

Expert group joint opinion

Evaluation Procedure: Assessment of Study Field

Higher Education Institution: Latvian Academy of Culture agency "Latvian College of Culture at the Latvian Academy of Culture"

Study field: Arts

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

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The study field "Arts" at the Latvian College of Culture (LCC) at the Latvian Academy of Culture (LAC) meets the needs and the development trends of the society and national economy. The study field is relevant and complies with the strategic goals of the LCC.

The LCC provides short-cycle (2 years) professional study programmes (corresponding to Level 5 of the European Qualifications Framework (hereinafter EQF)) and a vocational higher education qualification for the students. The study field "Arts" has one study programme "Contemporary Dance" with four specialisations: Contemporary dance, Hip-hop dance, Jazz dance and Latvian dance.

The short cycle level of the LCC causes some problems for the development of the studies: It is difficult to find similar level international partners in Europe and it is difficult to get local or international funding for research/artistic creation as it is usually intended for academic level studies. The experts also want to point out that the short cycle level also provides the students a diploma in dance that is very close to BA-level but does not give the BA-degree nor proper possibilities to continue straight to BA- or MA-level studies. The fact may force some of the graduates to start the BA-level studies from zero, in case one wants to continue the studies.

The LCC is going to merge with LAC in 2025-2027, which the experts consider a strategic opportunity for the next development step of the study field "Arts". The consolidation process is very important for the LCC as it provides possible solutions to the aforementioned challenges of the study field and the study programme. Directors of the LCC and the study programme are aware of the challenges and also see opportunities in the merger with LAC, which is a positive feature.

The titles of the study programme, specialisations and the vocational qualification should comply with the core of the studies. First of all, the title of the programme should be "Dance" as contemporary dance refers to a specific art form and genre, which is, for example, available in the LAC and also as a specialisation of the programme. Contemporary dance is a narrower concept than Dance. The qualification "leader of a dance group" is somewhat misleading in other contexts than maybe Latvian dance. The title of the programme and the qualification "leader of a dance group" are not perfectly describing the content of the programme, which means that in the next possible phase when the legislation can be changed, it would be important to at least consider the title of the qualification. The experts consider that the core content is the education of dancing skills to be able to teach dancing both individuals and groups in various dance industry contexts and also to educate some performing skills as some of the graduates will also be performing. In that sense, the title of the programme "Dance" is better, as already intended by the LCC.

Anyhow, the experts suggest rethinking the programme and the specialisation structure, as well as the titles of them, bearing in mind that the students get relevant opportunities for continuation into BA-studies and immersion into either pedagogic or artistic/performing/dancing skills for the best possible employability. However, there are several development paths to consider.

Recreation of the comprehensive "Dance" study programme is an option with some renewal. There could be two specialisations: Dance group leader (especially Latvian dances) and Dance with a selection of electives in diverse dance forms, both specialisations with slightly different emphasis.

Another option would be to create a comprehensive "Dance Teacher" study programme instead, with a bit more pedagogic content, depending on the legislation and discussions with the LAC and the stakeholders.

It would be important to create study paths to BA in contemporary dance, BA in choreography and BA in dance pedagogy and thus later to MA-level programmes. As the management and the local industry members have the best knowledge about the environment and the resources, the decisions are to be made by them in collaboration. The experts suggest that during the rethinking process of

the programme/specialisations, the core competencies and the course structure are evaluated and the current, fragmented courses are collected into bigger modules.

Considering the small size of administration of the LCC, it has a well developed Quality Assurance System. It is working well and the operations seem to be transparent and well administered. The student feedback system is working well. The system for assessment of students' achievements and learning outcomes is also developed in the LCC and the college has created principles of academic integrity as well. The management is actively developing the college and the study field, even though funding is scarce.

The experts praise the warm atmosphere of the LCC, the direct and trustful contact between the students, teachers and the study administration. It is very rare that the students give such positive and honest feedback as in the meeting during the site-visit. The student-centred approach was visible in every meeting. Even though the resources and the facilities are not at a satisfactory level, the main thing - the education itself and the atmosphere are satisfactory.

One of the main obstacles for the development of the study field are the scarce financial resources and the unsatisfactory facilities for the study field in the LCC. The historic, sympathetic building as such, needs renovation and especially the facilities for the core of the studies of the study programme, namely dance studios, need refurbishing. The LCC has established a system for distributing financial resources and for funding applied research and artistic creation but due to the minimal financial resources, the situation is not the best possible. Library resources and databases meet the basic needs of the study field "Arts" providing a collection of informational resources for both study and Qualification paper work purposes. The library also has remote access databases, materials and distance learning tools. Because of the educational level of a short cycle vocational higher education, there are difficulties to get funding for developing applied research or artistic creations. The LCC, especially artistic creation, is too dependent on project funding. Thus, the LCC wishes to increase financial support after the consolidation with the LAC.

The experts consider that the LCC has a transparent system for attracting qualified teaching staff. However, an obstacle for the development of the study field is the fact that the whole teaching staff, even the Director of the study field, are working part-time. Teachers' teaching hours are relatively few and the salaries are not at a satisfactory level. Despite the facts, the Director of the study field and the teachers are still highly motivated and very enthusiastic about the study process. The experts recommend exploring the possibilities of recruiting the Director of the study field and the heads of specialisations full-time to ensure concentration on the management and pedagogical work at the LCC.

Artistic creation/applied research on a small scale is included in the study process. The artistic creation and basics of academic writing are integrated in the study process especially during the Qualification works. The students have very good possibilities for practice during the studies and the students are very satisfied with the practice. The procedures for Practice and Qualification paper/creative work are very well explained, but study descriptions should be included. The students final thesis, the Qualification papers, correspond to the content of the study programme.

Cooperation with local institutions is direct, continuous and mainly sufficient for the study programme, but international collaborations, visiting teachers and artistic projects could be selected more strategically. The international mobility of the students and the staff is somewhat underdeveloped and could be enhanced. The LCC is working on developing internationalisation, paying particular attention to the search for relevant cooperation partners in the future. The experts consider the intention very important, especially after the consolidation with the LAC, as it seems that currently there are not enough relevant, equal level international partners.

I - Assessment of the Study Field

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1.1 Management of the Study Field

Analysis

1.1.1. The study field "Arts" at the Latvian College of Culture (LCC) at the Latvian Academy of Culture (LAC) meets the needs and the development trends of the society and national economy. The study field is relevant and complies with the strategic goals of the LCC.

According to Annex 4, the development strategy of the study field is connected to the long-term strategy, the LCC's development and operation plan for 2021-2027. The plan has been developed according to the strategic goals of the Latvian National Development Plan for 2021-2027, the Education Policy Guidelines and the "Cultural State" priorities of the national cultural policy guidelines.

According to the Self Assessment Report (SAR, p. 4), the vision of the LCC is to create a multifunctional, sustainable and creative cultural space for the study process that is also integrated in the work environment and based on the needs of the industry's labour market. The LCC educates professionals for the cultural sector. It also offers "evening programmes" for professionals, who already are working in the industry to obtain qualification, as well as it provides opportunities for lifelong education, further education and professional development.

The long-term goal of the LCC is focused on supporting and creating the nation state based on culture and language, the people, community and developing, preserving and popularising national culture and also on ensuring the sustainable development of Latvia but at the same time ensuring openness to cultural diversity. (SAR, p. 4).

The LCC is going to merge with the LAC in 2025-2027, which both the management of the LCC and the experts consider a possibility for a relevant education development in the study field "Arts" .

The aims of the study field "Arts" at the LCC are basically well defined and attainable. It is expressed in the SAR (p. 4) that the study field is implemented with the aim of preparing professionally knowledgeable and skilled leaders of dance groups. The qualification of a "Leader of a dance group", is internationally a little unclear definition. According to the site visit (17-18.1.2024) the "leader of a dance group" seems to mean rather the "dance teacher", who can also supervise groups. It may be a translation question and an expression connected to the Latvian dance tradition. However, dance teacher or dance pedagogue is internationally a more used expression for the similar type of education.

The education is a short-cycle (2 years) professional study programme (corresponding to Level 5 of the European Qualifications Framework (hereinafter EQF)), providing a diploma for the students but not an academic degree. The study field has one study programme "Contemporary Dance" with four specialisations: Contemporary dance, Hip-hop dance, Jazz dance and Latvian dance. As described in the self assessment report (SAR, p. 4) the College prepares specialists, who already work in the industry during their studies – both as part of internships and as part of practical lessons integrated in lectures, while learning theoretical principles and conducting applied research relevant to the industry of their studies.

According to the SAR (p. 14), the strategic goal of the study field "Arts" is to prepare competitive specialists for the cultural sector with balanced skills that meet future needs, providing competitive and student-centred short-cycle professional higher education in the dance industry and promoting the growth of the persons involved in the education process into enterprising, creative, responsible and competitive members of society.

The described aims in the SAR (p. 14) are relatively abstract compared to the factual aims described at the site visit (17.01.2024), meeting with the director of the study field and heads of the specialisations. The factual core and aim are to educate dance teachers of various dance styles (national dances, contemporary dance and contemporary show/jazz/popular dance styles like hip hop) with comprehensive skills of dancing, teaching and leading a group of children and/or adults. Especially important aim is to give a possibility for already working adults to study part time national

dances and pedagogy to get a qualification to teach.

The study field is relevant for the Latvian society as there is demand for national dance teachers around Latvia as the national dance heritage is very strong, popular and alive and practised in all towns and areas of Latvia. As well, the new dance forms like hip-hop are attractive to many young people. As heard during the site visit from the director of the study field, there is demand for teachers as a generation change is going on.

The study field "Arts" has only one programme, so it may not have any interconnection with following BA or MA-level programmes. There are three study fields in the LCC: "Arts", "Management, Administration and Real Estate Management" and "Information and communication sciences". Each study field has one study programme (SAR, p. 5). The dance students (on site visit 18.01.2024) had asked for more collaboration/interconnection with other, same level programmes, which had been taken into account by the college.

1.1.2. In the SAR (p. 16), it is proved that the LCC has created a SWOT-analysis of the operations of the study field "Arts" and analysed the weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The SWOT- analysis was carried out on the basis of the evaluation of students and lecturers, the results of graduate surveys, as well as employer surveys and the report of accreditation experts (SAR, p. 16).

The strengths that the SWOT (SAR, p. 18) mentions - and which the experts consider also strong strengths - are: The study field covers the diversity of popular dance genres and offers education in contemporary dance, which is rarely available in Latvia and that it offers qualification for Latvian dance teachers/group leaders that already work in the sector. The clearest weakness analysed in the SWOT - considered by the experts as well a clear weakness - is the limited resources for the renovation of premises necessary for the safe and proper dance studies.

The SWOT considers one of the possibilities for the study field: The future cooperation with the LAC and Jazeps Vitols Latvian Academy of Music (JVLMA) in order to achieve more favourable conditions and continuation of studies for graduates. The experts as well consider the coming merger the most important future issue and opportunity for the LCC and for the study field.

Main threats for the study field are insufficient labour market and level of salaries for young professionals, which may lead to a decrease of students, especially in the jazz dance specialisation. (SAR, p. 19) The experts agree on the mentioned possibility and the threats.

Overall, the SWOT has been carried out well.

Also, a development plan of the study field has been done and developed in the fall of 2022, clarified at the beginning of 2023 after the approval of the "Latvian Dance Strategy 2023 - 2027" by the Latvian Dance Council (SAR, p. 20). The fact also proves a good connection of the LCC staff with the stakeholders. The findings and operations and the responsible staff member have been included in the development plan (Annex 4).

1.1.3. The management structure of the college and study field is clear (Annex 1 and 5). The main managing roles are the board of the LCC, Director and Deputy Directors, study field/programme Director and the heads of 4 specialisations. The work division between the directors is also explained in the SAR. The management structure is logical. The management is oriented to the development of the field and the programme. To improve the quality of the study process, a new collegial decision-making body, the Council of Study Programmes, was established in the fall of 2022. The composition of the Council of Study Programmes consists of the Director, Deputy directors, heads of departments and Directors of study programmes, the Department of Studies, one representative of the academic staff and one representative of the students' self-government (SAR, p. 21).

The study programme "Contemporary Dance" is the only programme in the study field "Arts" (SAR, p. 21, Annex 5).

Considering the site visit and feeling the atmosphere in the meetings, it also seems that the decision-making is efficient and open. According to the discussion with the management, the

experts got an impression that the new Director of the LCC and the heads of specialisations are strategically aware and the management is developing the study field well, also seeing possibilities in the merger with LAC - and planning the merger well in advance.

1.1.4. The system has been set up and procedures for the admission of students are well explained in the SAR (p. 23). Accordingly, admission requirements are governed by the annual "Admission Rules" approved by the College Board. Admission requirements are determined taking into account the requirements of regulatory acts, as well as the specifics of study programme specialisations. The requirements are evaluated at the department meeting, based on the statistical data collected by the study programme and the results achieved by students in their studies, in consultation with employers. After harmonising the additional requirements in the Council of Higher Education, the Admission Rules have been approved by the Rector of the Latvian Academy of Culture. Some clarifications were also made in the admission rules for the 2024/2025 study year because of certain legislation changes.

The procedures for admission of students are also well explained in the SAR in a picture "Entrance examinations for the study programme Dance", (Table 3, p. 23) and it was also explained during the meetings.

The recognition of the study period and professional experience, and prior and non-formal education is proved in the SAR (p. 24-25), but also in the meeting with graduates (18.01.2024), where the experts heard an example from a graduate, whose prior education had been taken into account.

It remains unclear how well the involved stakeholders know and are informed about the systems for the over mentioned issues. However, during the meeting with the employers (17.01.2024), who probably are a group of important "involved stakeholders", it became clear that the connection between the employers and the college is quite direct.

1.1.5. The system for assessment of students' achievements and learning outcomes is developed in the LCC. The regulatory document of the LCC "Examination Regulations" determines the order in which examinations are to be administered and accepted in the study programmes of the college, and how students' knowledge is assessed (SAR, p. 27). It is explained that students' study results are evaluated accordingly: (1) qualitative assessment in percentage; (2) final grade in a 10-point system; (3) the number of credit points measure the scope of the study course.

Assessment of students' performance takes place per study courses, defence of practice, pre-defence and defence of Qualification Papers. Also practice reports are evaluated and the college has developed a transparent process to assess the creative part of diploma work, the creative dance of the Qualification Paper.

According to the SAR (p. 27), the main forms of assessment of students' competencies are: Written and oral exams, tests at the end of courses, midterm tests (interim test of a study course lasting two semesters or more). In practical classes there are discussions, applied games, presentations of independent work, etc., research projects and summaries of independent work, or public defences/speaking. These forms of assessment are relevant for the study field "Arts". During the site visit it became clear that the teaching is very student-centred. Both the graduates and the students were speaking very enthusiastically about the education at the LCC and about the teachers. Rarely do a graduate say "I love the school" as did one of the graduates - and it seemed that she was honest.

The needs of the students are collected directly during the classes but also formally in the e-platform, where the students can evaluate the courses and the teaching and also express their needs. As heard during the site visit, the students' needs are also analysed and taken into account.

1.1.6. The LCC has created principles of academic integrity. According to the SAR (p. 28) it is explained that there is the "Code of Ethics of the College". Also basic ethical requirements of

students are described and the desired norms of student behaviour are determined. Students are introduced to the principles of academic integrity in the introductory lectures of the study course according to the chosen specialisation. The students sign the study agreement at the start of their studies, where (point 3.1.9) he/she promises to complete all studies independently, not allowing plagiarism nor using the results of another person's creation or ideas in his own name.

The LCC has also an agreement with the University of Latvia (from 2020) on the use of the Unified computerised plagiarism control system, and the qualification papers are checked. The LCC has also created a procedure in case plagiarism would appear. The internal regulatory document of the "Latvian College of Culture at the Latvian Academy of Culture" describes the procedure. In case of signs of plagiarism an evaluation is carried out according to the procedures and the decision is made by the College's Ethics Commission. The experts got an impression that the LCC has done a good job by now in preventing plagiarism and creating systems to develop a healthy working culture. It remains unclear how well the stakeholders are informed about the systems.

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

The study field "Arts" is based on the needs of the arts and culture labour market and on the need for professional development of dance teachers and dancers in the cultural sector. There is demand for dance teachers both in the schools, cultural centres of Latvia and in the private dance schools but also demand for dancers in the creative and entertainment industry, which is however limited.

The study field is small, having only one programme, with 4 specialisations, which are on the other hand similar in their aims/content and on the other hand different. The experts ponder that the specialisations need rethinking. The common core and aim seem to be to educate dance teachers of various dance styles (national dances, contemporary dance and show/jazz/popular street dance styles like hip hop), but also aiming at providing comprehensive dancing skills and a glance into all the forms and teaching/leading a group of children and/or adults. Nevertheless, the specialisations are different in the sense that the Latvian dance teacher education is extramural education studied on Fridays/Saturdays. It seems to be like a continuous education for the qualification of a teacher. Also, contemporary, jazz and hip hop styles differ in their working life environment and paths - even though teaching dance is the very probable way of getting a living in all the genres.

The management system is clear and the work division between the staff is well explained. The new Director of the LCC seems to be well aware of the coming challenges and the questions for the development of the study field. As the LCC will merge with the LAC, the experts consider that the most important task of the management is to reflect on what is the core aim of the programme, the level of the programme, what are the specialisations and how to create wider possibilities for the working life and further paths to BA-level education in LAC and JVLMA or maybe also abroad.

Overall, the required study administrative systems like admission, assessment of students and integrity procedures have been well implemented.

Strengths:

- 1) Relevant comprehensive study field/dance education for working life and preparation for bachelor level studies in LAC or JVLMA or abroad.
- 2) Extramural "part time" dance teacher/leader education in Latvian dances has demand and is important for survival and development of Latvian dances and for community development.
- 3) Dynamic management, who sees possibilities in the merger with LAC.
- 4) Positive and enthusiastic atmosphere in the College.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Somewhat unclearly expressed title (contemporary dance) /aim (leader of a dance group) of the

studies and specialisations.

2) Internationally relatively rare level and status of education in the arts, as it is between secondary and BA/MA-level higher education, which creates some problems for the LCC.

1.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System

Analysis

1.2.1. The LCC has established the internal quality assurance system based on the procedures specified in the internal regulatory acts and in accordance with the LCC's "Manual of Quality Management System " that describes the main processes, their governing documents and procedures. (SAR, p. 29-30). The quality policy is developed and the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system is working according to the principle of continuous development: Plan – Do – Check – Act.

Directly in charge of implementation and organisation of the quality assurance system is the Deputy Director of International Cooperation, Research and Development, who in tune with the Council of the Study Programmes makes decisions relevant for the aims and learning outcomes of the study field and the study programme. The Council meets twice a month, discusses organisational issues, analyses quality of the study process and updates regulation of documents (as reported on the Meeting with members of the group responsible for the preparation of Self-Assessment report, the person responsible for QA management system.). During the site-visit strong enthusiasm and dedication for continuous improvement, development and operational efficiency of the study programme was detected, with an elaborate plan of improvement upon merging with the LAC.

1.2.2. The procedure for the development and the review of the relevant study programme are logical, efficient and available, yet the development possibilities are restricted with limited financial resources. One of the means of collecting the information of the requirements to improve the quality of study courses is the student's evaluation; students are invited to express their assessment in a survey available in the e-study environment, where the lecturer of the study course can be acquainted with the information provided. After evaluating the recommendations and criticism, the lecturer updates the description of his study course by the beginning of the next study year and submits the updated version for consideration to the Council of Study Programmes. The Director of the study programme collects recommendations for evaluation in the Council of Study Programmes. The council has created a unified catalogue of LCC study courses, which is available in the e-study environment. (SAR, p. 30)

The SAR (p. 30) states that: „The strength of the College's internal quality system is the relatively short path from the identification of deficiencies to the acceptance of the solution for improving the study processes” and the conclusions were confirmed during multiple meetings during the site visit. For instance, as heard during the site visit (17.01.2024, Meeting with members of the group responsible for the preparation of the Self-Assessment report, the person responsible for the QA management system), Latvian dance extramural specialisation was introduced upon detecting significant drop out rates of already employed students, who were not able to attend the lectures. The students generally expressed (18.01.2024, Meeting with the students) having good communication with the staff and administration and the process of giving suggestions is clear; after the survey at the end of each semester they receive feedback from the LCC with the list of improvements done or to be implemented based on the results.

The SAR (p. 29) refers to continuous surveys conducted among employers relating to the quality of study content, even though during the site visit (17.01.2024 Meeting with the employers) such continuous means of collecting information were not confirmed. The teachers and Director of the Study field meet regularly with prominent professionals in the field and discuss the study results, but more on the informal level.

1.2.3. The SAR (p. 33) indicates that: "Appeals regarding the assessment of study results or the conduct of examinations are considered in accordance with the procedure established by the College Examination Regulations and Regulation for Qualification Examinations." According to regulations students are encouraged to express their opinion and should receive feedback on the problem within 14 days at the latest, and jointly agree on the actions to be taken to resolve the situation. At the Meeting with the students during the site visit, students confirmed being informed of the clear procedure for making complaints, even though they mentioned it is not in use often, because the studying process takes place in small groups and discrepancies of opinions and approaches are resolved in direct communication and personal contact.

The site visit demonstrated that as the study process is developed in relatively small groups, good communication between students and teachers is detected and an enthusiastic atmosphere for resolving potential conflicts.

1.2.4. The LCC collects and analyses the data related to the study process to be able to plan the changes to be made and the necessary improvements in the implementation of the study course. The aforementioned "Manual of Quality Management" contains system process maps that are directly related to data collection mechanisms; "Process Map of Data and Information Management" and the "Map of Study quality Assessment", which include such types of assessment as applicants' survey, student survey, graduate survey, etc. The two most important activities are the collection of data on the course of the students' studies, as well as the survey of students and graduates (SAR, p. 35).

Low number of students enables a very student centred study process and monitoring students' performance is an important tool for planning the study process. The data is collected approximately one month before the end of the semester, especially the data on unsuccessful students are collected, these data and the situation of each individual student are reviewed by the Council of Study Programmes. (SAR, p. 35) At the end of each year, the statistics of the number of students are collected, the dynamics of changes in the number of students are evaluated in order to be able to plan the next year's funding and financial flow (SAR, p. 36).

1.2.5. Information about the study field and the study programme implemented within it is published on the College's website <https://kulturaskoledza.lv/>

The LCC has an active website which provides detailed information about the college, but as the study programme is conducted only in Latvian, the information is far more detailed in Latvian. "The information available on the website is regularly updated. Deputy Director in the course of studies, is responsible for the compliance of the documents available on the website, and the head of the Secretariat is responsible for posting information on the website. Departments of Studies are responsible for the compliance of information in the official registers." (SAR, p. 36)

The information regarding the length of the study, qualification to be obtained in the study programme and other valuable information is available, it corresponds to the information published in the official registers (VIIS and E-platform) and sufficient to enable students the relevant insight into the programme, when choosing what to study.

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

In general terms the internal quality assurance system is fairly developed. The procedures for the development and review of the relevant study programme are clear and the deficiencies are resolved in a rather short period of time. The LCC provides regular students surveys, collects and analyses the data related to the study process in order to implement the improvements in the study course. Relevant information for applicants and students are available on the LCC's website.

Overall, the experts concluded that the LCC has developed and maintains a relevant quality

assurance system. The management of processes is an important part of a proper quality assurance system. The experts conclude that according to the site visit and the SAR (p. 36-37) also the important processes like budgeting and recruitment of teachers are transparent at the LCC, which was proved by the SAR and a document "Budget structure of the study programme "Contemporary Dance" of the study field "ARTS", which was sent to the experts on 09.02.2024.

Strengths:

- 1) The LCC has established a solid internal quality assurance system.
- 2) The procedures for the development and review of the relevant study programme is efficient.
- 3) The short path from the identification of deficiencies to the acceptance of the solution for improving the study processes.
- 4) The mechanism developed for submission of student complaints and suggestions is effective.

Weaknesses:

None.

Assessment of the requirement [1]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LCC has developed a relevant internal quality assurance system to ensure continuous improvement and development of the study field.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The policy and procedure for assuring the quality of higher education are clear and effective.

- 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

The mechanisms for development of the study programme and supervision of the performance as well as periodic inspections have been developed.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The criteria, conditions, and procedures for the evaluation of students' results are a clear reflection of the learning outcomes.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The internal procedures and mechanisms for assuring the qualifications of the academic staff

are developed and effective.

- 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

The HEI collects and analyses the data on the study achievements, employment of the graduates, satisfaction of the students with the study programme, efficiency of the work of the academic staff to be able to plan the changes to be made and the necessary improvements in the implementation of the study course.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The HEI ensures continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field whilst implementing its quality assurance systems according to the available funds.

1.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field

Analysis

1.3.1. The LCC has established a system for distributing financial resources for the study field. The LCC indicates that the annual budget consists of state funding, income from educational services like fees, courses and seminars, renting premises, project funding like EU structural funds and local funding and funding from the cooperation partners (SAR, p. 36-37).

The financially responsible persons are mentioned. Those responsible for allocating the budget are the director, accounting specialist, and structural units under supervision of the LAC rector and financial manager (SAR, p. 37).

The distribution of funding for the study programme is based on the following costs: 1. Remuneration of academic and administrative staff; 2. Scholarships; 3. Costs of services (costs of communication services, information systems, etc.); 4. Costs of materials, energy resources and inventory (costs of building maintenance, costs of purchasing teaching aids and materials, costs of purchasing books and magazines, costs of equipment and inventory); 5. Marketing costs (SAR, p. 37). During 2023 the total budget of the LCC was EUR 581,997 from which state funding (82.57% or EUR 480,594.20) and student self-financing, the LCC revenues (17.42% or EUR 101,410). It can be seen that the biggest expenditure of the budget is the remuneration of academic and administrative staff (including taxes), 56%.

According to (SAR, p. 113-114) and site visit, the LCC had to pay tax debts from previous years, which means a very limited and tight budget. As it was expressed by the Management of the LCC on the site visit, the LCC funding is stable and there are no debts to be paid anymore in the recent period (SAR, p. 114). The description of the budget allows one to draw a conclusion that the system of distribution is relevant enough (SAR, p. 37) and that also the process is transparent. Also, when the costs of one study place in 2022 are calculated, the LCC concluded that the state budget is sufficient for the implementation of the study field (SAR, p. 37).

A system for funding applied research and artistic creation is implemented but due to the minimal financial resources, the situation is not the best possible. The financing of research and creativity are allocated mainly from funds of the Erasmus+ Education, Training, Youth and Sport Programme in Europe and projects of the State Cultural Capital Fund, the Riga City Council project competition, etc. (SAR, p. 38). According to the site visit, the system of allocating the project funding for the

study field is appropriate to the current financial situation where the LCC lacks their own resources for artistic creation. There are effective creative outcomes such as student's artistic works, masterclasses, creative projects and student's festivals funded by the projects (SAR, p. 54-55). However, the LCC is too dependent on project funding. The LCC wishes to increase financial support, regarding possible consolidation with the LAC.

As it is indicated (SAR, p. 37-38), in the long term, the amount of tuition fees must be evaluated and are planned to be increased. During the site visit, the Director of the LCC indicated that The Council of Study Programmes had decided to increase the study fees from EUR 1700 to EUR 1900 for full-time students and from EUR 1500 to EUR 1700 for part-time students. The decision of the fee raise was based on the need of funds for research and creative activities, as well as for the development of the technical and material base of the studies.

The experts conclude that the LCC should not be dependent on temporary project funding for students' creative works that are included in the curriculum thus the raise of fees is relevant.

1.3.2. The total surface area of the LCC premises is 3084.9 m², which includes 23 lecture halls, an event hall, a library, a photo and sound recording studio, a music studio, dance halls, conference rooms, administration rooms, teachers' rooms, dressing rooms, utility rooms and basement.

The lecture rooms and computer rooms used in the study process are equipped with the necessary material and technical equipment, however, could be improved. The halls dedicated to dance classes (Contemporary dance, Latvian dance, Jazz dance, Hip-hop dance), as observed during the site visit are not in optimal condition and require enhancements. Despite cosmetic upgrades being made in the dance halls in 2022, it is essential to pay particular attention to the dance studios. The classical dance studio's floor is dangerous for dancers as it is not a proper sprung dance floor which would protect the joints. The floor is worn out and the studio is very cold during the winter. Also mirrors would be needed in the dance studios, with curtains which cover the mirrors when pedagogically needed. As stated (SAR, p. 39), the most difficult situation is with the building's heating system during the winter period, which, as observed during the site visit and in response to requests from various parties, still needs to be upgraded. Especially downstairs dance studios need more heating.

As pointed out (SAR, p. 38), the LCC event hall is too small for Latvian stage folk dance productions. In experts' opinion all the dance studios and the stage in the event hall are small for dancing. There is a need for studios with larger capacity. During the site visit, the Director of the study programme "Contemporary Dance", specified that due to the fact that the building is situated in a historic location, the college has limited options to undertake extensive renovations. That is why the LCC establishes partnerships with various cultural centres in Latvia that can offer venues for larger performances.

As indicated in the site visit, resources (dance studios, music, video materials) for the study process are available both for students and teaching staff. If the students need additional, individual dance rehearsal time, they can apply for a studio, which is possible because of the small number of dance students. If the teaching staff need materials to be purchased, they can ask for it from the Director of the study programme and/or Management of the LCC. However improvement depends on budget possibilities, which are quite limited.

According to the site visit, there are very limited funds to improve the infrastructure of the LCC. As noted in the site visit, the infrastructure, material and technical support for the implementation of the study field are at a minimum acceptable level. However, the experts praise the LCC; the students did not complain about the conditions, which is an indication of an exceptionally good atmosphere in the college.

Generally, the Director of the study field "Arts" and the heads of the specialisations concluded that audio sound systems and lighting equipment have improved due to the collaboration with LAC and it is anticipated that the merger with the LAC will enhance the technical and material infrastructure of

the study process.

1.3.3. There is an established system and procedure for improvement and purchase of methodological and informative provision in the LLC. Students and teaching staff can order books and materials that are needed in the study process. As it was presented during the site visit, the process of consolidation of the LCC and LAC, could bring new financial opportunities for improvement of infrastructure, technical and material equipment.

The library premises' total area is 141 m². There are two reading rooms with open access collections and 28 workplaces and eight free-access computer workplaces available for students and academic staff. (SAR p. 39) The library offers a total of 7887 information resources (books, industry journals, CDs and DVDs, e-books) in Latvian, English and Russian. The LCC library is accessible for students from Monday to Thursday from 8:30 to 17:00, Friday from 08:30 to 16:00 and on Saturdays from 08:30 to 13:00 by recent arrangement. There is also free access to reading rooms, printing and scanning, wireless internet and other facilities (SAR, p. 39-40)

Library resources and databases meet the basic needs of the study field "Arts" providing a collection of informational resources for both study and Qualification paper work purposes. The library offers the following services: availability of printed and digital information resources, ordering resources from other libraries, electronic delivery of documents to users; consultations and training in thematic information search, information search and retrieval services; consultations on academic writing, principles of academic honesty, use of references, design of study papers, free-access computer workstations and wireless internet; printing, copying, scanning and binding of documents (SAR, p. 39-40). Student's Qualification papers are available in printed and digital form which is an important source for other students. There is also cooperation with Latvian National Library and LAC library which allows a wide range of materials and databases. However at the LCC library, there is a minimum number of printed books in contemporary dance, Latvian dance and pedagogical books appropriate to the education level of the study field. Some more English books/articles about dance and dance pedagogy could be added.

1.3.4. The electronic study (e-study) environment has been offered in the LCC since the study year 2016/2017. During the study year 2019/2020 the modernization of the e-study environment was carried out. The importance and active use of the communication technologies in terms of study process started to develop mainly during Covid 19 pandemic in the LCC.

The LCC library operates as the support centre for the use of the Moodle and Zoom platforms of the e-study environment, providing lessons and consultations to the students and lecturers.

Since the fall 2021, studies in the Latvian dance specialization are offered in part-time extramural form (SAR, p. 42). Hence, students engage in remote learning. To ensure remote studies, the LCC uses MS Teams and Zoom platforms (SAR, p. 42).

The LCC has developed the e-study environment Moodle, but given the unique study format of the "Contemporary Dance" programme and the prevalence of a large proportion of practical lessons, the daily usage of Moodle is relatively low. It is mainly used for theoretical courses and less often for practical ones, as well as serves for conducting student surveys and collecting feedback on the courses.

As observed on the site visit, a single template is employed for all study courses in Moodle across their respective sections. Also, it was confirmed that the use of other technologies is active, explored and used. For example, many artistic diploma works are done in dance video format. The technology solutions can be rated as appropriate for the study process, also used tools are available and accessible for students and the teaching staff.

1.3.5. Election to an academic position takes place in accordance with the procedure established by the Law on Higher Education Institutions and in accordance with the regulatory document

"Regulations on academic and administrative positions" adopted by the College Board and approved by the Senate of LAC. (SAR, p. 42) (https://kulturaskoledza.lv/en/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/03/ENG_Regulations_for_Academic_and_Administrative_Positions.pdf).

According to the regulations, academic positions at the LCC are docent and lecturer, and qualification requirements for both positions have also been established.

The criteria to be elected in the position of docent include holding either a Doctoral or Master's degree, along with a minimum of seven years of practical experience at a senior level. Additionally, candidates must demonstrate notable achievements in artistic activities, publish works relevant to their field of expertise, exhibit ability in conducting scientific research or artistic creation, and to carry out educational work. Furthermore, they are expected to engage in artistic pursuits at least once annually, possess proficiency in the national language as per regulatory standards, and demonstrate adequate proficiency in foreign languages necessary for fulfilling academic responsibilities.

The prerequisites to be elected in the position of lecturer include holding a Master's or Bachelor's degree and possessing at least five years of practical experience relevant to the subject being taught. Additionally, candidates must have authored scientific publications or teaching aids pertinent to their field of expertise and demonstrate the capability to deliver lecture courses, lead seminars, and conduct practical sessions independently. Furthermore, they are expected to engage in artistic activities relevant to the industry. Proficiency in the national language as per regulatory standards and adequate proficiency in foreign languages necessary for fulfilling academic duties are also required.

The number of full-time academic staff positions in the LCC is determined to ensure the requirements of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, respecting the amount of state funding allocated by the Ministry of Culture (SAR, p. 42).

Vacancies for academic positions and competition announcements are disseminated through the College's website and the official publication in "Latvijas Vēstnesis," providing an avenue for anyone interested to apply for a position at the LCC.

The experts conclude that the LCC has a transparent system for attracting qualified teaching staff: there are public announcements, qualification requirements, hiring, election procedure, responsible persons (SAR, p. 42-43). As it was indicated during the site visit, the teaching staff has a high level of trust between them as well regarding the programme director's decisions, and the Study Department of the LCC.

During the site visit, it was pointed out that none of the academic staff members are employed on a full-time basis. This may be attributed to budget constraints and the strategic planning of study courses. Not all academic staff members are required for numerous courses due to the specific nature and specialisations involved. In such instances, the college employs a visiting teacher or lecturer for a duration of up to two years. During the site visit, it was observed that this practice is quite common. Nevertheless, it is advisable for at least the Director of the study field "Arts" and possibly the heads of study specialisations or main teachers to be employed on a full-time basis.

Despite the fact that salaries of the teaching staff are not at a satisfactory level, they are still highly motivated and very enthusiastic about the study implementation process (site visit, Meeting with the academic staff). Although restricted financial resources have an impact on limited possibilities to attract high level full-time teaching staff. In order to access student's demand, the LCC has found a temporary, short-term solution, organising a cycle of masterclasses which allows to attract high level professionals of the field. With better financial times, the system could also be developed.

1.3.6. The LCC provides several opportunities for academic staff to participate in conferences, seminars, professional development courses, as well as to be invited as guest lecturers and experts at events organised by other institutions (SAR, p. 44). Additionally, the academic staff contribute to

their growth by getting involved with European Lifelong Learning programmes, Erasmus+ mobility programmes and other projects. From the 2013/2014 study year to the 2023/2024 study year, 6 members of teaching staff have participated in 13 Erasmus+ mobilities (SAR, p. 45-46). Teachers have participated in professional development events, which are organised in cooperation with other universities and institutions (SAR, p. 46) and by participating in seminars, open lectures, courses, workshops organised by the LCC and outside the College (SAR, p. 47).

For example in the 2022/2023 study year, Olga Spridzāne implemented 2 Erasmus+ teacher mobilities in Estonia - Viljandi Academy of Culture of Tallinn University and used the opportunity to familiarise herself with the professional bachelor's study programme in performing arts. Other international Erasmus+ teachers' further education has been provided in France, Georgia, Bulgaria, Poland, Finland and Lithuania.

The teachers have also had an opportunity to participate in the following further education workshops organised by the LCC: Creative skills in the application of computer graphics in digital communication, short course in event production, business models for the implementation of creative projects, risk management and safety plan at events, and visualisation in a virtual environment as well as other workshops for event industry professionals.

During the site visit, the academic staff acknowledged that their participation in mobility exchanges has provided them with valuable knowledge, experience, and fresh ideas that can be implemented in the study process to benefit the students. However, the teaching staff also had an opinion that there are not so many options for professional development. As there were new teaching staff at the meeting, it may be that not all have had the information or possibilities for the development courses.

Also, in a Hip-hop dance specialisation there are rarely formally educated and experienced Hip-hop dance teachers/courses available in the education market so the LCC has limitations for organising specific masterclasses for the improvement of a teacher's skills and knowledge in the area. The LCC Hip-hop dance teachers (and students) have to find their further development in the international Hip-hop dance communities.

Overall, it seems that the LCC is offering appropriate improvement measures for the teachers. It is evident that a restricted budget resources influence the ability of the LCC to organise masterclasses of high level professionals. Also, low salaries cause difficulties to apply for professional classes outside the LCC.

There is an evaluation system that measures the results of teaching staff professional development as it reflects in the student's performances. Also surveys provide data about the teaching staff as students can reflect on development needs and weaknesses regarding teaching staff skills and knowledge. In general, teaching staff's skills and knowledge are appropriate to the study field level. It was observed by experts during the site visit that if the study programme "Contemporary Dance" would be opened in the English flow, the College teaching staff must offer and improve English language skills. Also improvement of these skills would be necessary in case of the host of international projects and mobility.

The LCC has a possibility to reward teachers for improvement of qualifications or good performance. The academic staff, according to the "Latvian College of Culture at the Latvian Academy of Culture Staff

Policy"

(https://kulturaskoledza.lv/en/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/03/ENG_Staff_Policy_2020.pdf), has the right to receive additional remuneration for the improvement of qualifications, experience and excellent work results, as well as due to an increase in the complexity or responsibility of the work (within the available LCC budget). A bonus is paid for the performance of additional work duties or special tasks, in coordination with the Director of the LCC. For work in scientific and creative projects, the employee is paid a bonus, author's work or contract work in accordance with the relevant project's financing regulations.

1.3.7. The composition of teaching staff of the study field "Arts" consists of the academic staff of the College and guest lecturers. In the study year 2023/2024 9 lecturers and 4 docents have been elected as academics and 7 lecturers have been invited as guest lecturers (SAR, p. 48).

While the count of academic staff aligns with the provisions of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 793 of 11 December 2018 "Regulations Regarding Opening and Accreditation of Study Fields" specifying that at least 50% of the study programme should be conducted by the appointed academic staff, the data indicates that the number of academic staff members is not constant, but hovers around the threshold of 50% (SAR, p. 49). The fluctuations can be ascribed to factors such as alterations to the study programme and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (SAR, p. 48).

It was stated during the site visit, that all the academic staff, even Director of the study field and the lecturers work part time due to a small number of academic hours (SAR, p. 48). The contracts are also signed for a relatively short period of time, like for one year, which won't provide long term commitment for development of the study field. The low salary of the academic staff reduces motivation and forces the academic staff to make choices in favour of higher paid job offers. During the site visit, the representatives of the academic staff also confirmed that due to the relatively low salaries at the LCC they are compelled to seek additional employment to sustain themselves.

The lecturers teach several study courses, but the LCC workload is not very high. It cannot be said that the workload is balanced. Paradoxically, as the teachers are forced to work elsewhere or have their own dance studio to get a living, it may result in too much overall workload for the teachers.

In order to enrich the content of the study programme and ensure the integration of practice-based knowledge and experience of artistic creativity in it, academic personnel from the cultural and creative sector - industry professionals - are actively involved in the implementation of study courses (SAR, p. 49). The academic staff consists of a relatively large number of guest lecturers, which is due to the specifics of the study field. Due to it, it is very integrated into the working environment. The students are attracted by the most competent industry professionals. Guest teachers make it possible to ensure the inclusion of current dance trends in the study content and the opportunity to acquire knowledge in a real work environment. However, as heard in the meeting with the graduates, it is hoped that the LCC would provide more diversity in street dance forms.

On the other hand, the involvement of industry professionals for the long term agreements is also difficult to realise, due to the fact that the remuneration for teaching is not competitive (SAR, p. 49).

It was also validated during the on-site visit during the meeting with academic staff.

However, despite the financial challenges, all the representatives expressed admiration for the LCC. They emphasised that even though the wages may not be sufficient for their livelihoods, they remain motivated, display unwavering loyalty to LCC and their students and feel confident in delivering student-centred educational practices.

However, during the meeting with employers, it was mentioned that the industry experts do not formally engage in the development of study courses. Instead, they informally communicate with the Director of the study programme to discuss potential improvements.

Considering the college's vision: "The best place for creative and professional higher education in the cultural sector, for the realisation and growth of creative ideas, a multifunctional, sustainable and creative cultural space for the study process integrated in the work environment and based on the needs of the industry's labour market, and for the professional development of specialists in the cultural sector," it is recommended to formally involve industry professionals in the process of developing study courses. It would be beneficial to consider their advice regarding the trends in the labour market and the industry as a whole.

1.3.8. According (SAR, p. 50-51) and the site visit, there is a very enthusiastic, trustful, friendly atmosphere between students, teaching staff, and the Study Department of the LCC. If students have some questions, demands or problems during the studies, they will get support from the Director of the programme or teaching staff, or the Study Department which are both accessible

online and in person. The individual access and student centred approach is applicable, because there is a small number of students and a safe communication culture.

Professional psychological support is not available (SAR, p. 51). Instead, students can ask for support from the Director of the programme or teaching staff. Recently there were classes of techniques of dance movement therapy and music therapy. It was mentioned during the site visit from the Director of the LCC, that as transformed and adjusted, the course contents could be a tool for wellbeing of the students in the future. Regarding artistic work, a mentoring system could be developed which also would be a useful and helpful tool for students' wellbeing.

There is well established career support for the students as the Director of the programme informs students about work opportunities. Also there is a direct link with the labour market and employers' needs and requirements.

As it was observed during the site visit, the infrastructure of the LCC is not suitable for students with special needs, physical impairments or wheelchairs (narrow corridors and staircase, no space for special lifting mechanisms and other obstacles). But this is due to historical buildings with many very narrow stairs and corridors, which are impossible to reconstruct and special lifts are probably impossible to construct.

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

The financial stability of the LCC has been restored recently, successfully addressing past tax debts. However, this recovery has led to a constrained budget for investments in the development of the study programme. While experts acknowledge the appropriateness of budget allocation under the current circumstances, enhancing the situation requires the LCC to diversify income sources and attract new funds. Relying on temporary research and artistic activity funding from projects is deemed unsustainable. The anticipated consolidation with LAC is seen as a potential source of new financial opportunities to enhance the infrastructure, technical capabilities, and material equipment of the LCC. As stated before, the system for determining the financial support and allocating the budget for the study field and study programme is appropriate. There is a well established system and procedure for improvement of methodological and informative provision.

The LCC premises, lecture rooms and computer rooms used in the study process, are equipped with the necessary material and technical resources and are at satisfactory level. However, particularly the dance studios face suboptimal conditions, requiring refurbishing, especially the dance floor quality and the provision of mirrors/curtains. Additionally, the building's heating system is in need of an upgrade, especially downstairs.

Although the LCC has fostered partnerships with various cultural centres to provide venues for larger performances when its premises are insufficient, bigger dance studios/venues would be needed. However, the experts understand that this adaptation depends on the financial situation and the challenges posed by the historic building.

The LCC library resources, databases, and services are mainly appropriate for the basic requirements of the study field. Some English books about dance and pedagogy could be added. The library has several databases and accessible materials; there is a support centre for Moodle, Zoom and other distance learning environments, approachable for both students and teaching staff. While the e-study platform Moodle sees relatively infrequent use owing to the unique format of the programme, its composition is commendable. For remote studies, the LCC employs the MS Teams and Zoom platforms. In general, the technological solutions are considered suitable for facilitating the study process.

The LCC has a quite transparent system for attracting qualified teaching staff, also the teaching staff is highly motivated and enthusiastic, the academic staff representatives express loyalty to the LCC and their students. The professional knowledge and skills of the teaching staff are deemed

appropriate for the study field level. The individual access, supportive atmosphere, and student centred approach is visible, there is a well established career support and direct links with the employers. The LCC provides satisfactory development opportunities for the teaching staff.

Restricted financial resources, low salaries have an impact on limited possibilities to attract high level full-time teaching staff. The academic staff members often seek additional employment, hindering their full dedication to LCC. None of the academic staff members are employed on a full-time basis, and the college relies on visiting teachers to incorporate current dance trends into the study content. Nevertheless, the LCC does offer opportunities for academic staff to receive additional remuneration based on qualifications, experience, excellent work results, and increased work complexity or responsibility within the available budget.

Industry representatives currently do not participate formally in the development of study courses. Their engagement is informal, involving communication with the Director of the study programme to explore potential enhancements.

Strengths:

- 1) The system for determining and allocating the financial support is appropriate.
- 2) The system and procedure for improvement of methodological provision is well established.
- 3) The library has approachable and also remote access databases, materials and distance learning tools.
- 4) The teaching staff is well qualified, highly motivated and enthusiastic.
- 5) The individual and student centred approach is visible, there is a well established career support.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The limited budget resources, a constrained budget for investments in the development of the study field.
- 2) Due to low salaries and a small number of academic hours, there is only a part-time teaching staff.
- 3) There is no professional psychological support, mentoring system or wellbeing activities for students available.
- 5) The infrastructure is not at a satisfactory level. Premises, especially dance halls, face suboptimal conditions. There is a lack of sprung floor, mirrors/curtains in the dance halls and the heating system is in poor conditions.
- 6) The industry representatives do not formally engage in the development of study courses, indicating a gap in collaboration and input from industry professionals.

1.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation

Analysis

1.4.1. In the study field “Arts”, the activity of applied research and artistic creation is subordinate to the level of the College and the educational goal of the LCC. The main goal is the preparation of competitive specialists and professionals for the cultural industry. Artistic creation is the most relevant way of applied research for the working environment.

As the study programmes offered by the LCC are short cycle vocational higher education (corresponding to the EQF Level 5), which are implemented after the secondary education but does not provide academic BA-level degree, there is no scientific research, nor much human nor financial resources for applied research/artistic creation. All the teachers are working part time and because of the educational level of a short cycle vocational higher education, there are also difficulties to get funding for developing applied research or artistic creations (SAR, p. 52). Also infrastructure for artistic creation is limited at the LCC.

However, some scientific research and creative project possibilities are offered according to the SAR

(p. 52). The academic staff of the LCC participates in national and international scientific and creative projects, seminars and conferences. The scientific and applied research activities of the teaching staff may also result in publications. There is also academic staff that is also qualified for supervising the students in the basics of academic writing and/or creative activities.

In the study plan there is no course of scientific writing or methodology included. As the Qualification Paper course scope is 12 ECTS, the experts assume that the specific content is embedded in it. As seen during the site visit, the students learn the basics on how to write scientific text during the process of developing Qualification Papers. The papers seen were mainly well-written (18.01.2024.) and are relevant for the study field. Also, it is mentioned in the SAR (p. 39-40), that the library offers consultation in academic writing.

During the diploma work, artistic creations are also prepared. The artistic creations seen by the experts from the Drive link (additional information after the on-site visit 29.01.2024), prove that the quality of the creative works correspond to the level of the programme and the students' skills are very satisfactory. The creative potential of students is well supported in the LCC.

The LCC's goal for the future period is to strengthen the synergy of research and artistic activities, to identify practice-based research and involve students in applied research projects to promote a research based student education process. The experts support the goal in case the study field is merged into BA-level education in LAC or when the third year is provided for students to get BA-level education later in LAC or elsewhere.

1.4.2. The question of scientific research is basically not applicable as long as the LCC is an educational institution corresponding to the European Qualifications Framework Level 5. The study field and the study process is aiming at connecting the students with the working life and environment of the industry. However, artistic creation/applied research on a small scale is included in the study process. The artistic creation and basics of academic writing are integrated in the study process during the relevant specialisation lectures, practical dance lessons, qualification works, and in national and international projects of various levels.

Involvement of students in applied research is implemented in the study process. Students learn basic knowledge about research in the introductory lectures of the study course. The acquired theoretical knowledge is practically tested by applying it in creative works – developing Qualification Papers under the guidance of academic staff and industry professionals, thereby realising the synergy of applied research and artistic creativity in the study process (SAR, p. 54).

As heard during the site visit, the students are working a lot site-specifically with other study field students in productions, during festivals and events etc. Considering the working life of the study field, the practical, quite autonomous artistic and creative collaborations are relevant. The students are able to create connections to the art/entertainment/educational field. Colleague students may help their employment in the future. The students' active participation in student-led and teachers-led projects also teaches self-direction and "survival skills" in the future.

According to the SAR (p. 54), the students' acquired theoretical knowledge is tested by applying it in creative work when developing a Qualification Paper under the guidance of academic staff and dance professionals. The artistic creation is present in the entire study programme, and it culminates in students' dance productions performed every year as part of the Qualification Paper-process. The experts thank that already at the college level the connection between theoretical knowledge and artistic creativity is applied during the Qualification process. The assessment of the diploma works is done by leading experts from the dance industry, but also Latvian Academy of Culture lecturers participate in the defence of Qualification Papers (SAR, p. 54).

1.4.3. In the SAR (p. 56) it is explained that "the process of international scientific cooperation, which refers to the study field, is implemented through active participation in EU and EEA educational and research programmes and projects, activities defined in bilateral cooperation

agreements, student and teacher exchange programmes, as well as through participation in international academic and professional cooperation networks." As the LCC is a very small vocational higher institution with limited resources and part time academic staff, it cannot be expected that international cooperation in scientific research or in artistic creation is vast. However, the management of the LCC well understands and expresses that internationalisation is important for the study field and has done their best to develop international cooperation in research and artistic creation.

In the SAR (p. 57), it is expressed that the LCC's long-term foreign cooperation partners include for example: Burgas Free University (Bulgaria), Mathematical Institute of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS) and EU-Track (Italy) - a research institute operating in the field of implementing educational innovations. The experts think that scientific cooperation could be relevant in dance pedagogical research in the future.

In 2022, within the framework of ERASMUS+ cooperation initiative projects, cooperation was started with the University of Islas Baleares (Balearic Islands, Spain), Universidade de Vigo (Portugal), Virtual Campus Ltd. (Portugal), University of Cyprus (Cyprus), Municipality of Lousada (Portugal). The LCC has long-term cooperation with over 20 European universities of applied sciences.

The LCC is also working on developing internationalisation, paying particular attention to the search for relevant cooperation partners in the future. In 2022, the College also started to create an international cooperation network in the field of artistic creativity. The first cooperation project developed by the academic staff is the workshop "Trends of creating contemporary cultural events in Latvia and the world", which is planned as a long-term creative cultural event. The first workshop was held in April 2023 by Noemi Sanchez, a dance and movement teacher from Basque Higher School of Drama and Dance and Tiia-Mari Mäkinen - a Finnish theatre professional with extensive experience in movement and mask theatre. (SAR, p.57)

The experts think that artistic creation is a relevant way to improve international cooperation in the level of education in the LCC. The academic staff is already involved in both Latvian and international creative projects and takes students within as well. The experts think that more international visiting dance teachers per year would be beneficial to the development of artistic creation of the study field, as well as visiting international researchers in arts/dance pedagogy. Even though some cooperation has been established with several countries, so far it has been hard to attract international teaching staff to further improve the quality of the study field.

The management sees that the merger with the LAC will create more possibilities for funding and networks for international cooperation in artistic creation/ applied research as heard during the site visit from the Director of the LCC. The LCC and the LAC intend to strengthen cooperation in the development of scientific activity and the formation of unified research teams, to ensure systemic involvement of the academic staff of both universities in research activities, and to promote innovative methodological approaches to the study.

1.4.4. Due to a lack of funding and part-time staff, the LCC is unable to adequately support the active involvement of faculty members in scientific/applied research and/or artistic creation. However, the LCC supports the staff: the potential of scientific activity is evaluated and the individual work of lecturers in research is supported within the limits of financial possibilities. During the reporting period, the teaching staff of the LCC participated in 11 conferences, 4 Latvian and 9 international projects, presented 10 papers at the conferences, and published 14 scientific publications. The academic staff participated in 49 artistic creative activities, 15 creative workshops and professional development lectures. (SAR, p. 59) For example, in 2022, docent Katrīne Martinsone-Škapare published the supplemented methodical material for dance teachers "Raksturdejas" (Martinsone-Škapare, K. (2022). (Raksturdejas. Rīga, Jusanprint) and docent Edmunds Veizāns studies the process of youth value formation and the interaction between hip-hop culture dance classes, publishing the findings.

The College's long-term foreign cooperation partners include: Burgas Free University (Bulgaria), the largest and one of the first private universities of applied sciences in Bulgaria, in cooperation with which several ERASMUS+ innovation and personnel mobility projects have been implemented; Mathematical Institute of the Bulgarian Academy of Science (SAR p. 57). According to the SAR, the academic staff of the LCC participates in at least one scientific conference organised by Mathematical Institute of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS) every year and publishes research in the cited publication "Digital Presentation and Preservation of Cultural and Scientific Heritage".

There is no support for artistic creation of the staff. Also, it would be very difficult, as all the dance teachers are working part-time. The teachers do their artistic activities outside the LCC. For example, lecturer Ksenija Simanova has been involved in the festival "Environmental Dance" both as a choreographer and a dancer, involving College graduates in projects, and is the choreographer for play of M. Chekhov's Riga Russian Theater "The Count of Monte Cristo" (SAR, p. 60)

Overall, the teachers/academics are well qualified for the study field. 3 persons of the part-time working staff have doctoral level degrees but not from the core content of the study field (arts/dance) to conduct so-called artistic research in creations. In these circumstances, it is very difficult to create involvement of the staff in scientific research/artistic creation.

The experts ponder that the LCC could better support the study field's core dance teachers' artistic creations, and support the teaching staff in the future to merit themselves professionally in national events/venues outside the college.

1.4.5. College has developed some mechanisms to promote students' involvement in artistic creation. The minimal funding and human resources, and the relatively short study process make it difficult to create students' high quality artistic outcomes. The infrastructure, venue at the college, is also not properly developed for artistic creation of the students. Instead, the LCC has created other, creative solutions for artistic activities, which have been successful. For example artistic creations are done in digital form, as dance videos.

Mechanism of student involvement in artistic creation is mostly implemented during the development of student Qualification papers (diploma work) and various types of projects. During the site visit, it was possible to verify the support of the teaching staff for the students, and their close cooperation during the creative work process and Qualification paper writing. Students' motivation and the quality of the learning process were proved by clear and precisely defined study results. The mechanism to involve students in artistic creation seems to be well functioning as also seen from the shared Drive from LCC, where students' artistic creations were available for the experts.

One of the new initiatives, in search of innovative approaches in the organisation of the study process, is the involvement of all students and academic staff in the creation of the LCC branding events. The idea of the experimental creativity festival CULTURE MANIFEST project was created within the study course "Implementation of Projects". It is an experimental festival, where the events are created by students, which are realised in the College and in various places in Riga. (SAR, p. 62)

1.4.6. During the site visit, the innovative solutions for the implementation of the study programme were visible. Mostly, innovative solutions are related to the use of diverse digital tools. The practice introduced during the study process for students to plan and implement artistic creative projects in the digital environment is especially noteworthy. The students learn for example to use social media as an artistic platform. The innovative use of digital tools has a positive impact on the study process and later impact on the dance field.

The LCC has taken into account the educational innovation trends of Europe: inclusion and diversity; digital transformation; environment and prevention of climate change; participation in democratic processes. The LCC introduces content in its study and research process that corresponds to both

the inclusion of society and the building of tolerance towards different social groups (the project "TOGETHER IS STRENGTH 2023") and digital transformation (the creation of digitization tools and e-study platforms in projects EURICA, TEAM_STAR, creation and implementation of 3D applied games in the study process, as well as prevention of environmental and climate change. For example, the NATURE project's content was about responsible use of natural resources in cultural events.

In the autumn of 2022, the LCC started activities of professional further education courses. Several courses were developed and implemented both in person in the LCC premises and online to give the opportunity to participate to both students and professionals from the cultural field from all over Latvia. Several further education courses have been successfully implemented.

The LCC is visibly following and keeping up with the trends and is developing its operations using innovative solutions.

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

Artistic creation of the study field "Arts" corresponds to the development goals of the LCC. In the study field, the activity of applied research and artistic creation is subordinated to the level of the education of the LCC. The main goal is the preparation of competitive specialists for the cultural sector, for the working life in the dance industry. The study process is integrated in the working environment and artistic creation is well ensured for the students in the LCC. The creative potential of students is supported, especially during the final works and preparation of Qualification papers.

Because of the educational level of a vocational higher education (EQF 5), the academic staff has no factual scientific research objectives. Thus, the LCC has not many possibilities of getting funding for developing applied research nor artistic creation (SAR, p. 52) of the staff. Also resources and infrastructure for artistic creation are limited. However the LCC is taking care that the teachers are qualified also for supervising students' academic writing.

The management has developed relevant mechanisms to promote small scale involvement of the students and staff in applied research and especially for artistic creation during projects and for students in diploma works during the short cycle education. Artistic creation is a relevant way to improve international cooperation in the level of education in the LCC. The academic staff is already involved in both Latvian and international creative projects and takes students within as well. The merger with LAC will provide more possibilities to enhance international cooperation in artistic creation and also applied artistic or pedagogical research.

The LCC is visibly keeping up with the trends and is using innovative solutions as well.

Strengths:

- 1) Relevant artistic creation possibilities are ensured for the students during the study process in the EQF-level 5.
- 2) During the student's diploma work process the artistic creation and Qualification paper writing seem to be integrated, which provides a good basis for further development of applied research/artistic creation.
- 3) Artistic creations prove that the skills of the students are satisfactory.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The LCC has no proper funding nor infrastructure to support creative activities of the staff and students.
- 2) International cooperation in artistic creation or applied research is not very developed.

Assessment of the requirement [2]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The activity of applied research and artistic creation is subordinated to the level of the education of the LCC. Relevant artistic creation possibilities are ensured for the students, even though the facilities are unsatisfactory and international cooperation in applied research or artistic creation could be enhanced.

1.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation

Analysis

1.5.1. The LCC already has cooperation with LAC (library resources, creative projects, lecturers, examination members, experts). It was explained during the site visit that there is a planned consolidation process which could mean change of the programme and threaten the wholeness of the identity of the programme, but also could offer financial resources for improvement of facilities and technical equipment of the LCC. The consolidation process with LAC also has possibilities for content and study paths development.

The LCC's important stakeholders are industry associations - the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Latvian Producers' Union of Latvian Event Producers Associations, the Association of Technical Support Companies of the Latvian Event Industry and other industry associations.

As it was pointed out (SAR, p. 64-65), there are a variety of institutions and non-governmental organisations the LCC cooperates with: Latvian Modern, Contemporary and Hip-hop Professional dance associations, Latvian Professional Ballet association, Latvian Producer's Union and others. Besides, there is a cooperation with the Association of Latvian Colleges.

Also, there is an established group with a representative of the LCC in the Dance council, organised by the Ministry of Culture. This collaboration is important as it could foster improvement of the contemporary dance situation in Latvia, also achievements of the learning outcomes of the study field and programme.

There is also an established cooperation with employers, like private dance schools and cultural centres, which was mentioned during the site visit. It was stated that the Director of the study field especially has direct connections to the field. He is up-to-date and well informed about the latest career opportunities, issues or requirements and internship possibilities that he also conveys to students and graduates.

Overall, cooperation with local institutions is relevant, continuous and sufficient for the study programme to contribute to the aims and learning outcomes of the study field and the study programme.

1.5.2. The LCC, despite its small capacity, has sufficient international collaborations, especially those that started before Covid. There are agreements with Universities in Mexico and Uruguay. Also some international projects with Norwegian, Finnish, Bulgarian, and Kazakhstan institutions are mentioned (SAR, p. 67-68). For example, in 2018, professor Ilze Zīriņa got acquainted with Riveria, Finland (North Karelian Municipal Education and training consortium) teaching methods in contemporary dance classes. In 2019, the LCC participated in the international Erasmus+ project "Refugees" to improve professionally by cooperating with partners from Greece, Iceland, Italy, Germany and the Czech Republic. The LCC has signed a cooperation agreement with Anahuac University in Mexico, whose teacher Anna Kirse gave guest lectures to the students of the LKK dance department, while teacher Gita Senka led a workshop of creative projects at the Universidad del Caribe, Mexico in 2018.

In the 2018/2019 study year, two students from the Kazakhstan Academy of Choreography studied at the LCC as listeners, while the Director of the study programme made contacts with the teaching staff of the university. Besides that, some scientific and educational institutions are mentioned that

the LCC cooperates with in the long term: Burgas Free University (Bulgaria), EU-Track (Italy), Mathematical Institute of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (SAR, p. 57). Obviously, due to Covid many cooperation stopped or couldn't continue.

In general, there is a greater proportion of outbound mobility for both exchange studies and practices and practices for recent graduates. In the period from study year 2013/2014, students of the study programme have had 10 practice or practice mobility of recent graduates. 1 student was at the time of submitting the LCC report an exchange student at a cooperating university in Spain.

Overall, there are some international collaboration partners, which seem to be a bit randomly selected. Anyhow, they have been relevant to the study aims. It seems that the mobility of students is underdeveloped partly because of the short study path. According to Annex 18, there have not been any incoming students at all. The experts suggest more carefully selecting and developing connections to Western European partner colleges in cooperation with LAC.

1.5.3. According to the (SAR, p. 57) there has been cooperation with existing international partners, which is continued, as well as new contacts are made to promote the mobility of students and academic staff in both teaching and scientific research activities. However, the system and procedures for attracting teaching staff or students from abroad is not very developed. This is understandable because of the educational level of the LCC, Erasmus+ mobility rules, relatively local demand (and expertise in Latvian dance) for studies and a short 2-year study process. It is stated (SAR, p. 70) that the inbound mobility is influenced by the mismatch between the educational qualification level and the inbound mobility level, which is mainly meant for the Bachelor's level. Also funding for attracting teachers from abroad is very limited. Anyhow, the LCC has implemented Erasmus+ projects KA103 and KA107, where the mobility of students and academic staff to foreign cooperation universities and institutions is realised (SAR, p. 69).

Within the framework of the ERASMUS+ project, the LCC has long-term cooperation with over 20 European universities of applied sciences/universities. According to the Annex 19 there have been 13 teachers outgoing and 2 incoming mobilities between 2013-2023. According to the Annex 18, there have been 11 outgoing student mobilities between 2013-2023/24 and the mobility organisations seem not to be very relevant for the study programme "Contemporary Dance" as they include organisations like Christian Mission Church and Surf Yoga Portugal. As the LCC study field is a short cycle vocational higher education, there is a challenge to find an equal educational institution abroad.

According to Annex 18, there has been no incoming student mobility. As it was stated during the site visit, the study period is 2 years and it is not very comfortable for students to lose weeks of the study process. This is the main reason why students don't use Erasmus+ mobility opportunities (or internship abroad) so intensively. Besides that, hip-hop dance students can't find appropriate higher education institutions, because hip-hop dance can be learned in private studios/streets, not in terms of educational institutions. These are the reasons, why students prefer to choose mobility and exchange possibilities after studies.

In conclusion, even due to Covid-19 when the mobilities were interrupted, it seems that there are not sufficiently outgoing mobilities. As seen from the Annex 18, there has not been incoming mobilities at all. However, the management seems to be hopeful that the numbers are rising and developing again. The experts ponder that it could be better to find a few relevant, European cooperation partners and develop for example short mobilities of weeks. Maybe it would be easier to do with the LAC.

The way LCC attracts both teaching staff and students from abroad, is mainly through different projects, and direct contacts of the teaching staff. To attract high value lecturer's from abroad is challenging due to limited financial resources.

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

The cooperation with local institutions, employees and other organisations is relevant and satisfactory. The direct cooperation can contribute to achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field and study programme by implementation of internship, career opportunities and professional development.

The international cooperation partners listed are basically relevant, but it seems that factual collaborations are scarce and relevant mobility partners are hard to find. As the LCC is a short cycle education (EQF 5), which is relatively rare in the arts in Europe, there is a challenge to find an equal educational institution abroad. Also, because of the short study process and scarce funding, there are not sufficiently outgoing nor incoming mobilities. There has not been incoming mobilities at all. The experts think that it would be important to find a couple of relevant cooperation partners in the future and develop shorter mobilities for students instead of months. Also the artistic cooperation in projects could be more developed.

Strengths:

1) The cooperation with local institutions, employees, LAC and Ministry of Culture is appropriate.

Weaknesses:

1) As the LCC is a short cycle education (EQF 5), which is relatively rare in the arts in Europe, it is challenging to find equal international collaboration partners. There are not enough relevant mobility partners.

Assessment of the requirement [3]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

There is a very well developed local cooperation with Latvian institutions. The international mobility of teachers and students is underdeveloped and there are not enough selected, relevant partners.

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

Analysis

1.6.1.

The previous assessment of the study field "Arts" took place in 2013, where the study programme "Contemporary dance" received a rating of "good". In 2019, a new accreditation sheet was issued, because the parameter for the study programme "Contemporary dance" was changed (SAR, p. 71). Analysis is based on the SAR chapter 2.6. and Annex 20.

Recommendations given to study programme "Dance" in 2013:

1. It was recommended to improve the condition of the service hotel. Despite the LCC's mention of not having an on-site hotel service, the LCC asserts that it has entered into agreements with other universities for service hotel accommodations. In relation to this, no specific examples of such agreements by the LCC have been provided, nor are they listed in the cooperation agreements (ANNEX 16). Therefore, the recommendation could be considered as not implemented.
2. Another recommendation was to develop a funding attraction plan due to the insufficient financial resources of the LCC. Although the LCC's Quality Management System Manual (<https://kulturaskoledza.lv/en/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/02/Latvian-College-of-Culture-at-the-LAC-Quality-Management-System-Manual.pdf>) includes a finance administration and efficiency

process map, there is a noticeable absence of documents outlining long-term financial planning objectives, for example, defining of financial targets, planning of strategy budget, planning of annual budget, calculation of product cost of the services, control of strategy budget, corrections of strategy budget and audit. However, the LCC provided the experts with an extra document "Allocation of the budget and budget structure" and Annex 30 are proving that the budgeting is well administered and it seems that the process is lean as well. Also, during the site-visit, the experts heard that the Director of the LCC is well aware of the budget challenges and has future plans regarding finances. LCC's involvement in ERAF and ESF project tenders also represent a step toward diversifying its financial resources. Therefore, the recommendation has been implemented.

3. Enhancements were necessary concerning international mobility, including initiatives for student exchanges and programs facilitating the international mobility of academic staff. The LCC has established and advocated opportunities for exchange mobility for both students and academic staff. In the period from the 2013/2014 study year to the 2023/2024 study year, six members of teaching staff have participated in 13 Erasmus+ mobilities (SAR, 45-46) and 11 students have participated in Erasmus+ study and traineeship mobilities, as well as recent graduate traineeship mobilities (ANNEX 18). The recommendation has been implemented.

4. Recommendations were made to enhance the foreign language proficiency of LCC staff through initiatives like international mobility programs for academic personnel and English language courses. LCC's academic staff has engaged in various international mobility projects, and during the 2019/2020 academic year, four lecturers in the relevant field improved their English language skills through the ESF project "Effectiveness of Management of the Latvian Academy of Culture and the Latvian College of Culture and Modernization of the Study Process" (SAR, 47). While progress has been made in improving English language proficiency of academic staff at LCC, there has been a lack of specialised English courses specifically tailored for this purpose. Thereby, the recommendation has been partly implemented.

5. Improvements to the premises were recommended, including renovation projects for lecture rooms, cosmetic repairs, and adjustments to better accommodate the needs of students and staff. While some enhancements were made to the facilities during this time, this recommendation was also addressed in 2019. This leads to the conclusion that not all necessary improvements have been completed and for that reason, the recommendation has been partly implemented.

6. It was recommended to develop various projects within the framework of the European Social Fund. Since 2019, the LCC has participated in three ESF projects: "Effectiveness of management of Latvian Academy of Culture and Latvian College of Culture and modernization of study process", "Lifelong learning measures for employed persons" and "Jobs for students to promote employment". The recommendation has been implemented.

Recommendations given to study programme "Dance" in 2019:

1. Experts previously recommended reviewing the correspondence between the title of study course "Creativity Psychology" and the planned content, based on the fact that the study course does not have aspects of psychology, and to adjust the name or content of the study course accordingly. Since 2019, the LCC has aligned the course name with its content. The aim of the course is to create a general idea and create understanding for future dance team leaders about the elements of dance: time, space and energy and to gain experience in creating a composition in their specialty, learning not only from the teacher, but also from their own experience and colleagues (ANNEX 26, 75) and the course name was modified to "Creation of Motion Art." The recommendation has been implemented.

2. It was recommended to supplement library resources with modern and contemporary dance literature. During the on-site visit (17.01.2024.), the head of the library, highlighted that the library consistently acquires new literature, considering recommendations provided by both academic staff and students and that the English-language books currently constitute 20% of the entire library collection. The recommendation has been implemented.

3. The invitation of a guest lecturer with appropriate education and professional experience to teach the study course "Labor Safety and Civil Protection" was needed. The instructor for the "Civil Protection" holds a professional development education certificate (Program 30P861 01 - Civil Safety and Protection). His CV indicates experience in conducting study courses like "Civil Defense," "Civil and Environmental Protection," and "Labor Protection" at other higher education institutions (ANNEX 11, 30). The recommendation has been implemented.
4. It was recommended to attract specific guest lecturers and complete the list of teaching staff for the implementation of the study course "Latest trends in Dance Specialization". As outlined in ANNEX 10 and 27, the heads of the specialisations serve as instructors for the study courses within their respective specialisations. The heads of specialisations are tasked with the responsibility of inviting guest lecturers for specific lessons or overseeing the coordination of workshops. Guest lecturers are integrated in all the specialisations for example during the course "Latest trends of dance specialisation". Therefore, the recommendation has been implemented. During the site visit (17.01.2024), employers however conveyed a suggestion that LCC could bring in a bit more guest lecturers of diverse street dance styles to hip hop specialisation.
5. The prior recommendation from experts was to guarantee that students, particularly those intending to study in Latvian, receive information about the inclusion of certain courses taught in a foreign language prior to signing their study agreements. Since the study programme is being conducted in Latvian for the academic year 2023/2024, the plan is for all courses to be conducted in Latvian as well (SAR, p. 79) and, as a result, aligns with Section 56(3) of the Law on Higher Education Institutions. In the event of alterations, LCC has formulated guidelines for communicating with students regarding the execution of study courses in a foreign language. Therefore, the recommendation has been implemented.
6. Another recommendation was to improve the technical condition of the rooms for practical classes. During the on-site visit, it was observed that cosmetic repairs had been carried out in the improvisation hall. However, necessary repairs in the hip-hop hall have not been addressed. Additionally, it was noted that renovations are required for the Classical Hall, specifically regarding the suitable floors for relevant specialisations, which was not part of the initial renovation plan. The recommendation has been partly implemented.
7. It was recommended to establish an agreement with the Latvian Academy of Culture, enabling LCC students to independently choose individual study courses from the bachelor's study programme "Art of Contemporary Dance" offered by the Latvian Academy of Culture. Within the collaboration agreement between LCC and the LAC, there is a provision to enhance each other's study programmes through guest lectures by qualified instructors. However, there is no explicit mention of the opportunity for students to enrol in courses from the bachelor's study programme "Art of Contemporary Dance" at the Latvian Academy of Culture. The recommendation could be considered as not implemented.
8. Implementation of the basics of acting, costume, make-up art, stage ethics, multimedia - video and sound editing in the study courses was recommended. The study course "Visual Communication" focuses on acquiring theoretical and practical knowledge in the basics of stage lighting in order to communicate more effectively with the light operator and light programmer (ANNEX 26, 16). The study course "Digital Skills" aims to give knowledge about basic digital skills in music editing for dance choreography, video filming and editing (ANNEX 26, 23). Both of these study courses have been updated. The study course "Acting", which is offered since 01.09.2021., introduces students to the basic questions, concepts and professional terms of acting theory and to the practical application of the elements of acting (ANNEX 26, 72) Topics on artistic means of expression in dance productions are implemented in most of the limited elective specialization courses (ANNEX 26, 108-182). The recommendation has been implemented. Even with the implementation of these courses, employers emphasized their continued need during the on-site visit.

9. Another recommendation was to ensure an adequate number of rooms for practical study courses for both students and teaching staff. According to LCC, an agreement has been established for the utilization of shared spaces for study programmes, such as the White Hall and dance halls, with designated priorities for specific days and times. Additionally, during the on-site visit, the representative of the Study department, confirmed that students have the option to request rooms for individual training through the Study department at any time. The recommendation has been implemented.

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

The recommendations have been partly implemented. All recommendations that have not been fully implemented in the current assessment, should be addressed during the upcoming accreditation period. It appears that LCC promptly initiated the implementation of these recommendations in 2014 and systematically progressed on them until 2022. LCC's contribution to the adaptation and implementation of recommendations tailored to the unique aspects of the study field and programme is evident.

Strengths:

- 1) The LCC has established opportunities for exchange mobility for both students and academic staff.
- 2) The LCC is progressing towards diversifying its revenue streams through active participation in numerous European Social Fund (ESF) projects.
- 3) The library consistently acquires new literature, considering recommendations from both academic staff and students.
- 4) Emphasis on enhancing various aspects of the study process: Securing a qualified guest instructor for the "Civil Protection" course, refining the course name ("Creation of Motion Art") to better match its content, engaging in clear communication with students about changes in the study process, updating and introducing new study courses to incorporate topics related to artistic expression, and optimizing the use of LCC premises for more efficient utilization of rooms in practical study courses.

Weaknesses:

- 1) There are currently no agreements in place with other universities to offer hotel accommodation services.
- 2) There is a deficiency in documentation specifying long-term financial planning goals, which could impede effective planning and the acquisition of additional funding.
- 3) Not all necessary renovations of the premises, including improvements of the technical conditions of the rooms designated for practical classes, have been completed.
- 4) The opportunity for LCC students to enrol in study courses from the LAC study programme "Art of Contemporary Dance" is currently unavailable as there is no established agreement between LCC and LAC.

Assessment of the requirement [4]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

While recommendations regarding exchange mobility, development of projects within the European Social Fund, library resource acquisition and improvements related to the study process have been addressed, critical recommendations essential for the advancement of the study field and programme, including documentation concerning the long-term financial

viability, the adequacy of practical study rooms (dance halls) and other technical equipment, along with the incorporation of industry professionals for innovative perspectives, have been inadequately implemented.

1.7. Recommendations for the Study Field

Short-term recommendations

- 1) Increasing tuition fee to improve the implementation possibilities and creative activities of the study field.
- 2) Selecting a few international partners for cooperation in artistic creation or applied research, possibly with LAC and a few relevant Erasmus+ partners creating possibilities for short term exchange of students and teachers
- 3) Providing professional psychological support or mentoring system or other wellbeing activities for the students.
- 4) Adding to the study plan the course description for the Qualification paper/creative work course (12 ECTS) and including the basics of academic writing in it.
- 5) Enhancing possibilities for creative activities of the teaching staff and students with selected partners and supporting the teaching staff to merit themselves professionally in activities in national events/venues outside the college.

Long-term recommendations

- 1) Rethinking the title of the programme/s and the specialisations in accordance with the consolidation process with LAC. After the education, the students could specialise for contemporary dance (performer) in LAC or choreography in JVLMA, or possibly dance pedagogy in other universities.
- 2) Consider providing the students a straight study path to BA-degree by enabling the students a possibility for access to an extra study year in LAC or in JVLMA.
- 3) Exploring the possibility of employing the Director of the study field "Arts" and heads of study specialisations on a full-time basis and increasing salaries to attract high level guest teachers.
- 4) Addressing the sub-optimal conditions in the dance studios by investing in sprung dance floors, providing adequate mirrors and curtains, sound systems and upgrading the building's heating system downstairs.
- 5) Exploring more diverse income sources beyond relying on state budget funding and tuition fees. Putting more effort into getting temporary project funding for artistic activities and international guest teachers.
- 6) Including industry professionals in the formal development process of the study field. Establish structured mechanisms for collaboration, seeking their input on trends in the industry.

II - "Contemporary Dance" ASSESSMENT

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2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. In the study field “Arts”, there is only one programme “Contemporary Dance”. As dance is a genre of “Arts” and can be counted under the notion “Arts”, the programme complies well with the study field. The management is going to change the title of the programme to “Dance”, which the experts support as at least in English the title is currently misleading.

The programme “Contemporary Dance” has four specialisations (Contemporary dance, Hip-hop dance, Jazz dance and Latvian dance). Even though the specialisations partly give students a comprehensive understanding of the diversity of dancing, the four specialisations are all different. The four dance genres all have a different flavour, technique, cultural background and different working environment. The four specialisations are also quite many for one programme.

The SAR, (p. 81) states: “The strategic goal of the study field “Arts” is to prepare competitive specialists in the dance industry with balanced skills that meet the needs of the future, promoting the growth of those involved in the educational process into enterprising, creative, responsible and competitive members of society.” The strong dedication for achieving the strategic goal of the study programme was clearly recognizable during the site visit throughout the meetings with the administration and academic staff of the LCC.

However, because of the many specialisations and the actual core of the studies - basic level dance teacher education - the experts propose that the specialisations could be rethought during the consolidation process with LAC. After the education most of the students will find jobs as dance teachers, even though most of them applied for the education to get the specific dancing skills.

2.1.2. The titles of the study programme, specialisations and the vocational qualification should comply with the core of the studies. The LCC has an intention to change the title of the programme, which the experts support as currently the title “Contemporary dance” in English is misleading as it refers to a latest dance genre “of today” in the arts sector, which is, for example, available in the LAC and also as a specialisation of the programme. Contemporary dance is a much narrower concept than Dance.

The SAR (p.81) explains the formulation of the code of the programme as follows: “The first two digits of the code of the study programme (41 212) - 41, correspond to the short-cycle vocational higher education study programme. The third digit of the code - 2, indicates the thematic group of the study programme - “Humanities and art”, while the combination of the third and fourth digit - 21, corresponds to the thematic area “Arts” and directly indicates the study programme belongs to the study field “Arts”, but the combination of the third, fourth and fifth digits - 212 to the group of educational programmes “Music and performing arts”, determining the orientation of the content of the study programme.” The code is in tune with the professional qualification of the study programme. The scope and the 2-year duration of the study programme is according to the level 5 knowledge, skills and competences of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF) and European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

The aim of the LCC study programme “Contemporary Dance” (in the future “Dance”) is to prepare modernly educated, professionally competent and competitive dance team leaders for work in state and municipal institutions, private institutions, who are motivated to engage in innovative creativity and activities related to the preservation of cultural heritage (SAR, p.81) and using modern technologies, being able to continue their education in the first cycle of professional higher education in programs” (SAR, p.75).

The qualification “leader of a dance group” is somewhat misleading in other contexts than maybe Latvian dance. The title of the programme and the qualification “leader of a dance group” are not perfectly describing the content of the programme. The experts consider that the core content is the education of dancing skills to be able to teach both individuals and groups in various dance industry contexts and also to educate some performing skills as some of the students may also be

performing in various contexts. Because of the aforementioned considerations, the title of the programme "Dance" is much better and the qualification name should be rethought.

According to the SAR, "The professional qualification "Dance team leader" approved on November 14, 2002, precisely defines the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for the leader of a dance group to be able to competently work both as a tutor in the group's training sessions, to choose a repertoire, and to create productions and also one's own choreography as creative works (SAR, p. 82).

There are 7 knowledge, skills and competences determined, which seem to be learning outcomes of the programme in level LQF 5. It is somewhat questionable that one, very evident skill, or learning outcome is missing: The graduate is able to dance at a satisfactory level. One of the main content of the programme is dancing, practical dance classes, which should provide dancing skills. Ableness to dance at a satisfactory level (or equivalent) should be included in the learning outcomes of the programme. On the other hand, on page 82 (SAR), other learning outcomes are also listed and the first one is: "After studying the study programme "Contemporary Dance", the leader of the dance group can: 1. dancing in the dance style of your chosen specialisation, as well as knowing several dance styles; 2. creatively invent dances and apply compositional techniques in creating and staging a dance etc." It seems that there are two lists of learning outcomes and from the first list, the core of studies is missing. The second list includes more relevant and realistic learning outcomes.

The title of the qualification should be reformulated, when possible, to indicate more clearly that obtaining the qualification, students are educated as professional dance teachers. The qualification title "the leader of a dance group" is terminologically confusing, as at least in European context it is not a known expression and the education would be called a basic dance teacher's education. The qualification may have some historical reasons, but should be put under reconsideration to emphasise the pedagogical, "teaching dance" aspect of the diploma as well as the dancing/performing aspect that is also evident, especially in hip hop, jazz and contemporary dance.

Admission requirements are governed by the annual "Admission Rules" approved by the College Board. Admission requirements are determined taking into account the requirements of regulatory acts, as well as the specifics of study programme specialisations. Students are admitted once a year, applying for studies is done electronically by filling out an application on the LCC's website, attaching copies of documents, or submitting documents in person. In the SAR (p. 23 and Table 3) the admission rules and entrance examinations for the study programme are well expressed and are interrelated with the programme aims.

In 2019, a permission was received for the implementation of the study programme in English in the specialisation Modern dance (from the fall of 2021 Hip-hop culture dance) focusing on Eastern Europe and Asian countries. It seems that there is not really demand for it. The first year, only one student applied. The following year, two more applicants showed interest in studying in English, but they were unable to obtain visas and travel restrictions began due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to Covid and also war situations - change of the paradigm in the world - it was not possible to implement anymore. The former experiences make it probable that the programme has not been attractive for foreign students.

2.1.3. After receiving the previous accreditation assessment, the LCC made some corrections to the programme.

The data was collected accordingly: "a survey of 56 active dance group leaders, a survey of employers, a survey of current students and surveys of future students at open days of the LCC. Also, the LCC had discussions with the Dance council of Ministry of Culture, with dance experts (level of higher and professional education), Latvijas Nacionālais kultūras centrs (LNKC) with experts of the board of directors of the dance school (level of professional orientation), Institute of Contemporary Art, Design and Architecture of Art Academy of Latvia (LMDA) with managers of modern dance studios (private sector) and in the contemporary dance expert committee of the Ministry of

Education and Science and VISC - National Centre of Education (level of interest education)" (SAR, p. 91) The data was analysed and justified corrections and improvement were made to the programme. For example, new courses "Civil Protection" and "Environmental Protection" were introduced in accordance with the requirements of regulatory acts. The content of the study programme and the content of the study courses are regularly updated.

2.1.4. The economic and social justification of the study programme is provided based on the continuous study of the labour market of the dance industry and an analysis of the employment of the LCC graduates. Especially, there is a need for preserving and developing the Latvian dances and qualifying teachers for the cultural centres across the country. Also, there is a need for dance teachers in private schools and for dancers in the entertainment industry. The employment rate has been satisfactory.

"The analysis carried out in 2019 on the careers of the graduates of the LCC in 2017 and 2018 shows that 83.33% of the graduates are employed (SAR, p. 84). The percentage of the employment drastically dropped during the period of COVID-19 pandemic (24%), while in 2022 the employment rates significantly recovered - 69.2% of graduates were working in the dance industry in dance studios as choreographers, dance teachers and group leaders, while 15.38% were employed in equivalent work in another industry (SAR, p. 85).

The number of students is appropriate for ensuring profitability. There are four specialisations, the number of students is balanced between "Latvian dance", "Hip hop dance" and "Contemporary dance". However, there has been a remarkable decrease of students in the specialisation "Jazz dance" due to the small entertainment and show industry in Latvia, which would indicate the need of rethinking the specialisation.

The site visit revealed that the LCC nurtures continuous collaboration with Latvian cultural centres throughout the country and also in private dance studios, which enables good field practices for students and places for employment after graduation.

2.1.5. Not applicable.

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

The study programme "Contemporary Dance" (41212) is compliant with the study field "Arts", except that the title is currently misleading and should be changed to "Dance" as is the intention. The code and professional qualification and admission requirements of the study programme are in tune. The current title of the study programme and the professional qualification of "the leader of a dance group", are somewhat misleading, especially in the European context and should be rethought in the consolidation process. The title is not corresponding to the content of the education, which is clearly dance teacher education but also partly performer's education. It is expressed that the graduates work also in the entertainment sector, like performing in Tallink ships. The title of Dance teacher would fit all dance genres, also Latvian dances, but "the leader of a dance group" fits possibly best to the Latvian dances.

The learning outcomes of the programme should be explicitly expressed. There seem to be two lists of what the graduate can do after the education. A very evident learning outcome is missing in the first list of learning outcomes: The graduate is able to dance the specific genre at a satisfied level. As the core content of the programme is participating in dance classes, getting satisfactory competencies for dancing, a learning outcome: is able to dance at a satisfactory level (or equivalent) should be included in the learning outcomes of the programme.

The programme clearly has both economic and social justification in Latvia. The employment rates of the programme are continuously monitored and significantly recovering after the pandemic recession. The content of the study programme and the content of the study courses are also

regularly updated.

The site visit revealed that the LCC nurtures continuous collaboration with the state and municipal institutions and private institutions throughout the country, enabling good field practices for students and places for employment after graduation.

Strengths:

- 1) High employment rates of the graduates.
- 2) Good collaboration with communities and private institutions in Latvia.

Weaknesses:

- 1) There are many diverse specialisations in one programme. There is small demand for jazz dancers/dance teachers due to the small entertainment and show industry in Latvia.
- 2) The title “the leader of a dance group” is terminologically confusing and should be reformulated to emphasise the pedagogical and/or performing aspect of the Qualification.
- 3) The learning outcomes should be explicitly expressed and the core learning outcome “is able to dance at a satisfactory level” should be included in the learning outcomes of the programme.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. The content of the study programme “Contemporary Dance” is topical. The young generation of Latvia and Europe are excited about possibilities to work in the creative sector, which is also growing in Europe. The programme “Contemporary Dance” is topical in many ways, as it also serves the preservation and development of Latvian dance tradition and qualifies teachers (group leaders) for the genre. Also, the factual demand for the programme has been well surveyed beforehand (SAR, p. 91) and the content is developed continuously to meet the needs of the industry.

The programme is a two year education and the scope is 120 ECTS. The curriculum is quite fragmented into 2 ECTS courses, which is not necessarily the best possible solution (Annex 25). The courses understandably aim to give a comprehensive basic understanding of the field, both practical and theoretical, in a very short educational time. The graduates stated during the site-visit that there is a perfect balance between theory and practice. In the consolidation process the course structure could be checked and considered possibilities to collect the content into bigger modules. The experts also propose considering including some study content such as pedagogy, developmental psychology, dance movement therapy as there is a focus on teacher’s training.

The courses provide students to choose their specialisation (dance genre) according to their personal interests which complies well with the set strategic goals of the state standard for the short-cycle vocational higher education: The study programme “Contemporary Dance” prepares a certain profession, promotes his/her development into an intellectually and physically developed, free, responsible and creative personality (SAR, p. 91-92). The programme content complies with the Cabinet Regulations No. 305. The programme includes courses for basic business skills as well as courses “Civil Protection” and “Environmental Protection” and overall provides skills of professional standards in dance

The good results of the short-cycle education were proved during the site visit (17-18.1.2024) in diploma works both written and videos that were sent later to the experts. It seems that the programme is up to the artistic and industry trends in Latvia. The students also were enthusiastic about the LCC education.

2.2.2. Not applicable.

2.2.3. During the site visit it became very clear that the programme and implementation methods

are very student-centred. As usual, in arts education major parts of the implementation methods are practical. Especially in dance, the education is physical, consisting of technique classes of diverse dance forms, creative activities and performances, and a lot of collaborative work in a group. The scope of teaching practice is 24 ECTS in two years, which is a lot and provides a solid base for teaching. Part of the education is implemented in traditional, theoretical lecture form, in courses like "History of Latvian stage folk dance" or "Basics of Music Theory".

The dance students can choose the specialisation according to a dance genre and concentrate on getting specific skills of the form, but all students get a touch of the diverse, offered dance forms, which is essential to broaden the creativity. The content of the programme includes a lot of work in the dance field and collaborations with local cultural centres and private dance schools. The methods contribute well to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the courses. Also, the students can easily reserve studios for their own creative rehearsals. The teaching is also student-centred. The good atmosphere between the students and teachers became evident during the site visit. Also, communication between the administrative staff and students seemed to be informal and immediate, which the students appreciated.

The extramural students' education is custom-made per student including a lot of individual and group remote learning possibilities. For the purpose of improving criteria of modern quality education, the technological possibilities are reviewed every year (SAR, p. 95).

As the LCC is a small institution the most natural way to communicate between the teachers and students is an immediate, daily discussion, if any problems/questions occur. However, the LCC has created a formal way to give feedback as well. To improve the quality of courses, the students are expected to express their feedback in a survey available in the e-study environment.

2.2.4. The incorporation of student practice is systematically organised. The practice activities and associated tasks have proven their effectiveness in LCC. The students were satisfied with the practice possibilities in the field and the help of teachers to find a place.

The practice complies with the requirements of regulatory enactments. The four practices are 24 ECTS and according to the Cabinet of Ministers regulations No. 305, the practice of the study programme cannot be less.

The scope of practice in the curriculum (Annex 24) of the study programme "Contemporary Dance" is 24 ECTS, 6 ECTS per semester, which is a good amount of practice in the field. However, in the Annex 29 (Practice regulations), it is said that "the practice is a part of the study programs implemented by the LCC in the amount of 16 credit points", which should be updated. In the SAR (p. 101) and in Annex 29, it is explained what are the specific principles of practice and aims of each practice. In the SAR the procedures and evaluation system of the practices is well explained. It is also said that since the fall of 2022, the LCC has started a transition to digital practice management. However, as the experts tried to see, what is the study description of the course "Practice", there was not one. The same goes with the Qualification paper, the diploma course - there was no study description. The experts want to remind, that everything that is in the study plan, a course with ECTS, should have a study description. Instead there is a document "Practice regulations" (Annex 29), where the content and aims of the practice are described. The experts recommend creating a study description for both courses "Practice" and "Qualification paper".

As proved by the graduates, the LCC provides a lot of possibilities for practice and a lot of connections to the field. The LCC also helps the students to find practice places in case the student does not know a place in advance. It was stated by the employers that the Director of the study field has direct contact with the field and employers.

2.2.5. Not applicable.

2.2.6. In the SAR (p. 105) the procedure for the preparation of Qualification Paper is well explained.

In the study programme "Contemporary Dance" a student independently develops and creates choreographic, creative work in the chosen dance genre. The choreography is independently rehearsed, performed and publicly defended. The preparation and conduct of the professional Qualification Examination is regulated by the "Professional Qualification Examination Regulations", which was updated in 2023.

The written part of the Qualification Paper is regulated by the "Methodical Instructions for the Development and Defense of the Qualification Paper" and the "Methodical Instructions for the Preparation of Study Papers" updated in 2022. The first chapter of the Qualification Paper is a description of the topic chosen by the student for the creative work and the research carried out. According to the SAR (p. 106-108) the content of the choreography/creative work and the written part are well integrated. The themes of the creative productions of the last five years' Qualification Papers are added in Annex 14.

Also, it was observed in the site visit, the topics of the student's final thesis mainly correspond to the study programme. The main themes were abstract or based on individual experiences, personal feelings, in hand with explorations of different topics like mental health or society-based issues.

The paper has a definite structure, based on the description and argumentation of the theme, also description of the artistic statement, the process of creation, argumentation of used pedagogical methods, dance techniques, and methods of choreography. The formal requirements are appropriate to the college level and it is proved that the Qualification paper and the creative work are well integrated in the diploma working process. This is a positive feature and benefits the students' possible continuation of studies into BA-level.

However, some of the papers had quite poor and erroneous Latvian language, which would indicate that some of the students might need even more help in academic writing.

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

The content of the study field "Arts" is topical. Also, the factual demand for the programme has been well surveyed beforehand and the content is developed continuously to meet the needs of the industry. The custom-made studies for the extramural students is a plus.

One of the most evident learning outcomes of the programme is not stated, the ability to dance at a satisfactory level, and should be included.

The curriculum is quite fragmented into 2 ECTS courses, which is not the best possible solution in the future. The study descriptions are in order except that the courses "Practice" and "Qualification Paper" descriptions are missing. As such both of them seem to be well established and the content of diploma works seem to be mainly well done.

Even though the many 2 ECTS courses understandably aim to give a comprehensive basic understanding of the field, both practical and theoretical, in a very short educational time, the experts suggest rethinking both the programme (or maybe dividing into two programmes) aims, learning outcomes and the courses in the consolidation process. The course structure could be checked and considered possibilities to collect the content into bigger modules. The curriculum renovation expects analysing and thinking of what are the core competencies needed in the specific programme/s, like teaching and leading or performing as the core competence. The work needs collaboration with the industry people and the LAC, as has been well done previously.

The students have very good possibilities for practice during the studies and the students were satisfied with the practice possibilities. In the SAR, the procedures for practice and Qualification paper/creative work are very well explained. The students final thesis, the Qualification papers, correspond to the content of the study programme. The Qualification papers are mainly well written and formal requirements are appropriate to the college level. There is also a connection between the written and the creative diploma work, which is very positive.

However, it seems that the study descriptions for the courses "Practice" and "Qualification paper"

are missing, even though the procedures are otherwise systematically documented. The experts recommend creating study descriptions for the courses as well.

Strengths:

- 1) The procedures for practice and Qualification are systematical and well described in the SAR and Annexes.
- 2) The students' final thesis corresponds to the study programme and college level.
- 3) The opportunities and provision of practice offered to students is effective.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The study plan has relatively little pedagogical study content taking into account that the core competence needed is the ability to teach diverse students and age groups.
- 2) The study plan is fragmented into very small courses of 2 ECTS.
- 3) The study plan does not explicitly include the basics of academic writing. Also, the course description - where it could be mentioned - for the Qualification paper/creative work course (12 ECTS) seems to be missing.
- 4) The practice course study description is missing.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Not applicable

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. According to (SAR, p. 110-112) and the site-visit, there is sufficiently appropriate technical and informative provision for the implementation of the study programme.

There are computer classrooms where software programmes for photo, video and audio processing, stage lighting design are available. The LCC has social media activities such as instagram, FB, Tik Tok accounts, web pages, which provide publicity and information for the students.

The LCC library corresponds to the "Contemporary Dance" programme's requirements and demands, and is also approachable for students. The LCC library provides students access to field-relevant information through its collection of informational resources. The library's operating hours and supplementary services contribute to the accessibility of these informative resources.

There are scientific digital databases (EBSCO, Tylor&Francis Journals, ScienceDirect, JSTOR/ArtStor, Sage Journals, Cambridge Journals Online, Encyclopædia Britannica Academic Edition, Lursoft Newspaper Library, and others), e-books, magazines in collaboration with the National Library and LAC available. The resources accessible to students, such as study spaces, tools, equipment, and information sources (books, industry journals, CDs, DVDs), as well as information networks (wireless internet, MOODLE, Zoom, and MS Teams platforms), research materials, services, and software tools (for audio production, processing photographs and video materials and stage lighting design), enable students to engage with all programme courses.

There are also in total 484 printed resources, including 368 in Latvian, 82 in English, 34 in other languages. The topics are appropriate for the programme as pedagogy, psychology, project management, history of dance, dance styles. There are also available several dance monographs

both local and foreign, obtained during 2019-2023. According to the SAR (p. 111) there are however only 35 industry/dance books in English. Some more printed English books or articles on dance could be added. There is also an electronic catalogue, created by the LCC library, where Qualification Papers and Course Works are available. Overall, the library creates a flexible and student-centered learning environment.

While the SAR for the study field "Arts" at the LCC indicates that all the material and technical resources of the College are available (SAR, p. 110), during the site visit, it was observed that certain facilities and technical resources like sound equipment at the LCC do not meet satisfactory standards. Particularly, the dance studios need renovation and the floors especially are not appropriate for dancing. Overall, technical equipment of the dance studios is limited, which could be an obstacle for the provision of high-quality study process. Improvements are necessary in these areas.

2.3.2. Not applicable.

2.3.3. In recent years, the LCC has been operating under tight budget conditions (SAR, p. 114), therefore the investments for the development of the LCC and the study programme has been limited. The attraction of the additional funds as well as some re-evaluation of the distribution of resources could contribute to potential future advancements of LCC. It should be considered that the consolidation with the LAC will lead to changes in the funding and financing systems of the LCC.

As it is stated (SAR, p. 113) the main funding sources for the realisation of the study programme "Contemporary Dance" are state budget, tuition fees, and other funds. The study programme is funded mainly by the state budget (82.57%) and tuition fees (17.42%) (SAR, p. 113). 36% of the annual budget is allocated for the implementation of the study programme "Contemporary Dance". The percentage is adequate to the financial situation and can provide basic requirements of the study programme.

It should be noted that artistic creativity and research are funded by the European Erasmus+ Education, Training, Youth and Sport Programme. In 2021-22 the European project funds for artistic creativity/research were EUR 32,092 including marketing expenses. Also there are funds from the State Cultural Capital Fund and the Riga City Council project funding.

There are 28 state budget places that are provided every study year for the study programme "Contemporary Dance". The state budget funding per student was EUR 1630,11. Besides that, tuition fees (EUR 1,500) does not cover the actual average cost per student.

It is indicated that the study fees should be increased, because scarce funding limits investments in technical and technological bases. Also, utility payments have increased. It is calculated that during the study year 2024/2025 state budget funding per student could increase to EUR 1764.14 (SAR, p. 114) which could facilitate the development of the study programme. Based on the forecast, it is projected that in 2024 the total budget of the LCC rises to 624,004.20 euros (SAR, p. 113) because of the increase of funding for one study place.

During the study year of 2022/2023, the total number of students of the study programme "Contemporary Dance" was 49, of which 28 - full time, and 20 - part-time extramural students (paying tuition fees). There are 28 state budget places that are provided every study year for the study programme "Contemporary Dance", others are self-financed, or using state-guaranteed loans (SAR, p. 89). The number of students is appropriate as the study programme demands 5 students as minimum in each specialisation (there are 4 specialisations: Contemporary dance, Hip-hop dance, Latvian dance and Jazz dance). As it is noted (SAR, p. 88-89) the first Latvian dance specialisation as part-time extramural studies was established in 2021/2022 all 7 students graduated.

There was a temporary decrease in the number of students in the specialisation "Contemporary dance", but now the specialisation looks quite stable (6-10 students during last study years). The same refers to the specialisation "Hip-hop dance" (6-10 students) which seems to be the

specialisation most in demand (site visit, Director of the study programme and students).

The most problematic situation is with the specialisation “Jazz dance” as this direction has been strongly connected with the entertainment and show industry, especially cruise ship “Tallink” which left Latvia. Due to it there was a crucial decrease in the number of students during last study years (2-5 students). The experts propose that it would be necessary to think, if it would be possible to provide jazz dance as elective courses.

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

The resources and provision of the study programme partially comply with the requirements for effective programme implementation. While funding sources of state budget and tuition fees are clearly defined, and some project money has been also available, budget constraints currently limit investments in technical and technological infrastructure. The attraction of additional funds and the merger with the LAC hold the potential to drive future advancements at the LCC.

The programme boasts suitable material, technical, and informational provisions towards enriching the learning environment. Students have access to a variety of resources, study spaces, tools, and information networks, fostering a flexible and student-centred learning atmosphere.

There are computer classrooms where software programmes for photo, video and audio processing, stage lighting design are available. The LCC library mainly corresponds to the programme's requirements and demands, and is approachable for students. There are databases, electronic catalogues, e-books, materials, printed resources. Anyhow, some more printed, English books/articles about different dances could be added to the basic collection. The library is also a support centre for the use of distance learning environments, scientific writing, zoom and moodle platforms, providing a diverse range of resources and services.

The main funding sources for the implementation of the study programme “Contemporary Dance” are clearly defined. 36% of the total annual budget is allocated for the implementation of the study programme, which is adequate to the financial situation and can provide basic facilities for the study programme. It is indicated that the study fees should be increased, which would facilitate the development of the study programme.

The limited amount of funding doesn't cover all requirements of the study programme “Contemporary Dance”. Certain technical resources and facilities at the LCC fall short of satisfactory standards, particularly the conditions of dance studios that need improvements. Also, implementation of international artistic projects could be enhanced and more high level teaching staff could be invited.

Strengths:

- 1) The library is well equipped, approachable, and functions also as a support centre for students.
- 2) The computer classrooms have a variety of software programmes for design work.
- 3) The main funding sources provide basic implementation of the study programme “Contemporary Dance”.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The scope of books/articles in English about dance is relatively narrow.
- 2) The limited budget is an obstacle for development of the study programme “Contemporary Dance” and for appropriate technical, infrastructural, artistic and teaching implementation.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The resources and provision of the study programme partially comply with the requirements for effective programme implementation. The library and computer classes are mainly well equipped and approachable. There is a limited budget, which is not satisfactory for developing adequate technical, infrastructural, artistic nor teaching staff provision.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. The SAR, (p.115) indicates that in the 2023/2024 study year, 20 teaching staff are employed in the implementation of the study programme, of which 13 are academic staff (elected and approved) and 7 are guest lecturers. The number and qualification structure of the staff is sufficient. As reported during site visit, all the staff members, including the Director of the study programme, as well as the heads of study specialisations are only part-time employed, which is a challenge. The fact represents a serious obstacle regarding the intention of a long term engagement of high profile teachers and their serious dedication to the educational process.

The selection of academic staff in the study programme is based on the compliance of lecturers' education and professional experience with the requirements specified in regulatory acts. The lecturers of industry study courses are intensively working in the industry, thus building long-term cooperative relations with the LCC and other professional institutions (SAR, p. 115). The LCC administration expresses high dedication for employing field experts with the professional experience and involvement in the professional organisations of the dance industry, to be able to transfer to students most up-to-date information about what is happening in the dance industry. However, it is difficult to achieve the aim inside the system with highly underpaid professionals that are not engaged on a full-time basis, whose educational work is based mainly on personal enthusiasm.

The other means to assure high education standards is by inviting guest lecturers to conduct workshops on the latest trends, with the focus on the guest lecturer's professional activity (SAR, p. 116). The workshops have been highly evaluated by the students and graduates during the site visit, even though it was recommended to invite even more international profile experts in the future (Meeting with the employers). Especially, some more guest experts on diverse street dance forms were wished.

2.4.2. "Compared to the 2013/2014 study year (the beginning of the review period), the total number of academic staff has increased from 9 lecturers to 20 (there were 5 lecturers elected and approved for vacancies, 4 guest lecturers)." (SAR, p. 116) This is a significant improvement that reflected the changes in the curriculum of the study programme; the offer of elective study courses has increased during the period. New specialisations Hip-hop dance, Latvian dance and Jazz dance were introduced, which evidently demonstrate that the composition of the teaching staff positively affects the quality of the implementation of the study programme.

The other important point is the proportion of elected and appointed lecturers to the total number of lecturers employed in the implementation of the programme, which has also increased "from 55.55% in the 2013/2014 study year to 65% in the 2023/2024 study year" (SAR, p. 116). The statistics indicate that the LCC administration makes efforts to recruit experienced specialists working in the industry to develop professional competencies, even though all the recruited staff is only part-time employed which is an issue that should be put under consideration.

The study programme purposefully takes measures so that changes in the composition of the teaching staff do not negatively affect the quality of the programme implementation.

2.4.3. Not applicable.

2.4.4. The Annex 11 demonstrates artistic achievements of the teaching staff, which prove that all the teachers have more than five years of practical experience which is in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

According to Annex 14, during the period since the previous accreditation the academic staff of the LCC has realised the following results; 14 academic publications (by 5 participants), 10 academic papers at the conferences (by 5 participants), 7 national and 6 international conference participations, 4 national and 9 international projects, 15 Master classes and lectures, 49 participations in creative activities, 11 participations in festivals, which clearly demonstrates important scientific and artistic achievements of the academic staff.

During the site-visit the experts learned that there are conferences organised at the LCC usually once per semester. At the meeting with the academic staff, the lecturers confirmed the support of the LCC for individual participation at academic conferences in Latvia, while the support for international participation is scarce because of the lack of funding. The initiatives of the lecturers are reinforced, but unfortunately rarely appropriately financially supported.

2.4.5. Considering the size of the LCC and the number of students, the cooperation during the study process is almost self-explanatory and it has been recognized during various meetings during the site visit. "The cooperation is facilitated by the involvement of the Director of the study programme, lecturers of limited elective study courses, lecturers of classical dance and dance composition in the process of development of Qualification Papers, jointly observing the student's work at the time of presentation and providing feedback." (SAR, p. 119)

The other point of cooperation of lecturers of study courses is facilitated by the control of the execution of practice tasks, since the practice reports are evaluated by two lecturers, which enables the prompt diagnosis of shortcomings in the practice process. These examples accentuate the importance of cooperation in the study process, which was more than evident during site visit; a very open and enthusiastic atmosphere with positive and respectful relations between students, teachers and administration.

Based on good mutual cooperation "in the 2022/2023 study year, a new initiative was launched - a co-creation activity, creating the college's brand event, the Experimental Creativity Festival "Culture Manifesto" (SAR, p. 119). The project is taking place in the study course "Implementation of Culture Projects" ("Creative Workshops")", involving the students and lecturers of the entire study programme. Working process enables the students a better understanding of the connection between theoretical study courses and practical activities in the cultural sector and builds the audience for the demonstration of their creative works, but also promotes the cooperation of lecturers between study areas, acting as mentors at various stages of project development and implementation (SAR, p. 120).

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

The College employs the relevant number of teachers of adequate qualification structure, but all of the staff members are engaged on a part-time basis. It is recommended that at least the Director of the study programme and the heads of study specialisations be employed on a full time basis. The level of cooperation on all study levels is satisfactory and motivating for the students' career development.

Strengths:

- 1) Significant increase in the number of teaching staff in the last ten years.
- 2) Teachers are experienced specialists working in the industry.

3) Intensive cooperation between teachers, students, graduates and professional experts outside College.

Weaknesses:

- 1) All of the staff members, including the Director of the study programme, as well as the heads of study specialisation are only part-time employed.
- 2) A lack of guest experts of diverse dance styles.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

There is a significant increase in the number of teaching staff in the last ten years and teaching staff are experienced specialists working in the industry, which fully complies with the qualification requirements, even though it would be good to have more visiting professors and lectures for different specialisations.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The programme complies with the State Education Standard No 305 "Regulations on the State Standard of Professional Higher Education".

"Contemporary Dance" volume is 120 ECTS in both full-time and part-time form, of which 30 ECTS are study courses for obtaining general knowledge, 30 ECTS are mandatory study courses of the industry, 18 ECTS are limited choice industry study courses and 6 ECTS are devoted to free choice industry study courses. The study programme includes four practices totaling 24 ECTS along with a Qualification Paper worth 12 credit points (SAR, 93).

The study programme provides students an appropriate vocational higher education and a qualification of a dance teacher/leader of a dance group with satisfactory level of dancing skills, compositional, choreographic and management skills to be able to teach the specific dance genres: Latvian dance, hip hop, contemporary and jazz dance. The education also includes two pedagogical courses to provide the students basic knowledge about pedagogical psychology and methodology.

The attainable professional qualification aligns with the classification specified in regulatory provisions.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study programme complies with the "Leader of a Dance Group" professional standard approved on November 14, 2002. The qualification to be obtained corresponds to the fifth level

of the Latvian qualifications framework (5. LQF). It meets the requirements set in the professional standard through various specialisations and foundational courses within the field. The dance skills and dance teacher skills provided by the programme are satisfactory. Numerous courses augment students' expertise and skills in line with the professional standard's prerequisites. The alignment of these courses with the desired competencies, as outlined in ANNEX 27, offers a comprehensive and coherent overview of the programme's structure.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Course descriptions are prepared in both Latvian and English, meeting the requirements outlined in the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The template for the diploma awarded upon completion of the study programme adheres to the prescribed procedure for issuing state-recognized higher education documents.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Not applicable.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Not applicable.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Not applicable.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The academic staff possesses adequate proficiency in the Latvian language for cond

ucting study courses and handling professional and office responsibilities. This is verified by a confirmation signed by the LCC Director, applicable to all staff engaged in the implementation of the study field “Arts” (ANNEX 12).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Not applicable.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study agreement encompasses all essential components outlined in Cabinet Regulations No. 70. The agreement template includes comprehensive information about the higher education institution, the student, the study programme, as well as the respective responsibilities and rights of both the LCC and the student. Additionally, it outlines the financial arrangements and specifies the duration and termination terms of the agreement.

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

As stated in clause 4.1 of the study agreement (ANNEX 8), “By signing the Agreement, the Parties agree that in the event that the study programme defined in Clause 1 of the Agreement is not accredited or re-accredited during the term of the Agreement, the College offers the Student the opportunity to continue his studies in another College study programme or at another university.” While there is an assurance that students will be given opportunities to pursue further education in another study programme. The LCC lacks formal agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college to substantiate this claim.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The College holds a Confirmation signed by the LCC Director, assuring compensation for students in the event that the study program loses accreditation or its licence, and the student opts not to pursue studies in another programme (ANNEX 7).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Not applicable.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Not applicable.

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The LCC currently lacks an agreement with accredited higher education institutions or colleges to facilitate students' continuation of education elsewhere in the event of study programme termination.

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

The study programme "Contemporary Dance" complies well with the study field "Arts" as dance can be counted under the notion "Arts". The programme "Contemporary Dance" has four specialisations (Contemporary dance, Hip-hop dance, Jazz dance and Latvian dance), which all have a different flavour and different working environment. Latvian dance can be studied also as extramural, "evening studies". The study programme is implemented only in Latvian and provides a diploma in level 5 EQF.

There is economic and social justification for the study programme based on the continuous study of the labour market of the dance industry and an analysis of the employment of the LCC graduates. Especially, there is a need for preserving and developing the Latvian dances and qualifying teachers for the cultural centres across the country. Also, there is a need for dance teachers in private schools and for dancers in the entertainment and arts industry.

The merger with LAC will be a great possibility for development of the study programme or even programmes. As there seems to be little demand for Jazz dance specialisation, the experts suggest rethinking the programme and the specialisations during the consolidation process.

The English title of the study programme and the professional qualification of "the leader of a dance group", are somewhat misleading in the European context. The qualification provided seems to be "dance teacher". Even though the qualification "leader of a dance group" is sealed in the legislation, it would be important to at least consider it, when the legislation is renewed. The title of the programme should be reconsidered in the consolidation process. The experts suggest considering diverse possibilities:

For example, having two specialisations (or even two programmes): one for "Dance teachers", where there is more pedagogical content and the other for a comprehensive "Dance" programme, where the emphasis could be on providing versatile dancing, artistic, performing but also some pedagogic skills.

Another possibility could be developing the current programme only into a "Dance teacher programme" (if legally possible) with comprehensive dancing and pedagogical skills but without specialisations. Instead of specialisations, the diverse dance styles could be electives that the students choose according to their interests.

The third possibility could be to slightly reform the current programme into a comprehensive "Dance"-programme for getting a "Dance maker" or "Community dance expert" vocational qualification with several employment possibilities, depending on Latvian language and culture. One option would be also keeping "the Dance team leader" as specialisation for Latvian dance and create another specialisation "Dance" for other dance teachers/performers. The options have to be considered by the LCC and LAC with the stakeholders.

Also, the experts suggest considering possibilities for the students to continue their studies by

adding one year in BA-level. Anyhow, during the consolidation process different options to arrange the studies/programmes to create pathways for employment and further studies should be considered.

The learning outcomes should be explicitly expressed and the core learning outcome “is able to dance at a satisfactory level” should be included in the learning outcomes of the programme. One of the main content of the programme is dancing, practical dance classes, which should provide dancing skills.

The content of the programme is topical but the curriculum is quite fragmented into 2 ECTS courses, which is not necessarily the best possible solution. In the future, the courses could be collected into bigger modules. The graduates stated during the site-visit that there is a perfect balance between theory and practice. The content of the programme includes a lot of work in the dance field and collaborations with local cultural centres and schools. The methods contribute well to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the courses. The scope of practice in the curriculum (Annex 24) of the study programme “Contemporary Dance” is 24 ECTS, 6 ECTS per season, which is a good amount of practice in the field. The practice (24 ECTS) and the Qualification paper and the creative part (12 ECTS) procedures are very well explained in the SAR, but in the study plan the course descriptions are missing. The students’ final thesis, the Qualification papers, correspond to the content of the study programme.

The LCC system for determining the financial support and allocating the budget for the study field and study programme is appropriate. There is a well established system and procedure for improvement of methodological and informative provision. The main funding sources provide basic implementation of the study programme “Contemporary Dance”. The LCC covered tax debts from the previous years, which has meant a very tight budget. Due to limited budget resources, there is a constrained budget for investments in the development of the study programme.

The number of students is appropriate for ensuring the profitability of the study programme. The most in demand is “Hip hop dance”, also “Contemporary dance” as well as “Latvian dance” are well balanced specialisations. The “Jazz dance” is the most unstable due to the low number of students, and it is experiencing dependence on the small entertainment industry of Latvia.

The LCC library is a well equipped support centre, it has scientific databases and mainly appropriate materials, approachable for both students and teaching staff. Due to very limited budget resources, infrastructure and technical equipment of the dance studios are not at a satisfactory level.

The LCC has a highly motivated, friendly atmosphere between students, teaching staff, and the Study department. Also, an individual and student-centred approach is evident and there is well established career support. Anyhow, there is no professional psychological support or wellbeing activities available, the facilities are not accessible for students with special needs due to historical infrastructure - a fact which is impossible to change very much.

The LCC has a transparent system for attracting qualified, highly motivated and enthusiastic teaching staff appropriate to the learning level. Due to low salaries and a small number of academic hours, there is only a part-time teaching staff. Academic competition is relatively low and the workload is not well balanced - paradoxically because the teaching staff has to work elsewhere as well. In the future, high level international visiting teaching staff should be involved more.

The LCC has a specific education level (EQF 5), which rarely corresponds to educational institutions abroad, which is a challenge for cooperation. Instead, local cooperation with institutions, employers is relevant and satisfactory. There is a small number of Erasmus+ mobility partners for the study programme “Contemporary Dance”. International collaboration with selected organisations as well as international artistic projects could be expanded.

The number and qualification structure of the staff is sufficient, but all teaching staff members, including the Director of the study programme, as well as the heads of study specialisation are only part-time employed. The fact represents a serious obstacle regarding the intention of a long-term engagement of high profile teachers and their serious dedication to the educational process.

Evaluation of the study programme "Contemporary Dance"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Contemporary Dance"

Short-term recommendations

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| 1) Expressing the learning outcomes explicitly and including the core learning outcome "is able to dance at a satisfactory level" (or equivalent formulation). |
| 2) Creating study descriptions for the courses "Practice" and "Qualification paper". |
| 3) Including some more pedagogical study content, for example such as developmental psychology or dance movement therapy, as there is a focus on teacher training. |
| 4) Increasing the scope of books/articles in English about different dance genres in the library. |
| 5) Inviting guest professors/lecturers for workshops of diverse dance styles. |
| 6) Creating an agreement with the LAC or another college to ensure students' continuation of education elsewhere in the event of study programme termination. |

Long-term recommendations

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| 1) Considering developing the programme/even programmes and the specialisations in the consolidation process with the LAC, as well as the title/s of the programme/s. |
| 2) Developing the curriculum into bigger modules in the consolidation and development process. |
| 3) Improving the dance studios by providing sprung dance floors, mirrors, movable curtains, better sound equipment and implementing innovative technologies to enhance the study programme. |
| 4) Exploring the possibility of employing the Director of the study field "Arts" and heads of study specialisations on a full-time basis and increasing salaries to attract high level guest teachers. |

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

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Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation	Comment
R1 - Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 2.1 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field whilst implementing its internal quality assurance system:	Fully compliant	The LCC has developed a relevant internal quality assurance system to ensure continuous improvement and development of the study field.
R2 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the level of development of scientific research and artistic creation (if applicable)	Fully compliant	The activity of applied research and artistic creation is subordinated to the level of the education of the LCC. Relevant artistic creation possibilities are ensured for the students, even though the facilities are unsatisfactory and international cooperation in applied research or artistic creation could be enhanced.
R3 - The cooperation implemented within the study field with various Latvian and foreign organizations ensures the achievement of the aims of the study field.	Partially compliant	There is a very well developed local cooperation with Latvian institutions. The international mobility of teachers and students is underdeveloped and there are not enough selected, relevant partners.

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation		Comment
R4 - Elimination of deficiencies and shortcomings identified in the previous assessment of the study field, if any, or implementation of the recommendations provided.		Partially compliant	While recommendations regarding exchange mobility, development of projects within the European Social Fund, library resource acquisition and improvements related to the study process have been addressed, critical recommendations essential for the advancement of the study field and programme, including documentation concerning the long-term financial viability, the adequacy of practical study rooms (dance halls) and other technical equipment, along with the incorporation of industry professionals for innovative perspectives, have been inadequately implemented.

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

No.	Study programme	R5	R6	R7	R8	Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)
1	Contemporary Dance (41212)	Not relevant	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Good

The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts

no