

# Expert group joint opinion

Evaluation Procedure: Assessment of Study Field

Higher Education Institution: College of Business Administration

Study field: Management, Administration and Management of Real Property

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## Summary Assessment of the Study Field

### Summary Assessment of the Study Field

College of Business Administration (CBA) study direction "Management, Administration and Real Estate Management" has clearly defined aims that match the strategy statement. The CBA is led by a professional team of top managers who clearly understands the strategic position of the College in the educational market operating in a specific segment. The segment is - distance learning for working adults. However, strategy of study direction is almost the same as strategy of the CBA. The CBA should set strategic goals for 3-5 years oriented to further development of the study direction (range of programmes, target markets, target academic staff, innovations etc.).

The CBA has developed quality policy in line with the EFQM Excellence Model, which integrates ESG internal quality assurance standards and guidelines across all of the strategic priorities of the CBA. The College has developed and maintains a quality assurance system that contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programmes and study direction. The system ensures continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction and the relevant study programmes. The procedures for the development and review of the study programmes of the study direction and the feedback mechanisms are defined and they are logical. The CBA collects and analyses the information on study programmes of the study direction on a regular basis and uses it to improve the study direction. The students and graduates of all programmes rate the work of administrative and academic staff very high and seems very satisfied with College's services.

The CBA provides all necessary provision and facilities needed to ensure a high-quality study process. The College has strong and modern IT infrastructure, which support documentation, all information, customer service and study process. There are wide range of internal regulations and procedures that is great support for academic staff and students.

The College has set scientific research directions, which correspond to the profile and aim of the CBA and are relevant for the development of study direction. However, the formulation of strategic priority and research directions should be enhanced taking into consideration current scientific trends. Research of both students and academic staff needs to gain more attention as a relevant part of academic life; the research output with the CBA affiliation needs to be improved, and provided on the CBA website.

The CBA has included the development of cooperation and internationalisation in the strategy of the study direction. There is observed strong cooperation between study direction and industries that ensures contemporary curricula and development of practical skills and competences necessary for further employment on labour market. However, there is no incoming and outgoing mobility of students and very low mobility of teaching staff. Stronger emphasis on incoming and outgoing student and teaching staff mobility could be recommended.

The direction offers a wide range of specialisations. The first level professional higher education study programme "Marketing and Trade" has been developed into modern study programme with logically interrelated title, aim, tasks, results, and professional qualification. The aim of study programme "Marketing and Trade" is the same like other study programs and could be changed, aiming better reflect specifics of a particular area. Programme design and content of the study courses correspond to the market requirements. There are enthusiastic Programme director and high qualification of the teaching staff, engaged in various industries. Within one study programme, the student has the opportunity to choose one of the two qualifications offered. The reasons for the low number of graduates need to be analysed in more detail.

The first level professional higher education study programme "Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Management" name and professional qualification to be acquired, the aim, the tasks, and admission requirements are interrelated and can be regarded as programme strengths. Programme design and content of the study courses correspond to the industry requirements. Comparative quality

assessment would be recommended to observe how some improvement in the problematic areas pointed out in the surveys of students, alumni and employers can be made. The methodological guidelines of learning outcomes evaluation could be developed.

The first level professional higher education study programme "Personnel Psychology and Human Resources Management" is modern and meets the requirements of the labour market due to close cooperation with industry representatives. The content of the programme, teaching and assessment methods and study premises and facilities ensure the achievement of the defined aim, objectives and learning outcomes. The reasons related to big dropout rate, should be monitored. The motivation of students' participation together with teaching staff members in scientific conferences could be increased and outcomes more efficiently disseminated on the website of the CBA. The programme could be provided in English.

The first level professional higher education study programme "Office management" has been developed from the first level professional higher education study program "Institution Work Organisation and Management". The aim of study programme "Office Management" is the same like other study programs and could be changed, aiming better reflect specifics of a particular area. The motivation of students' participation together with teaching staff members in scientific conferences could be increased and outcomes more efficiently disseminated on the website of the CBA.

The first level professional higher education study programme "Accounting and financial planning" is important because accounting and finance are the cornerstones of a modern business. The strength of the programme is a large number of accounting and finance study courses (8 field-specific courses and 1 general study course). The study programme "Accounting and financial planning" received serious criticism. Descriptions of study courses written in faulty English and using of completely incorrect terminology raise doubts as to whether teachers of accounting and finance courses are able to prepare internationally competitive accountants who co-operate in foreign languages. We understand that these areas are complex because they contain many specific terms, definitions, and methods. Hopefully, the CBA management will find an opportunity to pay due attention to both areas.

The first level professional higher education study programme "Business Logistics" name and professional qualification to be acquired, the aim, the tasks, and admission requirements are interrelated and can be regarded as programme strengths. Programme design and content of the study courses correspond to the industry requirements. The aim could be revised of the programme, it should be more specific for particular area. The methodological guidelines of learning outcomes evaluation could be developed.

## **1. Management of the Study Field**

### **Analysis**

The aims of study direction "Management, Administration and Real Estate Management" are defined in the proposed development strategy of study direction for the 2018-2024 years that matched the strategy statement of College of Business Administration (CBA), 2018-2024. Since this direction is the main direction of the CBA, their strategies and aims are very similar to each other. However, aims and strategic priorities correspond to the trends of society and national economy. The number of enterprises and the number of employees employed there is growing every year in Latvia, thus the demand for highly qualified specialists is growing too. Taking into account the fact that the CBA offers distance learning, this makes education more accessible for employed people who combine work and private life with studies, and for those who live outside Riga and even Latvia, that is quite big segment in educational market. Performance of the CBA and the study direction correspond to many national development plans like "Latvia's Education Development Guidelines 2014-2020", "National Development Plan 2021-2027" , "The Government Action Plan 2019", "Sustainable

Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030" etc..

The study direction is managed by its director with great support from the administration. There is clear role of director and his collaboration with programme directors and academic staff. The main responsibilities of the director of the study direction are primarily related to the content of the programmes, maintenance of the qualification of the academic staff, development of scientific work and promotion of cooperation with stakeholders. He operates at strategic level, making comparisons with competitors, establishing cooperation at the international level, looking for opportunities to attract funding for the development of the field.

There is observed significant support provided by the administrative and technical staff, which is especially distinguished by students, alumni and academic staff during the meetings with experts.

Performance of study direction as a performance of whole college is based on a range of internal regulations and procedures such as Admission roles, Regulation on recognition of previous education or professional experience achieved learning outcomes, Study regulations, Internship regulations etc. All internal procedures correspond to the existing legislation of higher education in Latvia, are logical and successive and are available on the CBA website. It is necessary to highlight the developed procedures for the distance learning process that on the one hand, help the academic staff in the development of study courses, and on the other hand, help students effectively integrate into the educational process and understand the specifics of methods of teaching and assessment of learning outcomes in distance learning.

The CBA has academic integrity principles and mechanisms described at "Code of ethics for academic staff". There are mentioned four main principles: (1) interpretation of the concept of academic integrity and related behavioural examples; (2) respect for other's intellectual property; (3) "no" to plagiarism; (4) correct data and methods in research. The core values of academic integrity are defined too: Honesty, Respect, Justice, Responsibility, and Courage. The CBA participate in the Unified Computerized Plagiarism Control System (VDPKS) of Latvia that reduces plagiarism in other higher education institutions.

Information about the study direction and the corresponding study programmes is published on the CBA website [www.bvk.lv](http://www.bvk.lv). In general, the information published on the website complies with the information available in the official registers, except names of several study programmes. There are found different names of these three programmes: "Personnel Psychology and Human Resource Management", "Institution Work Organization and Management" and "Business", what may mislead candidates and the students. Website is available in two languages - Latvian and English that corresponds to the only study language - Latvian. The content of website is oriented on marketing issues mostly promoting study opportunities for candidates and less as support for existing students, for this purpose the CBA uses Moodle platform. Finally, it is almost impossible to find the CBA documentation on the website.

## **Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses**

The defined aims of study direction comply with strategic goals of the College and meet needs and trends of society and national economy.

The management of study direction is efficient and it contributes to the development of study programmes with the great support from administrative and technical staff.

There are many internal procedures elaborated that correspond to existing legislation of higher education in Latvia, the procedures are logical and successive and are available on College's website.

The academic integrity principles and core values are described in "Code of ethics for academic staff". For plagiarism detection, the College participate in the Unified Computerized Plagiarism Control System (VDPKS) of Latvia.

The content of website is oriented on marketing issues mostly promoting study opportunities for

candidates and less as support for existing students. There are different names of the same programmes on the College website in both languages (Latvian and English).

#### Strengths:

1. The CBA has a well established and viable administrative and technical support system. There is clear role of director of study direction and his collaboration with programme director and academic staff. There is observed great support from top management that is highly evaluated by all stakeholders.
2. Performance of study direction is based on a range of internal regulations and procedures that are logical and successive and are available on the CBA website. There are many useful regulations for organisation of distance learning.
3. The CBA uses the Unified Computerised Plagiarism Control System (VDPKS) of Latvia to reduce plagiarism in other higher education institutions.

#### Weaknesses

1. Strategy of Study direction is almost the same as strategy of the CBA, there are useful activity plans, but there are no strategic goals for the future. The CBA should set strategic goals for 3-5 years oriented to further development of the study direction (range of programmes, target markets, target academic staff, innovations etc.).
2. There are different names of the same programmes in Latvian and English on the CBA website, what may mislead candidates and the students.
3. Problems with English terms and descriptions of Accounting and Finance study courses.

## **2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System**

### **Analysis**

The internal quality assurance of the CBA study directions and programmes is in accordance with the Description of the Quality Management and Audit Process (approved at the Council of the CBA meeting on 12 August 2019) and the Description of the Study Programme Internal Evaluation Process (approved at the Council of the CBA meeting on 12 August 2019).

The CBA has developed quality policy in line with the EFQM Excellence Model, which integrates ESG internal quality assurance standards and guidelines across all of the strategic priorities of the CBA.

The goal of the quality management at the CBA is to ensure transparency of internal processes and performance of activities in accordance with the regulatory requirements of the Republic of Latvia and the EU. The purpose of maintaining a quality management system at the CBA is to fulfil the requirements of the quality criteria, to ensure the monitoring of these criteria, and to implement a process of continuous improvement so that the services fully meet the requirements of customers, legislators and supervisors. Students are involved in the quality assurance process through feedback (questionnaires, meetings, etc.), participation in the Council of the CBA meetings as well as through students' self-government. During the study process, the CBA students are regularly surveyed about both the content of studies and the academic staff. The survey is conducted at the end of each study course. Respondents are all students of the study programme. As a result of the surveys, direct feedback is obtained on the quality of the study course, evaluation of the particular lecturer, the attitude of students, their satisfaction, the adequacy of the study materials and their correspondence to the topics of the course, as well as there are suggestions of students in a free format about the ways how to improve the selected study course. Student recommendations regarding changes in the study programme, suggestions for adding new courses, complaints about course content, if any, are discussed by the Council of the CBA. Along with clearly defined quality assurance principles at the CBA, the internal quality of the study direction is also implemented within this quality assurance system. However, the respondents of surveys are not provided with

written feedback.

The CBA develops new study programmes in accordance with the requirements of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the Regulation on the National Standard for the First Level Professional Higher Education, and the Regulations for Licensing Study Programs. New study programmes are developed at the CBA in accordance with the main goal of the programme, which is consistent with the strategy of the CBA. The programmes have clearly defined objectives and expected learning outcomes that are aligned with the requirements of both the National Qualifications Framework and the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area. The structure and content of the programme are formed by coordinating the learning outcomes of the study courses with the study outcomes of the programme in accordance with the programme objectives.

Employers' representatives, students' representatives, academic staff and administrative staff are involved in the development of the study programme. Representatives of employers are also involved in the independent expertise of the study programme, assessing the usefulness of the study programme and pointing out the major differences between similar study programmes of the same level and in the same field of study at the CBA.

As the CBA has an individual approach and students are using this opportunity and actively and openly communicate with their Study Coordinators, the CBA does not see the need for possibility to submit anonymous complaints and suggestions. Upon reception of a complaint or proposal, the Study Coordinators inform the responsible person – the Deputy director of Studies. The responsible person evaluates the complaint or proposal received. If the complaint is related to studies, study courses, provision, content, quality of study courses etc. and / or the quality of work of academic staff, the responsible person investigates the complaint, a group of students can be questioned to determine the validity of the complaint. Additional information is gathered or the necessary activities are taken to make a decision. Complaints and suggestions are always discussed at weekly CBA staff meetings and decision is made and a responsible employee is appointed to enforce the decision. The responsible person shall monitor the execution of the decision and inform the author of the complaint or proposal of the decision made. The Students' self-government also plays an important role in providing mutual communication and feedback. Thanks to its active participation, many valuable events have been organised for students and staff. If necessary, a complaint or proposal may be referred to the CBA Council of Studies.

In order to make justified management decisions, the CBA collects and analyses different data on regular basis, which further are used as a base for making and implementing development plan of the study direction, and is an integral part of the internal quality assurance system of the CBA.

Once a month, the key performance indicators of the CBA are analysed, the profile of the students is analysed twice a year, once a week, data on study process, students' progress (marks) and drop-out rates are analysed, student satisfaction rates are analysed: once a year for satisfaction with the program; at the conclusion of each study course – on satisfaction with the specific study course, graduate satisfaction rates are analysed twice a year, once a year, the indicators obtained from employers' surveys are analysed, once a year with the administrative staff, once every 2 years with the academic staff.

The CBA has developed and formally documented the Concept of Excellence, which defines quality assurance principles and implementation policies. The quality assurance components defined therein are integrated into processes of the CBA. The CBA has defined effective management, operational and support processes in line with the Strategy of the CBA. The processes implemented in the CBA are described and schematically depicted in process descriptions approved by the Council of the CBA and integrated in the CBA nomenclature. In addition, the processes that drive the CBA are closely linked to the strategic development management of the CBA and are an essential cornerstone of the CBA's internal cultural development that contributes to the CBA's responsibility and commitment to sustainable excellence (EFQM Excellence Model). Provision of study programs in a high quality plays a central role in the implementation of the mission of the CBA. To ensure quality

management and excellence, special emphasis is placed on quality management criteria such as leadership and strategy, process approach (ESG Part 1, points 1.1 and 1.2), product and service development (ESG Part 1, points 1.2, 1.9, 1.3) human resource management (ESG Part 1, point 1.5), partnership building and effective resource management (ESG Part 1, points 1.6 and 1.7), customer and employee satisfaction, and sustainable business results. At present, none of the ESG Part 1 standards is considered to be a challenge as quality management system measures are implemented in a systematic, structured and sound manner.

### **Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses**

The CBA has established an Internal Quality Assurance System that contributes to the achievement of the aim and learning outcomes of the study programmes and study direction. The CBA Quality Manager is responsible for this.

Students have survey after each study course and then the CBA reacts to problems, complaints and talk to students. The CBA pays close attention to the results of the surveys and student satisfaction.

Strengths:

1. An effective internal quality assurance system within the study direction.
2. Overall satisfaction of students with teaching and learning processes.
3. The CBA responds quickly to complaints identified both by students as well by CBA management.

Weaknesses:

1. The respondents of surveys are not provided with written feedback.

### **3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field**

#### **Analysis**

CBA's main income comes from tuition fees. Income has been growing steadily every year. The CBA is performing well and can therefore attract even more students.

The CBA has developed own system how to determine costs per one student. The similarities observed in all study programmes and the fact that these programmes do not require costly technical infrastructure, let the CBA to take into consideration all students. Aiming to determine the costs, the CBA consider different aspects, such as provision of the study process, administrative expenses, investments, taxes and etc. The expanses are regularly compared and monitored according to the CBA strategy. When the costs are determined, all study programmes receive the incomes in proportion to the number of students enrolled in the programme. In previous years the CBA attracted more students and optimized methodology base, e-studies environment and academic staff, what let to decrease the costs per one student.

The CBA has developed staff motivation system, which includes scientific research and organization of methodological seminars. The motivation system aims to motivate academic staff to be involved in the scientific research. The academic staff is dedicating 100% of the efforts to the study process. Participating or new discovery making in scientific research just does not happen quite often due to specifics of the CBA. The students are mostly involved in the research activities during the internships.

The CBA has identified the infrastructure resources and the material and technical provision required for the implementation of the study field. The premises of the CBA, such as auditoriums, administrative rooms, reading rooms are functional and equipped properly. Each staff member has access to workplace, touchscreen computer, cameras and thus, is able to provide distance learning. The library is functional, but has some outdated study books. The study books have been changing based on the students' requirements. The students prefer to use online materials and subscriptions

to databases. These tendencies have been observed by increasing number of registered searches in the database. The CBA has own textbooks, developed by the academic staff. All copyrights belong to the CBA. These textbooks are provided to the students for each study course in each semester. The library has electronic catalogue for book reservation, access to 2 e-journals ("iFinances" and "Jurista vārds"), databases (SCOPUS, Ebrary, RUBRICON etc.), option to reserve books from other HEIs' libraries. Aiming to expand the resource base, the CBA collaborates with Riga Graduate School of Law, which is located in the same building. The students have the possibility to attend face-to-face lectures twice per month.

Moodle system was recently reorganised, well-structured and developed according to the international quality standards. Aiming to ensure further development and maintenance of this system, the CBA has established methodologist's position. The improvement of e-platform was achieved through the EU funds. In total 150 000 EUR were invested in the development of the study process and programme content. During this project the CBA has developed templates for study course descriptions and Moodle system. Therefore, the descriptions of study courses are easily understandable. Aiming to ensure the quality and authenticity of students' papers, exams and qualification papers, the CBA is using VDPKS plagiarisms control system.

The study field director is working together with programme directors with the purpose to evaluate what is necessary for improving and updating study process according to current trends in the industry. The directors make decisions, related to materials, technical support, specialists and etc., which are necessary for study process. In addition, they provide appropriate inquiries to board or director of the CBA to access these resources. Each lecturer is evaluating materials, necessary for the study course at least once per year. The obligatory and additional literature sources are assessed based on the tendencies in industry and updated together with programme director's approval.

Due to the provision of studies in distance learning form, the CBA has 3 different systems: 1) Education Process Administration System (IS) – IPAS sustains all the documentation and information about college, students, academic staff, administration and etc.; 2) Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) BITRIX System, which is managed by study support centre; 3) Learning Management System (LMS) – Moodle, which is the main platform for study process implementation.

The CBA adopted the formal process of recruitment and employment. It is regulated by the following documents: "The Regulation of academic and administrative positions of the CBA" and "The Regulation of competition on academic positions of the CBA". The council reviews and updates these documents once per two years in accordance to external regulations and labour market tendencies. The experience and achievements of potential candidates are evaluated and let the CBA employ appropriate specialists in the field.

The academic and research workload of the teaching staff is balanced. To balance the workload even more the CBA has expanded the semester to 6 months, that way students and academic staff have more time to finish everything. When the shortage of academic staff is inadequate, the CBA can hire additional staff to diminish workload.

The CBA has developed a number of quality management procedures to ensure constant improvement of the teaching staff and their work quality. The CBA acknowledges individual work of staff members, interaction with administration, study field director and study programme directors. The staff members are involved in constant communication process, reviewing surveys, recommendations from students, alumni, employers and discussing what can be implemented or removed from syllabus. In addition, workshops are organised 3 times per year with the purpose to increase the competencies of the staff. The staff is also involved in implementation of research projects and evaluating internships and qualification papers. The staff is involved in annual international scientific conference, organised at the CBA. The lecturers are involved in annual Life Opportunities day, which is very valued among students and employers.

ERASMUS+ programme for staff mobility has been developing. The CBA has already concluded 6



cooperation agreements in different countries for staff mobility. Two lecturers from the partner institutions already visited the CBA and two visits are planned during autumn semester. The aim of this mobility is to raise competencies and improve skills of the academic staff members. The CBA invites foreign lecturers as well, they expand students' knowledge about particular study fields and provide more insight into international market. Some students live abroad and their internship is held in foreign companies. The CBA could cooperate more intensively with these companies and employers to ensure that internship is held properly. In addition, such cooperation could provide contacts to further internship places and increase internationalisation processes.

The CBA took into account that most of the students are adults with average age above 30 years, already working full time and having their own businesses etc. In order to provide the best help, the CBA established Life opportunity centre. This centre helps with "Business greenhouse", which is equal to the business incubator. The centre provides possibilities for students to develop own business from just an idea. The CBA has developed very well-coordinated system for students to find internship or even job places. The CBA is planning to create a platform where students can see all the vacancies and internship offers and to make it even easier for them to find job or internship place. Furthermore, the CBA has integrated into the study process personality growth study course where each student is assigned a task to improve skills and qualification. The students and graduates are very positive about the work of this support.

The CBA has developed its own customer relationship management standard. This standard unifies the approach to students, including ways how help to students is also provided. The standard sets basic responsibility of every staff member and describes criteria for evaluation of communication. The CBA uses Bitrix system to unify this student service process. This system also helps to use, monitor and analyse necessary data for quality management and improvement and gives opportunity to provide fast feedback on any issues. Through all study process each student is provided with individual approach. For example, students can discuss and create their individual study fee schedule, most of the staff members offer informal communication via WhatsApp or SMS, students can get individual consultations. The study support centre also sends reminders to the students about exams, weekly discussions and other important events related to the study process.

The student support from academic staff and administration is possible via e-mails, ZOOM platform, phone and Moodle. The CBA has developed good materials, which are working together with Moodle system. The methodology of distance learning is perfect due to the fact that the CBA is a pioneer of distance learning in Latvia. The CBA has all necessary resource base to provide distance learning of high quality.

To help students even more, the CBA has created a lot of informational videos (e.g. how to use Moodle system). The CBA has a "startup semester", which let the students be accustomed with distance learning methodology. During the studies the CBA has created special goal matrix and self-assessment questionnaires, which let the students track what skills and knowledge they achieve. In each study course there is a discussion before exam. During this discussion the students have to compare each other's assignments and suggest what others have done right or wrong with structured arguments. The lecturer is a moderator of this discussion and provides feedback to each student.

The CBA is organising annual career days for students, employers and alumni with the purpose to connect, get internship and work places. The CBA plans to create smart calculator, in which employer can add requirements and student can fill particular skills. The calculator will match the best results and thus, student and employer can find each other even faster.

## **Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses**

The CBA has developed an efficient system to determine all financial resources necessary for the implementation of the study direction and the relevant study programmes. The scientific activities

are supported through motivation system. The CBA has good resource base and the students and the teaching staff have access to the necessary resources to ensure the quality of teaching and learning process. The CBA has developed a system to attract and assess highly skilled teaching staff. The teaching staff members of the CBA are not involved in outgoing mobility. Only few foreign lecturers visited the CBA during the reported period. The support system of students is remarkable and suitable for the working adults.

Strengths:

1. Steadily increasing number of matriculated students.
2. The motivation system for staff members to be involved in scientific research.
3. The premises of the CBA are adapted to distant learning process and are appropriate.
4. The CBA has copyrights of textbooks for distance learning.
5. Well-equipped study process. Moodle system is well structured, easily accessible and usable.
6. The CBA has strong and modern IT infrastructure, which support documentation, all information, customer service and study process.
7. High costumer service culture.
8. Constantly adapting to the changes in the industry.
9. Personal approach to the student.
10. Very well-developed student support system (Life opportunity day, business greenhouse, start-up semester and etc.).
11. Long term experience in the field of distance learning.
12. Good connections with other HEIs.

Weaknesses:

1. Only few students are involved in scientific research.
2. The teaching staff members are not involved in outgoing mobility.
- 3 The incoming mobility is very low.

#### **4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation**

##### **Analysis**

The CBA defined one of strategic priorities which is promotion of applied research. Aiming to achieve the strategic priority, the measures were identified. These measures comprise participation in scientifically-practical researches, preparation of international publications and participation in local and international conferences. Some measures such as dissemination of information about conferences, organization of national and international conferences at the CBA were already taken. However, strategic goals in the area of scientific research are not clearly defined and lack both quantitative and qualitative KPIs.

According to the self-evaluation report, the scientific research directions have been defined as follows:

- promoting competitiveness and efficiency of organisations;
- acquisition and deployment of new marketing and selling sites and types;
- current marketing methods and tools;
- disclosure of importance of human resources in the work of organization;
- trends in the work and personality of today's leader;
- research on factors facilitating business and innovation;
- the role of accounting financial indicators in the assessment of economic activity.

Scientific research directions correspond to the profile and aim of the CBA and are relevant for the development of study direction. However, the formulation of strategic priority and research directions should reflect current scientific trends (e.g. research trends defined by the EU policy).

According to the self-assessment report, the international cooperation of the CBA in the field of scientific activities, the study direction and the relevant study programmes is conducted through organization of regular international scientific conferences (there is one example mentioned in the report, i.e. the international scientific and practical conference "Integrated Approach to Business Sustainability" organized on April 27, 2019), participation of the staff members in international conferences (there are at least 4 examples mentioned in the report) and cooperation with international companies.

Aiming to promote scientific activity of the academic staff, the plan for the development of professional competencies of the academic staff in 2018-2024 has been approved by the Council of the CBA. The research activities are included in the performance assessment of the teaching staff and they are compensated by considering scientific outcomes. According to the interviews, the staff members report their research performance is conducted once per two years and takes into consideration scientific publications. During the reporting period 24 academic staff members, related to the study direction have been active in the scientific research (e.g. participated in National Research Program projects, published scientific papers and presented the outcomes of the research in the scientific conferences). Majority of academic staff members of the CBA are engaged in the research activities of other higher education institutions. According to the interviews, some staff members report that they are PhD students at other universities of Latvia or cooperate in publishing activities outside the CBA. Meanwhile, staff members elected at the CBA are less active in scientific research (e.g. five members out of nine do not have scientific publications).

The academic staff together with the students are encouraged to prepare scientific papers and present their research at conferences. The mechanisms to promote the involvement of the students in scientific research include a course "Research design", which is a compulsory course in part A in all study programs of the CBA, writing the qualification paper, attending annual scientific research workshop and participating in scientific conferences. The students mentioned their participation as the attendees at the conferences (there are at least two examples mentioned in the report). The faculty members also confirmed that the interested students are invited to participate in the research activities. However, scientific papers prepared by students together with academic staff members and presented at the conference of the CBA or other conferences are not available on website of the CBA. The research conferences of students could be more actively organized at the CBA (e.g. information about students' conference, programme and the full papers of students are beneficial to provide on the CBA website).

Participation in the European Social Fund project No: 8.2.3.0.18/A/005 and other activities have led to the innovative solutions adopted in the study process at the CBA. Several examples were provided in the report - improved e-learning environment, an innovative study course in e-studies environment Virtual Business Incubator ("Business Greenhouse"), study course "Professional and personal development" and other.

## **Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses**

The scientific research directions comply with the strategic priorities of the CBA and are relevant to the study direction. Scientific research and the outcomes are integrated in the study process through the requirements defined for the qualification papers, encouragement of academic staff and students to present their papers at scientific conferences and development of the study materials. The international cooperation of the CBA in the field of scientific activities is modest. The CBA has developed functioning mechanisms for the involvement of the teaching staff and students in scientific research. The need to promote scientific research as an integral part of programmes is recognised and commitment to develop research competence of the academic staff members and students is demonstrated.

## Strengths

1. Commitment of the CBA to develop research competence of the academic staff members and students.
2. Incentives for academic staff members for publications and other scientific activities.

## Weaknesses

1. The formulation of strategic priorities and scientific directions should consider current scientific trends (e.g. research trends defined by the EU policy).
2. Strategy in the area of scientific research should include goals and KPI targets for the time frame of 3-5 years, oriented to further development (e.g. target students' involvement into research activities, target students' involvement into entrepreneurship development events, target staff research and etc.).
3. The outcomes of students' conferences in the form of papers or abstracts should be more efficiently disseminated on the website of CBA..
4. The CBA should consider research outcomes with the CBA affiliation. This information should be provided in the website of the CBA.
5. The motivation of students' participation in scientific activities could be increased.
6. International cooperation in the field of scientific activities should be intensified.

## 5. Cooperation and Internationalisation

### Analysis

The CBA has included the development of cooperation and internalization in the strategy of the study direction. Strong cooperation with different institutions from Latvia has been developed. The main partners are other HEIs, private enterprises, governmental organizations and professional organizations.

The cooperation with employers and professional organisations is organised in five main directions:

1. The employers provide internships for students and are involved in discussions of internships' results in all study programmes.
2. The representatives of employers and professional organisations are involved in the committees of qualification papers' defence and are involved in discussions about quality and themes according to the labour market's needs.
4. The representatives of employers and professional organisations are lecturers at the CBA or they are actively involved in the programme or study course development and evaluation every year.
5. The representatives of employers and professional organisations are members at the CBA council. This cooperation ensures that demands of employers and the standards set by the professional organisations are fulfilled and the CBA prepares students for real market. The evaluation experts identified that the CBA has cooperation agreements and projects, which ensure internship places for the students. Permanent cooperation with employers and professional organisations allows the CBA to provide the students with the places for internship. During the visit the experts made sure that a number of alumni were involved in the cooperation with the CBA.

There are eight cooperation agreements with other HEIs. The cooperation includes participating in scientific conferences, Career Days, different events of other colleges, guest lectures, providing information about further education.

There is no student mobility in the analysed period. It is explained by the peculiarities of the study form. At the end of 2019 the CBA obtained the ERASMUS Charter 2014-2020.

The international cooperation based on ERASMUS+ projects, which foster exchange of academic staff and students, has been developing. The project is on the initial stage, only two international lecturers visited the CBA and two visits are planned in September, 2020. This correspond to the international strategy of the CBA, where the first priority of the CBA is to encourage the mobility of

the academic staff, the second priority – mobility of students (with emphasis on trainee-ships).

The CBA has signed five ERASMUS+ programme cooperation agreements with Karshi Engineering-Economics Institute, Šiauliai State College, University of Social Sciences in Lodz-Spoleczna Akademia Nauk, Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University, Marijampole College. The cooperation partners are selected according to the relevant programmes, fields of study and distance learning possibilities, which correspond to the interests of the CBA. According to the interviews, the partners are attracted through the contacts of staff in international congresses, meetings and seminars. The CBA could use the alumni network, especially alumni living abroad, for the purpose to expand internship places abroad.

The CBA has developed successful cooperation with Latvian employers, professional organisations, other HEIs, and alumni, which take part in the improvement of the study direction.

## **Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses**

To conclude, the CBA has included the development of cooperation and internationalisation in the strategy of the study direction. Strong cooperation with different institutions from Latvia has been developed. The main partners are other HEIs, private enterprises, governmental organisations and professional organisations. There is no student mobility in the analysed period. It is explained by the peculiarities of the study form. The CBA has developed successful cooperation with Latvian employers, professional organisations, other HEIs, and alumni, who take part in the improvement of the study direction.

### **Strengths:**

1. The aims and management of cooperation and internationalisation are developed according to the development aims and strategic goals of the CBA and aims of the study direction.
2. The CBA has strong cooperation with industry companies and experts in Latvia.
3. The CBA management and staff is very actively involved in cooperation with Latvian employers, alumni and other HEIs.
4. The cooperation partners are selected according to the aims of the study direction.
5. The employers and graduates are regularly involved in the provision of internships or lecturers.

### **Weaknesses:**

1. A lack of students' mobility and very limited international cooperation. Such cooperation could provide contacts to further internship places and increase internationalisation processes.
2. Insufficient efforts to increase international development.

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

### **Analysis**

All recommendations made by the experts during previous accreditation of the study direction have been fully respected and implemented in the work of the CBA (see Annex 9 "Review of implementation of the recommendations"). The recommendations were sound and targeted implementation of these recommendations has significantly improved the work and image of the College of Business Administration as a whole. The growing number of students and matriculated students proves this each year. The implementation of the recommendations has had a positive impact on the quality of studies as well as on the improvement of processes in the study direction and the corresponding study programmes.

Recommendation 1. Work on the composition of the academic staff elected at the CBA in order to

develop research and project work at the CBA, including attracting foreign guest lecturers.

This recommendation is topical for the CBA because the level of teaching depends on it. In a small country where many foreign companies operate, English language skills and the involvement of a foreign specialist in educational activities are also important. The CBA should involve foreign lecturers, which should not be a problem for them, considering the specific nature of the school in organising distance learning. Under recommendation no. 5, the CBA states that study course descriptions are now developed according to requirements. This may be the case in the Latvian descriptions of study courses, but in materials presented to experts, especially in the case of special subjects, it must be noted that these descriptions are very confusing and need to be changed. Conclusion: If there had been a foreign lecturer, the material would also have been in better English.

Recommendation 2. More support for research activities of the College's academic staff and this should be reflected in the College's budget.

The first two recommendations are interlinked, because without qualified teachers there can be no research. Lecturers, especially in the field, should be involved in research. Seminars on how to write high-quality research papers should be organised for them. It is very important, because the quality of learning also depends on the educational literature. Lecturers should be familiar not only with local literature published in Latvia but also with special literature published elsewhere. Only in this case they can recommend students to use better special literature.

Recommendation 5. Clarify and supplement study course descriptions, clarify requirements and outcomes, clarify criteria and requirements for receiving credit points, review basic principles of assessment, and diversify methods.

The CBA states, et study course descriptions are now developed according to requirements. This may be the case in the Latvian descriptions of study courses, but in materials presented to experts, especially in the case of special subjects, it must be noted that these descriptions are very confusing and need to be changed.

Recommendation 7. It is necessary to find possibility to use National Unified Library Information System.

This is very important recommendation, because the quality of learning also depends on the usage of special literature not only in the Latvian but also in English. Lecturers should be familiar not only with local literature published in Latvia but also with literature published elsewhere.

## **Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses**

Annex 9 "Review of implementation of the recommendations" contains 17 different recommendations and activities taken by the CBA. All recommendations made during the previous accreditation have been implemented. The CBA has issued a number of regulations. Further attention needs to be paid to recommendations 1 and 2. The proportion of the elected members of the academic staff is not large and foreign lecturers have not attended the CBA. In particular, more support would be needed for teachers of the most complex field-specific courses (such as accounting and finance).

Strength:

1. Almost all recommendations were implemented straight after the accreditation process.

## **7. Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field**

- 1 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  
**Justification:** The culture of continuous improvement is evident at the CBA.
- 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  
**Justification:** The CBA has developed quality policy in line with the EFQM Excellence Model, which integrates ESG internal quality assurance standards and guidelines across all of the strategic priorities of the CBA. The information is provided at:  
<https://www.bvk.lv/koledzas-dokumenti/>
- 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  
**Justification:** The development of programmes at the CBA is organised in accordance with the Description of the New Study Program Design and Approval Process (<https://www.bvk.lv/koledzas-dokumenti/>, approved on 12 August 2019).  
The internal quality assurance of the CBA study directions and programmes is in accordance with the Description of the Quality Management and Audit Process (approved at the Council of the CBA meeting on 12 August 2019) and the Description of the Study Program Internal Evaluation Process (approved at the Council of the CBA meeting on 12 August 2019).
- 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  
**Justification:** They are indicated in the course descriptions and made available to the students on Moodle platform.
- 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  
**Justification:** The College has developed a staff evaluation system to assess the competence of its staff and to plan future activities. The College regularly evaluates competence of the academic staff and suitability for work, and if necessary, new lecturers are involved in ensuring the study process.
- 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  
**Justification:** Surveys at the College are conducted and feedback is provided to all interested parties in accordance with the quality management system process description "Internal review of study programs" (KVAL 2-04 STUD).
- 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

**Justification:** The CBA has developed quality policy in line with the EFQM Excellence Model, which integrates ESG internal quality assurance standards and guidelines across all of the strategic priorities of the CBA. The information is provided at:  
<https://www.bvk.lv/koledzas-dokumenti/>

- 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:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** 5 Erasmus+ agreements with foreign HEI, 12 agreements with private firms (for internships) and 6 general cooperation agreements with private enterprises, NGOs, and HEIs serve as evidence of cooperation.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** List of publications is provided in Annex 6.

- 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

**Justification:** Recommendations of both expert commissions were implemented according to the plans which were prepared after the accreditation process.

## 8. Recommendations for the Study Field

### Short-term recommendations

The College should set strategic goals for 3-5 years oriented to further development of the study direction (range of programmes, target markets, target academic staff, innovations etc.) and clearly define qualitative and quantitative KPIs.

The low number of graduates should be addressed and the reasons for it analysed and then find solutions to increase it.

To improve study programmes quality and relevance monitoring by extended variety of monitoring methods (e.g. roundtable discussion, in-depth interviews, trend analysis).

It is necessary to define one single name for each study programme in both Latvian and English languages, and use only them in all official documents and on the College website.

In development activities, special attention should be paid to more complex study courses.

The aims of the programmes need to be revised because they are too similar to each other and do not reflect the uniqueness of each programme. Each aim has the word "internationally", but this aspect is not included or insufficiently included in the content of the programme.

It is not easy to find the location of the CBA documentation on the website. Change the location of the CBA documentation on the website.

### Long-term recommendations

Research of both students and academic staff needs to gain more attention as a relevant part of academic life; the research output with the CBA affiliation needs to be improved, and provided on the CBA website.



Situation with mobility of staff and students should be improved significantly.

The methodological guidelines of learning outcomes evaluation should be developed.

## **II. "Accounting and financial planning" ASSESSMENT**

### **II. "Accounting and financial planning" ASSESSMENT**

#### **1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme**

##### **Analysis**

According to self-evaluation report the CBA first level professional higher education study programme "Accounting and Financial Planning" with qualification "Accountant" provides students with the opportunity to acquire the first level professional higher education and become a locally and internationally competitive accountants complying with the requirements of the labour market and profession standard. In order to achieve the goal of the study programme, the content and implementation of the study programme was improved and supplemented during the reporting period.

It is very logical that the CBA study programme "Accounting and Financial Planning" was included in the study direction "Management, Administration, and Real Estate Management" in the previous accreditation period. According to self-evaluation report, in order to include the latest trends of accounting and financial management in the contents of the study programme and align the programme with the requirements of the labour market and profession standard, the amount of the study programme was expanded up to 88 CP (132 ECTS) instead of the previous 86 CP (120 ECTS).

Five new study courses were included in the programme related to digitisation, creativity and innovation, data processing, communication, etc. During the reporting period, the free choice part of the study programme has also been expanded to include one study course in English in order to promote the development of students' foreign language skills and, furthermore, success in the international market. Study course "International management" is offered in English.

General secondary education or secondary vocational education is necessary to admit the study programme. After graduation, students obtain the first level professional higher education with qualification "Accountant".

According to self-evaluation report section 1.2 "Analysis and assessment of the statistical data on the students of the respective study programme ...", the number of students in the study programme "Accounting and Financial Planning" in the academic year 2018/2019 was 107 students in total, including 48 students who were enrolled; 8 students gained the Accountant qualification. First, starting from the academic year 2015/2016, the number of matriculated students is increasing significantly every year (from 8 students in the academic year 2015/2016 to 48 students in the academic year 2018/2019). In a similar way, the total number of students increased (from 22 students in 2015/2016 per year to 107 students in 2018/2019). The number of graduates in receiving the qualification "Accountant" has been in the range from 3 to 17 in the last six years. Accountant qualification, starting from 2013/2014 until 2018/2019 was granted to 51 students. The dropout rate of students during the last three years is small compared to the average in Latvia.

Comments: The number of graduates (from 2013/2014 until 2018/2019 51 students) is very small compared to the number of matriculated students (from 2013/2014 until 2018/2019 142 students). At the same period (from 2013/2014 until 2018/2019), the total number of students was 566. The big difference between the number of matriculated students, the total number of students and the total number of graduates as well as the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students are unexplained.

The name of the study programme "Accounting and Financial Planning" is very expanded and at the

same time includes deeply specific subjects without defining frames or levels. Study programme name definition is not supported by the study courses included in the programme. For example, in study courses "Finances and credit" and "Finance analysis and planning" as results are mentioned only the simplest calculations of indicators of finance system, to recognize the elements of finance system and the characteristics of these elements. It would be more logical to have "Accounting and Finance" or "Accounting and Corporate Finance". Would be recommended to review the wording and define more clearly the Study programme title, reducing student misleading.

The tasks of the study programme follow the aim of the study programme but both are slightly too extensively wide for the first level professional higher education study programme.

## **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

The goal of the study programme "Accounting and Financial Planning" is the same as for other study programmes. There are no specific aims set in the study programme.

### **Strengths**

1. A large number of accounting and finance study courses (8 field-specific courses and 1 general study course).

### **Weaknesses**

1. The big difference between the number of matriculated students, the total number of students and the total number of graduates.
2. Small number of graduates. The analysis made in the self-evaluation report is superficial. The reasons related to the small number of graduates could be analysed in more detail.
3. The name of the study programme "Accounting and Financial Planning" is very expanded, not supported by the study courses and exceeds the provided level of education.

## **2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof**

### **Analysis**

Experts agree that today accountants can no longer do their job without special accounting software. It is therefore to be welcomed that the CBA has changed the study course "Computerised Accounting" in the reporting period, including opportunity to learn one of the leading accounting software "Horizon". For training purposes, Visma Enterprise Ltd, a developer of the accounting software Horizon, and the CBA have signed agreement to use the software license for this purpose. The software will also be used in the study programmes "Business Logistics" and "Personnel psychology and human resources management", introducing computerised accounting skills in these programmes as well. According to an increase in demand for accounting as an outsourced service, information on requirements and obligations of outsourcing accountants has been included in the program in an integrated way in different courses, such as "Entrepreneurship and its Legal basis", "Taxes and Duties". That is very logical and good.

According to self-evaluation report, the study courses included in the study programme meet the aim of the study programme: firstly, the programme includes all compulsory study prescribed by the Accountant profession standard; secondly, the programme includes general education courses to promote students' business competences as well research and analysis skills. The courses included in the study programme are designed sequentially to achieve the expected study results.

Comment: "The aim of the study program "Accounting and Financial Planning" is to provide locally and internationally competitive accountants according to the requirements of first level professional education, labour market and profession standard etc., etc." It is clear that meeting with the aim of the study programme cannot yet be inferred from the above statements.

According to self-evaluation report the CBA first level professional higher education study programme "Accounting and Financial Planning" with qualification "Accountant" provides students with the opportunity to acquire the first level professional higher education and become a locally and internationally competitive accountants complying with the requirements of the labour market and profession standard. In order to achieve the goal of the study programme, the content and implementation of the study programme was improved and supplemented during the reporting period.

Comment. In accordance with self-evaluating report:

Goal of the study programme: "The aim of the study program "Accounting and Financial Planning" is to provide ... internationally competitive accountants ... ."

Tasks of the study programme: "... 3. To adapt the development and improvement of the content, process and form of the study program as well as research work in accordance with international practice ... ."

Results of the study programme: "... 6. Co-operates in foreign languages and provides constructive feedback to counterparts. ..."

At the same must be noted the very poor English and completely incompetent terminology of some course descriptions (Basics of accounting; Management accounting; Audit and analysis of economic activity) as well as incorrect titles/names, confusing and unconnected content of some courses (Audit and analysis of economic activity, Finances and credit). Experts think that it is complicated to prepare internationally competitive accountants who co-operate in foreign languages, based only on Latvian-language study materials. Descriptions of study courses written in faulty English and using of completely incorrect terminology raise doubts as to whether teachers of accounting and finance courses are able to prepare internationally competitive accountants who co-operate in foreign languages.

During the reporting period, the free choice part of the study programme has also been expanded to include one study course in English in order to promote the development of students' foreign language skills and, furthermore, success in the international market. Unfortunately, it is not stated which course, probably "Business English".

There are some unpleasant disadvantages associated with this course of study as well. Typographical and grammatical errors - Title of the Course: "Buisness English I"; 1.1. Students remembers and demonstrates the core terminology; "Business English II": "Goal of the course: To deepen the understanding of English language as a system, to give opportunity to obtain skills theoretically and practically, that would allow to solve issues of work necessities, business communication as well as private life, in Russian language (?) successfully and effectively and to have adequate reactions to situation changes." Or, for example, "Skills: 2.5. Students justify in short thir opinion, intents in different professional situations and communicate accordingly."

That is very difficult to imagine, how the goal of the study course will be achieved if the wrong means are used on its own.

The programme is designed in accordance with the Education Law, Vocational Education Law and the Law on Higher Education Institution. The study programme is implemented in the form of part-time extramural studies, choosing internationally recognised study implementation methods corresponded to this distance learning form.

In self-evaluation report is stated that to include the prevailing needs of the education as well as labour market, as well as the professional standard requirements to know at least two foreign languages, in the contents of studies, and to ensure the quality of internships and development of research paper, the contents have been improved significantly in a number of study courses. The programme is supplemented with number of topics that develop communication and customer service competence. Compliance with labour market tendencies of professional environment is ensured by involvement of representatives of the employers of the field and representatives if professional associations. In accordance with self-evaluation report, all descriptions of study courses

are updated on a regular basis, the last updates were made in the first half of 2020. In order to ensure that the content of the study courses corresponds to the needs of the field and scientific trends, the latest literature is included in the descriptions of the study courses, which is also provided in the library of the CBA as far as possible.

Comment: Of the content descriptions of speciality courses, only "Finance analysis and planning" list of (additional) literature contain foreign language sources: one in English (published in 2006) and one in Russian (published in 2003).

Representatives of professional associations are involved in teaching, implementation and improvement of the content of the study programme "Accounting and Financial Planning". It is noteworthy that the CBA is a Member and Partner of the Latvian Association of Accountants. In cooperation with the Latvian Association of Accountants, guest lectures on current topics have been offered to the CBA.

Study programme "Accounting and Financial Planning" is implemented in the form of part-time extramural studies (distance learning), choosing internationally recognised study implementation methods corresponding to this distance learning form. Therefore, a lot of attention has been paid to the distance learning methodologies and their improvement. The CBA has two methodological positions where responsibility of one methodologist is to ensure that the methodology of distance learning courses is in line with the international standard Quality matters and responsibility of the other methodologist is the compliance of the technical course design with the standard set by the CBA. The methodologists also work individually with the members of academic staff, assessing the content of the study courses, the adequacy of the methods used and making the necessary adjustments on a regular basis. In addition the CBA conducts methodological seminars for the academic staff at least 3 times a year to improve development tools of course content and teaching methods in line with best practice and standards in distance learning to ensure that appropriate methods are used in the study process.

The study process considers the principles of student-centred education. Students are involved in the process of improvements of the study programmes and study environment by means of student surveys and they are provided with an individual approach to the organisation of the study process. Various pedagogical methods are used, which are specially adapted for the distance learning.

In the study programme there are two internships (respectively Accounting internship and Financial management internship at a company) – in the 4th and 5h semesters, each in the amount of 8 CP. The content of the internships is designed to strengthen the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired during the study process. Unfortunately, the REGULATIONS OF ACCOUNTING INTERNSHIP focuses only on financial accounting; nothing is stated about management accounting.

The tradition of "Life Opportunity Day" created by the CBA provides opportunities for employers, academic staff, graduates and students to collaborate in finding internship placement or even a job. For students of all study programmes (including "Accounting and Financial Planning") there is the opportunity to apply to the "Business Greenhouse", a virtual business incubator that supports the students in starting their own business by sharing achievements.

According to the self-evaluation report during the reporting period (years 2015–2019) qualification papers were defended by 57 graduates of the study programme. At the same time according to the self-evaluation report section 1.2 "Analysis and assessment of the statistical data on the students of the respective study programme ..." Accountant qualification, starting from 2013/2014 until 2018/2019 was granted to 51 students. This contradiction is not explained.

The quality of the final papers has significantly improved. In 2019 33% of students defended theses at the very high level and 48% at high level.

Surveys of students, graduates and employers are conducted at CBA. The results of a student survey conducted in the summer of 2019, show that students evaluated with the highest score the criteria "I evaluate academic staff as good professionals in their field" (average 3.52 out of 4 points) and "Study content was useful for my professional work" (average 3.52 out of 4 points). With the

lowest score evaluated the criteria “The study programme provides me with new contacts” (average 2.97 out of 4 points) and “I have the opportunity to participate in improving the quality of the study programme” (average 3.00 out of 4 points). As an aspect to be improved students have indicated the following: digitising tests and exams, provide individual communication between lectures and students. The management of the CBA are taking into consideration the results of the student surveys and plans improvements in the study process.

In 2020, 30 respondents completed the survey of graduates. The results show that graduates evaluate with the highest score the criteria “Support from the Study support centre” (average 3.60 out of 4 points) and “Attitude towards students and study environment at the College” (average 3.57 out of 4 points). With the lowest score evaluated the criterion “Adequacy of library resources” (average 2.90 out of 4 points). Graduates of the study programme indicated the following benefits after graduation (in descending order): opportunity to establish own business; have a job that suits you best; to have a job with higher salary; possibility to save the current position; opportunity to continue studies at the next level of higher education. All respondents would recommend the study programme to relatives, friends and acquaintances.

The results of an employers’ survey, showed that employers value the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired by the CBA graduates within the framework of the study programme.

The students are not provided by the opportunities of the incoming and outgoing mobility. However, the CBA has now received the Erasmus Charter and fulfilled all preconditions for applying for ERASMUS+ student mobility.

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

The study courses included in the study programme partially meet the aim of the study programme, includes compulsory study prescribed by the Accountant profession standard, includes general education courses to promote business competences and research and analysis skills.

The courses included in the study programme are designed sequentially to achieve the expected study results. According to an increase in demand for accounting as an outsourced service, in the program are integrated courses “Entrepreneurship and its Legal basis”, “Taxes and Duties”.

Based on the listed above analysis, provided by the experts, the CBA management must urgently take actions to address the identified deficiencies. One option is, of course, to remove the words “international” and “foreign languages” from the wordings of the goal (aim), tasks and results.

#### **Strengths**

1. Well-structured e-platform for distance learning.
2. Opportunity to learn one of the leading accounting software “Horizon”.
3. The CBA has received the Erasmus Charter and fulfilled all preconditions for applying for ERASMUS+ student mobility.

#### **Weaknesses**

1. One general major drawback: the text of the self-evaluation report is very bureaucratic; the sentences are very long and cumbersome. If it is the case for all study programme materials, would be complicate for students to acquire mentioned knowledge and skills.
2. It is not clear what language is the basis for the development of study course materials: based only on Latvian-language study materials and using of completely incorrect interpreted English terminology raise doubts that the CBA is able to provide accounting and finance courses and prepare internationally competitive accountants who co-operate in foreign languages.
2. There is no incoming and outgoing mobility of students.

### **3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme**

## Analysis

Provision of the study programme “Accounting and Financial Planning” takes place within the limits of the planned finances. The study programme has sufficient information and material, technical base, which corresponds to the specifics of the implementation of the study programme and helps to achieve the goals of study programme. The premises of the CBA, such as auditoriums and reading rooms are functional and well equipped.

The CBA has signed agreement with developer of the accounting software “Horizon” – “Visma Enterprise” Ltd. To use the software licence for the purpose of studies.

The CBA also provides its students and academic staff with electronic access to iFinances, the most popular electronic magazine in the financial sector in Latvia. In addition, State Revenue Service publish explanatory materials in this journal. The electronic and paper edition of the legal journal “Jurista vārds” published by “Latvijas Vēstnesis”, which deals with current issues arising from amendments to laws or the adoption of Cabinet of Ministers regulation, researching and interpreting them.

## Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

In summary, the study, informative provision, material, technical and financial provision correspond to the specifics of both the study program and implementation conditions and create preconditions for the achievement of study outcomes, thus, demonstrating the ability to ensure the delivery of high-quality study process. During the meetings with experts, students, graduates and academic staff shared high evaluation of study facilities and appreciated the infrastructure provided. The CBA is constantly adapting to the newest tendencies and implementing them into the study process.

### Strengths

1. Very well structured e-platform for distance learning.
2. Virtual Business Incubator (“Business Greenhouse”).
3. The agreement with Riga Graduate School of Law about using their premises for lectures and using the library.
4. CBA has implemented different methods how to adapt students for distance learning process.

### Weaknesses

1. There is little foreign language literature and it is outdated.
2. There is no incoming and outgoing mobility of students.

## 4. Teaching Staff

### Analysis

Implementation of the study programme is ensured by 24 academic staff members, 3 of them are assistant professors, 4 lectures and 17 course instructors or quest lectures. During the reporting period, both quantitative and qualitative changes in the composition of the academic staff have taken place. Number of academic staff members with PhD degree has increased from 16.1% to 20.8% and the proportion of academic staff member with Bachelor’s degree has decreased three times from 12.9% to 4.2%. The CBA considers that changes in the academic staff have had a positive impact on the quality of studies, as proved by the results of the students’ and graduates’ surveys.

Comment. According to the Table 3.2. Scientific and academic degrees of the academic staff (including guest lecturers) the only changes were a decrease in the number of lecturers with a master’s degree (were 22, are 18) and a decrease in the number of specialists with higher education (were 4, are 1), which also led to a decrease in the total number of lecturers (were 31, are 24). The

resulting structural shifts are rather arithmetical: the share of lecturers with doctoral degree decreased (was 16.1%, is 20.8%), the share of lecturers with master's degree decreased (was 71%, is 75%), the share of specialists with higher education decreased (was 12.9%, is 4.2%). It is premature to say that such arithmetical changes have had a positive effect on the quality of learning, especially in the absence of comparative data.

All courses, which are closely related to Accounting and Finance, are taught by only two teachers, who teach 7 and 3 different courses respectively. One of them has only a bachelor's degree. This cannot be considered normal. It must be noted the very poor English and completely incompetent terminology of some course descriptions (Basics of accounting; Management accounting; Audit and analysis of economic activity) as well as incorrect titles/names, confusing and unconnected content of some courses (Audit and analysis of economic activity, Finances and credit).

Based on self-evaluation report and approval by the CBA management, professional academic staff members are involved in the implementation of the study programme. The college policy is declared: to ensure that qualified, scientifically and methodologically trained instructors who use current teaching methods in their work deliver all study courses. The main criteria for the selection of instructors are education (degree), professional experience, research and creative activities as well as communication skills.

Annex 6 LIST OF PUBLICATIONS OF THE ACADEMIC STAFF IN THE REPORTING PERIOD does not contain any information on publications of accounting and finance lecturers.

Since 2006, the CBA has been organising scientific-practical conferences where academic staff participates. In 2018 and 2019, respectively, conference "Business Challenges in Latvia's 100 years' anniversary" and conference "Integral Approach to Business Sustainability" took place. Unfortunately, added list of publications does not include names of accounting and finance teachers who teach field-specific study courses.

Comment: Scientific-practical conference is a remnant of the Soviet era as are some meaningless wordings. Unfortunately, this is still common in the territory of the former Soviet Union. Experts understand that these could be caused by direct translation from Latvian/Russian.

## **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

All courses, which are closely related to Accounting and Finance, are taught by only two teachers, who teach 7 and 3 different courses respectively. One of them has only a bachelor's degree. Professional academic staff members are involved in the implementation of the study programme. The main problems are related to the English descriptions of the Accounting and Finance study courses. Descriptions of the main field-specific study courses (accounting/finance) are complete nonsense, gobbledygook or abracadabra. The language used cannot be called English. In many cases (especially terms and concepts), raw translations have been made. Simply translated Latvian or Russian words and used arbitrary matches. The names and content of the main field-specific study courses are those that are not used anywhere in developed countries.

### **Strengths**

1. CBA quantitative and qualitative changes in the composition of the academic staff have had a positive effect on the quality of learning, provided a large number of accounting and finance study courses (8 field-specific courses and 1 general study course).
2. CBA teaching staff has implemented different teaching methods how to adapt students for distance learning process.
3. Academic staff is involved in the study programme implementation process.

### **Weaknesses**

1. Teaching staff is not interested in research.

2. Teachers do not want to use English specialist literature.
3. The professional English language knowledge of the teachers seems to be very weak.
4. Very poor English and completely incompetent terminology of some course descriptions.

## 5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Accounting and financial planning"

### 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  
**Justification:** Sample of the diploma provided in Annex 27 complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued.
- 2 2. Documents confirming that the higher education institution/ college will provide the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in another study programme or at another higher education institution/ college (a contract with another accredited higher education institution/ college), in case the implementation of the study programme is discontinued.  
**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant  
**Justification:** Annex 28. In Latvian only.
- 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  
**Justification:** Annex 29. Contract on studies at the College of Business Administration.
- 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  
**Justification:** The provided confirmation of official language proficiency among academic staff (Annex 79) and CV of academic staff indicate the proficiency of the official language knowledge.
- 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  
**Justification:** Not applicable
- 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  
**Justification:** Not applicable.
- 7 7. The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.  
**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant  
**Justification:** Not applicable.



- 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

**Justification:** Sample of Study contract is provided in Annex 29. Contract on studies at the College of Business Administration.

- 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

**Justification:** The descriptions of the study courses include the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; the content of the study; the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, other sources of information; the organisation and tasks for the independent work of students; the evaluation criteria of learning outcomes.

The descriptions of the study courses are very poor in English and the terminology is completely incompetent. The language of implementation of the study programme (Latvian only) was taken into account.

- 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:** Partially compliant

**Justification:** Provided by the Annex 23.

The content of the study program has been developed in accordance with the profession standard

"Accountant" (Profession code - 3313 01), approved on December 14, 2011.

CBA has taken into account the newer 07.02.2018. Accountant profession standard, which corresponds to 3.PKL and 4.LKI:

<https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-021.pdf>

Partial compliance is based on the requirement of ensuring a level of foreign language proficiency

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

**Justification:** Not applicable.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** Compliance with the requirements defined in the national standard of the first level professional higher education (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation of 20 March 2001 No. 141 "Regulation on the National Standard of First Level Professional Higher Education") is evident from the Appendix 22. <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=6397>.

- 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

**Justification:** Not applicable.

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

**Justification:** List of publications of 13 teachers is presented in Annex 6. Five-year practical work experience is evident from CV of staff members. No accounting and finance lecturer is found.

15 P5 - Overall rating

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** The CBA is fully operating in accordance with requirements of legislation.

## 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:** Partially compliant

**Justification:** The programme has good resource base, the students and the teaching staff have access to the necessary resources. Special literature is very weak, descriptions of accounting study courses are very poor in English and the terminology is incompetent.

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

**Justification:** The instructors of all general education courses have at least Master's degree (about 90% of all staff members) and 3 staff members have PhD degree. Teacher of finance related courses has bachelor degree and teacher of all 7 accounting courses has master degree.

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

**Justification:** Not applicable.

## Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

Because of the very bureaucratic style and long sentences in Self-assessment report, and after reading the English descriptions of the study programme courses, could be noted, that self-assessment report consists largely of word foam. Formulas have been created for text analysis, which can be used to determine how educated a reader should be in order to understand the text.

In summary, the study process organisation, informative provision, material, technical and financial provision (well-structured e-platform for distance learning, opportunity to learn one of the leading accounting software "Horizon", Virtual Business Incubator "Business Greenhouse") includes compulsory study prescribed by the Accountant profession standard, correspond to the specifics of both the study program and implementation conditions and create preconditions for the achievement of study outcomes, thus, demonstrating the ability to ensure the delivery of high-quality study process. The CBA is constantly adapting to the newest tendencies and implementing them into the study process.

According to the self-assessment report the goal/aim is to provide "...internationally competitive accountants...." and the tasks of the study programme "3.To adapt the development and improvement of the content, process and form of the study program as well as research work in accordance with international practice." The study courses included in the study programme partially meet the aim of the study programme. Based only on Latvian-language study materials and using of completely incorrect interpreted English terminology raise doubts that the CBA is able to provide accounting and finance courses and prepare internationally competitive accountants who co-operate in foreign languages.

It is bad if students do not read special literature in foreign language, but it is even worse if the teachers do not. It is clear from the study course descriptions that the lecturers (with one exception) as well as authors of study course descriptions have never used any English language source, whether electronic or paper. Examination of the eight study course descriptions revealed that only one included foreign language sources (among the additional literature, one book in English and one in Russian, from 2006 and 2003, respectively).

The courses included in the study programme are designed sequentially to achieve the expected study results. The descriptions of the study courses are very poor in English and the terminology is completely incompetent.

The name of the study programme "Accounting and Financial Planning" is very expanded, not supported by the study courses and exceeds the provided level of education.

#### Strengths

1. A large number of accounting and finance study courses (8 field-specific courses and 1 general study course).
2. Well-structured e-platform for distance learning, implemented different methods how to adapt students for distance learning process, opportunity to learn one of the leading accounting software "Horizon".
3. The agreement with Riga Graduate School of Law about using their premises for lectures and using the library.
4. The CBA has received the Erasmus Charter and fulfilled all preconditions for applying for ERASMUS+ student mobility.
5. Academic staff is involved in the study programme implementation process.

#### Weaknesses

1. The big difference between the number of matriculated students, the total number of students and the total number of graduates.
2. There is little foreign language literature and it is outdated.
3. Teaching staff is not interested in research, do not use special literature in English, the professional English language knowledge of the teachers seems to be very weak.
4. Very poor professional English and completely incompetent terminology of the names and content of the main field-specific study courses course descriptions (evaluating English version).
5. There is no incoming and outgoing mobility of students.

### **Evaluation of the study programme "Accounting and financial planning"**

Evaluation of the study programme:

Average

### **6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Accounting and financial planning"**

#### **Short-term recommendations**

A specialist lecturer must have mastered his / her subject in a foreign language at least at the basic level (this does not mean giving lectures, but knowing the professional vocabulary and having basic knowledge). It should start as a matter of urgency.

Translated professional texts, including self-assessments, must be read by specialists. To do this, however, the latter must be fluent in a foreign language (especially English today). Otherwise, you will be greatly embarrassed.

### **Long-term recommendations**

The CBA management should pay more attention to the development of complex study courses with the keyword "cash".

It is necessary to include in all study programmes course "Investments".

## **II. "Business Logistics" ASSESSMENT**

### **II. "Business Logistics" ASSESSMENT**

#### **1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme**

##### **Analysis**

The first level professional higher education study programme "Business Logistics" provides qualification "Logistics specialist". The title of the programme and professional qualification are logically interrelated. The content of the study program has been developed according to the map of professions included in the structure of the branch of business, finance, accounting and administration (wholesale and retail trade, commercial sciences) and the project of the new profession standard "Logistics specialist" submitted for approval on 05 February 2020 by the LTRK to the National Centre for Education (information provided by Program director during experts visit).

The aim of the study programme "Business Logistics" is to provide students with the opportunity to acquire the first level professional higher education by training locally and internationally competitive logistics specialists according to the requirements of labor market and profession standard, who, using the advantages of distance learning, have acquired current knowledge, demonstrate skills and professional competence in logistics and constantly improve the quality of life. The aim of the study programme is quite general and very similar to the aims of other programmes. According to the aim, there are seven tasks developed and seven results set.

The tasks of the study program and the achievable results follow the aim of the study programme, thus the connection is clearly visible in the content of the study program, which is created sequentially and gradually in order to achieve the study results (a mapping of the study program is provided).

The programme was licensed on 23 September 2019. The short-term recommendations related to the revision of course descriptions were implemented.

Admission in the study program is organized according to the Admission requirements at the CBA which states that a person can be enrolled in the studies if a person has received a document of general secondary education or secondary vocational education. According to the Regulation on Admission of the CBA, persons with general secondary education or secondary vocational education can be enrolled in the studies, if they passed centralized exams in Latvian, foreign language, and mathematics. Different requirements are suited to the persons who have gained a secondary education up to 2004, gained education abroad or have special needs (based on passing grades in a secondary education document).

The name of the program, aim, tasks, results, and professional qualification are logically interrelated.

Implementing the programme in the form of extramural studies or distance learning is suitable for working adults, including outside Latvia.

Though the programme is new, it is demonstrating positive admission results. 17 students were enrolled in the academic year 2019/2020 and 31 student - in the year 2020/2021. These tendencies reveal that the programme is in the demand and is interesting for potential students. All students at the CBA study at their own expense.

The study program complies with the national standard of the first level professional higher education (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation of 20 March 2001 No. 141 "Regulation on the National Standard of First Level Professional Higher Education"). The volume of the study program – 88 CP, which includes compulsory part, i.e. general study courses and field-specific courses (20 CP and 36 CP respectively), free-elective study courses – 8 CP, internship –16 CP and Qualification paper –8 CP.

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

In summary, the name of the study programme, the professional qualification to be acquired, the aim, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated.

#### **Strengths**

1. The name of the programme, aim, objectives and professional qualification are logically interrelated.
2. Admission requirements correspond to the programme aim and objectives and are clearly described at Regulations on Admission.
3. The programme is designed in accordance with the requirements of the standard for higher education of the first level and the standard of the profession "Logistics specialist".
4. The number of students is increasing.

#### **Weaknesses**

1. The aim of the study programme is defined too general.

## **2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof**

### **Analysis**

The content of the first level professional higher education study programme is relevant to the management of business logistics. The courses offered in this study programme comply with the current needs of the labour market. The study programme is designed by aligning the courses in the following logic: firstly, all compulsory courses, included in the Logistics Specialist profession standard, are provided secondly, general study courses are provided in the program to develop the business competencies of students as well as research and analytical skills.

The programme "Business Logistics" has been developed in cooperation with representatives of employers and professional organizations. They participated in the development of the programme and continue to consult. Some representatives of employers and professional organisations are lecturers at the CBA and as they said during the meeting with accreditation experts are actively involved in improvement of course syllabus. This allows us to be ensured that employer demands, and the standards set by professional organisations are fulfilled and the CBA prepares students for the real market.

The descriptions of the internship and study courses include all the required information: course aims, learning outcomes, course content and planned hours, recommended literature and additional

sources of information, organisation of the independent studies, assessment structure, and course value in credit points and ECTS. All courses are 2 CP. Majority of study course descriptions are of good quality. However, some descriptions require to provide up to date compulsory literature (e.g. course description "Economy and Marketing of Logistics" is missing core literature and additional literature; course description "Basics of Logistics" provides recommended literature, which is of 2003 and 2004 and etc.). While the compulsory literature should include the main study book, some course descriptions provide a long list of compulsory literature (e.g. course description "Organization and Control of Customs Activities" does not distinguish core literature and additional literature). One course description is missing important information such as aim, literature sources, clear content (e.g. Personal and Professional Growth). There is a lack of contemporary literature in logistics as the recommended main literature in some course descriptions.

According to the interviews, the methods of teaching and fostering successful learning in this programme are of a wide variety, ranging from video lectures, audio lectures, podcasts to business simulation. The students approved that 100% lecturers use the variety of ways of methods and they are diverse and interesting.

In order to evaluate the level of knowledge, skills and competence, examinations are administered, and Moodle discussions/tasks are assessed over the course of the semester. The current evaluation system is that of a 10-point system and the individual evaluation criteria are noted in each study course description. The final course evaluation is based on work and effort assessed over the study period (in amount no less than 4 points) as well as a final examination (in amount no less than 4 points). The final evaluation is unified for all courses at the CBA. Majority of course descriptions define that the final evaluation consists of Moodle discussion/tasks – 50% and the final exam – 50%. Moodle discussion/task, which is open for one week, is organized when the student has independently studied the subject. In case of successful assessment of the intermediate examination, the student starts preparing for the test/exam. The evaluation methods of student achievements could be of higher variety and better reflect the learning outcomes of each study course. The additional consultations are provided at the premises of the CBA or via the online platform "ZOOM" twice per month. The students see the syllabus and evaluation at the beginning of each course. Majority of course descriptions define 8 contact hours/video/audio.

The study program includes internships in the amount of 16 credit points, which are implemented in the 4th and 5th semesters (4 credit points in each semester respectively). The internships are organized according to the "Regulations of Logistics Internships" and "Regulations for Internship of Warehouse Work Organisation" approved with updates at the Council of studies of the CBA meeting on 10 February 2020. The tasks of the traineeship correspond to the learning outcomes of the study programme. The students write internship journal, provides self-assessment and submit reports containing information on what has been done during the internship. At the end of the internship the results of the internship are presented at the internship conference. The experts were acquainted with the cooperation agreements and projects, which assure possibilities for internships in the firms. The programme was launched in 2019 and thus, the internships were not organized yet.

At the end of the studies, the student must develop and defend a qualification paper. There are no defended qualification papers in the programme. Concerning qualification paper, an individual evaluation system could be developed.

Regular assessment of pedagogical methods is done according to student surveys after each study course. The teaching staff has the possibility to see the results immediately. Once the results of the survey are gathered, actions are taken accordingly. The results of the surveys are discussed with the programme director. The outcomes of the surveys conducted among the students are used to improve the quality of studies. While there are no graduates, the report does not include the results of surveys of graduates and employers.

Because of study language – only Latvian and specific of student target group, there is no student mobility in the programme. However, the CBA has now received the Erasmus Charter and fulfilled all

preconditions for applying for ERASMUS+ student mobility.

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

The descriptions of the study courses and the internships are of high quality and comply with the provisions set forth in the regulatory enactments. The content is relevant and complementary, and it complies with the aims of the study programme, ensures the achievement of the learning outcomes, and meets the needs of the relevant industry. Regarding up to date compulsory literature, more precision in the course descriptions can be recommended. The imprecisions of course descriptions "Economy and Marketing of Logistics", "Organization and Control of Customs Activities" and "Personal and Professional Growth" should be eliminated.

The study implementation methods, including the evaluation methods, contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study courses and the study programme. Student-centred learning and teaching principles are taken into account. The higher variety of evaluation methods can be recommended instead of predominating Moodle discussion/tasks and the final exam.

There is an absence of the incoming and outgoing mobility for students.

The outcomes of the surveys conducted among the students are used to improve the quality of studies. There are no employers and graduates' surveys yet.

#### **Strengths**

1. The investigation of course syllabus indicates that the content of the programme is logical, consistent and corresponds to the aim and objectives of the programme and ensure the achievement of defined learning outcomes.
2. There are used diverse teaching methods and study materials, which are suitable for specifics of distance learning.
3. The results of conducted surveys are used for further programme development.

#### **Weaknesses**

1. Further steps are required to strengthen learning outcomes evaluation in the course descriptions.
2. A lack of opportunities of the incoming and outgoing mobility for students.

### **3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme**

#### **Analysis**

Resources and provision of the study programme "Business Logistics" are relevant.

The premises of the CBA, such as auditoriums and reading rooms are functional and well equipped. As in other private institutions, tuition fees are the main source of income in the CBA. The financial resources required for continuous improvement of study programme are planned for a period of five years and revised annually depending on the number of students in the programme.

The CBA applies Education Process Administration System (IS) – IPAS, which includes all documents and information about students, academic staff, administration and etc. The study support center is equipped with Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) BITRIX, which helps to ensure information exchange between all involved parties in the study process. The study process is conducted through Learning Management System (LMS) – Moodle. Aiming to ensure quality and originality of students' papers, exams, the CBA adopted VDPKS plagiarisms control system.

There are both study materials and audio and video recordings developed by the lecturers in the Moodle environment. The Zoom platform is used to conduct lectures online. For student support is used Skype, e-mail, and phone. There are functional facilities for administrative staff too. Since students are also invited to attend lectures in person, there are some classrooms equipped with a

computer, access to Internet and a projector.

Informative provision, including libraries, comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme. Library resources are ensured in cooperation with Riga Graduate School of Law that is located in the same building. The working hours of library is adapted for student's needs: it works until 8 p.m. twice a week and is open on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month when lectures are being implemented in person.

For research of publications the CBA provides EBSCO database. The students have access to open source resources useful in their studies - databases, e-journals, e-books, as well as e-libraries, including links to legal information resources. The CBA also subscribes two magazines, both electronically and in print form: "iFinances" and "Jurista vārds". In cooperation with the Cultural Information System Center (KISC), the CBA offers the following pilot databases, such as Britannica Academic edition, SAGE, Taylor & Francis -eBooks, Library PressDisplay, BiblioRossica Eurironitor International, Scopus, Ebrary, Passport GMID, ScienceDirect, RUBRICON, ProQuest and etc.

The distance learning materials developed within the study courses by academic staff are perceived as one of the advantages of the CBA library funds. The copyrights of these materials belong to the CBA. The students are provided with text books for each study course.

The interesting example is Life Opportunity Centre established by the CBA. This Centre provides a help with an innovative study course in e-studies environment Virtual Business Incubator ("Business Greenhouse").

According to the interviews, the students, graduates and academic staff shared high evaluation of study facilities and appreciated the infrastructure provided.

## **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

In summary, the study provision, informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision correspond to the specifics of both the study programme and implementation conditions and create preconditions for the achievement of study outcomes, thus, demonstrating the ability to ensure the delivery of high-quality study process.

### **Strengths**

1. Infrastructure and technical resource base which include applied software systems;
2. e-studies environment Virtual Business Incubator ("Business Greenhouse").

### **Weaknesses**

1. None.

## **4. Teaching Staff**

### **Analysis**

As a programme is new and has been implemented for a year there are no changes in composition of the academic staff. According to the report, the planned staff of the programme "Business Logistics" consists of 22 academic staff members, 3 of them are assistant professors, 4 - lecturers, and 15 - course instructors or guest lecturers.

The instructors of all general education courses have at least Master's degree (17 staff members). 2 staff members have PhD degree. The composition of the academic staff meets the requirements of regulatory enactments.

The education acquired by the instructors of the specialized courses corresponds to the field of the study course. All lecturers have relevant education and practical experience in industry. Therefore, it can be noted that the qualification of lecturers and the content of their study courses are more based on their own practical experience in the industry than on the scientific approach, but this does



not interfere with the achievement of the aim and learning outcomes of programme, since the level of this programme is foundation level and provided knowledge, skills and competences are sufficient for successful employment after graduating from the programme.

Since the legislation of Latvia does not provide specific requirements for the scientific activities of the college, the academic staff is weak in the field of scientific research. During the reporting period 8 academic staff members, related to the study programme have been active in the scientific research (e.g. published scientific papers). These academic staff members of the CBA are engaged in the research activities of other higher education institutions (published with the affiliation of other institutions). The scientific papers are published in both national and international publishing outlets. Some teaching members of the programme are PhD students at other universities. Meanwhile, staff members elected at the CBA are less active in scientific research (e.g. only two staff members out of six have scientific publications).

The course content is developed in close collaboration between academic staff through lifelong learning seminars organized by the CBA, where all lecturers exchange ideas and regularly discuss the necessary improvements for their study quality.

The programme director facilitates communication between lecturers to ensure that courses are consistent and interconnected, and it was confirmed by the tutors during the meeting.

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

Current teaching staff seem to be sufficient for the successful implementation of this study programme. The qualification and composition of teaching staff are appropriate and correspond to the regulatory enactments. The academic staff is involved in scientific research of other higher education institutions. The collaboration of staff members is ensured.

#### **Strengths**

1. Lecturers are specialists in their fields, and they ensure the achievement of the aim and learning outcomes of the programme, sharing their practical knowledge with students. The composition of academic staff meets the requirements of regulatory enactments.
2. Teaching staff regularly collaborates on the development of the study programme and improvement of separate courses.
3. The programme director facilitates collaboration between teaching staff to ensure interrelation between study courses.

#### **Weaknesses**

1. Staff members elected at the CBA are less active in scientific research.
2. There are no foreign guest lecturers.

## **5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Business Logistics"**

### **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

**Justification:** Sample of the diploma provided in Annex 71.

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

**Justification:** The following agreements are provided:

1. EKA University of Applied Sciences Nr. LIG.2019/01; 20.03.2019
2. Rigas Tehniska Koledža Nr. LIG/2019/03; 01.04.2019

- 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

**Justification:** Sample of Study contract is provided in Annex 73.

- 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

**Justification:** CV of the teaching staff indicate the proficiency of the official language. Approval of Knowledge level of State language (see Annex 79).

- 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

**Justification:** Not applicable

- 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

**Justification:** Not applicable.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

**Justification:** Not applicable.

- 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

**Justification:** Sample of Study contract is provided in Annex 73.

- 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

**Justification:** The descriptions of the study courses include the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; the content of the study; the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, other sources of information; the organisation and tasks for the independent work of students; 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:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** Conformity of the study programme with the professional standard is provided in Annex 67.

The study programme "Business logistics" corresponds to the profession standard "Logistics specialist" (profession code 3323 02), approved on March 15, 2012).

<https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/ps0285.pdf>

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

**Justification:** Not applicable.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** Compliance with the requirements defined in the national standard of the first level professional higher education (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation of 20 March 2001 No. 141 "Regulation on the National Standard of First Level Professional Higher Education") is evident from the Appendix 66. <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=6397>

- 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

**Justification:** Not applicable.

- 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

**Justification:** The publications of programme faculty is presented in the Appendix 6. Each member of academic staff has either publications within the last six years or a five-year practical work experience. The topics of the publications are generally related to the courses delivered by the academic staff members.

- 15 P5 - Overall rating

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** College is fully operating in accordance with requirements of legislation.

## 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

**Justification:** The programme have good resource base, the students and the teaching staff have access to the necessary resources to ensure 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

**Justification:** The qualification of the academic staff members, visiting lecturers, comply with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. See Annex 5.

- 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

**Justification:** Not applicable.

## Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The first level professional higher education study programme "Business Logistics" name and professional qualification to be acquired, the aim, the tasks, and admission requirements are interrelated and can be regarded as programme strengths. Programme design and content of the study courses correspond to the industry requirements. The study provision, informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision correspond to the specifics of both the study program and implementation conditions and create preconditions for the achievement of study outcomes, thus, demonstrating the ability to ensure the delivery of high-quality study process. Very dedicated academic staff members.

Strengths:

1. The programme is modern and meets the requirements of the labour market due to close cooperation with industry representatives.
2. The content of the programme, teaching methods and study premises and facilities ensure the achievement of the defined aim, objectives and learning outcomes.
3. Distance learning corresponds to the needs of working adults both in Latvia and living abroad.

Weaknesses:

1. Further steps are required to strengthen learning outcomes evaluation in the course descriptions.
2. A lack of opportunities of the incoming and outgoing mobility for students.
3. The motivation of students' participation together with teaching staff members in scientific conferences could be increased and outcomes more efficiently disseminated on the website of the CBA.

## Evaluation of the study programme "Business Logistics"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

## 6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Business Logistics"

### Short-term recommendations

1. To revise the aim of the programme, it should be more specific for particular area.

2. To improve study programme quality and relevance monitoring by extended variety of monitoring methods (e.g. roundtable discussion, in-depth interviews, trend analysis).
3. Regarding up to date compulsory literature, more precision in the course descriptions is recommended.

### Long-term recommendations

1. Expand the partnership agreements in the framework Erasmus+ with schools having similar study programmes that could offer the students and academic staff more opportunities for programme specific international exchange.
2. Taking into account the fact that in Latvia there is no modern literature on logistics in Latvian language, perhaps the CBA can find ways to motivate its lecturers to write their own textbook (s) in this area and thus contribute to the development of education in mentioned area on the national level.
3. The motivation of students' participation together with teaching staff members in scientific conferences could be increased and outcomes more efficiently disseminated on the website of the CBA.
4. The methodological guidelines of learning outcomes evaluation could be developed.

## II. "Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Management" ASSESSMENT

### II. "Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Management" ASSESSMENT

#### 1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

##### Analysis

The aim of the first level professional higher education study programme "Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Management" is to provide locally and internationally competitive business specialists according to the requirements of the first level professional higher education, labour market and profession standard, who using the advantages of distance learning, have acquired current knowledge, demonstrate skills and professional competence in accounting and financial planning and constantly improve the quality of life.

General secondary education or secondary vocational education is necessary to admit the study programme.

After graduation, students obtain the first level professional higher education with qualification "Business specialist".

The study programme is different from other first level study programmes with the qualification "Business specialist" which is well highlighted in the self-assessment report. Some examples: algorithm developed for acquisition of the programme content, which enables student to start own business; significant involvement of employers and industry experts; qualification of academic staff in the field etc.

The study programme is in line with Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers on the Classification of Education in Latvia. The study programme was improved and supplemented during the reporting period. Changes made are related to the setting and definition of the study programme goal tasks and learning outcomes. Namely, the aim of the study programme has been redefined in order to emphasise the training of business specialists for local and international market. The range of study courses of the study programme has been expanded. Courses related to digitalization, creativity and

innovation, data processing, communication, applied research etc. are included. The free choice part of the study programme has also been expanded to include one study course in English. Note: Unfortunately, it is not stated which course. For some study courses not only the content but also the title was revised and updated.

Comparison of Table 3.1 Changes in content and titles of study courses during the reporting period, Table 3.2. Scientific and academic degrees of the academic staff (including guest lecturers) at the beginning and end of the reporting period and Appendix No.14 Plan of study programme raised some questions. Namely, Table 1 states that management accounting is no longer included in the study programme, but according to the Appendix No.14 and Table 3.2, it is still in study programme. Contradiction!

The study programme includes a study course with a very strange title – "Finances and Credit". The title is not in line with current higher education tendencies.

The tasks of the study programme and the study outcomes follow the aim of the study programme. The study programme complies with the national standard of the first level professional higher education (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation of 20 March 2001 No. 141 "Regulation on the National Standard of First Level Professional Higher Education"). The volume of the study programme is 88 CP, which includes compulsory part, i.e. general study courses and field-specific courses (20 CP and 36 CP respectively), free-elective study courses – 8 CP, internship –16 CP and Qualification paper –8 CP.

## **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

In conclusions, the name of the study programme, the professional qualification, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated.

### **Strengths**

1. In essence, in the course of the transformation of the study programme, a new modern study programme with logically interrelated title, aim, tasks, results, and professional qualification has been created.

### **Weaknesses**

1. The number of graduates is small compared to the number of matriculated students. The reasons related to the low number of graduates could be analysed in more detail.

## **2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof**

### **Analysis**

The study courses included in the study programme "Micro, small and medium enterprise management" meet the aim of the study programme: firstly, the programme includes all compulsory study prescribed by the "Business specialist" professional standard; secondly, the programme includes general education courses to promote students' business competences as well research and analytical skills. The courses included in the study programme are designed sequentially to achieve the expected study results. Notably, a study course on financial management and investment needs to be included in the study programme, taking into consideration current trends in higher education. The programme is designed in accordance with the Law of Education, the Law on Vocational Education and the Law on Higher Education Institution. The study programme is implemented in the form of part-time extramural studies, choosing internationally recognised study implementation methods corresponded to this distance learning form.

Compliance with labour market tendencies and requirements of professional environment is ensured by involvement of representatives of the employers of the field and representatives of professional

associations in ensuring and improvement of the study process, including evaluation of the programme content. The CBA list of professionals involved in study programme implementation and content improvement is impressive.

The descriptions of the study courses include the following information: course aims, learning outcomes, course content and planned hours, recommended literature and additional sources of information, assessment structure, individual work, and course value in credit points and ECTS. Majority of study course descriptions are provided in detail. However, some descriptions require up to date compulsory literature (e.g. Socio-psychological Training; Logistics and etc.). While the compulsory literature should include the main study book, some course descriptions provide a long list of compulsory literature. One description is missing important information, such as aim, literature sources, clear content (e.g. "Personal and Professional Growth").

The teaching methods used in the program "Management of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises" are various: video lectures, audio lectures, podcasts, business simulation, etc.

In order to evaluate the level of knowledge, skills and competence, examinations are administered, and Moodle discussions/tasks are assessed over the course of the semester. The current evaluation system is that of a 10-point system and the individual evaluation criteria are noted in each study course description. The final evaluation is unified for all courses at the CBA. Majority of course descriptions define that the final evaluation consists of Moodle discussion/tasks – 50% and the final exam – 50%. Moodle discussion/task, which is open for one week, is organised when the student has independently studied the subject. In case of successful assessment of the intermediate examination, the student starts preparing for the test/exam. The evaluation methods of student achievements could be of higher variety and better reflect the learning outcomes of each study course. The additional consultations are provided at the premises of the CBA or via the online platform "ZOOM" twice per month.

As an integral part of professional higher education, this study programme includes internships for the students. The total amount of internships is 16 credits, which are divided equally into the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th semesters (4 credits in each semester). The tasks included in the internships are aimed to formulating and refining the business idea, establishing and registering own business in the Register of Enterprises. During the internship, students are acquainted with the main processes of the company, evaluation of the company's efficiency, evaluation of the suitability of the personality for business, etc. Business ideas of students are already being implemented in successful business, for example portable car washes, wooden tile making, non-ice hockey drills etc. The internship is well organised. The descriptions of internships are thorough and impressive. Students must complete internship diary, submit interim reports containing information on what has been done during the internship, describe self-assessment, indicate which skills and knowledge have been acquired. At the end of the internship, the students present the results of the internship at the internship conference.

At the meeting, the employers confirmed that they provide internships for students and have been involved in discussions of internships results. Some representatives of employers and professional organisations are involved in teaching and participate actively in the development of study courses.

At the end of the studies, the student must develop and defend a qualification paper. Students initially choose the topic of their qualification paper based on their professional and research interests, as well as the condition that the topic of their qualification paper must be related to exploring and improving aspects of starting or developing their own business. Potential topics of the qualification papers are discussed and agreed with the chosen supervisor, according to the aims and results of the study programme and the competence of the academic staff. During the visit, the experts were acquainted with many of the qualification papers. It can be confirmed that the themes are topical and the qualification papers are written at a good level. During the reporting period, 78 students of the study programme have defended qualification papers. In summary, everything related to the qualification papers is well organised.

The surveys of the students, graduates and employers are carried out. In the summer 2019, the survey of students was conducted, including a survey of students of the study programme “Micro, small and medium enterprise management” (69 respondents). The results show that students evaluate with the highest score (4 points) the technical provision of studies and the academic staff observe objectivity in the assessment of knowledge.

Well-thought plan of studies, content of Moodle discussions, internships, high quality and transparent study materials, competent academic members, engaging lectures have been identified as strengths of the CBA and the study programme. As aspects to be improved, students have indicated the following: show grades in the Moodle, digitalising tests and exams, provide individual communication between lecturers and students. The management of the CBA evaluates results of surveys and plans improvements in the study process.

In 2020, 33 respondents completed the survey of graduates of the programme “Micro, small and medium enterprise management”. The results show that graduates evaluate the implementation of the study programme mainly as good and excellent, the highest assessments to the work of Study Support Centre (3.69 points) and treatment of students (3.66 points). Graduates indicated the following benefits after graduation: possibility to save the current position; work in a job that suits you best; opportunity to establish own business; to do work with higher salary; opportunity to continue studies at the next level of higher education. All 33 respondents would recommend the study programme to relatives, friends and acquaintances because the studies increase self-esteem and career opportunities, the study programme is relevant in today’s labour market and it is possible to combine studies with work.

Due to the implementation form of the study programme (distance learning), incoming and outgoing mobility of students was not organised. However, the College has now received the Erasmus Charter and fulfilled all preconditions for applying for ERASMUS+ student mobility.

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

The descriptions of the study courses and the internships are of high quality and comply with the provisions set forth in the regulatory enactments. The content is relevant and complementary, and it complies with the aims of the study programme, ensures the achievement of the learning outcomes, and meets the needs of the relevant industry. Regarding up to date compulsory literature, more precision in the course descriptions can be recommended. The imprecision of course descriptions “Socio-psychological Training”; “Logistics” and “Personal and Professional Growth” should be eliminated.

The study implementation methods, including the evaluation methods, contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study courses and the study programme. Student-centred learning and teaching principles are taken into account. The higher variety of evaluation methods can be recommended instead of predominating Moodle discussion/tasks and the final exam.

There is an absence of the incoming and outgoing mobility for students.

The outcomes of the surveys conducted among the students, employers and graduates are used to improve the quality of studies.

#### **Strengths**

1. Good relations with employers and professional associations who are involved in implementation and improvement of the content of the study programme.
2. Good cooperation between the study programme and the industry.
3. Well-organised internships
4. The CBA has received the Erasmus Charter and fulfilled all preconditions for applying for ERASMUS+ student mobility.



#### Weaknesses

1. There is no incoming and outgoing mobility of students.
2. Further steps are required to strengthen learning outcomes evaluation in the course descriptions.

### 3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

#### Analysis

Resources and provision of the study programme "Micro, small and medium enterprise management" are relevant.

The premises of the CBA, such as auditoriums and reading rooms are functional and well equipped. The financial resources required for continuous improvement of study programme are planned for a period of five years and revised annually.

The CBA applies Education Process Administration System (IS) - IPAS, which includes all documents and information about students, academic staff, administration and etc. The study support center is equipped with Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) BITRIX, which helps to ensure information exchange between all involved parties in the study process. The study process is conducted through Learning Management System (LMS) - Moodle. Aiming to ensure quality and originality of students' papers, exams, the CBA adopted VDPKS plagiarisms control system.

Informative provision, including libraries, comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme. For research of publications the CBA provides EBSCO database. The students have access to open source resources useful in their studies - databases, e-journals, e-books, as well as e-libraries, including links to legal information resources. The CBA also subscribes two magazines, both electronically and in print form: "iFinances" and "Jurista vārds". Unfortunately, there is no information about the management magazine(s). In cooperation with the Cultural Information System Center (KISC), the CBA offers the following pilot databases, such as Britannica Academic edition, SAGE, Taylor & Francis -eBooks, Library PressDisplay, BiblioRossica Eurionitor International, Scopus, Ebrary, Passport GMID, ScienceDirect, RUBRICON, ProQuest and etc. The CBA collaborates in the provision of library resources and has an agreement with Riga Graduate School of Law. However, there is little specialized literature and the foreign (English) language special literature in the library is not the latest.

The distance learning materials developed within the study courses by the academic staff are perceived as one of the advantages of the CBA library funds. The copyrights of these materials belong to the CBA. The students are provided with text books for each study course. The CBA has its own methodologist who provides a help for teaching staff in working with e-platforms.

The interesting example is Life Opportunity Centre established by the CBA. This Centre provides a help with an innovative study course in e-studies environment Virtual Business Incubator ("Business Greenhouse").

According to the interviews, the students, graduates and academic staff shared high evaluation of study facilities and appreciated the infrastructure provided.

#### Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

In summary, the study provision, informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision correspond to the specifics of both the study program and implementation conditions and create preconditions for the achievement of study outcomes, thus, demonstrating the ability to ensure the delivery of high-quality study process.

#### Strengths

1. Infrastructure and technical resource base which include applied software systems;
2. e-studies environment Virtual Business Incubator ("Business Greenhouse").

3. Agreement with the Riga Graduate School of Law on the use of their premises for lectures and the use of the library.
4. The CBA has its own methodologist who provides a help for teaching staff works in working with e-platforms.

#### Weaknesses

1. There is little specialized literature in the library.
2. The foreign (English) language special literature in the library is not the latest and there could be more.

### **4. Teaching Staff**

#### **Analysis**

According to the report, the projected staff for the programme consists of 25 academic staff members, 4 of them are assistant professors, 4 - lecturers, and 16 - course instructors. During the reporting period both quantitative and qualitative changes in the composition of the academic staff have taken place.

Share of academic staff members with PhD degree has increased from 12.1% to 16%, the proportion of academic staff member with Master's degree has increased from 72.7% to 80% and the proportion of academic staff members with Bachelor's degree has decreased three times - from 15.2% to 4%. Changes in the academic staff have had a positive impact on the quality of studies, as proved by the results of the students' and graduates' surveys. Note: This statement is questionable, because the change in the proportions is due to the departure of only 4 masters and 5 specialists.

The education acquired by the instructors of the specialized courses corresponds to the field of the study course. The CBA policy is to ensure that qualified, scientifically and methodologically trained lecturers who use modern teaching methods in their work deliver all study courses. The main criteria for the selection of lecturers are education (degree), professional experience, research and creative activities as well as communication skills. Majority of the instructors have considerable practical experience in the respective field of activity. Therefore, they are highly skilled and informed on the current topical themes of the field and can relay this to students in a way that it may complement their academic success and reaching the study course and programme aims.

The students are provided the opportunity together with academic staff prepare scientific papers and present their research at the conferences or attend the international scientific conferences organized at the CBA. Since 2006, the CBA has been organising scientific-practical conferences where academic staff participates. In 2018, a conference "Business Challenges in Latvia's 100 years' anniversary took place. In 2019, a conference "Integral Approach to Business Sustainability" took place. Unfortunately, there is no information about participation and presentations of lecturers who are teaching field-specific study courses.

During the reporting period 7 academic staff members, related to the study programme have been active in the scientific research (e.g. published scientific papers). These academic staff members of the CBA are engaged in the research activities of other higher education institutions (published with the affiliation of other institutions). The scientific papers are published in both national and international publishing outlets. Some teaching members of the programme are PhD students at other universities.

The course content is developed in close collaboration between academic staff through lifelong learning seminars organized by the CBA, where all lecturers exchange ideas and regularly discuss the necessary improvements for their study quality.

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

Current teaching staff seem to be sufficient for the successful implementation of this study programme. The qualification and composition of teaching staff are appropriate and correspond to the regulatory enactments. The academic staff is involved in scientific research of other higher education institutions. The collaboration of staff members is ensured.

#### Strengths

1. A large proportion of lecturers with doctoral and master's degrees in teaching staff.
2. Most lecturers have considerable work experience in their field of activity, which ensures that the knowledge, skills and competences acquired by students correspond to the acquired qualification and can be used in further professional activities; some lecturers are active in professional organisations.
3. Teaching staff regularly collaborates on the development of the study direction and improvement of separate courses.

#### Weaknesses

1. Lecturers with a doctoral degree teach general study courses, not field-specific study courses.
2. Absence of invited foreign lecturers.

### 5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Management"

#### 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

**Justification:** The sample of the diploma provided in Annex 16 complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued.

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

**Justification:** Agreement about possibilities to continue the education is signed with:

1. Alberta Koledža Nr. LIG/2018/02; 11.07.2018
2. RISEBA University of Applied Sciences, 23.05.2018

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** Sample of Study contract is provided in Annex 18.

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

**Justification:** CV of the teaching staff indicate the proficiency of the official language.

- 5 5. The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of a related foreign language, if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language.  
**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant  
**Justification:** Not applicable
- 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  
**Justification:** Not applicable.
- 7 7. The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.  
**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant  
**Justification:** Not applicable.
- 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  
**Justification:** Sample of Study contract is provided in Annex 18.
- 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  
**Justification:** The descriptions of the study courses include the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; the content of the study; the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, other sources of information; the organisation and tasks for the independent work of students; 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:** Fully compliant  
**Justification:** Conformity of the study programme with the professional standard is provided in Annex 12. The content of the study programme has been developed according to the standard "Business specialist", approved on April 18, 2012 and harmonized with the new "Business specialist" profession standard, which was submitted on 05.02.2020. by the LTRK to the National Centre for Education for further coordination and approval.  
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired after the acquisition of the study programme with the actual profession standard "Business Specialist" (approved on June 10, 2020.) has been verified: <https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-134.pdf>
- 11 11. Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.  
**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant  
**Justification:** Not applicable

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** Compliance with the requirements defined in the national standard of the first level professional higher education (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation of 20 March 2001 No. 141 "Regulation on the National Standard of First Level Professional Higher Education") is evident from the Appendix 11. <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=6397>

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

**Justification:** Not applicable.

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

**Justification:** The publications of programme faculty is presented in the Appendix 6. Each member of elected academic staff has either publication within the last six years or a five-year work experience. The topics of the publications are generally related to the courses delivered by the academic staff members. Visiting lecturers have work experience which exceeds 5 years.

15 P5 - Overall rating

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** The CBA is fully operating in accordance with requirements of legislation.

## 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

**Justification:** The study provision, scientific support, informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision comply with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensure the 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

**Justification:** The qualification of the academic staff members, visiting lecturers, comply with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

**Justification:** Not applicable.

## Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The first level professional higher education study programme "Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Management" name and professional qualification to be acquired, the aim, the tasks, and admission requirements are interrelated and can be regarded as programme strengths. Programme design and content of the study courses correspond to the industry requirements. The study provision, informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision correspond to the specifics of both the study programme and implementation conditions and create preconditions for the achievement of study outcomes, thus, demonstrating the ability to ensure the delivery of high-quality study process. The academic staff members demonstrate dedication to the teaching profession.

#### Strengths:

1. Distance learning corresponds to the needs of working adults both in Latvia and living abroad.
2. The academic staff includes professionals from industry

#### Weaknesses:

1. The reasons related to the low number of graduates could be analysed more extensively.
2. Comparative quality assessment would be useful to observe how some improvement in the problematic areas pointed out in the surveys of students, graduates and employers can be made.
3. Further steps are required to strengthen learning outcomes evaluation in the course descriptions.
4. A lack of opportunities of the incoming and outgoing mobility for students and staff.

### **Evaluation of the study programme "Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Management"**

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

### **6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Management"**

#### **Short-term recommendations**

- |   |
|---|
| 1. The low number of graduates should be addressed and the reasons for it analysed and then find solutions to increase it.  |
| 2. To improve study programme quality and relevance monitoring by extended variety of monitoring methods (e.g. roundtable discussion, in-depth interviews, trend analysis). |
| 3. Regarding up to date compulsory literature, more precision in course descriptions is recommended.  |

#### **Long-term recommendations**

- |  |
|--|
| 1. Expand the partnership agreements in the framework Erasmus+ with schools having similar study programmes that could offer the students and academic staff more opportunities for programme specific international exchange. |
| 2. The methodological guidelines of learning outcomes evaluation could be developed.   |

## **II. "Marketing and Trade" ASSESSMENT**

### **II. "Marketing and Trade" ASSESSMENT**

## 1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

### Analysis

The aim of the first level professional higher education study programme “Marketing and Trade” is to provide locally and internationally competitive marketing/trade specialists according to the requirements of the first level professional higher education, labour market and profession standard, who, using the advantages of distance learning, have acquired current knowledge, demonstrate skills and professional competence in marketing/sales, and constantly improve the quality of life.

The study programme complies with the national standard of the first level professional higher education (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation of 20 March 2001 No. 141 “Regulation on the National Standard of First Level Professional Higher Education”). To integrate the latest trends in marketing and trade (digitalisation, email marketing, life cycle marketing; introduction of artificial intelligence in marketing and trade; customer experience mobility, etc.) into the study programme and align it with the requirements of the labour market and the old profession standard “Marketing and Trade specialist” and the new project of “Professional qualification requirements of marketing specialist”, the programme volume has been increased to 88 CP (132 ECTS) instead of the previous 86 CP (129 ECTS).

Since the previous accreditation, the programme has undergone several significant improvements, starting with the change of the programme title from “Business” to “Marketing and Trade”. Objectives, targets and achievable results were revised, new study courses developed, several courses renewed, study course content updated according to the labour market requirements, new regulation have been developed for internship. During the reporting period, the free choice part of the study programme has also been expanded to include one study course in English in order to promote the development of students' foreign language skills and, furthermore, success in the international market. Unfortunately, it is not stated which course. Probably it is “Business English”.

According to the self-assessment report, when implementing Marketing and Trade study programme, it is possible to provide the student with the opportunity to select one of the offered qualifications. For both qualifications, more than half of the content of the study programme (52 CP) and the total amount of credits (88 CP) are equal. The main differences are in the compulsory field-based courses (12 CP), in internship (16 CP), as well as in the topics of Qualification paper (8 CP). The difference occurs in the first semester but only for one compulsory field-based study course (Consumer behaviour in the market/Professional client service). In the second semester, there are differences between two pairs of compulsory field-based study courses (Marketing planning and advertising /Merchandising; Sales management /Trade management). Thus, qualification can be changed quite easily even after the second semester.

According to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation on the Classification of Education in Latvia (effective from 16 June 2017) the study programme code remains the same - 41345 (management and administration). Despite the student's selection to acquire one of the qualifications in the programme – either Trade or Marketing specialist, both qualifications are included in the section of a commercial specialist in the Map of professions of the Business, finance, accounting and administration sector.

General secondary education or secondary vocational education is necessary to admit the study programme. After graduation, students obtain the first level professional higher education with qualification “Marketing specialist/Trade specialist”.

The study programme is different from other first level study programmes with qualification of “Marketing specialist” or “Trade specialist”. For example, significant involvement of employers and industry experts; qualification of academic staff; the study programme develops personal competences etc. The study programme is harmonised with the professional standard “Marketing and Trade specialist” and project of the “Professional qualification requirements of marketing specialist”.

The tasks of the study programme and the expected result follow the aim of the study programme.

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

In summary, the name of the study programme, the professional qualification to be acquired, the aim, tasks, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated.

#### **Strengths**

1. In essence, in the course of the transformation of the study programme, a new modern study programme with logically interrelated title, aim, tasks, results, and professional qualification has been created.
2. Within one study programme, the student has the opportunity to choose one of the two qualifications offered.

#### **Weaknesses**

1. The reasons for the low number of graduates need to be analysed in more detail.

## **2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof**

### **Analysis**

The study courses included in the study programme meet the aim of the study programme, prescribed by the profession standard “Marketing and Trade Specialist” and project of “Professional qualification requirements of marketing specialist”. During the reporting period, 16 study courses were created or substantially improved in terms of content. The study courses included in the study programme correspond to the aim of the study programme: first, the programme includes general education courses to promote students' business competences, as well as research and analysis skills; second, all the field-specific courses are included in the programme which are regulated by the profession standard and the new project of the qualification requirements. Experienced lectures and professionals have developed the content of the study courses. The descriptions of the study courses/modules, trainee-ship, and the qualification paper comply with the provisions set forth in regulatory enactments and include the latest literature, which is also available in the library of the CBA.

Both qualifications of the study programme have a common part of compulsory general courses and special study courses. The following special study courses are included for the marketing specialists: Sales Management, Marketing Planning and Advertising, Basics of Digital Marketing, Consumer Behaviour in the Market, Public Relations and Marketing II. For the qualification of a trade specialist, the following special courses are included: Trade Management, Merchandising, International Trade, Professional customer Service, Direct Sales and Basics of E-Commerce.

The study programme is implemented in the form of part-time extramural studies, choosing internationally recognised study implementation methods corresponding to the distance learning form. The study process considers the principles of student-centred education. Students are involved in the process of improvement of the study programmes. Distance learning studies are organised through the e-learning environment “Moodle”. The study process takes into account the principles of student-centred education:

- Students are involved in the process of improvements of the study programme and study environment by means of student surveys, as well as by active involvement of the CBA Students' self-government in the work of the College.
- Students are provided with an individual approach to the organisation of the study process – students always have a study coordinator at the Study Support Centre, who can be contacted with a variety of questions. Students have highly appreciated this opportunity and their cooperation with



study coordinators in student surveys.

- Various pedagogical methods are used, which are specially adapted to the distance learning environment, the lecturers are introduced to the latest methods on a regular basis.
- The College has established procedures for resolving student complaints – “Procedure for Reviewing Complaints and Proposals of Students (Customers)” (approved at the Council of the CBA meeting 16 on February 2018).
- Evaluation of submissions of students is consistent, fair, and applicable to all students. It is carried out according to procedures approved by the CBA. In addition, in order to ensure sequential and regular recording and monitoring of the achievements of the learning outcomes, the “Description of the Accounting and Control of the Study Results Process” (KVAL 2-17 STUD) and “Regulation of Examination at the CBA” (approved at the Council of the CBA meeting on 29 August 2016).

There are two internships for the students: Marketing internship and Financial Trade internship. The content of the internships is designed to strengthen the knowledge, skills and competences acquired during study process. Students choose internship placement independently, taking into account the tasks of the internship and the possibilities to fulfil them. If the student is working, his/her place of work may be approved as a place of internship. If the student does not have an internship placement or is a job-seeker, the internship placement is provided by the CBA.

At the end of study programme “Marketing and trade”, the students have to develop the final thesis – qualification paper in the volume of 8 CP. Students choose the topic of qualification paper based on their professional and research interests, topicality in the field and the specific organisation. The topics are developed and updated based on the programme's objectives and achievable results, as well as the recommendations of industry professionals. The topic of the research is coordinated with the supervisor. During the preparation of the final thesis, the student not only consults with the supervisor of the qualification paper, but also has the opportunity to consult with any other lecturer according to the field. The qualification papers examination commission includes both the CBA academic staff and industry professionals. During the reporting period, including January 2020, 93 graduates have defended their qualification paper.

The surveys of the students, graduates and employers are carried out. The student surveys take place after each study course. In the summer 2019, the survey of students was conducted. The results show that students evaluate with the highest score technical provision for studies satisfies me, the second best is score for the academic staff to be professionals. As an aspect, to be improved, students have indicated the following: providing feedback in Moodle environment; organisation of work in pairs and group.

The survey of graduates of the programme was completed in 2020. The results show that graduates evaluate the implementation of the study programme mainly as good and excellent, with the highest evaluation of the work of the Study Support Centre and attitude towards the student and study environment at the CBA.

Graduates indicated following benefits after graduation: possibility to save the current position; have a job that suits you best; opportunity to establish own business; opportunity to continue studies at the next level of higher education. All 26 respondents would recommend the study programme to relatives, friends and acquaintances because it is interesting and meaningful study programme; positive and supportive environment; good study plan, it is possible to combine studies with work, other activities; good value for money.

Unfortunately, there is no incoming and outgoing mobility of students.

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

To conclude, the descriptions of the study courses are of a good quality. During the visit, experts were acquainted with many of the qualification papers. The content of the qualification papers is relevant, relies on the aims of the study programme and is in line with market trends. The content of

the internships is designed to strengthen the knowledge, skills and competences acquired during study process. Students choose internship placement independently, taking into account the tasks of the internship and the possibilities to fulfil them. The surveys of the students, graduates and employers are carried out. The student surveys take place after each study course. Unfortunately, there is an absence of the incoming and outgoing mobility for students.

#### Strengths

1. The survey of employers of CBA graduates shows that employers value the knowledge, skills and competences acquired by CBA graduates in the study programme.
2. Good relations with employers and professional associations who are involved in implementation and improvement of the content of the study programme.
3. The CBA has received the Erasmus Charter and fulfilled all preconditions for applying for ERASMUS+ student mobility.

#### Weaknesses

1. There is no incoming and outgoing mobility of students.

### **3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme**

#### **Analysis**

Provision of the study programme “Marketing and Trade” takes place within the limits of the planned finances. As in other private institutions, tuition fees are the main source of income in the CBA. The programme budget is planned for 5 years along with all other programmes and is revised and adjusted annually depending on the number of students on the programme.

The premises of the CBA, such as auditoriums and reading rooms are functional and well equipped. Study, information, material-technical, financial base is appropriate for distance learning. The CBA is a pioneer in Latvia with distance learning and very well-functioning methodology how to prepare the best specialists for labour market through distance learning.

The study provision of the programme is based on Moodle platform that match the needs of distance learning in the best way. There are both study materials and audio and video recordings developed by the lecturers in the Moodle environment. The Zoom platform is used to conduct lectures online. The CBA has own methodologist who provides a help for teaching staff and students. For student support is used Skype, e-mail, and phone. There are functional facilities for administrative staff too. Since students are also invited to attend guest lectures, there are some classrooms equipped with a computer with an Internet connection and a projector.

Library resources are ensured in cooperation with Riga Graduate School of Law that is located in the same building. The working hours of library is adapted for student's needs: it works until 8 p.m. twice a week and is open on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month when lectures are being implemented in person. The collection of the library is updated on a regular basis as the curriculum develops. Library has electronic catalogue for book reservation, access to 2 e-journals, 5 data bases, option to reserve books from other HEI libraries.

The programmes' students have access to databases, such as Britannica Academic edition, SAGE, Taylor & Francis - eBooks, Library PressDisplay, BiblioRossica Euromonitor International, Scopus, Ebrary, Passport GMID, ScienceDirect, RUBRICON, ProQuest, EBSCO eBook.

The CBA has their own textbooks. The academic staff of the programme develop these materials on their own and all copyrights belong to the CBA. Unfortunately, there is no information about the marketing and trade magazine(s).

It can be said that study support as well as informative support (including libraries), material and technical support and funding correspond to the specifics of the study programme. The study

programme has sufficient information and material, technical base, which corresponds to the specifics of the implementation of the study programme and helps to achieve the goals of study programme.

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

In summary, the study, informative provision, material, technical and financial provision correspond to the specifics of both the study program and implementation conditions and create preconditions for the achievement of study outcomes, thus, demonstrating the ability to ensure the delivery of high-quality study process. During the meetings with experts, students, graduates and academic staff shared high evaluation of study facilities and appreciated the infrastructure provided. The CBA is constantly adapting to the newest tendencies and implementing them into the study process.

#### **Strengths**

1. Well-structured e-platform for distance learning.
2. Application of various methods to adapt students for distance learning.
3. The CBA has its own methodologist who works on improving e-platforms.

#### **Weaknesses**

1. The foreign (English) language special literature in the library is not the latest and there could be more.
2. Marketing and trade magazine(s) are not available.

## **4. Teaching Staff**

### **Analysis**

28 academic staff members ensure implementation of the study programme, 3 of them are assistant professors, 4 lecturers and 21 course instructors or guest lecturers. During the reporting period, both quantitative and qualitative changes in the composition of the academic staff have taken place. It is alleged that changes in the academic staff have had a positive impact on the quality of studies, as proved by the results of students and graduates survey: "Changes in the academic staff have had a positive impact on the quality of studies, as evidenced by the results of the student and graduate survey, providing a positive evaluation of the work of the academic staff" (according to the self-assessment report section 4.1. Teaching staff, p. 111). Comment. According to the Table 3.2. "Scientific and academic degrees of the academic staff (including guest lecturers) at the beginning and end of the reporting period" the only changes were a decrease in the number of lecturers with a doctoral degree (were 4, now are 3) and a decrease in the number of lecturers with a master's degree (were 26, now are 22), which also led to a decrease in the total number of lecturers (were 33, now are 28). The accompanying structural shifts are rather negative: the share of lecturers with doctoral degree decreased (was 12.1%, now is 10.7%), the share of lecturers with master's degree decreased (was 78.8%, now is 78.6%), the share of lecturers with first-level higher education or bachelor's degree increased (was 9.1%, now is 10.7%). Thus, there are some doubts that such changes have had a positive impact on the quality of learning.

Professional academic staff members are involved in the implementation of the study programme. The CBA policy is to ensure that qualified, scientifically and methodologically trained lecturers who use modern teaching methods in their work deliver all study courses. The main criteria for the selection of lecturers are education (degree), professional experience, research and creative activities as well as communication skills.

The qualification and composition of teaching staff are appropriate and correspond to the regulatory enactments. The academic staff is involved in scientific research of other higher education

institutions.

Since 2006, the CBA has been organising scientific-practical conferences where academic staff participates. In 2018, a conference "Business Challenges in Latvia's 100 years' anniversary took place. In 2019, a conference "Integral Approach to Business Sustainability" took place. Unfortunately, there is no information about participation and presentations of lecturers who are teaching field-specific study courses.

## Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

Current teaching staff seem to be sufficient for the successful implementation of this study programme. The qualification and composition of teaching staff are appropriate and correspond to the regulatory enactments. The academic staff is involved in scientific research of other higher education institutions. The collaboration of staff members is ensured. Professional academic staff members are involved in the implementation of the study programme. The college policy is to ensure that qualified, scientifically and methodologically trained lecturers who use modern teaching methods in their work deliver all study courses. The main criteria for the selection of lecturers are education (degree), professional experience, research and creative activities as well as communication skills.

### Strengths

1. A large proportion of lecturers with doctoral and master's degrees in teaching staff.
2. Most lecturers have considerable work experience in their field of activity, which ensures that the knowledge, skills and competences acquired by students correspond to the acquired qualification and can be used in further professional activities; some lecturers are active in professional organisations.

### Weaknesses

1. The number and share of lecturers with (scientific) degrees in the total teaching staff have decreased.
2. Lecturers with a doctoral degree teach general study courses, not field-specific study courses.

## 5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Marketing and Trade"

### 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

**Justification:** Diploma provided in the Annex 60 complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued.

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

**Justification:** Agreements about possibilities to continue the education are signed with:

1. RISEBA 9-02/2019-7,
2. Business School TURĪBA, 9-02/2020-2,
3. EKA LIG/2019/01,
4. Alberta Koledža LIG/2018/02

- 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

**Justification:** Attestation provided in the 62 Annex. Example of study contract.

- 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

**Justification:** CV of the teaching staff indicate the proficiency of the official language.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

**Justification:** Not applicable

- 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

**Justification:** Not applicable

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

**Justification:** Not applicable

- 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

**Justification:** Attestation provided in the 62 Annex. Example of study contract.

- 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

**Justification:** The descriptions of the study courses include the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; the content of the study; the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, other sources of information; the organisation and tasks for the independent work of students; 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:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** Study programme content developed in accordance with professional standards "Marketing and trade specialist " (Profession Code - 3313 01), which is approved on 21 March 2011. Requirements of the new draft "Marketing specialist professional qualification requirements" profession standard are taken into account.

Compliance of the qualification to be acquired after the acquisition of the study programme with the actual profession standard "Business Specialist" specializations "Trade Specialist" and "Marketing Specialist" (approved on June 10, 2020) has been verified:

<https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-134.pdf>

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

**Justification:** Not applicable.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** Compliance with the requirements defined in the national standard of the first level professional higher education (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation of 20 March 2001 No. 141 "Regulation on the National Standard of First Level Professional Higher Education") is evident from the Appendix 44. <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=6397>

- 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

**Justification:** No joint programs.

- 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

**Justification:** Academic publications of program faculty are presented in the Chapter 4.4. in Self-evaluation Report. The list of academic publications of 7 academic staff members teaching in the program "Marketing and Trade" in the time period 2013 - 2019 out of 13 publications together. The topics of the publications are generally related to the courses delivered by the academic staff members.

- 15 P5 - Overall rating

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** The CBA operates according to the Laws

## 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

**Justification:** The programme has a good resource base, the students and the teaching staff have access to the necessary resources to ensure the quality of the teaching and learning process. The distance learning experience is a competitive advantage.

- 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

**Justification:** The study programme is implemented by 28 lecturers in total; 5 of them, or 18% are doctors. Some of the courses are delivered by invited lecturers - industry professionals.

- 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

**Justification:** Not applicable.

## Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The professional first level study programme 'Marketing and Trade' name, the degree and the professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, and admission requirements are interrelated and can be regarded as program strengths. Distance learning is a competitive advantage. Programme design and content of the study courses correspond to the market requirements.

Sharing rooms and library, the reading room, which is available for students' individual work, printed materials motivated students. There are enthusiastic Programme director and high qualification of the teaching staff, engaged in real industries.

Strengths:

1. The programme is well-positioned.
2. The programme is in distance learning.
3. Enthusiastic and motivated teaching staff and programme director.
4. Close cooperation with market people.

Weaknesses:

1. No strategies aim.
2. No possibilities for student international mobility.

## Evaluation of the study programme "Marketing and Trade"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

## 6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Marketing and Trade"

### Short-term recommendations

1. Set the strategic goals.

### Long-term recommendations

1. Open some courses in English.

2. Attract international visiting lecturers
3. Expand incoming and outgoing opportunities for students

## **II. "Personnel Psychology and Human Resources Management" ASSESSMENT**

### **II. "Personnel Psychology and Human Resources Management" ASSESSMENT**

#### **1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme**

##### **Analysis**

The study programme "Personnel Psychology and Human Resources Management" is the first level professional higher education study programme (LQF level 5) in the CBA. The name of the programme reflects its content and the provided qualification.

The aim of the study programme claims that programme provides "locally and internationally competitive personnel specialists". Searching programme curricula there is not found any study course on international aspects, except one free choice course "International management" and only one topic "International Economic Relations" in course "Economics". Therefore, it is not possible to assert that the aim can be fully achieved.

The objectives of the programme and the learning outcomes follow the aim of the study programme, thus the connection is clearly visible in the content of the study programme, which is created sequentially and gradually in order to achieve the study results (a mapping of the study programme "Personnel Psychology and Human Resources Management" is provided).

The study programme is preparing personnel specialists in accordance with the requirements of the first level professional higher education and profession standard (renewed on 16.10.2019). These specialists demonstrate skills and competence in human resource management. The study programme is providing competitive education in human resource management. It is developing analytical thinking and skills for work of personnel specialist. The study programme is constantly updated with newest innovations of industry and highlights significance of applied research in the field of human resources. Another task of the programme is to promote interest in continuing education in the next level higher education programmes. After graduation alumni demonstrate knowledge and professional performance in the implementation of personnel management. They can manage documentation in accordance with the legislation and provide proposals for the improvement of personnel management. The graduates can discuss about the importance of their acquired profession and cooperate in foreign languages providing constructive feedback to the colleagues. The employers verified that the CBA is preparing good personnel specialists.

This programme is developed in accordance with the map of professions and qualification standard. The programme has 88 CP, which is appropriate to the requirements of the first level professional higher education. The compulsory part includes general education courses and field-specific courses – not less than 20 CP and 36 CP, free-electives part – 8 CP, internship –16 CP, Qualification paper –8 CP. To graduate the programme, the students have to pass examination in the form of qualification paper. The qualification to be obtained – Personnel specialist.

The name of the programme, aim, tasks, results, and professional qualification are logically interrelated.

The admission in the study program is organised according to the Admission requirements at the CBA, which states that a person can be enrolled in the studies if a person has received a document of general secondary education (LQF level 4) or secondary vocational education (LQF level 4). According to the Regulation on Admission of the CBA, persons general secondary education or secondary vocational education can be enrolled in the studies, with passed centralised exams in



Latvian, foreign language and mathematics.

## **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

To conclude, the name of the study programme and the professional qualification to be acquired are interrelated with the aim, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements of the programme.

Strengths:

1. The name of the study programme, the professional qualification to be acquired, the aim, objectives and learning outcomes are interrelated.
2. The admission requirements correspond to the programme aim and objectives and are clearly described at Regulations on Admission.
3. The programme is perfectly suitable for working adults, who want to obtain the first level professional higher education in distance learning environment.

Weaknesses:

1. There are some doubts in case of possibility to fully achieve the programme aim on international level.
2. Big dropout rate, less than 50% of matriculated students acquire qualification.

## **2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof**

### **Analysis**

The descriptions of the internships, study courses are of good quality and include all the required information e.g. course aims, learning outcomes, course content and planned hours, recommended literature and additional sources of information, organisation of the independent studies and assessment structure. However, the sources included in the course descriptions and indicated as the main literature are older than 5-7 years.

The programme has been developed in cooperation with representatives of employers and professional organisations. They participate in defence of qualification theses, internship commissions, and seem very passionate about the programme and involved in its implementation. The employers provide internships for students and are involved in discussions of internship results. The representatives of employers and professional organisations are lecturers at the CBA and as they said during the meeting with evaluation experts are actively involved in improvement of course syllabus.

This allows us to be ensured that employer demands, and the standards set by professional organisations are fulfilled and the CBA prepares students for the real market. The evaluation experts identified that the CBA has cooperation agreements that ensure internship places for students. Permanent cooperation with employers and professional organisations allows students to find places for the internship.

The students have access to very detailed general regulations of internship. They are precise, easy to understand and gives insight what responsibilities the student has and what support the CBA can provide to student. Internship regulations provide all necessary annexes to fill during the internship and has very precise internship tasks, detailed task description and expected outcomes as well. This way students have the possibility to track their progress during the internship. During the study period students have 2 internships ("Personnel psychology internship" and "Human resource management internship"). Both internships cover all necessary knowledge and correspond to the goals of study programme. During the internship students have to use all gained knowledge from theoretical study courses. Internship regulations and internship tasks are constantly being evaluated

together with the employers and programme director according to the newest tendencies in the labour market.

The guidelines for the development and defence of student's qualification work also have been made. They are precise how to format the qualification papers, what will be assessed in the student's work. The guidelines have all necessary annexes for finishing the qualification work. The students also can think of their own qualification work thesis or ask the CBA to provide some ideas. Very often qualification work is being made in the workplace or internship company. Thus, in the process of developing qualification paper employers can gain some positive effects for their company as well.

All study courses are relevant and complementary, they comply with the aims of the study programme and ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes.

The study implementation methods are diverse. The lecturers mentioned specially prepared books, video lectures, audio lectures, Business games; Podcasts; case-studies, etc. The students approved that 100% lecturers use the variety of ways of methods and they are diverse and interesting.

The evaluation methods of each study course are indicated in the course syllabus. All courses are 2 CP. The final evaluation is unified for all courses at the CBA and consists of discussion/task – 50% and the final exam – 50%. The students especially praised the discussion part because it is very helpful for learning and exchanging ideas between academic staff and themselves. The evaluation methods of student achievements could be of higher variety and better reflect the learning outcomes of each study course. For obtaining the final evaluation, both activities should hold successful evaluation – not below 4 points. The final evaluation is the average grade in 10-point system, in the proportion of percentage distributed amongst both activities. The students see the syllabus and evaluation at the beginning of each course. Usually, there are 8 contact hours/video/audio, 18 hours for distance learning, 8 hours for discussion and 8 hours for the exam.

During the site visit the experts were acquainted with some Qualification papers. The content was relevant to the study programme.

The student surveys take place after each study course. The lecturer sees the results immediately. The results of the surveys are discussed with the program director. The outcomes of the surveys conducted among the students are used to improve the quality of studies. There is no available feedback on these surveys for students or future students.

Because of study language – only Latvian, there is no student mobility in the programme.

## **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

Study course descriptions, internship and qualification work descriptions are very well developed and relevant to industry and current trends. Regarding up to date compulsory literature, more precision in the course descriptions can be recommended. The CBA is taking into account student-centred learning and teaching principles. The surveys are held among students, alumni and employers. The feedback about implemented improvements could be recommended to be provided for students. Unfortunately there are no opportunities for incoming and outgoing student mobility.

Strengths:

1. The investigation of course syllabus indicates that the content of the programme is logical, consistent and corresponds to the aim and objectives of the programme and ensure the achievement of defined learning outcomes.
2. There are used diverse teaching methods and study materials that are suitable for specifics of distance learning.
3. Academic staff is constantly improving materials and are in close communication with employers to prepare specialists for labour market.
4. The CBA is helping a lot with finding internship places, even offering work places.

Weaknesses:

1. Further steps are required to strengthen learning outcomes evaluation in the course descriptions.
2. Feedback is not always provided to students after surveys.
3. No student mobility options for now.

### **3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme**

#### **Analysis**

Study, information, material-technical, financial base is appropriate for distance learning. The CBA is a pioneer in Latvia with distance learning and very well-functioning methodology how to prepare the best specialists for labour market through distance learning.

The study provision of the programme is based on Moodle platform that match the needs of distance learning in the best way. There are both study materials and audio and video recordings developed by the lecturers in the Moodle environment. The Zoom platform is used to conduct lectures online. For student support is used Skype, e-mail, and phone. There are functional facilities for administrative staff too.

Since students are also invited to attend lectures in person, there are some classrooms equipped with a computer with an Internet connection and a projector.

Library resources are ensured in cooperation with Riga Graduate School of Law that is located in the same building. The working hours of library is adapted for student's needs: it works until 8 p.m. twice a week and is open on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month when lectures are being implemented in person. The collection of the library is updated on a regular basis as the curriculum develops. Library has electronic catalogue for book reservation, access to 2 e-journals, 5 data bases, option to reserve books from other HEI libraries.

The programmes' students have access to databases, such as Britannica Academic edition, SAGE, Taylor & Francis - eBooks, Library PressDisplay, BiblioRossica Euromonitor International, Scopus, Ebrary, Passport GMID, ScienceDirect, RUBRICON, ProQuest, EBSCO eBook.

The CBA has their own textbooks. The academic staff of the programme develop these materials on their own and all copyrights belong to the CBA. Before each study course the student receives textbooks, which are compliant with study course tasks. The tasks are available in Moodle platform as well.

As in other private institutions, tuition fees are the main source of income in the CBA. The programme budget is planned for 5 years along with all other programmes and is revised and adjusted annually depending on the number of students on the programme.

During the meetings with experts, students, graduates and academic staff shared high evaluation of study facilities and appreciated the infrastructure provided. The CBA is constantly adapting to the newest tendencies and implementing them into the study process. The employers and alumni confirmed that the CBA are preparing competitive professionals and praised the work academic staff is doing on everyday basis. Everything mentioned above indicate the possibility to ensure a high-quality study process.

#### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

To conclude, study, information, material-technical, financial base are appropriate for distance learning. All resources of the CBA provides the possibility to ensure a high-quality study process also in the future.

Strengths:

1. The CBA has implemented different methods how to adapt students for distance learning process.
2. The CBA is in constant communication with students.

3. The CBA supports specific needs of student taking into account that most of students are above 30 years old, already working or managing their own business.
4. The CBA has developed unique study materials.
5. The CBA has own methodologist working on improvement of e-platforms.

Weaknesses:

1. None

#### **4. Teaching Staff**

##### **Analysis**

Since the previous accreditation, there have been positive changes in the composition of the academic staff, namely, the number of lecturers employed in the programme has decreased, but the number of teaching staff with PhD and Master's degree has increased. The total number of academic staff members involved in the implementation of the program has decreased (from 34 to 26). The implementation of the study programme is ensured by 26 academic staff members, 4 of them are assistant professors, 3 - lecturers, and 19 - course instructors or guest lecturers. The composition of the academic staff meets the requirements of regulatory enactments.

Before hiring personnel, the CBA assess the candidate's experience in the field, related to the teaching subject. All lecturers have relevant education and practical experience in industry. Therefore, it can be noted that the qualification of lecturers and the content of their study courses are more based on their own practical experience in the industry than on the scientific approach, but this does not interfere with the achievement of the aim and learning outcomes of programme, since the level of this programme is foundation level and provided knowledge, skills and competences are sufficient for successful employment after graduating from the programme.

Since the legislation of Latvia does not provide specific requirements for the scientific activities of the college, the academic staff is weak in the scientific work. There are only few lecturers who write scientific articles and participate in scientific conferences.

The collaboration of the academic staff members is organised by the CBA. They can exchange new ideas in teaching practice and research, and suggest topics or didactic techniques, relevant to the study courses. On average, the CBA organises 3-4 such training events, promoting collaboration of academic staff members, developing competencies required for study courses and distance learning. Academic staff during the site visit provided some examples of cooperation. The lecturers meet aiming to discuss the topics taught at different courses so they don't overlap. The programme director facilitates communication between lecturers to ensure that courses are consistent and interconnected, and it was confirmed by the tutors during the meeting.

##### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

To conclude, the composition of academic staff has positive development dynamics. It meets the requirements of regulatory enactments. Lecturers are specialists in their fields, and they ensure the achievement of the aim and learning outcomes of the programme, sharing their practical knowledge with students. The programme director facilitates collaboration between lecturers to ensure interrelation between study courses. There are several lecturers only who write scientific articles and participate in scientific conferences.

Strengths

1. The composition of academic staff ensure the achievement of programme aims and objectives.
2. Lecturers have practical experience in their respective industries.
3. The interrelation between study courses is ensured.

## Weaknesses

1. The academic staff is not sufficiently involved in scientific activities

## 5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Personnel Psychology and Human Resources Management"

### 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  
**Justification:** The sample of diploma provided in annex 38 complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued
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  
**Justification:** Agreements (Annex 39) are signed between CBA and:  
1. RISEBA  
2. Alberta koledža
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  
**Justification:** Contract with highlighted points provided in Annex 40.
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  
**Justification:** The provided confirmation of official language proficiency among academic staff (annex 79) and CV of academic staff indicate the proficiency of the official language knowledge.
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  
**Justification:** Not applicable
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  
**Justification:** Not applicable.
7. The academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.  
**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant  
**Justification:** Not applicable.

- 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  
**Justification:** Contract provided in Annex 40.
- 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  
**Justification:** The descriptions of the study courses include the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; the content of the study; the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, other sources of information; the organisation and tasks for the independent work of students; 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:** Fully compliant  
**Justification:** Information provided in Annex 34.  
 Compliance of the qualification to be acquired after the acquisition of the study programme with the actual profession standard "Personnel specialist" (approved on October 16, 2019) has been verified:  
<https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-122.pdf>.
- 11 11. Academic study programmes provided for less than 250 full-time students may be implemented and less than five professors and associated professors of the higher education institution may be involved in the implementation of the mandatory and limited elective part of these study programmes provided that the relevant opinion of the Council for Higher Education has been received in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.  
**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant  
**Justification:** Not applicable.
- 12 12. The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard.  
**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant  
**Justification:** Compliance with the requirements defined in the national standard of the first level professional higher education (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation of 20 March 2001 No. 141 "Regulation on the National Standard of First Level Professional Higher Education") is provided in Annex 33. <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=6397>
- 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  
**Justification:** Not applicable.
- 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

**Justification:** Due to specifics of study programme (1st level professional programme) It is not necessary for all academic staff to have publications. But every staff member work experience exceeds 5 years, which is necessary to teach in the 1st level professional programmes.

15 P5 - Overall rating

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** College is fully operating in accordance with requirements of legislation.

## 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

**Justification:** Programme has good resource base, everyone involved in study process (staff and students etc.) has access to necessary resources to ensure 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

**Justification:** Information in Annex 5.

- 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

**Justification:** Not applicable.

## Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

To conclude, the programme is modern and meets the requirements of the labour market due to close cooperation with industry representatives. The content of the programme, teaching and assessment methods and study premises and facilities ensure the achievement of the defined aim, objectives and learning outcomes. Students, graduates, and employers highly appreciate the work of the entire educational institution, especially the opportunity to get higher education remotely and get it in high quality. Students and teachers are not sufficiently involved in scientific activities. The programme has great potential for development by providing an opportunity to study in English.

Strengths:

1. Growing number of students
2. Experienced academic staff
3. High level administrative support
4. Efficient management of the study programme
5. Programme curricula corresponds to programme aim and objectives and ensure the achievement of learning outcomes
6. Well-developed collaboration with industry representatives
7. Sufficient study facilities and technical base

Weaknesses:

1. Different names of the programme on the website of the CBA
2. Students and teachers are not sufficiently involved in scientific activities.

### **Evaluation of the study programme "Personnel Psychology and Human Resources Management"**

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

### **6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Personnel Psychology and Human Resources Management"**

#### **Short-term recommendations**

- |  |
|--|
| 1. To revise the aim of the programme. It should be more specific in particular area and it should be achievable through programme content (international aspect). |
| 2. To use only one name of the programme in both languages English and Latvian on the CBA website and in official documentation.                                   |
| 3. Regarding up to date compulsory literature, more precision in the course descriptions is recommended.   |

#### **Long-term recommendations**

- |   |
|---|
| 1 The motivation of students' participation together with teaching staff members in scientific conferences could be increased and outcomes more efficiently disseminated on the website of the CBA. |
| 2. To consider the possibility of implementing the program in English to enter international markets.   |
| 3. Based on steadily growing number of matriculated students in the programme, the CBA should develop mechanisms how to monitor and strengthen relationships with alumni.                           |
| 4. To expand mobility options for students and teaching staff.  |
| 5. To develop a system, which could let the students to see the feedback on study course surveys.   |
| 6. The methodological guidelines of learning outcomes evaluation could be developed.  |

## **II. "Office Management" ASSESSMENT**

### **II. "Office Management" ASSESSMENT**

#### **1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme**

##### **Analysis**

The first level professional higher education study programme "Office Management" is a new name for the first level study programme "Institution work organisation and Management" with the qualification "Office Administrator". The decision to change the title of the study programme is because "Institutional work organisation and management" may mislead potential students and the public that the College prepares specialists exclusively for public authorities, although office



administrators are also in demand in private and non-governmental organisations. The study programme "Office Management" is designed according to the profession standard "Office Administrator".

Study programme "Office Management" is implemented in extramural study form (distance learning) in Latvian, qualification level – 5 NKI/EKI, profession code in occupation classification – 3341 01, study time 2 years and 5 months, qualification acquired – Office Administrator. The study programme "Office Management" corresponds to the study direction "Management, Administration and Real Estate Management" and the strategy of the CBA.

The aim of the study programme "Office Management" is to provide locally and internationally competitive office administrators according to the requirements of first level professional higher education, labour market and profession standard, who, using the advantages of distance learning, have acquired current knowledge, demonstrate skills and professional competence in office management, and constantly improve the quality of life. There are six tasks according to the aim. The absence of study courses on international aspects should be noted. Therefore, it is not possible to assert that the aim can be fully achieved.

The name of the study programme, the achievable degree and professional qualification, the aims and tasks are mutually compatible. The content of the study programme has been developed in accordance with the map of professions included in the structure of the branch of business, finance, accounting and administration (wholesale and retail trade, commercial sciences), the profession standard "Office administrator", and the recommendations of the professional associations.

The tasks of the study programme and the achievable results follow the aim of the study programme, thus the connection is clearly visible in the content of the study programme, which is created sequentially and gradually in order to achieve the study results (the mapping of study programme "Office management" provided in Annex 46).

Admission in the study programme is organized according to the Admission requirements at the CBA, which state that a person can be enrolled in the studies if a person has received a document of general secondary education or secondary vocational education. According to the Regulation on Admission of the CBA, persons general secondary education or secondary vocational education can be enrolled in the studies, with passed centralized exams in Latvian, foreign language, and mathematics.

Implementing the program in the form of extramural studies or distance learning is suitable for working adults, including outside Latvia.

In 2018/2019, there were 90 students (Annex 43. Statistics BV students). Out of 24 students enrolled in the programme, 8 or 33% students graduated. The total number of students has significantly increased during the last two years (from 36 students in 2016/2017 to 90 students in 2018/2019).

Analysing provided statistics on the number of students, it can be concluded that this programme has a very high dropout rate (e.g. enrolled students in 2016/2017 -24 and graduates in 2017/2018 - only 6), which indicates that there are probably certain problems in the programme. Perhaps therefore the management of the CBA decided to make changes in this programme.

## **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

To conclude, the goal of the study programme "Office Management" is the same as for other study programmes. There are no specific aims set in the study programme.

### **Strengths**

1. The name of the programme, aim, tasks and professional qualification are logically interrelated, distance learning is suitable for working adults can be regarded as program strengths.
2. Admission requirements correspond to the programme aim and objectives and are clearly described at Regulations on Admission.

### Weaknesses

1. There are found different names of the programme on the CBA website and self-assessment report.
2. The dropout rate of students is very high.

## 2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

### Analysis

The descriptions of the internships, study courses are of good quality and include all the required information e.g. course aims, learning outcomes, course content and planned hours, recommended literature and additional sources of information, organisation of the independent studies and assessment structure.

At the moment, according to the director of the programme, the positioning of the programme on the market is changing – it was focused on government sector, but now the programme is more focused on private business preparing specialists for big companies. The analysis of programme curricula revealed the absence of study course on international aspects, except one free choice study course “International management” and only one topic – “International Economic Relations” in the course “Economics”.

The programme has been developed in cooperation with representatives of employers and professional organisations. They participate in defence of qualification theses, internship commissions, seem very passionate about the programme and involved in its implementation. Employers provide internships for students and are involved in discussions of internship results. Representatives of employers and professional organisations are lecturers at College and as they said during the meeting with accreditation experts are actively involved in improvement of course syllabus.

This allows experts to be ensured that employer demands and the standards set by professional organisations are fulfilled and College prepares students for the real market. The experts identified that College has cooperation agreements that ensure internship places for students (7 Annex: Cooperation Agreements). Permanent cooperation with employers and professional organisations allows students to find places for the internship.

All study courses are relevant and complementary, they comply with the aims of the study programme and ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes.

The teaching methods are diverse. Lecturers mentioned specially prepared books, video lectures, audio lectures, Business games; Podcasts; case-studies, etc. Students approved that 100% lecturers use the variety of ways of methods and they are diverse and interesting.

Evaluation methods of each study course are indicated in the course syllabus. All courses are 2 CP. The final evaluation is unified for all courses at whole College and consists of discussion task – 50% and the final exam – 50%. For obtaining the final evaluation, both activities should hold successful evaluation – not below 4 points. The final evaluation is the average grade in 10-point system, in the proportion of percentage distributed amongst both activities. Students see the syllabus and evaluation at the beginning of each course. Usually, there are 8 contact hours/video/audio, 18 hours for distance learning, 8 hours for discussion and 8 hours for the exam.

The study process takes into account the principles of student-centered education, for example, students are involved in the process of improvements of the study programme and study environment by means of student surveys, as well as by active involvement in the work of the CBA.

In the summer of 2019, the survey of students was conducted. As the strengths of the CBA and the study programme, students have indicated: a set of study materials, transparent and easy-to-use study materials, mid-term examinations - Moodle discussions, opportunity to study at your own time, professional academic staff, quick feedback. The students have indicated the following aspects to be improved: to improve the communication possibilities in the Moodle environment, the possibility to

see corrections of mistakes in the Moodle environment.

The graduate survey was completed by 32 respondents in 2020. All respondents would recommend the study program "Office management".

It should be noted that the rating obtained in all survey criteria ranges from "more agree" (3 points) to "strongly agree" (4 points), with the average score of 3.31 for all criteria that is the lowest result among all programmes offered by the College.

Because of study language – only Latvian, there is no student mobility in the programme.

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

The descriptions of the study courses and the internships are of high quality and comply with the provisions set forth in the regulatory enactments. The content is relevant and complementary, and it complies with the aims of the study programme, ensures the achievement of the learning outcomes, and meets the needs of the relevant industry. The absence of study courses on international aspects should be eliminated. Regarding up to date compulsory literature, more precision in the course descriptions would be recommended.

The study implementation methods, including the evaluation methods, contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study courses and the study programme. Student-centered learning and teaching principles are taken into account.

There is an absence of the incoming and outgoing mobility for students.

The outcomes of the surveys conducted among the students, alumni and employers are used to improve the quality of studies.

#### **Strengths**

1. The content of the programme is logical, consistent and corresponds to the aim and objectives of the programme and ensure the achievement of defined learning outcomes.
2. There are used diverse teaching methods and study materials that is suitable for specifics of distance learning.
3. Results of conducted surveys are used for further programme development.

#### **Weaknesses**

1. Sources older than 5-7 years are indicated as the main literature in majority of course descriptions.
2. There is one description with literature in English only although the course is taught in Latvian.
3. There is no student mobility.

### **3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme**

#### **Analysis**

The amount of the tuition fee for the programme and the payment procedure for each academic year is determined and approved by the Management Board of the CBA. Students can choose an individual payment schedule according to their financial capabilities. The marketing and sales strategy of the College is to offer tuition discounts and carry out various promotions to help to increase student enrolment according to the prognosis.

To stimulate the provision of additional resources, the CBA administration has attracted additional funding in 2019 from the European Union (150,000 €), which is invested in the development of the study process and programme content till the end of 2020.

Salaries paid to academic staff for teaching courses and maintaining study content also account for a large percentage of funding. In addition, the major contribution to the creation of video content is worth mentioning. The choice of this format is in line with the strategy of the CBA and offers

significant advantages in the study process, allowing students to adjust the speed of learning to their abilities, thus not burdening the academic staff and efficiently utilizing the resources available. Students' self-government activities are financed from the budget of the CBA in accordance with the Article 53 of the Law on HEI.

The most significant increase in expenses is in the positions of remuneration and external services. This is related to the implementation of the strategic plan of the CBA. Work is being done to improve study programmes in accordance with the latest trends in education, and innovations and IT solutions have been introduced in the study process. Automated internal study support management and administrative processes. Increase in administration costs – it consists of staff salaries, taxes, expenses for business trips, rent of premises for on-site classes. The number of enrolled students continues to increase in the academic year 2019/2020 at the CBA. Net turnover in 2019 increased by 24.24% compared to 2018. In 2019, costs, directly related to production or provision of services have also increased by 18.17%.

During the meetings with experts students, graduates and academic staff shared high evaluation of study facilities and appreciated the infrastructure provided. The study provision of the programme is based on Moodle platform that match the needs of distance learning in the best way. There are both study materials and audio and video recordings developed by the lecturers in the Moodle environment. The Zoom platform is used to conduct lectures online. For student support is used Skype, e-mail, and phone. There are functional facilities for administrative staff too.

The programmes' students have access to databases such as Britannica Academic edition, SAGE, Taylor & Francis – eBooks, Library PressDisplay, BiblioRossica Eurionitor International, Scopus, Ebrary, Passport GMID, ScienceDirect, RUBRICON, ProQuest, EBSCO eBook.

Library resources are ensured in cooperation with Riga Graduate School of Law (Annex 7) that is located in the same building. The working hours of library are adapted for student's needs: library works until 8 p.m. twice a week and is open on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month when lectures are being implemented in person. The collection of the library is updated on a regular basis as the curriculum develops. Library has electronic catalogue for book reservation, access to two e-journals, five databases and option to reserve books from other HEI libraries. The CBA has own textbooks. The study programme faculty creates these materials independently and all copyrights belong to the CBA. The foreign (English) language special literature in the library is not the latest and there could be more.

## **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

In general, the study foundation, information base including libraries, material, and technical base, and financial foundation correspond to the specifics of both the study programme and implementation conditions and create preconditions for the achievement of study outcomes, thus, demonstrating the ability to ensure the delivery of high-quality study process.

### **Strengths:**

1. The CBA students have access to Internet resources that offer up-to-date information from industry professionals.
2. Strong, unique distance learning base programme.
3. Satisfaction with Moodle system.
4. The agreement with Riga Graduate School of Law about using their premises for lectures and using the library.
5. Modern CBA owns library with printed materials and the reading room, which is available for students' individual work.

### **Weaknesses**

1. The foreign (English) language special literature in the library is not the latest and there could be more.

#### **4. Teaching Staff**

##### **Analysis**

The implementation of the study programme is ensured by 28 academic staff members, of which 4 (or 10.7%) are assistant professors, 3 – lecturers and 21 – course instructors or guest lecturers. The academic staff involved in the implementation of the study programme according to their scientific degree consists of 3 PhDs, 23 (82.1%) teachers with Master's degree and 2 specialists with higher education. During the reporting period, both quantitative and qualitative changes in the composition of the academic staff members have taken place. The share of academic staff members with PhD degree almost doubled (from 5.4% to 10.7%) and the proportion of academic staff members with a Bachelor's degree has decreased more than twice (from 18.9% to 7.1%). The total number of academic staff members involved in the programme has fallen from 37 to 28. The instructors of all general education courses have at least Master's degree. Professional academic staff members are involved in the implementation of the study programme. The education acquired by the instructors of the specialized courses corresponds to the field of the study course.

The CBA policy is to ensure that qualified, scientifically and methodologically trained instructors who use current teaching methods in their work, which is particularly important for the implementation and development of distance learning materials, deliver all study courses. The collaboration of the academic staff members is encouraged through lifelong learning seminars organized by the CBA, exchanging new ideas in teaching practice and research, and suggestions for topics or didactic techniques to add to the course.

The policy of the CBA is to promote and develop the research activities of the academic staff in order to ensure the use of the latest and most up-to-date information in the study process and to promote the research skills of the students. Out of 13 academic staff who have scientific papers, 6 are from the programme "Office Management". The academic staff together with the students are encouraged to prepare scientific papers and present their research at conferences. The mechanisms to promote the involvement of the students in scientific research include a course "Research design", which is a compulsory course in all study programmes of the CBA, writing the qualification paper, attending annual scientific research workshop, and participating in scientific conferences. The motivation of students' participation together with teaching staff members in scientific conferences could be increased and outcomes more efficiently disseminated on the website of the CBA.

##### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

Since the previous accreditation, there have been positive changes in the composition of the academic staff, namely, the number of lecturers employed in the study programme has decreased, but the share of teachers with PhD degree and Master's degree has increased. The composition of the academic staff meets the requirements of regulatory enactments.

##### **Strengths**

1. Incentives for academic staff members for scientific activities.
2. Out of 13 academic staff who have scientific papers, 6 are from the programme "Office Management".

##### **Weaknesses**

1. Study programme could be enhanced by lecturers of specialised courses about international topics.

2. The motivation of students' participation together with teaching staff members in scientific conferences could be increased and outcomes more efficiently disseminated on the website of the CBA.

## 5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Office Management"

### 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

**Justification:** Sample of the diploma provided in Annex 49 complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued.

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

**Justification:** Agreements about possibilities to continue the education are signed with:

1. RISEBA 9-02/2019-7,
2. Alberta Koledža LIG/2018/02

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

**Justification:** Sample of Study contract is provided in Annex 51.

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

**Justification:** CV-s of the teaching staff indicate the proficiency of the official language.

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

**Justification:** Not applicable.

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

**Justification:** Not applicable.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

**Justification:** Not applicable.

- 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

**Justification:** Sample of Study contract is provided in Annex 51.

- 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

**Justification:** The descriptions of the study courses include the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; the content of the study; the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, other sources of information; the organisation and tasks for the independent work of students; 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:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** Conformity of the study programme with the professional standard is provided in Annex 45.

Compliance of the qualification to be acquired after the acquisition of the study programme with the actual profession standard "Office administrator" (Profession code – 3341 01), approved with the order of the Ministry of Education and Science No. 424 on September 8, 2003, and approved at the Cabinet of Ministers on May 23, 2017 has been verified:  
(<https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=291004>).

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

**Justification:** Not applicable.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** Compliance with the requirements defined in the national standard of the first level professional higher education (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation of 20 March 2001 No. 141 "Regulation on the National Standard of First Level Professional Higher Education") is evident from the Appendix 22. <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=6397>

- 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

**Justification:** Not applicable.

- 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

**Justification:** List of publications is presented in Annex 6. Five-year practical work experience is evident from CV of staff members.

15 P5 - Overall rating

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

**Justification:** The CBA is fully operating in accordance with requirements of legislation.

## 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

**Justification:** The programme have good resource base, the students and the teaching staff have access to the necessary resources to ensure 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

**Justification:** The instructors of all general education courses have at least Master's degree (more than 80% of all staff members) and 4 (16% of all staff members) staff members have PhD degree.

The qualification of the academic staff members, visiting lecturers, comply with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

**Justification:** Not applicable.

## Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

To conclude, the first level professional higher education study programme "Office Managements" name and professional qualification to be acquired, the aim, the tasks, and admission requirements are interrelated. More study courses on international aspects could be included in the curricula. Programme design and content of the study courses correspond to the industry requirements. The study provision, informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision correspond to the specifics of both the study program and implementation conditions and create preconditions for the achievement of study outcomes, thus, demonstrating the ability to ensure the delivery of high-quality study process.

Strengths:

1. The management follows up to the demands of the labour market by actively communicating with employers.
2. The name of the study programme is changed, so that it is up to date and does not mislead students.
3. The students have access to paid Internet resources that offer up-to-date information from industry professionals.
5. The CBA's management has made personnel changes to improve the quality of the study



programme.

Weakness:

1. The aim of study programme "Office Management" is the same like other study programmes.
2. The dropout rate of students is high.
3. The CBA should involve more students in scientific writing.
4. The foreign (English) language special literature in the library is not the latest and there could be more.
5. Only teachers participate in scientific conferences.
6. Additional study courses on international aspects are necessary to include.

### **Evaluation of the study programme "Office Management"**

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

### **6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Office Management"**

#### **Short-term recommendations**

- |  |
|--|
| 1. To use only one name of the programme on the CBA website and in official documentation.   |
| 2. To revise the aim of the programme. It should be more specific in particular area and it should be achievable through programme content (international aspect). |
| 3. Regarding up to date compulsory literature, more precision in the course descriptions is recommended.   |

#### **Long-term recommendations**

- |   |
|---|
| 1. To identify the reasons for the high dropout rate and to develop an action plan to eliminate them or to reduce their impact. |
| 2. To increase the involvement of students and academic staff in scientific activities.   |
| 3. To eliminate the shortage of foreign (English) language special literature in the library.                                   |

## **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
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			The culture of continuous improvement is evident at the CBA.
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.	Fully compliant			5 Erasmus+ agreements with foreign HEI, 12 agreements with private firms (for internships) and 6 general cooperation agreements with private enterprises, NGOs, and HEIs serve as evidence of cooperation.
R3 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the development level thereof (if applicable).	Fully compliant			List of publications is provided in Annex 6.
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			Recommendations of both expert commissions were implemented according to the plans which were prepared after the accreditation process.

#### 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	Accounting and financial planning (41344)	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Not relevant	Average
2	Business Logistics (41345)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Not relevant	Good

<b>No.</b>	<b>Study programme</b>	<b>R5</b>	<b>R6</b>	<b>R7</b>	<b>R8</b>	<b>Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)</b>
3	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Management (41345)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Not relevant	Good
4	Marketing and Trade (41345)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Not relevant	Good
5	Personnel Psychology and Human Resources Management (41345)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Not relevant	Good
6	Office Management (41346)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Not relevant	Good

### **The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts**

NO.