cultural studies (SAR, p. 57). 2019, the research programme "Regional studies, literature and arts" having history and archaeology on the list have received high scores (4 out of 5) in nationally mandated every 6-year international assessment (see the report at Ministry of Education <https://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/media/10719/download>).

In the study field "History and Philosophy" researchers focus on historical source theory and sourcing methodologies for studies, as well as the introduction of digital history research in Latvia. This is supposed to be a priority of history study in the field in Latvia and a sound basis for future participation in the international scientific community, science and technology transfer activities. The Oral History Centre makes oral histories archives serving as a research base for historians from Latvia and abroad. Technology transfer takes place, focusing not only on sources content and their research methodology but also source building, documentation and archiving principles. Research conducted by faculty is of high relevance to the field of studies and work of memory institutions, public administration, and the tourism industry. In particular, experts would admire the research in regional history using "traditional" sources (archives, periodicals etc.) and oral history. Oral history direction is one of the strongest in the country and accumulated considerable scientific expertise. Both approaches have produced new knowledge in regional history with high applicability in the museum and tourism industry as well as gaining scholarly attention to Eastern Latvian history. Faculty (professors and associate professors) carry out research also in interdisciplinary fields (digital humanities), such as e- tourism, smart place applicability, use of the semantic web for publishing archives (as evidence the experts identified 4 SCOPUS, 2 domestic refereed publications). This research is highly applicable in tourism, museum, and archival industries.

However, only a few of the academic staff engaged in the implementation of the study field "History and Philosophy" are experts of the Latvian Council of Science. Now, when the report is being prepared, the experts identified only 3 (three) members of teaching staff being recognised by the Latvian Science Council. In addition, one of those Latvian Science Council experts recently left the DU. Thus, DU es expected to take immediate steps to promote high-level publications and sequent staff applications for the expert status of the Latvian Science Council.

Although a lot of academic staff members mainly work as practitioners and it might have an influence on their research activities, it should be noted that the internationalisation of the results of research is an area requesting additional attention and support of the DU at an institutional level. Regarding archives, Daugavpils research in the methodology of study of historical sources and archival science is the only one of a kind in Latvia. In recent years (2019 – 2020) this has resulted in one monograph and student textbook on archeography by a professor of DU. This is an asset worth noting and stronger presence in the presentation of study field and its achievements.

The research fields of most of the faculty are concentrated on history, especially local and regional. From the perspective experts and memory institutions research in oral history and archival science with a high degree of practical applicability is especially important.

As mentioned, University is publishing its history journal where faculty and students publish their research findings. The journal is open access and is included in the EBSCO database. It is suggested

to focus on publishing scientific articles in the journals indexed in SCOPUS and Web of Science databases since these publications provide the opportunity for receiving more funding for further research and contribute to the effective functioning and development of the study field.

The relation between scientific research in the study field and the study process has been ensured in the following ways: 1) students are involved in research work when elaborating Bachelor's theses, Master's theses and Doctoral theses; 2) students have an opportunity to participate voluntarily in the research conducted by the academic staff inside the study field as participants of the research, thus getting closer acquainted to the research process as such; 3) the lecturers of the study field use their own and colleagues' research results and findings in the teaching courses, referring to them and linking them with other international researches and findings. The relation between research in the study field and the study process is ensured. Expert's observations confirm this especially in the field of oral history where students are taking an active part in oral history expeditions. Research is also a prerequisite in the successful defence of bachelor and masters' theses.

International cooperation in the field of research is established with the universities of Tartu, Petrozavodsk, Glasgow and Vilnius Educational University. Partners are co-producing research, serve as editors in - house journal "History: Sources and People" etc. The SAR (p.83) includes information on USA military cadets studying the course at DU. However, the information does not reveal the substantial details - whether the cadets did study something of the history.

All in all, DU has developed the necessary mechanism for the involvement of the teaching staff in research by monetary awards for publishing articles in internationally refereed publications. Research publications are also a national requirement to make a successful academic carrier. At the end of each calendar year the academics of the study field "History and Philosophy" submit a report on their achievements in scientific and creative work, work projects, information on participation in scientific seminars and conferences, publications according to the DU procedure for evaluation of the scientific activity of academic staff. The scientific/research activity of the lecturers is fostered within the existing DU budget by receiving funding for the promotion and support of the further scientific activity.

The COVID 19 inspired and affected, DU within the study field has been initiated video recording of lectures and seminars as well as to promote the use of innovative forms of independent work of students in the study process. Existing research is an experimental model of a uniquely multicultural environment and is supposed to be innovative as well.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

The DU and study field management have developed mechanisms for the involvement of the teaching staff in scientific research. Scientific research and the outcomes thereof are integrated into the study process in the study programmes on all levels. However, staff financing is mostly based on outcomes of teaching and not research what is nationwide deficiency and problem.

Strengths:

1. Academic staff and students are actively involved in research with a high degree of applicability.
2. Publishing of EBSCO (Scopus, WoS) indexed journal is recognised as positive.
3. Staff is being financially rewarded for publishing articles in internationally refereed journals.
4. A lot of research (up to 40 per year) is being published in the house journal "History: Sources and People" which is indexed in EBSCO.

Weaknesses:

1. Staff financing is mostly based on outcomes of teaching and not research (what is nationwide deficiency and problem). Research and publishing its results appear to be undervalued.
2. International cooperation should be broader, involving more international partners.
3. Coverage by more indexing services (e.g. SCOPUS) would be highly recommended for in-house publishing.

5. Cooperation and Internationalisation

Analysis

Within the study field "History and Philosophy", extensive cooperation with Latvia and foreign countries are being pursued, reinforcing the interdisciplinary approach and multidimensional capacity support. According to the SAR (p.70), there are several directions for cooperation:

- a) international cooperation with education and research institutions resulting in mobility and joint actions;
- b) cooperation with national level and local authorities;
- c) co-operation with Latvian and foreign non-governmental organisations;
- d) co-operation with students of Latvian secondary and higher education;
- e) co-operation with Latvian and foreign media.

The general direction of cooperation and internationalisation within the study field looks sensible and well-directed (SAR p. 76). However, despite a track record of individual partnerships, including a flow of incoming students from the US for short-cycle studies, the University demonstrates an insufficient level of embedding internationalization and cooperation in the development strategy of the study field and the entire DU. The experts' team was surprised by the marginal participation of students in academic exchange programmes and puzzled by the insufficient instrumentalization of the resources provided by programmes like Erasmus+ to advance the curriculum, strengthen institutional ties, and bring up new partnerships for scholars and students.

Domestic, in-country cooperation with governmental institutions, as well as NGOs, is much more sustainable and promising for further joint development of various initiatives (SAR, pp. 78-81). This is mainly seen in the coverage of the local Latgale region and oral history. From an overall perspective, some tangible links with several 'oral history' organizations both locally and internationally are demonstrated under cooperation with NGOs.

Individual examples of partnerships appear to be rather accidental and resultant from cooperation initiatives of individual faculty members, rather than consistent and institutionally driven strategies for cooperation (SAR pp. 77-78). Thus, several questions arise. Is there an institutional policy to stimulate, carry out, and foster international cooperation with a clearly defined research goal? Have any attempts been undertaken to initiate European programmes in cooperation with a specific, fine-tuned selection of institutions or groups of universities? From the SAR it seems that much of the described cooperation does not ensure sustainability and long-lasting effects. With a plethora of meetings, seminars, lectures no clear platform of international cooperation can be determined.

The information provided in SAR about foreign students studying at DU is interesting but remains unclear (SAR, pp. 82-84). Reporting on Erasmus+ is mixed with information about students from the US, whose study periods, requirements (teaching hours, credits, and periods of study) do not correspond with the European ones. The list of overseas (in particular, US) institutions is impressive (SAR p. 83), but it does not reflect the size of programs and does not indicate what mid and long-term impact and multiplication effects might these initiatives have on the overall study field.

According to SAR, Erasmus+ activities in the study field remain of a marginal scale and do not become a pipeline of attracting students to DU. A single student is referred to, as someone who has participated in the possibility to study abroad (Philippines) and there seems to be no information about incoming Erasmus+ students. A much broader and more effective performance is reported in the utilization of the Erasmus+ student trainee-ship framework, where several DU students have taken the opportunity to have a work placement and internship in selected cultural and educational institutions abroad.

Expanding own network of international partnerships could naturally be strengthened by a proactive involvement in multilateral Erasmus+ funded capacity-building projects, as well as building up DU's profile as an attractive destination for international students: first, as incoming exchange students, and later, for full degree programmes. Ultimately, DU's engagement with networks like Nordplus could also be beneficial to strengthen already existing ties to DU's counterparts in the Nordic and Baltic regions.

The DU has defined criteria for partnership (SAR, p.71). They are as follows:

- a) A partnership is established with partners which implement similar study programmes within the field (Bachelor of History, Master and doctoral programmes);
- b) PhD students share common scientific interests and research projects (research) and are potentially involved in the development of publications);
- c) There is the possibility of organising students' participation in joint activities (e.g. doctoral visits of students to partner high schools, summer schools, archives, museums and archaeological practices, etc.).

Despite the clear criteria for cooperation and internationalization, there is a vague institutional policy to stimulate, carry out, and foster international cooperation with blurred goals. Cooperation and internationalization are more person-dependent rather than stable and sustainable institutional policy.

Setting a perspective for both institutional development and strengthening of the History and Philosophy study field, DU could benefit from setting a priority of becoming a member of the European University Initiative, a flagship programme of the European Commission to support and foster the establishment of the European Education Area by 2025. Given DU's profile and exposure to regional interaction, the University would be able to step a significant step forward by making such a commitment within its next strategic planning period.

Shall additionally resources and incentives be provided by the University management to advance internationalization at DU (e.g., via internationalization at home, fostering outgoing and incoming student mobility, fostering capacity-building projects etc.), the study field would be able to make a significant step forward in sharpening the profile and regional importance of the University, as a whole.

Ultimately, after an assessment of the provided documents and interviewing different groups of stakeholders as a part of the evaluation procedure, internationalization by far remains one of the areas of major potential for development.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

Internationalization by far remains one of the areas of major potential for development at DU. Despite a successful track record on individual cases of partnerships, the University did not manage

to demonstrate how internationalization is fully embedded in the development strategy of the study field and the entire DU. There is rather poor participation of students in academic exchange programmes related by the insufficient instrumentalization of the resources provided by programmes like Erasmus.

Strengths:

1. Outgoing staff mobility, particularly in 2018-2019, demonstrates a high level of engagement of faculty in conferences and academic exchange.
2. Eagerness and commitment of the faculty members to foster international partnerships and apply for project funding from regional and European funds.
3. Consistency in partnering with renowned scholars from abroad is highly valued by students and the academic community and thus can be used to build stronger institutional ties with HEIs from abroad.

Weaknesses:

1. Lack of clarity regarding the international strategy and ambition of the University. Besides fostering networking and disseminating outcomes of the research activity, internationalization is not considered as a tool to challenge the academic inbreeding at DU.
2. Students are not motivated effectively (i.e. the existing practices do not result in their participation) to join academic exchange programmes, which in turn limits the opportunities and narrows potential pathways for their employability and academic horizons.
3. Few attempts are visible to strengthen international cooperation for example entering cooperation with the Oral History Association in the US and hence networking with the world's leading NGOs in the area. No attempts are shown to work with Open Society and other Soros network institutions, like the Central European University. The university does not seem to enter European networks of universities or cooperate with them such as Coimbra Group, UnaEuropa, Utrecht Network, European University Association or Europaeum.
4. Additional resources and incentives be provided by the University management to advance internationalization at DU (e.g. via internationalization at home, fostering outgoing and incoming student mobility, fostering capacity-building projects etc.),

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

Analysis

The previous accreditation of the study field "History and Philosophy" at DU was commenced back in the academic year 2014/2015. At that time, the quality of DU resources and the ability to implement study programmes at all three levels (Bachelor, Master and Doctoral) was assessed in the light of the regulatory framework being in force.

During the accreditation, significant shortcomings were not identified with the following decision - to accredit the study field along with its three programmes for six years.

In 2015, the expert group assigned for accreditation of the study field "History and Philosophy" made recommendations aimed to improve the quality of studies. As a result, DU significantly optimises the resources within the MA programme by eliminating specialisation. In addition, the decision was made to create a joint doctoral programme of DU and University of Latvia (UL) "History and Archaeology".

During the licensing of DU and UL joint doctoral programme "History and Archaeology" in the spring of 2021, three long-term recommendations were received:

1. To find the possibility of raising funds from other sources for the development of the programme.
2. It is desirable to consider the possibility of establishing a joint Admission committee.
3. To identify and incorporate into the content of the study programme the possibility to specialize and elaborate Doctoral theses in a wider range of auxiliary branches of history.

As implementation of the programme started in September 2021, both universities took seriously recommendations and prepared a joint plan tailored to tackle the recommendations.

In the autumn of 2021, the joint council of DU and UL of the joint doctoral programme "History and Archaeology" was established, the work plan related to the improvement of the quality of studies were designed.

There is a joint Admission committee established in September 2021, with a representative of DU included in the admission committee of the joint doctoral programme "History and Archaeology" at the University of Latvia. So far, there are more separate actions in the programme, including separate budgeting. It is expected to achieve more synergy in the latest stages of cooperation.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

All in all, DU has been serious regarding the recommendation expressed in the previous accreditation and licencing. The plan covering implementation of the recommendation provides all information on all recommendations stated. The recommendations are either fully implemented or is under implementation. No serious risks have been identified regarding the implementation of the previous recommendations.

Strengths:

1. The joint doctoral programme "History and Archaeology" with the University of Latvia was established.

Weaknesses:

Not identified

7. Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

DU has invested efforts to upgrade its study quality management system along with the procedural documents to the requirements of ISO 9001:2017 and ESG with support of ESF project "Daugavpils University governance and management competence improvement" (No. 8.2.3.0/18/A/010). All in all, the internal quality assurance system ensures student-centred and sustainable higher education.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The quality policy has been approved and published. The relevant procedures of the internal

quality assurance system has been recently upgraded.

- 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

Internal and external quality assurance of higher education is ensured in cooperation with DU and external stakeholders like the Ministry of Education and Science, Academic Information Centre and Higher Education Council. Such an institutional ecosystem provides quality in issues like programme licencing and accreditation, strategic development of the DU as a part of higher education in Latvia.

Internally, DU has established the necessary mechanisms for reliable and regular upgrade of study programmes like a study field council, self-evaluation reports, quality policy and internal procedures.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The criteria, conditions, and procedures for the evaluation of students' results, have been developed and made public.

The approach to the evaluation of students' results enables guarantee regarding achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

- 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

Internal mechanisms for assuring the qualifications of the teaching staff and the work quality have been developed.

- 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

DU and management of the study fields ensure the collection and analysis of the information related to the study achievements of the students; employment of the graduates, satisfaction of the students with the study programmes, efficiency of the teaching staff, the study funds available. During the on-site visit, it was confirmed that even after graduation faculty staff assist the graduates for their future careers.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

DU ensures continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field while implementing their upgraded quality assurance systems according to the "Change

management and implementation plan for modernisation of the study programmes and quality improvement plan for internships".

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Current cooperation with different organizations from Latvia and abroad have been established in a sufficient manner and partly ensures the achievement of the goals of the study field.

However, cooperation with organizations abroad is very limited and should be broadened. The fields and subjects of cooperation should be much wider than Erasmus + mobility for students or the invitation of teachers to lectures and the implementation of projects. DU needs to set priorities for the development of partnership and the results to be achieved.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The DU and study field management have developed mechanisms and tools for the involvement of the teaching staff in scientific research. Scientific research and the outcomes thereof are integrated into the study process in the study programmes of all three levels.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

DU has fully implemented the recommendations of identified in previous accreditation of the study field.

8. Recommendations for the Study Field

Short-term recommendations

1. In two years arrange the information in the DU website, so it would display all the latest information, including quality policy, as well as translate and add the important information (such as library working time etc.) in English.
2. To ensure everyday operational use of quality management system manual at the DU.

Long-term recommendations

1. Until the next accreditation procedure starts, to ensure increase amount of research results published in English.
2. To re-consider the place and the role of internationalization, including mobility, partnerships, and capacity-building, as a fundamental priority for the upcoming strategic planning period
3. Until the next accreditation procedure starts for this study field, provide additional spaces for students to study in the university building.

4. Until the next accreditation procedure starts for this study field, review the system of academic research workload distribution for the academic staff members not employed at the institute and balance the hour distribution.

5. Until the next accreditation procedure starts for this study field, increase the amount of incoming mobility per year for academic staff members. What should be considered seriously is the possibility and relative easiness of arranging online lectures, seminars, workshops for students and staff. Utilizing the technology and know-how developed in the last years due to the covid pandemic.

II. "History" ASSESSMENT

II. "History" ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

The title of the academic bachelor study programme is "History". The degree to be acquired, goals, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are generally consistent and relevant to the topic.

The goal and objectives of ABSP "History" are to deliver high quality, competitive and modern student-centred academic studies resulting in students having knowledge and skills to work in the local, national and international market.

The ABSP "History" is implemented in Latvian as full-time studies in 3 year period. The students are awarded a Bachelor`s Degree in History and Archaeology. The content of BA studies is consistent with the subsequent MA programme, if students chose to pursue further their educational path after graduation from the BA programme. The programme is designed mainly for local students.

Data demonstrates a rather stable number of active students over the last six years with an average number of students around 29 for the whole programme (i.e. 10 per each year). However, this programme also faces student dropouts during and after the first year of studies. The number of graduates of the programme also is rather stable, with exceptionally low 2019/2020 when only 2 (two) students graduated. As it appears from the SAR and visit to DU the small numbers of students are resultant from the number of study places financed by the government and the dropping demographic figures.

Based on the number of active students and number of graduates, the programme can be characterized as a small programme.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The academic bachelor study programme "History" is designed mainly for local students. The main reasons students for choosing the programme are related to being residents of the Latgale region and accessibility of the studies. Meanwhile, students are tended to continue their study path - in MA programme as both programmes ensure synergy of content.

Strengths:

1. The academic bachelor programme is secure as long as there is a regional demand, and the

graduates are capable to find their place in the labour market directly related content of the programme

2. There is a synergy in the content between the academic bachelor programme and academic master programme "History".

3. The size of the programme assures almost individual instruction in all courses and fields taught. This allows for a much deeper involvement of both sides in the programme - of the students and the teaching staff.

Weaknesses:

1. A number of drop-outs during and after the first study year is an area of concern.

2. As the programme is designed for the local students with a strong regional focus, the internationalisation of studies and international mobility of students (in and out) is uncertain.

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

The descriptions of the study courses, the traineeship, and the final thesis are of good quality and comply with the requirements.

Examining the descriptions of the courses in the SRA and on the website of DU, the experts gained confidence in their compliance with the requirements of Article 56¹ of the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the recommendations of the Higher Education Quality Agency. The aims, tasks, results and outcomes, planning logic and other required elements in course descriptions are well described and well defined. Reading lists, according to experts' knowledge and subject expertise, are relevant and up to date. All in all, the descriptions of the study courses, the traineeship, and the final thesis are of good quality and comply with the requirements.

The content of the program is relevant for the industry and complementary. It meets the set aims, learning outcomes, and needs of industry and trends in humanities and social sciences. The study program aims to "provide students with an opportunity to acquire competitive high-quality academic education that meets contemporary requirements, is demanded on the international and local labour market, and opens opportunities for further professional and academic education."

The content and structure of the program are arranged in a chronological approach. Students start their studies with courses devoted to ancient and medieval history (1st and 2nd semester) and finish with contemporary history (4th - 6th semesters). This is a traditional and academically accepted arrangement for general history education programs. Students find a general knowledge of world history which is a basic requirement for teaching history at pre-tertiary educational institutions, working in museums, tourism industries and government (e.g., foreign affairs, archives, heritage protection etc.). As it is required by the legal framework, the programme offers also compulsory courses - Civil protection (1 credit point) and Environmental protection (1 credit point) (SAR, p.104).

The study implementation methods are various: lectures, seminars, practical and field studies, group and individual works. These are again universally and academically accepted methods in humanities and social sciences and no doubt contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the program. During the assessment visit and meetings with students and teaching staff, the experts receive evidence that student-centred learning and teaching principles are taken into account. The relatively small number of students is also facilitating student-centred teaching and learning.

To deepen the specific knowledge required by industry, the program has introductory courses on memory institutions (Vēst1151), practices (in fact, traineeships) in oral and local histories (Vēst1060, Vēst2028). Students are provided with a prospect to expand their general history knowledge and specialization in certain aspects of history related industries at the Master's level. The program also offers courses reflecting the modern study trends in history and history curriculum: Wars and Battles (Vēst1093), Reception of Past (Vēst 3059) etc.

The general theoretical course "Source Studies" (Vēst2025) is planned for the 3rd semester, but before that the students have already taken a specific course "Old Testament as a Source of History" (Vest1026) and passed the "Oral History Practice" (Vēst1060). It would only be logical to transfer the general theoretical course to the first or second semester.

The bachelor's study program includes the courses "Fundamentals of museum science" (Vēst3020) and "Practice in a museum" (Vest1088). The other memory institution - the Archives course (Vest4017) is included in the master's study program. During the visit to the University, the experts listened to the opinion of the directors of the study programs regarding the need to acquire in-depth knowledge and specialization in the work of memory institutions at the master's level. Therefore, experts recommend that the museology course be reworked and included in the master's study program.

During the on-site meeting with the representatives of the study program, the experts also discussed the need to pay more attention to language learning courses. DU specializes in regional studies, including the history of Latgale and Sēlija. Research in these regions is not possible without reading historical sources and literature in Polish, German and Latin. There is only one 3ECT course for German (Valo1340). Polish is not taught, although a course is offered in Swedish (Valo1134). Given that fewer and fewer students are choosing to study German as a first or second foreign language and that bachelor's studies in history are mostly started without knowledge of German, it would be advisable to increase the number of German language courses. Swedish has little weight in the study of the region's history, so experts recommend replacing it with Polish. A Latin language course should also be considered (for example, in an analogous study program at the University of Latvia it is being taught). In DU Latin is taught only in doctoral studies. The doctoral course in Latin (ValoD071) is planned for 3 ECTS. Given that doctoral students already have certain linguistic maturity, such a small (3ECTS) course is superfluous to experts. Its content is suitable and transferable to the bachelor's study program without any changes. Daugavpils and Sēlija region are located on the Lithuanian border, the history of the region and current cultural processes relate to Lithuania as well. Daugavpils University already has a Lithuanian Studies Center. Therefore, the inclusion of a Lithuanian language course in the program should also be considered.

Surveys on student, employers and graduate needs are regularly conducted and analysed (see respective annexes of the SAR). Surveys are conducted by customized open-source survey tools (see Daugavpils Universitātes Aptaujas Sistēma (du. lv)). Outcomes are used to improve the quality of studies, for instance - a creation of a study course on memory institutions (Vēst1151).

While students are informed about mobility opportunities, at the moment the experts visited DU, there was just one in-coming student (from Kazakhstan). Thus, DU is expected to streamline efforts to encourage and facilitate students' incoming and outgoing mobility.

DU staff design and teach courses for foreign students, in particular students from the USA taking part in various consortia or university study abroad programmes. There appears to be no policy to stimulate interaction between those students and local DU students.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The content of the programme is relevant and complimentary, and it complies with the aims of the study programme, ensures the achievement of the learning outcomes, and meets the needs of industry and trends in humanities and social sciences. It provides a good historical base for future historians in various domains of public life. The concentration on local history, Soviet times as well as oral history are natural and logical. The content and structure of the program are arranged in a chronological approach.

The study implementation methods are various: lectures, seminars, practical and field studies, group and individual works. Surveys on student, employers and graduate needs are regularly conducted and analysed

Strengths:

1. In general, clear, understandable course planning and arrangement within the programme.
2. The course descriptions are updated regularly.

Weaknesses:

1. Minor inadequacies are identified in course arrangement between semesters and bachelor's and master's levels (museology).
2. Not adequate language training for regional history.
3. There is limited student mobility.
4. There appears to be no policy to stimulate interaction between foreign (US) students, who attend additional courses at DU and local DU students - neither on a professional, nor social level.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

The resources and provision of the bachelor study programme correspond to the conditions of the study programme implementation and achievement of the learning outcomes.

The resources available to students, including the material and technical base and equipment (for preparation, combination, integration, visualisation and distribution of study and research materials), information networks (Internet, intranet, Moodle), databases (library network, databases of DU research centres, free access to databases (databases of literature resources), materials (research materials, scientific publications, archives), services (administrative, financial, IT and network support services, access to official statistics), computer applications and software provide for acquisition all study courses offered in the programme, as well as conducting research, and provide a flexible and student-centred environment (SAR, p. 111).

Library visit identified less than 20 seating places for the whole library (which is not just history), while none such were presented in facilities utilized by the study programme. There appears to be no access to ProQuest databases, to JStor, or Oxford publications. While this may require substantial additional funding, it should be raised as an important issue - possibly solvable though nation wide cooperation (University of Latvia has access to many more databases)

Students during the onsite meeting speak very highly about the additional resources (links to publications etc.) provided by the lecturers themselves regarding each course or even class. Overall the experts think that the resources and materials in disposal for DU regarding the study programme under evaluation is enough to provide high-quality education when moving forward. For more information regarding the resource and material base in general, please see the 3rd chapter of

the study field analysis.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The resources, materials and provision of the study programme correspond to the conditions of its implementation and achievement of the learning outcomes, as well as provide the high-quality education now and in the future.

Strengths:

1. Lecturers provide additional resources and materials for classes, which are highly evaluated by the students.

Weaknesses:

1. Limited possibility to use online resources and databases at the university facilities.
2. While a list of available databases and Internet resources exists, it is rather small.
3. The programme depends strongly on government financial support and numbers of graduates of high schools. Even a small change could hinder the functioning of the programme.

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

The composition of the faculty of the programme is of good quality and corresponds with the formal requirements and academic regulations. The qualification of the academic staff involved in the study programme implementation complies with reaching the outcomes of the study programme. It is evident that a proportion of members of the History Department and members of the Department of Foreign Language reflects both the institutional arrangement and place of the study programme within the structure of the University. An English language training and improvement of the language proficiency occupies an important place in the curriculum and adheres to the skillset, needed for a further academic and/or professional pathway of graduates. Ultimately, the background of faculty members and their research portfolios correspond well to the aims of the study programme.

While conducting a study visit, the expert team had a chance to witness an outstandingly high level of commitment of the faculty to the programme and its goals, highlighting both the academic purpose, but also a service to a community and region, by fostering undergraduate studies in history. A sense of commitment to teaching and research that faculty has demonstrated also reaffirms the culture of mutual collaboration, nurtured by the teaching staff, which is reinforced by common research and publishing activities, as well as projects related to the Latgale region (SAR pp. 117-118). The faculty's clear understanding of the programme's mission illustrates a form of civic engagement potential that is transmitted to students and the broader community.

The staff implementing the study programme at the BA level is fully compliant with the conditions and provisions set out in relevant state acts. The CVs enclosed in one of the SAR annexes produce a positive impression. The staff, as a group, is adequately prepared to carry out the aims of the programme. Many interesting publications, participation in conferences, Erasmus+ visits all make a good impression and lay a foundation for further involvement. The staff implementing the study programme at the BA level is fully compliant with the conditions and provisions set out in relevant national legal acts.

In total, there are 23 persons involved in the teaching of this programme, 11 of whom teach history itself. Many of them teach several undergraduate courses on various subjects and years, and continue on the graduate level. This makes the programme vulnerable to a limited number of teaching staff and in several cases, the absence would severely hinder the fluent delivery of the programme.

Among the history-related faculty, we find 4 professors and 3 associate professors and docents (SAR pp. 112-114), while only 3 members are junior. Such proportion of faculty's seniority, or even a generation gap, exposes the programme's longevity risks.

In the reporting period 'history' staff published about 200 articles and publications. The number (about 20 per scholar) is satisfactory, yet their impact is somewhat blurred. SAR mentions publications indexed in SCOPUS and WoS, yet lists no examples. Staff is involved in numerous projects and appears to be open to some student involvement in them.

A disproportion in the workload of faculty members stands out as an evident area of improvement. Given how large proportions of the teaching workload are distributed among a few key faculty members of the programme and the high level of fragmentation of the teaching courses (with an average course-load of less than 3 credit points), faculty members become too vulnerable to end up in a position, where advancing research is hardly feasible due to overwhelming teaching obligations. The University management is encouraged to look more thoroughly into the issue and to introduce a clearer regulation between the workload distribution among teaching, research, didactic, organisational activities per each of the academic positions (i.e. Lecturer, Docent, Associate Professor, Professor).

Less evident is what initiatives, especially international does staff undertake to broaden the opportunities for themselves and more importantly for students. Especially with the rapid development of online seminars, conferences, and lectures, it appears that technical possibilities exist for much broader involvement of foreign scholars in DU initiatives, while there appear to be a few if any.

Fostering the diversity of the faculty members would also be an advantageous avenue to prevent academic inbreeding among instructors of the programme. As an alternative to headhunting for international talents, the University management could also investigate the ways how to recruit faculty members of Latvian and/or regional origin possessing foreign-obtained degrees, which in turn could bring new skills and teaching methods to the classroom.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The undergraduate study programme has sufficient, well prepared, and experienced staff. Teachers are both history researchers and teachers, passing on theoretical, but also practical knowledge. Their instruction is linked with their projects and can demonstrate how theory is applicable in life and in practical historians' professions. Although several of the faculty members demonstrate a tangible track record of involvement in regional and international research projects, there is a lack of international diversity of the teaching staff, which in turn limits the scope of experiences of students.

Strengths:

1. Well experienced staff and strong commitment of faculty to the goals and profile of the programme.
2. Long teaching experience and the possibility to involve in practically individual teaching.

3. Knowledge-based on personal research and ability to pass to students own research methods and life examples.
4. Strong level of English language proficiency.

Weaknesses

1. The overall size of 'history' faculty is very limited (11-12 people) thus making it dependent on several professors, whose absence would seriously hinder the existence of the programme.
2. The faculty relies heavily on rather mature and experienced teaching staff members. There appears to be too few young, learning researchers/teachers, which puts in question the sustainability and continuity of the programme. We may even speak of a generation gap.
3. The faculty appears to be of limited international diversity and exposition to foreign teachers and professors – both in person, but also online. Two names over 5-6 years do not guarantee significant impact and input.
4. The faculty are exposed to a disproportionate level of teaching obligations, which undermines necessary time resources to produce research, all due to a lack of regulation on the proportion of research within faculty workload.

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "History"

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The diploma sample issued to Latvian students complies with the Cabinet Regulations No 202.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

There is an agreement with University of Latvia, dated June 18, 2009.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

There is a guarantee (included in the annexe) stated that DU guarantees compensation for damages caused to the student if, due to DU conduct (act or omission), the study field "History and philosophy" is not accredited or the licenses of the study programmes belonging to the study direction are withdrawn, or the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The attached CV of the staff confirm that state language proficiency is compliant with regulations No. 733 "Noteikumi par valsts valodas zināšanu apjomu, valsts valodas prasmes pārbaudes kārtību un valsts nodevu par valsts valodas prasmes pārbaudi".

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The list of academic staff involved in the implementation of the study programme is included in the annexe. Number of professors and associate professors, who are elected to academic positions

in the university and participating in the implementation of the compulsory part and the limited elective part of academic study programme exceed the threshold stated in the law - five.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the study agreement provided in the appendix includes all mandatory provisions.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The course descriptions contain all necessary information to provide the full picture of the study course. In particular, the course descriptions cover the requirements of the study course; the aims the study course and the planned learning outcomes; the content of the study; the study course time plan, mandatory and supplementary literature, other sources of information; the organisation and tasks for the independent work of students as well as the evaluation criteria of learning outcomes.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The letter of the Council for Higher Education No1.10/24 from 18 June 2021 is enclosed. The letter supports DU in commencing the implementation of the academic bachelor's study programme "History", which is intended for less than 250 full-time students.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study programme fulfils requirements with the State Academic Education Standard.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The the academic staff have publications in reviewed editions within the last six years.

- 15 R5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The programme, in general, is well developed and fits all necessary the requirements stated in the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

Requirements (R6-R8)

- 1 R6 - The compliance of the study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The programme have a good base regarding resources as library as well as essential technical provision. From the perspectives of resources, the programme is equipped in such amount as it ensures achievement of the learning outcomes. The students and the teaching staff have access to the necessary resources to ensure and to improve the quality of teaching and learning process.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualification of the academic staff members and visiting academic staff are appropriate the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the legal framework.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

Academic Bachelor Study Programme ' History' is fully compliant with the requirements prescribed in the Law on Institutions of Higher Education and other regulations.

Strengths:

1. There is a synergy in the content between the academic bachelor programme and academic master programme "History".
2. The size of the programme assures almost individual instruction in all courses and fields taught. This allows for a much deeper involvement of both sides in the programme - of the students and the teaching staff.
3. There is a clear, understandable course planning and arrangement within the programme.
4. Well experienced staff with long teaching experience and strong commitment of faculty to the goals and profile of the programme.
5. Knowledge-based on personal research and ability to pass to students own research methods and life examples.
6. Strong level of English language proficiency.

Weaknesses

1. The overall size of ABSP 'History' faculty is very limited (11-12 people) thus making it dependent on several professors, whose absence would seriously hinder the existence of the programme.
2. The faculty relies heavily on rather mature and experienced teaching staff members. There appears to be too few young, learning researchers/teachers, which puts in question the sustainability and continuity of the programme. We may even speak of a generation gap.
3. The faculty appears to be of limited international diversity and exposition to foreign teachers and professors - both in person, but also online. Two names over 5-6 years do not guarantee significant impact and input.
4. The faculty are exposed to a disproportionate level of teaching obligations, which undermines necessary time resources to produce research, all due to a lack of regulation on the proportion of research within faculty workload.
5. A number of drop-outs during and after the first study year is an area of concern.
6. As the programme is designed for the local students with a strong regional focus, the internationalisation of studies and international mobility of students (in and out) is uncertain.
7. There are limited possibility to use online resources and databases at the university facilities.
8. While a list of available databases and Internet resources exists, it is rather small.
9. The programme depends strongly on government financial support and numbers of graduates of

high schools. Even a small change could hinder the functioning of the programme.

Evaluation of the study programme "History"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "History"

Short-term recommendations

- | |
|--|
| 1. On annual bases to analyse in-depth factors of students drop-outs and to implements mechanisms for limiting drop-outs |
| 2. To review access and usage to online resources and databases at the University facilities annually. |

Long-term recommendations

- | |
|---|
| 1. To facilitate internationalisation of the programme by attracting the visiting teaching staff. |
| 2. To promote student internationalisation by fostering students incoming and outgoing mobility. |
| 3. In order to overcome the generational gap and dependence from mature and experienced teaching staff members, to design and implement the comprehensive human resource management and development plan. |
| 4. To design long term measures on balancing the workload of the staff between teaching and research workload. |

II. "History" ASSESSMENT

II. "History" ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

The title of the academic master study programme is "History". The degree to be acquired, goals, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are consistent.

The goal AMSP "History" is to deliver high-quality academic studies resulting in students having knowledge and skills to be involved in the research and as well to be a high-level expert in the field. The programme does not offer a wider range of elective and professionally oriented courses, in particular it does not teach teachers, archivists, or museum curators.

The AMSP "History" is implemented in Latvian and English as full-time studies in 2 years period. The students are awarded a Degree: Master of Arts in History and Archaeology. The content of MA studies is consistent with the preceding BA programme "History" taught at DU and students can continue their educational path after graduation from the BA programme. At the same time, the MA programme also accepts students with a background education in other social sciences like sociology, political science, anthropology, who are admitted to the full programme. They are

required to 'make up' several courses to meet the requirements of the study programme in those fields, which they did not acquire during their earlier BA studies. All in all, the programme is designed mainly for local students. However, by accepting 2 (two) foreign students, the programme was pushed towards English language instruction as well.

Data demonstrates the number of active students over the last six years is decreasing with an average number of students around 16. However, this programme also faces student dropouts during and after the first year of studies. The number of graduates of the programme is also low, with exception of 2016/2017 reaching 8 (eighth) graduates.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The academic master study programme "History" is designed mainly for both local students seeking historical knowledge and basic workshop/research skills in history. In the past few years several international students have enrolled in the programme and graduated studying in English. This may be a forecast for the future strategy and programme development. The low number of students is directly linked to the limited number of the budget place assigned for DU for both bachelor level and master level.

Strengths:

1. There is a synergy and interdependence in the content between the academic bachelor programme and academic master programme "History".
2. The programme has a strong regional focus.
3. The programme has potential to develop some study courses of Latvian study programme variant in English - with benefit for the graduates.

Weaknesses:

1. The AMSP "History" does not provide elective 'specialities', concentrating practically solely on history.
2. The AMSP "History" does not have a coherent and transparent policy of incorporating knowledge and skills acquired at other faculties or abroad, into its own curriculum.
3. The programme offers mainly historical knowledge and skills, without additional, elective courses/blocks which could attract the attention of future teachers, museum employees, archivists.

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

The descriptions of the study courses, the traineeship, and the final thesis are of good quality and comply with the requirements.

This is a good trend identified at DU - the course description in both: bachelor and master programmes are prepared of good quality.

By inspecting the descriptions of the courses in the SAR and on the website of Daugavpils University, the experts are confident in compliance with the course descriptions with the requirements of Article 56¹ of the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the recommendations of the Higher Education Quality Agency. - The aims, tasks, results, planning and other required elements in course descriptions are sound, adequate and well defined.

Reading and literature lists, according to experts' knowledge and subject expertise, are relevant and up to date.

The content of the program is appropriate and complementary to the goals stated by the academic community as well as by the industry. The content reflects the aims, learning outcomes, and needs of industry and developments in humanities and social sciences. The program in general is aimed to provide students with knowledge and skills to perform research (see Goals, Tasks and Results parts of program's in SAR).

There is a trend that the content of study courses includes deeper insights into historical methods, historiography and issues in regional studies as well as to provide in-depth research knowledge and skill (see Vēst 5012, Vēst 5033, Vēst 6025 etc). Current developments are reflected in the courses on the application of ICT in history (Vēst6017), identity (Vēst5036) and anthropological approaches to historical research (Vēst5038). From the perspective of employment, several courses are important like publishing archival documents (archaeography, Vēst4019), archival science (Vēst4017), oral history (Vēst4018). These are extremely valuable courses when the graduates would decide to build their professional path in archives and museums. Courses on civil defence (1 CP) and environmental protection (1 CP), provided DU for the students who have not mastered it in their previous studies, are also of employment-related importance. Historical objects as cultural monuments are parts of civil defence plans and sometimes closely relate with nature protected objects as well. This is especially significant when graduates are employed by museums, the tourism industry and spheres closely related to the protection of cultural and historical monuments. For instance, museums may be located in manors that also has protected nature objects - parks, individual trees, habitats etc. Additionally, DU provided study course "Basic Latvian Language Course" (2 CP) must be acquired by students without knowledge of the Latvian language.

The study implementation methods are various: lectures, seminars, practical and field studies, group and individual works. These are universally accepted methods in humanities and social sciences and for sure contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the program. At the masters' level, the major emphasis is on seminars and individual work. This should be appreciated considering the program's aim to prepare research-capable historians. During assessment visit and meetings with students and teaching staff, experts were able to collect evidence that student-centred learning and teaching principles are considered. In addition, the relatively small number of students is also facilitating and feeding into student-centred teaching and learning as a response to individual needs and talents. It is appreciated that students are required to participate in two conferences and publish one research article.

Surveys on student, employers and graduate needs are regularly conducted and analysed (see respective annexes of the SAR). Surveys are conducted by customized open-source survey tools (see Daugavpils Universitātes Aptaujas Sistēma (du. lv)) and professionally analysed by the University's Institute of Social Research. Survey data are used to significantly improve the quality of studies, for instance - dropping the specialization in cultural history (SAR, point 2.6.).

The Master's program has a course in archival science (Vest4017). The bachelor's study program includes the courses "Fundamentals of museum science" (Vēst3020) and "Practice in a museum" (Vest1088). For better integrity of the bachelor and master programme, experts recommend considering to re-design the museology course be and including it in the master's study program.

As the Masters level program is dedicated to deeper studies of historical sources, the program would highly benefit from a course in palaeography. In Latvia, the number of specialists being able to read texts created before 20th-century texts are very limited. There is high demand for palaeography skilled specialists in archives, museums, genealogy, and restoration of cultural heritage objects.

However, the students' mobility is somehow a weak point for the master programme as well. There is an impressive number of ERASMUS+ agreements, and students are informed regularly. However, as mostly master students are already employed, they refuse to go for exchange students as this include a high risk of losing job.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The program is sound and well elaborated. Descriptions of study courses and final thesis are of decent quality and comply with national requirements.

The content of the program is relevant and complementary. It meets the set aims, learning outcomes, and needs of memory institutions, the tourism industry, and further studies to obtain a higher degree - a PhD.

The study implementation methods emphasizing seminars are adequate.

Surveys on student, employers and graduate needs are conducted and are used in quality improvement - dropping the specialization in cultural history etc. Students are hesitant regarding mobility opportunities.

The strengths:

1. There is a clear planning logic of the courses and arrangement within the programme.
2. There are good and up to date individual course descriptions.

Weaknesses:

1. There is minor inadequacy regarding the course arrangement between bachelor's and master's levels (e.g., museology).
2. The programme does not provide training in palaeography, nor does it offer additional supplementary courses which would be useful on the job market (teacher training).
3. There is a limited offer of other professional development paths, except the historians. The programme is somehow weak in preparation for teachers, economic and diplomatic historians, which could potentially increase potential for graduates and could attract extra students.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

The resources and provision of the study programme correspond to the conditions of the study programme implementation and achievement of the learning outcomes.

The quality of the study process is ensured by the book depository available to students: DU scientific library accounts about 14 thousand units related to history and cultural history. The DU library has three book depositories, several reading rooms and provides home subscriptions. The number of books in English is 525, which is 4% of the books in the field of history. In other languages: Latvian -28%; Russian. - 66%; Polish - 1%; another (German, French, Spanish, etc.) - 1%. Readers in the library have the opportunity to use the funds and services of the 13 largest libraries of Latvia. The students also have access to private gifts and books purchased within the framework of projects. Students may also use the books from lecturers' private libraries. The funds of Latgale Research Institute library (2600 titles), database "Latgale data", electronic publications on the Latgale Research Institute website can be used in the study and research process (SAR, p. 134).

Overall the experts think that the resources and materials in the disposal for DU regarding the study programme under evaluation is enough to provide high-quality education when moving forward. For more information regarding the resource and material base in general, please see the 3rd chapter of the study field analysis.

As was indicated when writing about BA programme, there appears to be lacking of study space for students, who could utilize online resources at university premises. In this context, the available list

of databases is limited, in particular omitting ProQuest, JStor and Oxford journals.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The resources, materials and provision of the study programme correspond to the conditions of its implementation and achievement of the learning outcomes, as well as provide the high-quality education now and in the future.

Strengths:

1. Wide range of additional books and literary resources available for students for studies and research purposes.
2. University premises are well furnished with teaching tools and modern computer and media facilities.

Weaknesses:

1. As in case of BA studies there appears to be lack of study spaces on university premises, in particular if one wants to access Internet databases from the campus.
2. A broader selection of databases should be made available at the disposal of students (ProQuest, JStor, Oxford...).

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

The composition of the faculty of the graduate programme corresponds to the requirements and academic regulations. However, a large coincidence between the same faculty members teaching on the graduate and undergraduate levels represents an additional vulnerability, which may result in a lack of incentive for alumni of DU undergraduate programme in history to proceed with their further academic pathway at the university on a graduate level. Such risk can be mitigated by fostering an incoming teaching staff mobility via Erasmus+ programme, as well as institutionalizing more possibilities for employability of young generation of history scholars at DU, if not with a financial incentive, then by providing ever bigger flexibility and/or autonomy in conducting research and other projects while affiliated with DU. The expert team was also puzzled by the limited availability of the faculty's profiles on the University website.

The provided curricula vitae of the teaching staff enclosed in the annexes are broad and provide sufficient information on the strength and capacity of the faculty. As a group, they are adequately prepared to carry out the aims of the programme and the number and qualifications of the teaching staff are fully compliant with requirements on national and University levels. Interesting publications, participation in seminars, conferences, Erasmus + visits all provide a coherent and convincing picture.

At the time of the study visit, the expert group had a chance to get reaffirm this notion, as well as to witness a presence of mutual collaboration among the teaching staff in the realm of research projects, collective monographies, and DU-hosted research centres, like the Centre of Oral History. Also, while interviewed teaching staff demonstrated an openness to some serious student involvement in joint projects.

The number of staff involved in the teaching history courses for the programme is rather small - barely 12 persons. Heavy reliance on a limited amount of faculty members carrying out a significant part of the course-load exposes additional risk to the implementation of the programme, in case of

unexpected alteration of the faculty's composition. If such a threat occurs, the fatality of an alteration would be reinforced by the virtue of the graduate programme's heavier emphasis on the research component. In the reporting period 'history' teaching staff published about 200 articles and publications. The number (about 20 per scholar) is satisfactory, yet their impact is somewhat blurred. Although the expert team was able to get acquainted with the aggregated number of total publications indexed in SCOPUS and Web of Science databases, no individual examples were listed in the SAR.

Many of the teaching staff members teach several courses on various subjects and years, including a substantial teaching load on the undergraduate level. Hence, the graduate programme depends on the know-how, but also availability, capacity, and health of a limited number of the faculty. In cases of absence would be directly hit and might experience damage to the fluent delivery of the programme. Similarly, to the programme's undergraduate-level counterpart, a disproportion within the workload of faculty members is a point of concern that exposes the vulnerabilities of the programme.

Although teaching staff demonstrates a strong background and training across different specializations of history, an increase of internationalisation of the faculty would benefit the students, especially those of an international origin. Given the presence of English as the language of instruction and sufficient English language proficiency of teaching staff, such a venue could serve as a pipeline boosting the student body in short- and mid-term perspectives.

Ultimately, the teaching staff of the graduate study programme is distinguished by the same patterns as in the case of the discussed above undergraduate study programme.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The graduate (i.e., MA) study programme is sufficiently delivered by well-prepared and experienced teaching staff. The faculty is composed of researchers and scholars, who are committed to the programme's mission and eager to share experiences with their fellow students. Further internationalisation and fostering diversity of the teaching staff could increase the attractiveness and the competitiveness of the programme in recruiting students from overseas. The instruction of the faculty is linked with their own, personal projects and demonstrates how theory is applicable in life and in practical aspects of historians' professions.

Strengths

1. Teaching staff is well-experienced with tracking history teaching and research.
2. Students are provided with a possibility to include themselves into effectively individual teaching.
3. Faculty's knowledge is based on practice. Thanks to their commitment to the programme's goals and profile, students are passed on with research methods, life examples, successes, and potential failures – all shared by teaching staff.
4. Teaching staff members are actively involved in the history-related research centres and activities at DU and beyond.
5. Faculty is equipped with strong English language proficiency.

Weaknesses

1. The overall size of 'history' teaching staff is limited thus making it dependent on a few professors, whose absence would seriously hinder the existence of the programme.
2. There appear to be too few young teaching staff members, which jeopardises sustainability, continuity, and avoidance of academic inbreeding within the programme's faculty.

3. There is limited exposure to internationalisation, including attracting foreign scholars and teaching staff.
4. Limited distinction of the faculty composition with the preceding cycle of studies.

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "History"

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The diploma sample issued to Latvian students complies with the Cabinet Regulations No 202.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Full compliance can be found in cooperation agreement between DU and LU No 1-47/2009-247. The LU AMSP "History" is also implemented in English. (SAR, Annex "Vienošanās-starp-LU-un-DU-par-vēstures-studiju-programmām_ENG")

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Full compliance can be found in the guarantee signed by DU Rector No 4-40/342. (SAR, Annex "Guarantee_ENG_FINAL")

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Full compliance can be found in the acknowledgement signed by DU Rector (SAR, "APLIECINĀJUMS_Par_studiju_virziena_vesture_un_arheologija_iesaistito_docetaju_valsts_valodas_prasmi")

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Full compliance can be found in the guarantee signed by DU Rector No 4-40/330. (SAR, Annex "APLIECINĀJUMS_AMSP_Vesture_svesvaloda_B2")

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Full compliance can be found in the guarantee signed by DU Rector No 4-40/329. (SAR, Annex "APLIECINĀJUMS_AMSP_Vesture_atbilstiba_55_panta_1_d_3_p")

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Full compliance can be found in SAR, Annexes "Ligums_par_studijam_DU_LV" and "AGREEMENT_STUDIES_ENG". The study agreements have been prepared in both implementation languages - Latvian and English.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study course descriptions fully comply with the requirements set forth in Section 56.1, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education. They have been prepared in all of the implementation languages - Latvian and English. (SAR, Annexes "ENG_AMSP_kursu_apraksti" and "LV_AMSP_kursu_apraksti")

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Full compliance can be found in the positive opinion of the Council for Higher Education expressed in a letter No 1.10/25. (SAR, Annex "Nr_25_DU_mg_Vesture_250_stud")

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Fully compliant to Cabinet Regulations No 240 (State Academic Education Standard). (SAR, Annex "AMSP Vesture" Compliance of the study programme with the state standard of higher education")

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Fully compliant based on the information found in the CV's of the academic staff members. (SAR, Annex "Mācībspēku biogrāfijas (CV ENG)")

- 15 R5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study programme is compliant with the requirements prescribed in the Law on Institutions of Higher Education and other Latvian regulatory enactments.

Requirements (R6-R8)

- 1 R6 - The compliance of the study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The resources, scientific support and provision of the study programme correspond to the conditions of the study programme implementation and achievement of the learning outcomes. Although there is room for improvement regarding the database list and its accessibility, it is not so crucial to decrease the evaluation for this criteria.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualification of the academic staff members and visiting academic staff are appropriate the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the legal framework

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Academic staff involved in this programme participates in research in their fields of expertise and ensures a link between research and the study process, where the research findings constitute a substantial input.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The academic master study programme "History" is designed mainly for both local and international students. The low number of students are directly linked to the limited number of the budget place

assigned for DU for both bachelor level and master level.

Strengths:

1. There is a synergy and interdependence in the content between the academic bachelor programme and academic master programme "History".
2. The programme has a strong regional focus.
3. University premises are well furnished with teaching tools and modern computer and media facilities.
4. Strong commitment of faculty to the goals and profile of the programme and strong involvement of faculty members in the history-related research centres and activities.

Weaknesses:

1. Steps should be taken to enrich the programme with additional 'professional' components, which could either be elective or could replace some of the existing ones. In particular, the expert group would suggest the establishment of such 'professional' teaching blocks/platforms as [a] palaeography [b] teaching abilities (basics of pedagogics, psychology) [c] elements of economic/diplomatic (or other) histories. This would make graduates more competitive and flexible on the job market.
2. The overall size of 'history' teaching staff is very limited thus making it dependent on several professors, whose absence would seriously hinder the existence of the programme.
3. The AMSP "History" is somehow weak in measures to ensure that students with a non-history background can follow the studies.
4. A broader selection of databases should be made available at the disposal of students (ProQuest, JStor, Oxford...).

Evaluation of the study programme "History"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "History"

Short-term recommendations

1. To review access and usage to online resources and databases at the University facilities the annually.

Long-term recommendations

1. Steps should be taken to enrich the programme with additional 'professional' components, which could either be elective or could replace some of the existing ones. In particular, the expert group would suggest the establishment of such 'professional' teaching blocks/platforms as [a] palaeography [b] teaching abilities (basics of pedagogics, psychology) [c] elements of economic/diplomatic (or other) histories.
2. In order to overcome the generational gap and dependence from mature and experienced teaching staff members, to design and implement the comprehensive human resource management and development plan

II. "History and Archeology" ASSESSMENT

II. "History and Archeology" ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

The title of the joint study doctoral programme (further on - JSDP) is "History and Archaeology", the classification code- 51228. The degree to be acquired, goals, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are consistent. Graduates are awarded a PhD in History and Archaeology.

The goal of JSDP "History and Archaeology" is to deliver high-quality academic studies resulting in sustainability of the science field and capacity building in the science as well as to train the staff for educational and cultural institutions.

The JSDP "History and Archaeology" is implemented in Latvian and English as full-time studies over 3 years.

The joint doctoral programme was licensed on 7 April 2021 and it started to operate on September 1, 2021. Thus, students enrolled hitherto in the doctoral programme "History" at DU were transferred to the new programme.

At the moment (i.e., at December 2021) there are 7 (seven) new students enrolled in the joint programme according to the data provided in the annexe (Statistika par studējošajiem pārskata periodā studiju programmā "Vesture".xlsx). The programme was joined by students of the former PhD in 'History' programme by the DU, which was closed.

The previous doctoral programme delivered by DU only was affected by the same negative factors as the BA and MA programmes – negative demography, and unfavourable socio-economic conditions in the Latgale region, which do not motivate potential students to cover the tuition fees for their studies from private incomes. However, the joint programme and cooperation with the University of Latvia provide quality education in history at the doctoral level and it is based on the research of LU and DU high-level historians. The study programme complies with the sectoral breakdown "History and archaeology" defined in the scientific classification, by strengthening an increase in the role of archaeology as well as providing some synergy with other fields of science like geology, geophysics, chemistry, physics, biology. All in all, the joint programme now is the only programme in Latvia covering the topic.

As the joint programme is making its first steps it is hard to evaluate to what extent the programme will be able to fulfil its original intention. During the on-site visit, the experts received information and evidence that proves the commitment of DU and LU to develop the programme continuously.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The joint study doctoral programme is "History and Archaeology" is a good example of cooperation between two universities to streamline the efforts and resources. The joint doctoral programme is a research-based study programme.

Strengths:

1. The idea to establish the joint doctoral programme demonstrates the efficient use of staff and resources.

Weaknesses:

1. The programme has just started its operations thus DU and LU might need to invest resources and efforts to keep the programme according to the originally intended outline.
2. It is the very first year of the existence of the programme, so it is hard to evaluate it based on too short experience. Also the covid-19 pandemic does not allow for a smooth and complete start of the programme as intended.

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

This is a joint program with the University of Latvia that should be appreciated in particular for consolidating the strengths and resources of the two universities.

The descriptions of the study courses and the final thesis are of good quality and comply with the requirements. The course descriptions enclosed to the SAR and available on the website of Daugavpils University provides good evidence regarding their compliance with the requirements of Article 56¹ of the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the recommendations of the Higher Education Quality Agency.

The aims, tasks, results, planning and other required elements in course descriptions are set and well defined. Literature lists, according to experts' knowledge and subject expertise, are important and up to date.

The content of the program is appropriate as to the aims of the programme as to the wider requirements of society. In general, the programme convenes the set aims, learning outcomes, and needs of industry and trends in humanities and social sciences.

The program is aimed at training scholars and leading employers of scholarly and scientific institutions, universities, and government institutions. As a rule for PhD programs, it is expected that graduates will have the knowledge and highly advanced skills to perform research, lead scientific and scholarly projects (see Goals, Tasks and Results parts of SAR).

The content of the study program is targeted to students' independent work in preparing for and successful defence of a doctoral thesis. Students are required to take also the national mandated examinations in languages, a subdiscipline of history and field of speciality. There are also advanced taught theoretical and methodological courses e.g., Theory of history and historiography (Vēst7032), Computer Technologies in Representation, Research and Editing of Historical Records. Overall doctoral program's structure, contents and workload of students observe common and universally accepted trends in PhD programs in history. To provide universities with high qualified lecturers, the lecturers are expected to have university teaching traineeship (practice) as mandatory (Vēst7003).

The study course "Basic Latvian Language Course" (2 CP) is included in study plan and must be acquired by students without knowledge of the Latvian language. Nationally mandatory courses on civil defence (1 CP) and environmental protection (1 CP), required for students who are not having credits on these subjects from previous study levels – BA and/or MA level, are included in the study program study plan. Historical objects as cultural monuments are parts of civil defence plans and sometimes closely relate with nature protected objects as well. This is especially important when working in a museum, tourism industry and protection of cultural monuments. For instance, museums may be located in manors that also has protected nature objects – parks, individual trees, habitats etc.

The study implementation methods are determined by the nature of PhD program: the majority of time is devoted to students individual research with less time to seminars and, finally, lectures. This is a universally accepted path as well.

Surveys on student, employers and graduate demands and needs are regularly conducted and analysed (see respective annexes of the Self-Assessment Report). Surveys are conducted by customized open-source survey tools (see Daugavpils Universitātes Aptaujas Sistēma (du. lv)) and professionally analysed by the University's Institute of Social Research. The outcome of this is demonstrated by a fact that a decision was made to reshape the program into a joint Daugavpils and University of Latvia program.

As the joint programme is just launched, there is no data on mobility regarding the PhD students. In addition, mobility was very limited due to the COVID19 outbreak.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The particular program is consolidating the strengths of two universities – DU and the University of Latvia.

The descriptions of the study courses and the final thesis are of good quality and comply with the requirements. The content of the program is appropriate and corresponds to the requirements.

The study implementation methods are determined by the nature of PhD program – significant emphasis on students' individual work is commonly accepted.

Survey of stakeholders and their needs demonstrate positive conclusions - making of the joint doctoral programme is a contribution for efficient study and research environment.

Strengths:

1. There is good logic behind the course sequence and offer. The courses well fits in the programme.
2. The course descriptions are sound and in the good quality.

Weaknesses:

1. Unnecessary, in terms of content - a bachelor's degree course in Latin.
2. Taking into consideration the duration of the programme (only 3 years), the course workload, as well as the fact, that most students are already employed and working (SAR p. 149), it is somewhat doubtful, whether there is enough time for sufficient research to feed into PhD dissertation. Three first semesters are devoted to the study courses exclusively, with the remaining three relatively free to conduct research and write the dissertation.
3. Time allocation is not well balanced. Regarding the engagement, the doctoral programme is supposed to be typical Doctoral research programme. While, regarding the mandatory study courses the students should attend (<https://studijudala.du.lv/kursiinfo/D0817>), the doctoral programme is tailored towards a Doctoral taught programme, which usually is extended beyond 3 years.
3. The programme has a strong regional focus, thus the internationalisation of studies and international mobility of students (in and out) is rather poor and there seem to be no intentions to stimulate it.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

The resources and provision of the study programme correspond to the conditions of the study programme implementation and achievement of the learning outcomes. As this is a joint programme

between DU and the University of Latvia (further – LU) the resources from both universities, including the facilities, library resources, material and technical base and equipment are available to all the students enrolled in the programme. DU scientific library accounts about 36 thousand units related to history and cultural history as well as 10 databases, including EBSCO, Cambridge Journals Online, Science Direct etc. (SAR, pp 154-155).

All classrooms in LU are equipped with multimedia projectors and computers, all rooms have internet (wireless) connection. In the future, 2023, it is planned to locate all the resources from LU side in the history programmes in the LU Writers' House in Torņakalns. As written in the SAR, p. 155 there is a science room in disposal for LU, which is being developed as an archaeological laboratory. LU subscribes to 34 e-resource platforms (which include e-books, e-journals, reference resources, tools, multimedia, statistics, and mixed-format databases), including ProQuest, JSTOR, Oxford Journals Online etc. (SAR, pp 158-159) Every year, the library offers its users an average of 110 new electronic resources. LU offers the possibility to use the subscribed electronic information resources (databases, e-book platforms) outside the LU computer network by connecting to them with the LU internal system username and password (SAR, p. 158).

The resources gained through cooperation include primary sources stored in archives play an important role in the elaboration of Doctoral theses in history. The Latvian archive system is united in the Latvian National Archives, to which 15 archives are subjected. These include the Latvian State Historical Archives (LVVA), the Latvian State Archives (LVA), the Latvian State Archive of Audiovisual Documents (LKFFDA) and 11 zonal archives. The most important archives that students will use are LVVA and LVA. LVVA stores more than 6 million archive files dated from 1220 to 1991. Archive reading rooms are available to students and other researchers every working day. A significant progress has been made in recent years with the digitization of archive collection and funds, as well as the possibility to re-photograph archival documents free of charge. The Latvian State Archives store documents created since 1940. LKFFDA stores film and video documents (100 units), photo documents (1.7 million units) and audio documents (6 thousand units). The Daugavpils Zonal State Archives plays an important role in the research of Latgale regional history. Students can use the collections of more than 100 accredited state and municipal museums. Repositories of archaeological artefacts are of particular importance. The collections of the National History Museum of Latvia are significant in this respect. Students have access to the artefacts of the Repository of Archaeological Materials of the Institute of Latvian History of the University of Latvia. It contains the largest collection of plans drawn in archeological excavations in Latvia (28,553 items), a collection of excavation reports (about 1,342 items), a collection of preliminary documentation (2,038 items), and a collection of photonegatives (more than 130,000 film frames). (SAR, pp. 160-161)

Overall, the experts are under the impression that the resources and materials in DU disposal for the study programme under evaluation from the cooperation with LU, other institutions and archives is enough to provide the students with a high-quality doctoral programme. Considering the information that the resources are periodically reviewed and renewed at both cooperation universities the experts are convinced that the high quality will be kept for the future as well. For more information regarding the DU resource and material base in general, please see the 3rd chapter of the study field analysis.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The resources, materials and provision of the study programme correspond to the conditions of its implementation and achievement of the learning outcomes, as well as provide the high-quality education now and in the future. There is a material and resource base gained from cooperation with other institutions which add to the high-quality doctoral education and it's maintenance in the

future.

Strengths:

1. Good databases available for students within the cooperation with LU.
2. Good cooperation with the Latvian archive system, providing the students with the necessary resources for PhD theses.

Weaknesses:

None identified.

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

The teaching staff of the joint doctoral programme in History and Archaeology is of very high quality and corresponds well to the requirements and criteria of assessment. The special role and place of the programme are derived from the fact that this is Latvia's sole only doctoral programme in history. Although AY 2021/22 is the first year of the programme's implementation, the already present diversity of the faculty members reflects a strong asset of the programme and contributes well to expanding the career opportunities of the doctoral students.

Given the joint profile of the doctoral programme, the composition of the faculty naturally reflects the relationship and resources available at both institutions, that oversee the programme's implementation — DU and the University of Latvia. In turn, the dual nature of the programme's ownership produces a synergy of know-how and opportunities that doctoral students are provided with.

At the same time, roughly a third of the faculty members of the joint programme come from DU, compared to the remaining two-thirds affiliated with the University of Latvia (5 and 9 faculty members, respectively). The high level of the programme's teaching staff is evidenced by the fact that 40% of the faculty are experts of the Latvian Council of Science (SAR p. 163).

Although the joint arrangement of faculty members provides a unique opportunity for doctoral students to experience diversity in teaching and research methods as well as broad and far-fetching resources, including professional networks, institutionally DU, due to its relative smallness, may risk ending up on a secondary position, whenever graduates of the joint programme will consider their further academic and professional pathways.

Faculty's publications and research projects are of national, regional, and international level, which in turn assures high quality of teaching and research process within the doctoral programme. The total number of publications in SCOPUS and Web of Sciences databases during the reporting period is 49, out of which 43 come from DU teaching staff. The joint nature of the programme makes cooperation between teaching staff members intrinsic and thus vivid characteristic of the programme. This and the faculty's commitment to the goals and mission of the programme have been verified by the expert team during the study visit.

In the current stage of the programme's implementation cycle, the programme lacks a larger international component. Although three scholars from overseas are listed as elective courses teachers in the preceding doctoral programme, SAR does not provide clarity about the further strategy of DU in the institutionalisation of foreign faculty within the joint doctoral programme's implementation.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The teaching staff of the joint doctoral programme in History and Archaeology has relevant experience and know-how to work with doctoral students. Long teaching experience, participation in local, domestic, and international research projects allow passing adequate experience to future doctoral graduates. The fact, that programme is jointly taught at two Universities broadens the expertise and experiences of staff, supplementing each other, including a synergy of teaching and research methods, resources, and networking opportunities.

Strengths:

1. Very strong base of the teaching staff research portfolios.
2. Possibility to exchange staff between both Universities' research centres and thus acquaint students with a broad and diverse range of experiences.
3. A good professional composition of researchers and practitioners, as well as added values presented by archaeology and auxiliary sciences.

Weaknesses:

1. Absence of faculty members from overseas. The SAR does mention some potential exposure to foreign lecturers (SAR p. 164), but it appears to be accidental and not institutionalised by far.
2. No strategy is outlined for the exposure of students to international historical exchange. Erasmus+ is mentioned only episodically. In the age of the ever-expanding online possibilities, mandatory participation in courses taught abroad is advised to be part of the programme's strategy and made compulsory.

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "History and Archeology"

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The diploma sample issued to Latvian students complies with Cabinet Regulations No 202.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Full compliance can be found in cooperation agreement between DU, LU and Tartu University. (SAR, Annex "Sadarbības Līgums DU_LU_TU")

The Tartu University programme is implemented only in English, therefore experts recognise the issue that the Latvian students would not have the chance to continue their studies in Latvian. However, as LU and DU are the only universities in Latvia implementing such a PhD programme, in experts opinion, this is a unique situation and therefore fully compliant to the given criteria.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Full compliance can be found in the guarantee signed by DU Rector No 4-40/342. (SAR, Annex "Guarantee_ENG_FINAL")

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Full compliance can be found in the acknowledgement signed by DU Rector (SAR, "APLIECINĀJUMS_Par_studiju_virziena_vesture_un_arheologija_iesaistito_docetaju_valsts_valodas_prasmi")

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Full compliance can be found in an acknowledgement signed by the DU Rector No 4-40/328. (SAR, Annex "APLIECINĀJUMS_DSP_Vesture_un_arheologija_svesvaloda_B2-1_ENG")

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Full compliance can be found in an acknowledgement signed by the DU Rector No 4-40/352. (SAR, Annex "APLIECINĀJUMS_par_LZP_ekspertu_skaitu_ENG")

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Full compliance can be found in an acknowledgement signed by the DU Rector No 4-40/326. (SAR, Annex "APLIECINĀJUMS_DSP_Vesture_un_arheologija_atbilstiba_55_panta_1_d_3_p")

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Full compliance can be found in SAR, Annexes "AGREEMENT_STUDIES_ENG" and "Ligums_par_studijam_DU_LV". The study agreements have been prepared in both implementation languages - Latvian and English.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study course descriptions fully comply with the requirements set forth in Section 56.1, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education. They have been prepared in all of

the implementation languages - Latvian and English. (SAR, Annexes " [ENG] Doktoranturas_kursu_apraksti" and "[LV] Doktoranturas_kursu_apraksti")

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Full compliance can be found in the positive opinion of the Council for Higher Education expressed in a letter No 1.10/19. (SAR, Annex " AIP_atzinums_LU-DU-DSP_ENG")

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Full compliance can be found in the SAR, Annex "Compliance of the joint study programme with the requirements of the Law on Higher Education Institutions".

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Fully compliant based on the information found in the CV's of the academic staff members. (SAR, Annex "Mācībspēku biogrāfijas (CV ENG)")

- 15 R5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study programme is mostly compliant with the requirements prescribed in the Law on Institutions of Higher Education and other Latvian regulatory enactments.

Requirements (R6-R8)

- 1 R6 - The compliance of the study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The resources, scientific support and provision of the study programme correspond to the conditions of the study programme implementation and achievement of the learning outcomes.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualification of the academic staff members and visiting academic staff are appropriate the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the legal framework.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Academic staff participates in the research activities and provides the use of research results in the study process. The programme is strongly based on the research approach.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The joint study doctoral programme is "History and Archaeology" is a good example of cooperation between two universities to streamline the efforts and resources. The joint doctoral programme is a research-based study programme.

Strengths:

1. The idea to establish the joint doctoral programme demonstrates the efficient use of staff and resources.

Weaknesses:

1. Taking into consideration the duration of the programme (only 3 years), it is somewhat uncertain, whether there is enough time for sufficient research to feed into PhD dissertation.
2. The programme has a strong regional focus, thus the internationalisation of studies and international mobility of students (in and out) is rather poor and there seem to be no intentions to stimulate it.

Evaluation of the study programme "History and Archeology"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "History and Archeology"

Short-term recommendations

1. To measure annually the factual workload of the PhD students involved in the programme for the further improvements to ensure effective allocation of time.

Long-term recommendations

1. Based on the measurement of the factual workload, to define type of the PhD programme - to be typical doctoral research programme or to be Doctoral taught programme.

2. The internationalisation of studies and international mobility of students (in and out) is suggested to be stimulated and fostered.

3. To attract faculty members from overseas on the planned base and institutionalised approach.

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

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

Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field

| Requirements | Requirement Evaluation | | Comment |
|---|-------------------------------|--|--|
| R1 - Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 21 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction whilst implementing their internal quality assurance systems: | Fully compliant | | DU has invested efforts to upgrade its study quality management system along with the procedural documents to the requirements of ISO 9001:2017 and ESG with support of ESF project "Daugavpils University governance and management competence improvement" (No. 8.2.3.0/18/A/010). All in all, the internal quality assurance system ensures student-centred and sustainable higher education. |

| Requirements | Requirement Evaluation | | Comment |
|--|------------------------|---------------------|---|
| R2 - The cooperation with different organisations from Latvia and abroad implemented within the study direction ensures the achievement of the aims of the study direction. | | Partially compliant | <p>Current cooperation with different organizations from Latvia and abroad have been established in a sufficient manner and partly ensures the achievement of the goals of the study field.</p> <p>However, cooperation with organizations abroad is very limited and should be broadened. The fields and subjects of cooperation should be much wider than Erasmus + mobility for students or the invitation of teachers to lectures and the implementation of projects. DU needs to set priorities for the development of partnership and the results to be achieved.</p> |
| R3 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the development level thereof (if applicable). | Fully compliant | | The DU and study field management have developed mechanisms and tools for the involvement of the teaching staff in scientific research. Scientific research and the outcomes thereof are integrated into the study process in the study programmes of all three levels. |
| R4 - Elimination of the shortcomings and deficiencies identified during the previous assessment of the study direction, if it has been conducted, or the implementation of the provided recommendations. | Fully compliant | | DU has fully implemented the recommendations of identified in previous accreditation of the study field. |

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 | History (43228) | Fully compliant | Fully compliant | Fully compliant | Not relevant | Good |
| 2 | History (45228) | Fully compliant | Fully compliant | Fully compliant | Fully compliant | Good |
| 3 | History and Archeology (51228) | Fully compliant | Fully compliant | Fully compliant | Fully compliant | Good |

The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts

The dissenting opinions of the expert are not identified and present.