

Expert group joint opinion

Evaluation Procedure: Assessment of Study Field

Higher Education Institution: University of Latvia

Study field: Management, Administration and Management of Real Property

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Summary Assessment of the Study Field

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The goal of the study direction “Management, Administration and Real Estate Management” of the University of Latvia (UL) is “to provide research-based and innovative management science studies that meet the needs of the Latvian and European labour market, which use and integrate economics, finance, law, social, information and communication knowledge into a unified whole as well as prepare qualified specialists in the area of business management for Latvia, the European Union and the world community by providing the appropriate skills, knowledge and competences”. It is aligned with the strategic goals of the UL set for the period till 2026. The analysis of the submitted documents and the evidence received during the on-site visit shows the capacity of the study direction is sufficient to achieve the stated goal.

The Study direction complies of thirteen study programmes, and eight of them were submitted for accreditation (1 academic Bachelor programme “Business administration”, 2 professional Bachelor programmes “E-business management” and “Industrial engineering management”, 2 academic Master programmes “Business administration” and “Public administration”, 2 professional Master programmes “International business” and “Project management”, and 1 Doctoral programme “Economics and Business”). The content of the analyzed programmes is relevant to the latest trends in related fields of science and to the market needs. The content is regularly updated taking into account the viewpoint of students and graduates, as well as recommendations of employers. The main problems of the Study direction refer to a low number of students and high dropout rate.

The UL has established a quality policy and it is publicly available on the UL website. The quality assurance system is based on the EFQM excellence model and shows a clear distribution of roles and responsibilities towards quality assurance. The management of the Study Direction is organized in a way that ensures a quality of teaching as well as supports the development of the Study Direction. The management structure ensures the regular flow of information between different management levels as well as constant progress monitoring.

The UL respects the principles of fair and responsible conduct as stipulated in The Academic Ethics Codex of the University of Latvia (UL Senate 27.10.2018. decision No. 170) and in the Regulations for Academic Integrity at the University of Latvia (UL Senate 25.02.2013. decision No 287, 27.06.2016. Senate decision No. 33). They are publicly available to students of the UL and its staff. The UL has a plagiarism-checking system that, however, should to be improved.

The infrastructure is developed enough to implement the study programmes and it is highly appreciated by the students. In opinion of students there are no problems with digital resources or the availability of computer classes. The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics (FBME) provides 38 auditoriums of various sizes from 20 to 350 places. The FBME also has a state-of-the-art Photo and Video Studio. There is also a Student Business Incubator, which organizes lectures, conferences, as well as various events to stimulate students' interest in starting and developing a business. There are several successful examples of functioning business. The Student Business Incubator also gets financial support from sponsors. The Library is well equipped, the access to various e-resources and databases is provided. However, the premises of the Faculty are not available for people with disabilities (with reduced mobility).

Research activities play an integral role in strategic planning documents of the UL and FBME. The teaching staff members have a complete awareness about the research results expected from them, express a strong commitment to research and most of them have an impressive list of achievements. The UL has a centralized Support programme for research activities. FBME has two scientific journals “Journal of economics and management research” and “Humanities and social sciences Latvia” (<https://www.bvef.lu.lv/petnieciba/petnieciba/zinatniskie-zurnali/>). The UL provides financing for publishing to UL staff members. Academic staff members participate in international projects and conferences. Besides, international events are organized at FBME: conference “New

Challenges in Economics and Business Development”, sections within the International conference of the UL, conference “Project Management Development – Practice and Perspectives”. Involvement of the teaching staff in research is ensured by the set of internal rules (research work is included into the workload). The engagement of students in research activities is actively promoted and supported. Various databases are available for students to support them in conducting research and preparing the final Thesis. There are four conferences available for students at FBME without any charge. There is a special programme to award students for their contribution to promote UL and FBME brand, including participation in research activities.

FBME has long-term successful cooperation with other higher education institutions in Latvia (RTU, LLU, RTA, ViA, RISEBA, BSA, etc.). UL FBME has cooperation agreements on Double Diploma programmes with Université Paris - Est Créteil Val de Marne (UPEC) in France, University of Economics in Bratislava, Slovakia and Manipal University in India. UL FBME has signed an agreement on the establishment of the Silkroad Business School, which aims to promote cooperation between Chinese and Eastern European business schools. Negotiations are underway for a joint programme with Beijing Foreign Studies University, China. Within the Study direction, a number of incoming students is stable during the reporting period due to a large number of courses taught in English. Two Bachelor study programmes and two Master study programmes are offered entirely in English what let to enroll foreign citizens. Moreover, the Doctoral programme “Economics and Business”, including a module “Global Management and Leadership” is offered to foreign students under the agreement with Salzburg University of Business and Finance. However, evaluating the programmes separately, the number of student mobilities in some programmes is low. The mechanism of the involvement of foreign teaching staff is in place based on the Erasmus+ agreements. However, only a few permanent foreign staff members are employed at the UL FBME.

1. Management of the Study Field

Analysis

1.1. The Study Direction “Management, Administration and Real Estate Management” offers 13 different study programmes, including 3 bachelor study programmes, 5 master study programmes and 2 doctoral study programmes and programmes taken over from Riga Teacher Training and Educational Management Academy (RTTEMA) since 2017/2018 academic year (Study accreditation commission decision No. 26-A of July 26, No. 2020/02, 31.01.20). However, only 8 programmes will be accredited and consequently subject to review: 3 bachelor programs and 5 master programmes. Such a number of programmes of different levels ensures the continuity of education. The Study Programmes are also diversified as they offer the academic as well as professional qualification degrees. The scope of the programmes range from Public Administration, Project Management, International Business into E-Business and Engineering Studies. It seems to be the case that University of Latvia (UL) does the market research and can identify the current trends occurring in the study field of Business Management as well as competitors in its field though many of programmes are content wise close to each other. Moreover, the choice and decision on the development of specific programmes occur in line with the “Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030” which states and evaluates the perspective of the study field and study programmes from the point of view of the interests of the Republic of Latvia (Self-Assessment Report (SAR), p.53). Consequently, it can be stated that UL takes into consideration the needs and potential demand on new labor from the job market.

The aim of the Study Direction is “to provide research-based and innovative management science studies that meet the needs of the Latvian and European labour market, which use and integrate economics, finance, law, social, information and communication knowledge into a unified whole as

well as prepare qualified specialists in the area of business management for Latvia, the European Union and the world community by providing the appropriate skills, knowledge and competences". Consequently, it can be stated that the field of studies offered by the UL seems to fulfill the aim of the study direction and corresponds with the UL Development Strategic Plan 2010-2020. The latter assumes creation of such an environment which allows the UL to fulfill its goals. Moreover, the strategic goals of the UL set to 2026

assume "the improvement of the study quality, research work, internationalisation, mobility, personnel development, good management principles, and facilitating cooperation with social partners and the public" (SAR, p. 100). Many steps have already been undertaken to satisfy these goals and to monitor the progress of work. As an example: to improve the teaching process the lecture hospitations have been introduced; the lectures are offered the methodological seminars; the study quality has been regularly assessed by students; the cooperation with the business practitioners has been tightened. Importantly, the monitoring of the study quality occurs at every management level ranging from Programme Directors to the Council members of UL Faculty of Business, Management and Economics (FBME).

Moreover, the content of programmes seems to be regularly (at the end of each semester) updated as well as discussed among the practitioners. On-site interviews with the Employers as well as Faculty have confirmed a tight collaboration to discuss and revise the programme content to reflect the most timely topics the demand of the job market. Moreover, it has been confirmed that changes have been incorporated into the programme as a result of such discussions. Moreover, from 2018 on, in order to update the study courses, an order was issued by the UL Rector on the Procedure for the Development and Updating of Study Courses of the University of Latvia (10.08.2018. No. 1/277), as well as the instruction of the FBME Dean on the preparation of study course descriptions and improvement of the E-study environment (FBME-A43.1 / 318 15.08.2018.)

The Study Direction tries to involve in its development different stakeholders, from the politicians, company employees as well as entrepreneurs, to provide the most updated content in the business administration. Moreover, the faculty also invites guest lecturers including leading practitioners and politicians (SAR, p. 59; on-site interviews). The Faculty successfully helps in operation of the Student Business Incubator, which organizes lectures, conferences, as well as various events to stimulate students' interest in starting and developing a business.

Finally, FBME has long-term successful cooperation with other higher education institutions in Latvia (RTU, LLU, RTA, ViA, RISEBA, BSA, etc.). UL FBME has cooperation agreements on Double Diploma programmes with Université Paris - Est Créteil Val de Marne (UPEC) in France, University of Economics in Bratislava, Slovakia and Manipal University in India. UL FBME has signed an agreement on the establishment of the Silkroad Business School, which aims to promote cooperation between Chinese and Eastern European business schools. Negotiations are underway for a joint programme with Beijing Foreign Studies University, China.

Overall, it can be stated that the programmes offered in the Study Direction of "Management, Administration and Real Estate Management" at the UL seem to be a result of discussions and market research. However, the number of students enrolled in some programmes is low and the dropout rate is high. Moreover, the number of foreign students seems to be relatively low around 115 in the academic year 2018/2019 (SAR, p. 57). One of the reasons might be that the programmes are overburdened with the theoretical content and long list of readings. Such programmes, especially at the Master level, might lose against the programmes offered by business schools which are very practical and heavily oriented at developing specific skills and case studies. Moreover, some programmes are offered in too many variations as for example: full-time, part-time, English, Latvian in relation to number of students enrolled. The Bachelor programme seems to be more

specialized than the Master Programme, especially while considering, for example, International Business at the Master Level and at the Bachelor Level. The proportion should be revised. Finally, the FBME should consider whether there is not much overlap between different Study Programmes. Some Study Programmes have to be also revised in terms of objectives they offer to students (see for example Business Administration at the Master Level). More detailed analysis is provided in the Analysis of each Programme.

1.2. Collegiate responsibility for the administration of the Study Direction lies with the UL decision-making bodies - the Senate, the UL Study Programme Quality Evaluation Board (headed by Vice-Rectors), Faculty councils and Study Programme Councils, which are in charge in assessing, monitoring, evaluating and auditing the whole Study Direction. However, the responsibility for the study fields and study programmes are in the hand of the Study Director and the Dean, Study Programme Directors. Additionally, each lecturer is responsible for the quality of the content and implementation of the courses, research activities and professional development (Self-assessment Report, p. 75-77).

The management is in the hands of the Dean, who is the top official at the FBME. The Dean is responsible toward the Rector and offers a report about his or her work to the Council once a year. The FBME Council is the highest-ranking decision-making institution at the faculty and it includes 25 members, among other, academic personnel representatives from each Department and from each Institute. The competence of the Council includes approval of changes in the content of the study field, approval of study plans, election of lecturers and other important decisions within the study process. However, the Study Programme Council (SPP) is a collegiate governing body that manages all levels of academic, professional and doctoral programmes relevant to one discipline. The SPP develops a strategy for the development of the field study programmes, evaluates applications for new study programmes at all levels in the respective field, evaluates annual study programme self-assessment reports, changes in study programmes, etc. It includes, among others, the directors of all the relevant study programmes, employers, representatives of the students and professors and other qualified professionals. In practice, the Study Programme Directors make proposals on how to improve the study programme in a systematic manner. No less than once per semester they inform the Study Programme Council about their work. No less than once a year, they approve a SAR that is submitted to the Faculty Council and focuses on the indicators and aspects of the study programme. In total, 25 general personnel employees who ensure the success of studies for more than 2,000 students. This is a mathematical proportion of 1:80 (SAR, p. 79).

Overall, the information provided in the SAR as well as on-site interviews seem to support that flow of information between different bodies works efficiently. The most active are the Programme Directors who supervise and collect the feedback from students and employers about the content of the study programmes which then they forward to the upper-level management. Consequently, on-site interviews seem to prove that both students and employers are heavily involved in the management of the Study Direction. Moreover, representatives of students are elected to the FBME Council and the Study Programme Council, which have a full veto right related to any issue that has to do with student interests (SAR, p. 79). Students are also involved in the practical implementation of the study direction, in that all of them have the right to make proposals, submit complaints, etc. Finally, there is the normative and structural system of the UL, which dictates the processes of the implementation and development of the study direction in a centralized manner.

1.3. Admission requirements to the UL and FBME are regulated by admission rules (Senate decision No 15, 30 May 2016, approved in accordance with Article 65.2 of the law on universities and Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 846, 10 October 2006, "Requirements related to the demands, criteria and procedures related to admission to study programme). Admission to basic studies is centralized,

using the "unified admission to bachelor study programmes," which merges admission to 12 universities in Latvia.

Consequently, the competition for study slots is based on the results of centralized exams, or the grades of people who have been exempted from the centralized exams or have completed their secondary education abroad. Study programmes that do not have appropriate centralized exams are accompanied by additional requirements for certain marks in the certificate, such as awards at the Latvian State Olympiads or Latvian State Student Scientific Conferences (SAR, p. 80).

Admission to the Master's Degree Programme is decentralized in each faculty, but they all have the same terms. The requirements generally refer to the certificate of Bachelor's education in specific areas (depending on the type of the Programme), language requirement and sometimes entry exam. Admission for the Master level Programme is regulated by each Programme independently. The Bachelor's degree in specific fields(-s) depending on the Study Programme is required and a language certificate if the programme is in a foreign language. More specialized programmes also require entry exams. Additionally, for professional qualification programmes the specific years of experience might be required. In general, it must be stated that the admission rules are clear and consistent with the programme field. More specialized programmes require more technical background and its proof, while more general programmes have "softer" admission criteria, and thus refer to a wider group of students. However, it is worth considering whether FBME should not introduce the entry exams for all technical Master programmes due to the high drop-out rate at the Programmes. However, soften technical requirements (as for example grade from mathematics) for general management programmes. Admission to the doctoral programme requires a submission of the topic of the dissertation and interview. The latter has not been mentioned in the Self-assessment Report, however it has been stated as required during the on-site interviews with the Faculty of the Doctoral Programme. Moreover, there is the discrepancy in the admission rules between the SAR and UL website. For example, the admission criteria for Bachelor in Business Administration are different than on the website of the Programme. In the Syllabuses as well as in the Booklet it is not mentioned about the skype interview (see for example "Analysis of the Study Programme" in this Document or SAR p. 395-396) while on the website the interviews are required. In other places on the website it has also been mentioned that interviews are required only for Indian, Nepal and Sri-Lanka students.

The study period, professional experience and previously obtained formal and informal education recognition procedures in the Study Direction are in line with Article 47.3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, as well as Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 932, 16 November 2004, "The Procedure for Starting Studies During Later Study Phases." Article 7 of this regulation and the UL legal document "The Procedure for Beginning Studies During Later Study Phases" (approved by Instruction No 1/128, 8 June 2009).

UL has clear procedures on recognition of other qualifications, including international ones, and subjects in the Study Programmes. They are fair and mostly accessible to everyone online. Though, there were a few procedures which could not be found on the UL website. The recognition of the material and subjects from other Universities and study directions in specific programmes occur upon the decision of the Programme Director.

1.4.

The UL respects the principles of fair and responsible conduct as stipulated in The Academic Ethics Codex of the University of Latvia (UL Senate 27.10.2018. decision No. 170) and in the Regulations for Academic Integrity at the University of Latvia (UL Senate 25.02.2013. decision No 287, 27.06.2016. Senate decision No. 33). They are publicly available to students of the UL and its staff. The University of Latvia Academic Ethics Code includes principles and norms related to honest and responsible activities among employees of the university.

In order to prevent violations of the principles of academic fairness, the University of Latvia has

established the Unified Computerized Plagiarism Control System (Order No.1/125 of 22.04.2014). Anti-plagiarism tools are used systematically. With the help of the system all students of the study programme will be tested for their conclusions and promotional papers. There is also a procedure in place to describe further actions to be taken in the event of signs of plagiarism (see annex to UL Order No.1/125 of 22.04.2014 on control of plagiarism). The system automatically compares the final theses uploaded to on the UL system, incl. material available on the Internet. In case of plagiarism, the Study Programme Directors are sent an overview of these test results. The Programme Directors pass this information on to the appointed supervisor and reviewer for review and, in the event of a suspected breach of academic integrity, pass on the results of the analysis to the final examination panel for final consideration (Self-Assessment Report, p. 95). All employees of the UL are asked to submit honest and fair information about violations of the code to the UL Academic Ethics Commission. Every employee has the right to submit proposals to the commission on how the code and its implementation could be improved.

Though, such a plagiarism system is used by seven higher education institutions, it cannot be concluded that such a system is sufficient. First of all, UL uses it only for research papers including the theses. However, the majority of plagiarism that occurs in western universities has been detected in homework, course works or other projects. In fact, the UL should desire to have a system where all course works are submitted and reviewed for plagiarism. Second, the detection of the plagiarism should occur before the thesis is submitted, and not afterwards, i.e., the thesis should not be accepted by the supervisor/reviewer if it has not gone through the plagiarism system. Finally, the procedure should go the other way round. The supervisor should report the plagiarism detection to the Programme Director to discuss the matter. In fact, the supervisor is responsible for the quality of the student's work and in case of any violations should inform the Programme Director. Moreover, the plagiarism programme does not detect plagiarism in English-language texts. This is done by the Director of the Programme manually (SAR, p. 96). Again, it should not be the responsibility of the Programme Director but the Supervisor. Moreover, it is very difficult to manually enter the whole Master Theses. Given that FBME started introducing more English speaking programmes as well as wanting to be more internationally oriented, it is highly recommended to use an international plagiarism programme detecting the English written texts. Moreover, the plagiarism system should also detect the works from other European Universities, and not only Latvian. Also, clearer procedures must exist in case of plagiarism detection. FBME members as well as students have to be sufficiently and regularly trained in plagiarism detection as well as informed about the consequences of such a violation. In fact, each student during the Thesis Seminar should go through the plagiarism training. Importantly, the same procedures must be clear and applied by all faculty members.

1.5. In general, it should be stated that the UL offers the website in Latvian and the English language. However, the information about all programmes, admission rules, funding or other activities at the UL does not seem to be updated. The study programmes appeared on the website is not fully compliant with what the FMBE currently offers. Moreover, the study programmes are not always fully translated into English. Moreover, some programmes offered by FMBE do not appear on the English page, as for example: E-business or Project Management.

The information does not seem to be updated as well as there is inconsistency in information between the syllabuses and website. For example, in the Syllabuses as well as in the Self-Assessment Report the type of the degree to be obtained within the Business Administration is mentioned as: "Bachelor of Social Sciences in Management Sciences". In the booklet on the homepage it is stated as : "Bachelor of Social Sciences in Management" see: https://www.lu.lv/en/studies/study-process/courses/programme-search/?tx_lustudycatalogue_pi1%5Baction%5D=detail&tx_lustudycatalogue_pi1%5Bcontroller%5D=Course&tx_lustudycatalogue_pi1%5Bprogram%5D=20799&cHash=26fdbd73d046fe7f54415ed7667e1f80), while on the website it is given as "Bachelor of Social Sciences in Business Administration".

A similar situation occurs for example in the admission criteria where in the Syllabuses attached to the SAR as well as in the website booklet, the admission criteria for Bachelor in Business Administration are different than on the homepage of the Programme. In the Syllabuses as well as in the Booklet it is not mentioned about the skype interview (see for example "Analysis of the Study Programme" in this Document or SAR p. 395-396) while on the website the interviews are required. In other places on the website, it has also been mentioned that interviews are required only for Indian, Nepal and Sri-Lanka students.

Many descriptions under the English link appear in the Latvian language, including the information about potential funding (see for example <https://www.lu.lv/en/admission/scholarships-and-student-loans/student-loans/>) or <https://www.lu.lv/en/gribustudet/ziemas-uznemsana-1/ziemas-uznemsana-fakultates-magistra-limen-a-studijas/>.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

In general, the aims of the Study Direction are clearly defined. The programmes offered are updated and a result of discussion involving different stakeholders, from faculty into the business practitioners. FBME has also long-term cooperation with other higher education institutions. However, the main problems of FBME refer to low number of students and high dropout rate. FBME should review whether the programmes are not too theoretical as well as burdened with too much self-study material. In addition, FBME should consider whether there are not too many of the same programmes offered in different combinations (like full-time, part-time, Latvian or English language) in relation to the number of students enrolled and graduated. It should also consider whether some programmes are not too close to each other in terms of content (more information in the Documents analyzing each Programme).

The management of the Study Direction seems to be organized in a way that ensures a quality of teaching as well as supports the Study Direction development. The management structure ensures the regular flow of information between different management levels as well as constant monitoring of the FBME development. All stakeholders seem to play an active role in the development of the Study Direction.

The admission procedures are compliant with the qualification degree offered. Some admission rules were not consistent between the on-site interviews with the Faculty and the SAR. Also, there is a discrepancy in the admission rules between the SAR and UL website. FBME should also consider if entry tests should not be required for all technical Master Programmes and soften, i.e., less specialized requirements for the management programmes.

UL has a plagiarism system and the Code of Ethics in place. However, the system has several deficiencies which should be corrected given a more international focus of UL and its inefficiency.

Finally, UL provides only partial information about the programmes, admissions and other UL activities in English language. The English language homepage does not involve full information about the Study Programmes. A lot of information, though including English links, appears in the Latvian language. There is also inconsistency between the information provided in different places on the website as well as between website and syllabuses.

Strengths:

- 1 FBME tries to follow the strategic national documents while offering its programs.
- 2 FBME updates and revises the Study programmes regularly.
- 3 FBME has undertaken steps to improve the study experience.
- 4 Partnership with different higher education institutions.
- 5 Active participation of the practitioners, employers and students in the discussion on the

programme development.

6 Constant monitoring of the study programmes.

7 A structure enabling constant monitoring of the Study Direction.

8 Involvement of all stakeholders in the FBME development.

9 Established admission rules.

10 Generally, admission rules are compliant with the qualification offered.

11 Plagiarism system in place.

12 Code of Ethics in place.

13 Website is clear and easy to navigate.

Weaknesses:

1 High drop-out rate.

2 Inconsistency in information in different places on English and Latvian language. For instance, not all admission procedures are accessible online in English language (the websites do not exist):

<https://www.lu.lv/gribustudet/normativie-dokumenti/uznemsanas-prasibas-un-kriteriji-pamatstudiju-programmemas-2019-2020-akademiskaja-gada/>

<https://www.lu.lv/gribustudet/normativie-dokumenti/uznemsanas-prasibas-un-kriteriji-augstaka-lime-na-studiju-programmemas-20192020-akademiskaja-gada/> Besides, there is a text in Latvian on the English language website.

3 The information about the Study Programmes are not updated on the websites, both in English and Latvian language.

4 Inconsistency in the admission procedures between the website and Self-Assessment Reports (please see 1.5. on more information).

5 Lack of established hierarchy in plagiarism detection and reporting.

6 A plagiarism system does not detect English language plagiarism.

7 Lack of regular plagiarism training among faculty and students.

2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System

Analysis

2.1. The higher education institution has established a quality policy and it is publicly available on the [university website](https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_EN/2/Kvalitates_politika_majas_lapai_ENG.pdf) (https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_EN/2/Kvalitates_politika_majas_lapai_ENG.pdf).

The UL has developed and maintains a quality assurance system which is based on and contributes to the strategic goals of the institution (evidenced in the SAR and supported in site visit meeting with institutional management). The system is based on the EFQM excellence model and shows a clear distribution of roles and responsibilities towards quality assurance.

The quality assurance system ensures continuous improvement and development of the study direction and the study programmes, for example through regular reviews of courses including course descriptions, and continuous development of the learning outcomes on study direction level, programme level and course level (stated in the SAR and supported in meetings with Study field director and programme directors). The procedures include information and feedback from all primary stakeholders such as students, graduates and employers.

2.2 The procedures for development and review of the study direction and the relevant study programmes are defined (evidenced in SAR) and implemented (evidenced in site visit meetings with

directors, academics, students, graduates and employers) and they are logical, efficient and available to the relevant stakeholders.

Sufficient procedures are in place but the institution lacks a detailed quality handbook which details out the procedures and distribution of responsibility regarding updating the procedures. At the meeting with the group responsible for the SAR they confirmed that such a quality manual is under development and will be in place in 2021.

Feedback mechanisms are in place and the institution regularly collects data from primary stakeholders such as students, graduates and employers. Concrete examples of how student feedback is used to improve the programmes are provided by the study field director and the program directors, i.e. the involvement of technological tools in the study process and to include more practical examples in the studies. The quality policy also includes procedures for feedback to students, graduates and employers on the use of the information provided. Some students and employers confirm that they receive such feedback (evidenced in meetings with students and employers), but not in a systematic way. It has not been possible to evidence the same for the graduates.

2.3 The institution regularly collects, analyzes and uses relevant information to improve the programmes. Every year the literature on each course is updated, the course descriptions are reviewed, and the learning objectives are updated. Furthermore, statistical data about a number of applicants, applicant profiles and background, drop-out rates and completion in each programme, grades and employment rates are used efficiently to surveillance and improve the quality and performance of the study direction and the study programmes.

2.4 The higher education institution has integrated the standards set forth in part 1 of the ESG's in the institutions quality assurance system. The integration is evidenced in Table 2.1 in the SAR and includes all aspects of part 1 in the ESG's. This also addresses the implementation of Student-Centred Learning (SCL) at UL, by examples of how SCL can look like. It has not been possible though, to evidence a shared understanding of the concept of SCL throughout the institution.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

The UL has formulated a quality policy that is publicly available. The institution has also a well-established quality assurance system which contributes to the institutional strategic goals and the aims of the faculty. The quality assurance system includes well-defined procedures for the collection, analysis, and use of information.

Strengths:

- 1 Established quality policy which is publicly available on the UL website.
- 2 Quality assurance system is based on and contributes to the strategic goals of the institution and the faculty.
- 3 All stakeholders are engaged in the improvement of study programmes with the Direction.
- 4 Well defined procedures for development and review of the study direction and the study programmes.
- 5 Systematic and regular collection, analysis and use of data and information about the study direction and the study programmes.

Weaknesses:

- 1 Lack of systematic feedback to students and graduates about how the information from the

student surveys and the graduate surveys are used and which changes have been made due to the information.

2 Lack of common understanding in the institution of what student-centered teaching and learning is.

3 Lack of a detailed quality manual or quality handbook with detailed information about the distribution of roles and responsibilities in relation to quality processes.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field

Analysis

3.1. Financial resources are determined by state budget places, it depends on the number of students, as well as depends on the overall system of the UL. The money system follows the student, the tuition fee is determined accordingly (which is considered as procedure). There is a system for financing the scientific research and/or artistic creation activities in place. There is no separate procedure or budget line for the study programme, all is for the faculty which does not allow to fully verify the efficiency of financial resources of the study direction.

3.2. Infrastructure is highly recognized by the students. In opinion of students there are no problems with digital resources or the availability of computer classes. According to the SAR, the FBME provides 38 auditoriums of various sizes from 20 to 350 places. However, the premises of the Faculty are not available for people with disabilities (with reduced mobility). All lecture rooms are equipped with computers, screens and projectors, and all lecture rooms are provided with contact points for powering laptops and smartphones. The FBME also has a state-of-the-art Photo and Video Studio.

According to the decision of the dean, the faculty annually reviews the latest literature. E-books are mainly provided with access from any place. FBME attracts many practitioners as guest lecturers, lecturers of study courses decide who should be invited and it is accepted by the dean of the faculty. The FBME invests a lot in databases, open access is one of the priorities and the faculty is proud of it. According to SAR, the UL subscribed to 34 e-resource platforms in 2019 (which includes e-books, e-journals, reference resources, tools, multimedia, statistics, and mixed-format databases). However, the frequency of use of multiple databases is not growing rapidly with an exceptional breakthrough in 2019.

FBME has good contacts and cooperation with professional associations; however common projects with industry (and support) are not widely developed there are some examples of such cooperation.

3.3. There are 4 departments with the faculty and heads of departments are responsible for the improvement of academic skills, for example, language skills. Accordingly, staff skills are regularly improved. Furthermore, each year the academic staff writes a short report (self-evaluation report) on the achievements of the previous year, it may serve as a basis for change in academic staff performance and need for training. There are regular methodological seminars. Moreover, academic staff exchanges experience among themselves, there have been several meetings on how to provide learning remotely, cooperation with other faculties takes place.

Academic staff use software that improves collaboration between students. Although some students pointed out that some of the academic staff have a lack of ICT skills.

The academic and research workload is well balanced – internal workload calculation is provided, academic staff should sign workload documents. Faculty supports publications, financial support for conferences also available. Not only is support available from a variety of projects (Horizon 2020 programme, Norway grants, etc.), but there is a support mechanism on how to support project writing. The FBME has an intranet where all information is available.

Every academic position defines the balance between academic and research activities however it applies to scientific papers which should be at least 2 per year (indexed by Web of Sciences or Scopus). All academic staff is well informed about what they should achieve and what are the main

requirements. With regard to research projects, personal contacts play a significant role. The workload of academic staff also depends on whether they are professors or lecturers. The Head of the department follows up with the workload of the academic staff.

Academic staff participates in outgoing mobility quite often using Erasmus+ programme but there are some other options available outside Erasmus+ programme. It is worth mentioning that places for academic staff outgoing mobility are limited – they are just informed how places are available and compete with each other.

There is a procedure on how to apply and get support for scientific activities, it is approved by the vice-dean on research. Academic staff can receive bonuses on grant projects, however, there is no precise information as it is the responsibility of the administration. Some study directors encourage students to obtain grants from different programmes, even by receiving messages directly from the study director.

3.4. The support of teaching methodologists has also been acknowledged. In turn, students of the Master programme have been involved in the mentoring programme. However, mentor support may be needed to facilitate students' outgoing mobility. According to SAR, The Faculty successfully operates the Student Business Incubator, which organizes lectures, 42 conferences, as well as various events to stimulate students' interest in starting and developing a business. At the moment, 24 teams are working. There are several successful examples of a functioning business. The Student Business Incubator also gets financial support from sponsors.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

There is a system to determine the financial resources required for the implementation of the study direction, including access to research activities and support. The infrastructure is well developed. The FBME supports the improvement of the skills of the academic staff, it should be noted that the academic and research workload is well balanced and supervised.

Strengths:

- 1 The FBME has a very well developed infrastructure, including digital resources and classrooms; it is also recognized by the students.
- 2 The professional and didactic skills of the teaching staff are regularly improved and involves different methodological and collaboration forms.
- 3 The students and academic staff have possibilities to get support for scientific activities, in addition, various sources of funding and forms of support are available.

Weaknesses:

- 1 The premises of the FBME are not available for people with disabilities (with reduced mobility).
- 2 There is no clear procedure for students about the access to resources for scientific activities, it may depend on personal contacts and the activity of the supervisor of the student.

4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation

Analysis

4.1. Research activities play an integral role in the strategic planning documents of the UL. One of the development directions defined in The University of Latvia Development Strategy for 2016-2020 – UL Strategy (the summary of the Strategy with its Implementation Plan is available on UL website in Latvian and English) is “Research capacity and competitiveness development” that includes three strategic goals with indicators and target values. Besides, the goals for research development are stated within other development directions, such as “The development of resources and

performance management system", "Promotion and cooperation", "Internationalization". Research development targets and indicators are also summarized in the UL Research programme for 2015-2020 (available on UL web site in Latvian). Additionally, the Handbook on UL Strategy performance indicators was provided to experts during the visit. This Handbook contains the information explanation about the indicators, as well as information about data sources and responsible persons.

The targets and performance indicators in the above-mentioned strategic documents are defined for the University as a whole. In the SAR, it was mentioned that "scientific research in the study direction fully complies with ... the UL Faculty of Business, Management and Economics (FBME) strategic goals". Strategic goals and target measures for the period 2019-2024 are available in the additionally submitted document (after the on-site visit) in Latvian "BVEF Startējiskais plāns 2019.-2024. gadam" [Translation to English: FBME Strategic Plan for 2019-2024]. It contains performance indicators for research development within the Study Direction.

Doctoral Programme "Economics and Business" is realized within the Study Direction. The goal of the programme "to prepare highly qualified researchers, industry and organization leaders, as well as academics capable of developing independent research in the field of economics and business ...to prepare highly qualified professionals with internationally comparable competencies in the field of economics and business and an internationally comparable Doctor in Science degree" complies with the goals to ensure "Promotion of research and scientific excellence" and "Raising international competitiveness" (UL Strategy, available at https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_EN/1/Summary_UL_strategy_EN.pdf)

4.2. The relationship between scientific research in the study direction and the study process has been explained in the self-assessment report, and several examples were provided. In the self-assessment report, it was mentioned that professors/lecturers introduce students to the results of their own research. Besides, several faculty members defended their Doctoral dissertations at FBME. They worked and continue working with students, transferring their knowledge and research results to study courses. During the on-site visit, various examples were provided by the academic staff members of study programmes at all levels. Students and graduates of Master and Doctoral programmes unanimously confirmed that Professors share their research experience with students. There was no clearly expressed opinion from Bachelor students.

4.3. Based on the SAR, academic staff members participate in international projects and conferences. Evidence is provided in Annex No. 18 and No.19. Approximately a half of academic personnel have experience in international projects. Staff members also actively participate in international conferences. However, these conferences take place mostly in Latvia. There is relatively limited participation in international conferences abroad.

The UL is a partner in FORTHEN alliance. FBME representatives participate in FORTHEN Labs for education, research and innovation (<https://www.lu.lv/en/cooperation/international-cooperation/forthem-alliance/>).

Besides, international events are organized at FBME: conference "New Challenges in Economics and Business Development", sections within the International conference of the UL, conference "Project Management Development – Practice and Perspectives".

Editorial boards of scientific journals "Journal of economics and management research" and "Humanities and social sciences Latvia" involve foreign professors and researchers. Besides, according to the SAR, FBME staff members participate in Editorial boards of many foreign journals.

4.4. Involvement of the teaching staff in research is ensured by the set of internal rules (internal documents were provided during on-site visit). Research work (at least 100 hours per year) is included into the workload. Besides, there are clearly defined publication performance indicators for the academic and scientific personnel per year (publications and their quality, citation). This mechanism is clear and the staff members know about it and understand it (confirmed by staff

members representing study programmes at all levels during the visit).

FBME provides teaching staff with access to different databases (SCOPUS, Web of Science, Euromonitor and others). Teaching staff members know about it and actively use it (confirmed during the on-site visit via discussion with staff).

The UL has a centralized Support programme for research activities (available on UL website (<https://www.lu.lv/zinatne/atbalsts-petniecibai-lu/zinatniskas-darbibas-atbalsta-programma/>), only in Latvian). During the on-site visit, academic staff members confirmed the possibility to get support from the Department to attend conferences. However, there was no clear answer regarding the application rules and criteria to get financial support. The special financial support for publishing in Q1 and Q2 journals as described in the self-assessment report and mentioned during the on-site visit. But, for instance, academic staff representing bachelor programmes did not know exactly about this support mechanism. During the discussion with the academic staff of Master and Doctoral programmes, the possibility to apply for academic grants was mentioned. But, again, there is no publicly available information about the competition rules. On UL website, the information block "Atbalsts pētniecībai LU" (available only in Latvian) [in English: Support for research in UL] contains only the data about received support, not about the criteria for application or at least the contact information. After the on-site visit, FBME delivered an additional internal document in Latvian "Latvijas Universitātes Zinātniskās darbības attīstības atbalsta kārtība" [Translation to English: Procedure on support for research development at UL]. In this document, the application procedure for staff is described, but if it is available only in Latvian, this information is not relevant for foreign staff members. Besides, this information should be publicly available.

Every year UL organizes an International Scientific conference, and there are special sessions for FBME. For instance, for 2021, it is planned to organize 10 sub-sessions for FBME.

FBME has two scientific journals "Journal of economics and management research" and "Humanities and social sciences Latvia" (<https://www.bvef.lu.lv/petnieciba/petnieciba/zinatniskie-zurnali/>). The UL provides financing for publishing to UL staff members.

Based on the information from a self-assessment report (Annex No. 16), 114 teaching staff members are involved in the implementation of the study direction. 68 percent of them hold a Doctor Degree. In turn, 45 percent of persons with Doctor Degree are the experts of the Latvian Council of Science (checked in sciencelatvia.lv). This indicates a high level of the engagement of teaching staff into research activities, because the prerequisite for expert status is the high-level publications published during the last three years (Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 320, 09.07.2019.) Only approximately 25 percent of permanent teaching staff with the Doctor Degree do not actively "generate " research papers, most of others are outperforming scholars with an impressive number of scientific works.

The teaching staff members with Master degree are less actively engaged in research. However, based on the information provided in the Annex No. 19 and information delivered during the on-site visit (publications of staff members of the Study Direction in 2019-2020), nine of 19 permanent staff members have regular scientific publications.

In turn, almost all staff members actively participate in the scientific conferences (Annex No. 19). However, in most cases these are international conferences organized in Latvia.

Teaching staff members engaged in Study Direction moderate most of the sub-sessions within UL International Scientific Conference, and they represent all study programmes within the Direction (for instance, Marketing and Innovations, Different Aspects of Entrepreneurship and Management - <https://www.konference79.lu.lv/en/programme/social-sciences/faculty-of-business-management-and-economics/>)

Professors engaged in Study directions are members of the journals' Editorial Board ("Journal of economics and management research" and "Humanities and social sciences Latvia"). Besides, teaching staff members publish their own research in these journals.

There are various projects, in which teaching staff members of Study Direction take part

(<https://www.bvef.lu.lv/petnieciba/petnieciba/programmas-un-projekti/>). There is a sufficient number in statistics provided in the self-assessment report for 2013-2018 (individual results of staff members). Academic staff members participate in various research programmes and projects both at national and international level.

4.5. For students, it is obligatory to conduct research for development of Bachelor or Master Thesis. This requirement is described in the guidelines "Requirements for elaboration and defending of the graduation papers" (available on FBME website in Latvian and English).

There is a specific study course about research methods in several Bachelor and Master programmes. There is also a special workshop for Bachelor and Master students to prepare them for the final Thesis. During the visit, it was obvious that students knew about it, and some of them participated.

Various databases are available for students to support them in conducting research and preparing the final Thesis. Students know about it and use the opportunities. Access to digital library and computer classes also is ensured.

Bachelor students confirmed that the professors provide support in conducting research and monitor the progress. Master students are encouraged by Professors to continue studies in Doctoral programme.

There are four conferences available for students at FBME without any charge. One of them is a Student conference in collaboration with Riga Technical University. (<https://www.bvef.lu.lv/en/research/conferences/student-scientific-conference/student-scientific-conference-2021/>) It is clear from the self-assessment report that UL International conference, as well as conferences "Project Management Development – Practice and perspectives" and "New Challenges in Economics and Business Development" are more appropriate for Master and Doctoral students. Information about the conferences is available, students are promoted by teaching staff and directors of the programmes to participate. It was confirmed by most Bachelor students and graduates. However, during the expert visit, most Bachelor students answered that they have not used these opportunities.

The UL participates in state-funded research programmes which require a participation of students. Some Master and Doctoral students are involved in research projects as part-time employees.

There is an information on FBME website about the special programme to award students for their contribution to promote UL and FBME brand, including participation in research activities (available in Latvian and English <https://www.bvef.lu.lv/en/financial-support/scholarships/>). The application rules are described in the document "The order, in which tuition fee benefits are applied" (available in Latvian and English on UL website <https://www.lu.lv/en/about-us/documents/>)

4.6. According to the self-assessment report, there are a number of innovative solutions implemented in the study process at the University level, and, in particular, within the Study Direction. One of these innovative solutions is an integration of the Student Business Incubator into the study process. During the on-site visit, all students and graduates of Bachelor and Master programme confirmed their awareness about the Business incubator, sufficient information flow via e-mails, and some students and graduates told about their positive experience in the Business Incubator.

Study trips abroad organized for Bachelor students are also treated as a valuable innovative tool for improvement of study quality. Summer school organized in cooperation with Cambridge University (mentioned in the SAR and during the visit in regards to Business Administration Bachelor programme) is a very good example.

However, other information in the SAR regarding the cooperation with the media, NGOs, graduates, Riga Technical University in organizing Student conference can hardly be treated as innovation. This is the common practice in many higher education institutions.

During the on-site visit, the Photo laboratory was demonstrated to the experts. This laboratory is used to promote products developed by students within Business Incubator and Marketing courses.

Regarding the innovation teaching methods, some examples were provided by staff members and students during the expert visit, such as: 1) simulation games and using of design-thinking methods within the Master study programme “Public administration”; 2) usage of digital tools by Professors within the Bachelor programme “Industrial Engineering”; 3) ice-breaking event to get an insight about start-ups within the Bachelor programme “Business Administration”.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

The research activities at the UL are prioritized at the strategic level. The teaching staff members have complete awareness about the research results expected from them, express a strong commitment to research and most of them have an impressive list of achievements. There is a wide range of information sources provided to researchers for free (scientific and statistics databases). The UL provides financial support for researchers, and the teaching staff members know about it. However, there should be more visible procedures of application. Teaching staff members encourage students to participate in research activities, but mostly Master and Doctoral students are engaged.

Strengths

- 1 Research activities is a criterion in the remuneration system and staff evaluation system. Staff members understand the system and the requirements.
- 2 Most of the teaching staff members involved in the study process within the Study Direction are researchers with great experience, an impressive number of research works, active participation in scientific conferences and research projects.
- 3 Teaching staff members implement the results of their own research into the study process.
- 4 FBME organizes several international scientific conferences, in which teaching staff members, Master and Doctoral students take part.
- 5 FBME has two scientific journals and provides financing for publishing to UL staff members.
- 6 FBME provides teaching staff with access to different databases. Teaching staff members know about it and actively use them for research purposes.
- 7 FBME organizes the annual Student conference in cooperation with Riga Technical University.
- 8 Master and Doctoral students are involved in research projects.
- 9 Research is a part of the Final Thesis for Bachelor and Master students.

Weaknesses:

- 1 Lack of publicly available information about support for staff and students to do research (with a clear description of the application procedure and requirements).
- 2 Limited engagement of Bachelor students in research.

5. Cooperation and Internationalisation

Analysis

5.1 The UL FBME has developed successful cooperation with several Latvian and foreign universities for the implementation of the Management, Administration and Management of Real Property study direction, which contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study direction. A large number of contracts for cooperation with foreign educational institutions, Latvian enterprises, organizations, institutions and main Latvian HEIs should be recognized as a good achievement. Selected partners are chosen according to the aims of the study direction and opportunities to develop scientific research, which give a significant contribution to the field.

The cooperation of the Management, Administration and Management of Real Property direction's academic personnel with other universities and organizations in Latvia is taking place within the

framework of various research and teaching projects. Cooperation with foreign universities, higher educational institutions and organizations is taking place on both an interpersonal and organizational level. All cooperation partners are being chosen according to the aims of the study direction and its development goals.

Cooperation with employers and professional organizations is organized in the following directions:

1. Employers and professional organizations are actively involved in the organization of student's internship.
2. Involvement of representatives of employers in preparing study courses, advising annual papers and final papers let understand and address the issues faced by real organisations.
3. Involvement of representatives of employers and professional organizations in final examination commissions for professional and academic study programmes means that competency test required for work is provided prior to receiving a degree in both the bachelor's and master's study programmes.
4. Participation of employer representatives in the FBME Council and the study direction Council means that control is ensured about the study direction's conformity with employer demands and the standards set by professional organizations.
5. The consultations to employer representatives provided by the academic personnel of the FBME in the form of individual consultations, education courses or seminars.

5.2 The involvement of foreign students is undertaken within the framework of the student exchange programmes (for example, Erasmus+) and bilateral agreements. The number of incoming students is stable during the reporting period due to a large number of courses taught in English. Within the study direction, 2 Bachelor study programmes and 2 Master study programmes are offered entirely in English what let to enroll foreign citizens. Moreover, the Doctoral programme "Economics and Business", including a module "Global Management and Leadership" is offered to foreign students under the agreement with Salzburg University of Business and Finance. During the reported period, an average of 60 foreign students studied in this module. The increase of enrolled students has been observed in the Bachelor study programme "Business Administration" and professional Master study programme "International Business with Specialization in Export Management".

The staff's knowledge of foreign languages is good, and all lecturers read freely and generally speak English or German well, more than 50 % of teaching staff can teach in very good English, and some can teach in good/excellent Russian as well.

The involvement of foreign teaching staff in the framework of the direction is taking place based on the Erasmus+ agreements. However, only a few permanent foreign staff members are employed at the UL FBME. Incoming foreign professors/lecturers deliver lectures and evaluate works, which let the students to find out widened global information about the latest research and practical methods in the field. Mobility indicators of staff (in average incoming 18, outgoing 11 per/year) in the review period have had a positive dynamic.

The best results were achieved in attracting foreign students in comparison with outgoing mobility. The UL FBME has significantly improved the dissemination of information on outgoing mobility. However, outgoing mobility indicators have tended to decrease. The fact that students are working in parallel with their studies or are trying to find jobs, aiming to pay their tuition, can be mentioned as an important factor that interferes with outgoing mobility. Mobility periods in other countries can lead to the threat of losing one's job and/or make finding work more difficult, which seriously reduces student motivation to start outgoing mobility opportunities. Student mobility indicators within the framework of the direction can be rated as adequate to the situation in the country in general.

Joint study programmes have not been started in the study direction; however, the UL FBME has agreements on double diploma programmes with the HEIs from France, Slovakia and India. The efforts to increase internationalization through agreements to join the Alliance of Silkroad Business

Schools and the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business can be rated as good examples.

5.3 The UL has adopted a unified approach toward internships. Employers and the graduates of the Management, Administration and Management of Real Property direction programmes are regularly involved in the provision of internships, as supervisors and internships leaders. Employers offer proposals for the organization of student internships and their management. Permanent cooperation with employers and professional organizations allows the university to help all students find places for internships that are suitable to their requirements. Moreover, the students can take the opportunities for internships abroad in the framework of the Erasmus+ programme and the European University Fund's projects, implemented by the FBME staff members.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

UL FBME has developed successful cooperation with Latvian and foreign universities, employers, alumni for the implementation of the Management, Administration and Management of Real Property study direction.

Strengths:

- 1 Management of cooperation and internationalization follow the development aims and strategic goals of the HEI and aim of the study direction and the management helps to achieve them.
- 2 Cooperation partners are selected according to the aim of the study direction.
- 3 Employers and graduates of Management, Administration and Management of Real Property study direction are regularly involved in the provision of internships as supervisors.

Weaknesses:

- 1 The absence of a joint study programme with another foreign HEI.
- 2 Insufficient number of permanent foreign staff members.

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

Analysis

The UL FBME has successfully implemented previous recommendations as is specified in annex Nr. 25 to self-assessment report (SAR) "Overview of the implementation of the provided recommendations". Implementation was also described in the SAR, as well as mentioned during the on-site visit.

FBME Study direction "Management, administration and real estate management" received five recommendations. Several of them are described in detail in SAR as well. Most of the recommendations concentrated on internationalization as well as improving the international competitiveness of the staff and accessibility of study programmes for international students (Appendix 25 "Overview of the implementation of the provided recommendations", FBME Study direction "Management, administration and real estate management" recommendations No. 1, 2, 4.). Students are offered four study programmes in English (BSP "Business administration" and "Industrial Engineering management" as well as MSP "International business" and "Project Management"). Several study courses provide terminology in both Latvian and English. Students are provided access to several databases, for example, Elsevier, EBSCO, to obtain the most recent information on the subjects and it is mainly in English.

Each year students go on Erasmus+ exchange, however, on average about 80 students while there is a possibility to send 150 students on exchange each year. During on site visit, it was stated that the goal is to have at least 200 students participating in Erasmus+ programme. The main issues with students going on exchange are due to the fact that many students work during their studies or have insufficient funds to go on an exchange abroad, stated by students, staff and administration

members as well as alumni. However information about opportunities, for example, for going on an Erasmus+ exchange with family are introduced to students as stated by alumni and students. Students also stated that they would like to have more information about the possibility to go on exchange as well as someone who would mentor them. There are major improvements in the number of international students - in the 2018/2019 academic year the increase was from 86 to 123 students, which is an increase for about 30% (Appendix 25). Internationalization is achieved through various programmes, including Erasmus+, Campus Europae, ISEP, as well by providing joined degrees in several study programmes. In each faculty there is also a staff member, who addresses the issues of international students - one is for academics, the other for practical matters as stated during the on-site visit.

FBME provides internationally competitive staff - there are many guest lecturers, as well as two elected international staff members in the study direction. Financial instruments of the European Union are used to implement the previously mentioned recommendation - European Social Fund 8.2.2. Specific Support Project "Renewal of Academic Staff and Competence Development at the University of Latvia" (Project Contract No 8.2.2.0/18/A/010), Erasmus+ teaching staff mobility programmes. Academic staff is provided with English training courses to improve their knowledge and proficiency in the upper mentioned language (Stated in Annex No 25, mentioned during on-site visit).

Another recommendation for the study direction was to improve collaboration with other HEI's, especially with Riga Technical University (RTU) and particularly in doctoral programme. As stated in Annex No 25, as a part of field study, FBME has cooperation with management science and economic study programmes in other Latvian Universities, e.g. Riga Technical university, Rezekne Technology high school, Baltic International academy etc. A new draft cooperation agreement has been prepared for joint research and doctoral schools with RTU and RISEBA. During the on-site visit, it was also mentioned that there is a joined annual conference for students together with RTU, as well that there is a possibility to attend study courses in other HEI's and faculties upon agreement. Collaboration is also provided in grant projects, as well as DemoLAB, which is the product of collaboration between UL and RTU.

The last recommendation stated that alumni should be more involved in supporting studies. UL has established an alumni club, as well there is an Employer's council, where alumni are involved as well. FBME Student council organizes regular Experience story events and invites alumni to present at them. Alumni are also involved in making proposals for development and improving study programmes.

Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses

FBME has successfully implemented all recommendations and a positive dynamic is seen within improvements. There is an increase in international students, internationalisation of studies is achieved by using international exchange programmes and mobility for both students and staff members, three study programmes are offered in English. Several study programmes offer a joined degree. International competitiveness of teaching staff is improved by providing mobility, English courses, motivating academic staff in research. There is improved collaboration with other Latvian HEI's as well as alumni.

Strengths:

An Employers council is involved in strategic development and improvement of study programmes. Internationalization is achieved by providing double degrees, study courses in English, increasing amount of international students, and having foreign guest lecturers.

Collaboration with other HEI's is achieved through joint research and doctoral schools.

The student body is active in communication with alumni through Experience story events.

International competitiveness of the academic staff is increased by motivating them on international publications, improving their English as well as providing exchange.

7. Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field

- 1 Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 21 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction whilst implementing their internal quality assurance systems:
Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant
Justification: Continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction are ensured. The evidence was received during the meetings with administrative staff, academic staff, students, graduates and employers. Internal quality assurance system is established, working and the progress has been monitored.
- 2 1.1. The higher education institution/ college has established a policy and procedures for assuring the quality of higher education.
Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant
Justification: The higher education institution has established a quality policy and it is publicly available at the university website (https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_EN/2/Kvalitates_politika_majas_lapai_ENG.pdf). Furthermore, the procedures for assurance of the quality is outlined in the internal document: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM AT THE FACULTY OF BUSINESS, MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS (FBME)
The guidelines for the development, maintenance, improvement and evaluation of the UL quality management system are summarised in the Quality Management Manual (available on the website of the UL).
- 3 1.2. A mechanism for the development and internal approval of the study programmes of the higher education institution/ college, as well as the supervision of their performance and periodic inspection thereof has been developed.
Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant
Justification: Programme directors regularly update study programmes, based on analysis of market needs and discussions with students, graduates and employers. The newly established Employers' Council is actively engaged in the process. Responsibilities of the programme director are described in REGULATIONS ON THE UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA STUDY FIELD MANAGEMENT (available in Latvian and English at https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_EN/3/Nolikums_par_LU_studiju_virzianu_parvaldibu.doc_ENG_2020.pdf !!! Most of the experts had the decision "fully compliant", except 1 expert. Her opinion will appear in the section "The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts".
- 4 1.3. The criteria, conditions, and procedures for the evaluation of students' results, which enable reassurance of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes, have been developed and made public.
Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant
Justification: The procedure for the evaluation of students' results is described in the documents available at UL website:
 - Regulations on evaluation of study courses (available only in Latvian) https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_LV/3_STUDIJA_UN_ZINATNES_PROCESU_REGLEMENTEJOSIE_DOKUMENTI/9_STUDIJA_3.PDF
 - "Regulation on graduation examinations at the University of Latvia" (available in Latvian and English) https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_EN/3/REGULATION_ON_GRADUATION_EXAMINATIONS_AT_THE_UL.pdfThe requirements for evaluation of student learning outcomes regarding each particular study course are available in course descriptions (according to the "Procedure for Developing and Updating Study Courses at the University of Latvia" (UL Order No.1 / 277 of 10.08.2018)). !!! Most of the experts had the decision "fully compliant", except 1 expert. Her opinion will appear in the section "The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts".
- 5 1.4. Internal procedures and mechanisms for assuring the qualifications of the academic staff and the work quality have been developed.
Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant
Justification: Internal procedures and mechanisms for assuring the qualifications of the academic staff and the work quality include:
 - Regular hospitation (procedure and template are available in the Annex 10 of the SAR)
 - Qualification requirements are described in the REGULATORY ENACTMENTS ON ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA (available at www.lu.lv https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_EN/5/Regulatory_Enactments_on_Academic_and_Administrative_Positions.pdf) and UL academic job descriptions (reference in the same document). Job description is a part of the work agreement. Teaching staff confirmed the awareness about the requirement during the on-site visit
 - Regular staff training organized by the Department or Faculty (confirmed by the teaching staff during the on-site visit)
 - Regular students' surveys, incl. the questions about the qualifications of the academic staff. The procedure is described in the PROCEDURE FOR THE ORGANISATION OF REGULAR SURVEYS FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE STUDY PROCESS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA (available in Latvian and English at https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_EN/3/25_ORGANISATION_OF_REGULAR_SURVEYS_AT_THE_UL.pdf)
- 6 1.5. The higher education institution/ college ensures the collection and analysis of the information on the study achievements of the students, employment of the graduates, satisfaction of the students with the study programme, efficiency of the work of the academic staff, the study funds available and the disbursements thereof, as well as the key performance indicators of the higher education institution/ college.
Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant
Justification: Based on SAR, the Department of Studies of the University of Latvia organizes surveys for students, graduates and employers centrally each academic year (according to the Procedure for Organizing Regular Surveys for the Evaluation of the Study Process at the University of Latvia (UL Order No. 1/334 of 22.08.2016)). The internal information system of the University of Latvia (LU IS) contains information about student achievements. The information about the key performance indicators is regularly collected and made publicly available in the Annual year statement (available at the website of the UL https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Zinas/2020/Gada_parskats_2019_publiskais.pdf)
- 7 1.6. The higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction whilst implementing their quality assurance systems.
Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant
Justification: Continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction is ensured. The evidence was received during the meetings with administrative staff, academic staff, students, graduates and employers. Internal quality assurance system is established, working and the progress has been monitored.
- 8 R2 - The cooperation with different organisations from Latvia and abroad implemented within the study direction ensures the achievement of the aims of the study direction.
Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant
Justification: 148 Erasmus+ and Campus Europae agreements with foreign HEIs and Cooperation agreements (60 agreements within professional master's study programme "International Business"; 152 agreements within bachelor's study programme "Business Administration"; 82 agreements within study programme professional bachelor's study programme "E-Business Management" and 47 agreements within study programme professional master's study programme "Project Management") with private local and international enterprises, government organizations, NGOs and other HEIs serve as evidence of cooperation.
- 9 R3 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the development level thereof (if applicable).
Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant
Justification: Teaching staff members are committed to do research (confirmed during the on-site visit). Most of the teaching staff members have scientific publications (Annex 19 of the SAR). 45 percent of persons with Doctor Degree are experts of the Latvian Council of Science. The evidence for staff's participation in research projects is provided in Annex 18 of the SAR.
- 10 R4 - Elimination of the shortcomings and deficiencies identified during the previous assessment of the study direction, if it has been conducted, or the implementation of the provided recommendations.
Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant
Justification: All recommendations given previously have been implemented as stated in Self-assessment report (part 6), as well as discussed in detail in annex No. 25 "Overview of the implementation of the provided recommendations".

8. Recommendations for the Study Field

Short-term recommendations

- 1 The University website (both English and Latvian) has to be improved in the way it provides fully all relevant information on the study programmes. Information should be updated on the websites of the UL and FBME after the official decision regarding accreditation of the study field.
- 2 Update the information about study programmes on the website (both in English and Latvian). Information should be updated on the websites of the UL and FBME after the official decision regarding accreditation of the study field.
- 3 Make information about support for staff and students to do research (with a clear description of the application procedure and requirements) publicly available on the UL website in Latvian and English.

Long-term recommendations

- 1 Establish procedures to solve the problem with high drop-out rate in study programmes. For example, it is recommended to establish a Mentoring programme or to offer students more friendly assessment criteria. Besides, it is recommended to help students financially (to solve the financial problem of students dropping the studies due to financial problems), maybe by offering some scholarships or discounts for the best students. Currently, there is a trend at European Universities to offer scholarships funded. Employers. It is recommended to consider the opportunity of cooperating with employers in this regard.
- 2 Inconsistency between the syllabuses and the website has to be eliminated. The recommendation is for 2-years period.
- 3 Please establish clear procedures including the personal hierarchy regarding the detection and reporting the plagiarism at UL. In order words, it should be clearly defined who should be the first instance of detecting the plagiarism and whom should it be reported to. Generally, it should be a bottom-up process with the Ethical Commission at the top. The recommendation is for 2-year period.
- 4 Initiation of the plagiarism system aimed at detecting the English language plagiarism; plagiarism system allowing to detect also other course works.
- 5 Provide regular training on plagiarism for students as well as for the faculty members.
- 6 Develop a mechanism for the provision of systematic feedback to students and graduates about how the information from the surveys is used and which changes have been made.
- 7 Introduce the practice of staff training to raise awareness about student-centered learning and teaching.
- 8 Develop a detailed quality manual or quality handbook with information about the distribution of roles and responsibilities in relation to quality processes.
- 9 Improve the access to FBME premises for people with disabilities (with reduced mobility).
- 10 Establish a clear procedure about how students can access financial support for scientific activities.
- 11 Develop a mechanism for more intensive engagement of Bachelor students in research.

12 Explore the possibilities of international cooperation that would result in the joint study programme with foreign higher education institutions.

13 Develop a plan for attracting foreign professors on a permanent basis.

II. "E-Business Management " ASSESSMENT

II. "E-Business Management " ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

The title of the study program has been changed from "E-Business and Logistics Management System" to "E-Business Management" (42345). In the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) p. 291 it is claimed that the Program should comply with the fifth level of professional qualification and the sixth level of the Latvian Qualifications Framework. The Program has been implemented in the Latvian language in three study forms – full-time intramural form (4 years), part-time intramural form (4 years 5 months) and part-time extramural form (5 years). The Program corresponds with the sixth Latvian qualification framework, which requires the duration of studies at least 4 years. Degree to be acquired is a professional Bachelor's degree in E- business management as well as qualification to be obtained as E-business manager and both are compliant with the professional standard. (<https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-112.pdf>). As shown in Table 1.1. (SAR, p. 292), the aims and objectives of the study programme are interlinked with aims and objectives defined in the professional standard.

The trend in the program is downward over the analysed period of time, though indeed the exception was the year of 2019/2020 where 66 students were enrolled as compared to 45 which were enrolled in the last two academic years. However, since 2012/2013 one can notice a constant decrease from 59 to 45 in 2018/2019. Moreover, looking at the total number of students in the program going down from 194 to 151 in 2019/2020 one can also notice that downward trend also come from a quite high drop-out ratio as compared to the enrolled students. In 2018/2019 this ratio was $40/142=28\%$ whereas in the previous years the average was 16%. Based on these facts one can conclude that the program suffers from a downward trend as well as a high drop-out ratio. Interestingly, the number of dropout students from the program seems to be high ranging from 9 to 26 with the main reason as failing to meet the requirements of program study on time.

The aim of the study programme is "to prepare versatile specialists with practical skills and integral knowledge of information technologies, enterprise organisation and management". More specifically, the Program's aim is to provide specialists with IT, business and e-business management skills (SAR p. 293). However, the objectives of the program is "to help students to obtain scientific research skills and ability to prepare and implement innovative business projects" (Self-Assessment Report p. 292). Moreover, the Self-Assessment Report p. 292 states that students in the fifth level of professional qualification is the highest qualification for specialists in specific fields, allowing planning and conducting scientific research in respective fields. However, if this is the objective of the course, then it is questionable that the aims of the course and its objective are interlinked. Moreover, it is also questionable whether the Bachelor graduates can have the highest competences, skills and knowledge to conduct the scientific research in respective fields (Self-Assessment Report p. 292).

The Study Program seems to develop specialists being able to develop, manage and support different IT projects, including the data analysis and management, however, it is difficult to claim that the Program's objective is to develop the research skills of students. Firstly, the study program

offers professional qualification and does not intend to develop students working in the research field. Secondly, the Program content is much more practical oriented toward big data, system management and business needs' understanding. Research Methods in the Study Program is a course offering only 2 CP. Though we agree that the aim of the Program and its content are interrelated, and the learning outcomes allow the students to achieve necessary skills and knowledge in the E-business field, however the objectives of the course, as stated above, cannot be verified. Other objectives as stated in the Syllabus on the Self-Assessment Report p. 286 as: to provide theoretical knowledge of economics, finance, accounting, logistics, legal sciences, business management, marketing, information and communication technologies (ITC); to ensure that the set of knowledge and practical skills in all defined spheres meets the professional standards and employer demands; to develop ability to independently improve one's own competences in areas needed for practical activity; to develop ability to search for new information by modern means and methods, and apply the newly obtained knowledge to create innovations; to provide opportunities for students to obtain scientific research skills, develop and implement innovative business products are too general. Since the Program provides a professional qualification Program students should gain precise knowledge and skills in the IT operations and data management which should be clearly reflected in the objectives of the Program. Also, looking at the content of the courses it is advisable to reduce the number of required and recommended readings for the individual courses. Moreover, the courses seem to be overloaded with the materials as compared to the number of hours. This might be also the reason why there is so high a number of dropouts from the Study Program. The learning outcomes cannot be clearly linked to the objectives of the course. For example, an objective "to ensure that the set of knowledge and practical skills in all defined spheres meets the professional standards" is very difficult to link with the learning outcome which must be verified by specific methods of assessment.

The knowledge of the Latvian language and Mathematics, reflected by state exam results for applicants graduated after 2004 or average yearly grade in Latvian language and Literature and Mathematics (or average grade of Algebra and Geometry) for applicants who graduated before 2004 are among the admission requirements for "E-business Program". The criteria in Mathematics are applicable since it is necessary for the comprehension of information technologies as well as the acquisition of analytical skills. The admission criteria for this type of Program are consistent with the nature of the Program and offered qualification.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The Study Program is an interesting and highly demanded field. The Program can cover important fields of the economy. However, the objectives of the program are not clearly defined and linked with the study material. There is also inconsistency in terms of the objectives: should the students gain the research skills or rather more specialized knowledge allowing them to work in the field? It is not clear from the course description. The Program needs to definitely be better structured and described. The name of the study programme is closely interrelated to the qualification and degree acquired as well objectives, learning outcomes and aims are connected with the main goal of the study programme.

Strengths:

- 1 Study outcomes and tasks are compliant.
- 2 Study programme is compliant with employers' demands.
- 3 Qualification offered is compliant with the study courses.

Weaknesses:

- 1 Objectives of the program are not clearly defined and linked with the study material.
- 2 Now, there is a limited influence of research and research results in the programme.
- 3 Lack of clearly defined prerequisites and skills allowing to successfully graduate from programmes.

4 The number of students is decreasing.

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.1 The content of the courses is relevant which is also confirmed in the meetings with employers and complies with the aim of the study programme. The content of the programme complies with the newly introduced professional standard “E-business Manager”.

The description of the internship is relevant, however, there is no sufficient information about the students’ evaluation criteria (it is not clear, what achievements will lead to the different grades).

The high number of courses, many of which are 2 CP courses, is not ideal for students to engage in a deep approach to learning. It should be considered if some of the courses can be integrated into fewer, larger courses.

The mapping of the study courses within the programme “E-business Management” does not allow understanding whether the aims of each course comply with the aims of the study programme (the outcomes themselves are not listed).

The descriptions of the courses are of high quality and include all relevant information. However, in the course descriptions, there is information about the course plan (number of teaching hours) only for one form of studies, but the programme is realized as full time studies (4 years) and part time studies (4,5 or 5 years).

In some course descriptions, the list of the literature was not updated (for instance, Statistics in Economics and Business, The Legal Regulation of Commercial Activities).

In some courses, the number of learning outcomes is not consistent with the number of credit points (for instance, 10-11 learning outcomes in the courses with 1 CP).

The tasks of the internship and regulations on writing internship report are available in the course description “The use of Information and communication technologies in an enterprise (internship)” and in the programme-specific regulations (available at <https://www.bvef.lu.lv/studijas/studentiem/studiju-darbi-un-prakses-parskati/>).

The requirements on the development of the Bachelor Thesis are described in three connected course descriptions “Bachelor's Thesis in E-Business Management” and in the general Methodological guidelines for the development and defense of the final thesis (available at <https://www.bvef.lu.lv/>). It is not possible to make a fully reliable conclusion about the quality of the final theses due to the fact that the only last version of the Regulations (Accepted on September 10, 2019) is available. The randomly selected Bachelor Thesis (defended in 2013) for instance contains the list of literature sources that do not comply with the current minimum limit (30 sources).

2.2 The study methods contribute to achievement of the learning outcomes. The courses in the program uses a varied portfolio of teaching and learning methods, i.e. lectures, group assignments, role plays, discussions and self-assessment tests, and the students and graduates confirm that the teaching staff is accessible and attentive to student needs. Graduates of the programme mentioned the participation in the real project within the course related to IT project management. Students mentioned practical workshops, regular working in computer class. On the opinion of the students, the individual work is prioritized rather than passive listening of the Professors. They in particular point to the many small practically oriented assignments and guest lectures as motivating for the studies.

The programme has explicit principles for how to implement a Student-Centred Learning approach.

2.3 Regular and systematic surveys among students, graduates and employers are conducted and used for improvement of the courses and the programme. This is evidenced in the self-assessment report as well as in the meetings with students, graduates and employers. Several examples of

adjustments are provided, as for example the revision of the course Design of Internet Systems. However, the graduates during the meeting expressed their willingness to get more information about what exactly has been done, based on the survey's results. Besides, the students pointed to the poor communication with the programme director.

2.4 Incoming mobility is limited because of the programme being taught only in Latvian language. Outgoing mobility is also limited to a few students per year (1-5 per year 2013-2019). The interpretation of the main reasons for this among students and academic staff are family and job obligations. It is probably right, but at the same time also raises the question of why the level of international mobility is relatively lower than in many other European countries.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The content of the courses is relevant and the descriptions of the courses are good, but updates are needed. Despite the information provided by the teaching staff during the on-site visit about the frequent revision of course descriptions, some course descriptions require an update. The many small courses are not ideal for the learning process. Regular surveys are used for the improvement of the programme. The low number of outgoing students limits the international study experience for the students.

Strengths:

1. The courses in the program use a varied portfolio of teaching and learning methods.
2. Regular and systematic surveys among students, graduates and employers are conducted and used for the improvement of the courses and the programme.

Weaknesses:

- 1 Many study courses with a small number of credit points.
- 2 Old literature sources and a disproportionately large number of learning outcomes in relation to the number of credit points that indicates the necessity to revise some course descriptions.
- 3 The mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course.
- 4 Low number of outgoing students' mobilities.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

During the visit, the experts made sure that the study provision, scientific support, informative provision, material and technical provision, and financial provision fully comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the professional bachelor study programme "E-business management". All resources are available to students and academic staff both in the study process and in research.

The financial resources for the implementation of the study programme are provided by the state budget financing for studies and the faculty's own income and tuition fees. The financial resources at the disposal of the Faculty are planned each year in accordance with the UL budget and used in accordance with the estimates approved by the UL management, which ensures control of the use of financial resources. However, there is no separate procedure or budget line for the study programme. According to SAR, with the changes in total number of students, the proportion of students whose tuition fees are covered from the state budget has reached 16 per cent. Nevertheless, the majority of students cover their tuition fees from personal funds.

According to the self-assessment report, The Faculty has modern, renovated auditorium and a computer room. There are comfortable relaxation rooms and halls for students (Levels 3 and 4), free Wi-Fi available throughout the Faculty. Library provides availability (including remote access) of over 170 000 e-resources subscribed by UL in various fields of science. Databases of e-journals and e-

books with full text versions from publishers like Cambridge University Press, Emerald, Elsevier, Sage and others are available to students and teachers alike, along with databases of e-journals, ebooks and other materials from various publishers, Latvian databases are also available. The study courses of the study programme “E-business management” provide access to various platforms and user software, including the open code software. The study process is conducted through the E-Studies platform Moodle, which includes necessary study resources (e.g. course descriptions, practical work descriptions, snippets of study book chapters, software to be used and etc.). The necessary methodological resources are also available in the FBME Portal. The access to E-studies platform from students' homes using a virtual private network provided by the UL let the students study outside the UL premises.

According to the self-assessment report, the study courses provide access to various platforms and user software, including the open code software and also provide training in use of such open code software. The study courses provide access to business intelligence, data science and machine learning platforms like Microsoft Analysis Services, Microsoft Excel PowerPivot, QlikView, Qlik Sense Desktop, Qlik Sense, Tableau, Power BI Desktop, Microsoft Azure Machine Learning Studio, RapidMiner Studio, IBM SPSS Modeller. For example, the study course “Online Animation and Multimedia” implies training in the use of vector graphics editor Inkscape, open code software for creating animation Synfig Studio.

Close cooperation with employers, seminars organized by the leading IT companies, two traineeships within the study programme, cooperation agreements with companies on traineeships, create the preconditions for the achievement of the learning outcomes. However graduates rate the study environment only by 5.3 points out of 7, besides the results are lower than a year before.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics has the necessary infrastructure, the necessary material and technical support, information support, financial support and a library.

Strengths:

1. The Faculty has the necessary resources for the implementation of the professional Bachelor study programme in “E-Business management”.
2. Majority of students study for a tuition fees.
3. Digital resources are also available outside the Faculty premises.
4. Library resources are regularly updated according to the needs of academic staff and students.
5. The study programme “E-business management” provides access to various platforms and user software.

Weakness:

No

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

The professional Bachelor study programme “E-Business Management” is delivered by highly professional academic and professional teaching staff. Significant changes in the teaching staff have not taken place during the assessed period.

The study programme is implemented by 28 lecturers in total; of them 61% has PhD and 39% master's degree. This includes 8 professors, 4 associate professors, 4 docents, 7 lecturers and 5 teachers. Some of the courses are delivered by doctoral students. As the programme is professional, the delivered courses are interdisciplinary and have been developed and implemented by UL

lecturers and guest lecturers, who also have professional experience in the appropriate field.

This shows that the qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme “E-Business Management” complies with the requirements for the implementation of the professional study programmes and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme. In order to ensure high academic quality, students have opportunities to attend guest lectures. However, the number of guest lectures could be higher (only two cases are presented in the assessment report).

Academic staff seem to be highly involved in scientific research which is evident from academic publications, national and international projects of programme faculty. The topics of the publications are generally related to the courses delivered by the academic staff members.

The staff members take part in various programmes, increase their professional and pedagogical qualification and the knowledge gained is integrated in the study process. According to SAR, staff members participated in the study programmes and courses for the purpose to increase general teaching competences and IT-related competences. Thus, the integration of up-to-date knowledge is assured in implementation of the study programme.

The existence of cooperation was confirmed by the academic staff members and representatives of the employers and it seems that it takes place. The regular meetings of the department, the regular e-learning training seminars for teachers and methodological seminars, organized twice a year on the improvement of study courses, collaboration among lecturers who jointly teach the same study course, regular Creative Forums and observation of colleague’s classes are good examples of such cooperation.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

Programme “E-Business Management” is delivered by highly qualified teaching staff. Significant changes in the teaching staff have not taken place during the assessed period. The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme “E-Business Management” complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses. The academic staff is involved in scientific research both at the national and international levels. There is a mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members in place.

Strengths

1. High qualification of the teaching staff.
2. High level of scientific research of the programme faculty.

Weaknesses

1. The number of guest lecturers from Latvia and international professors/practitioners from the field.

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "E-Business Management "

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme does not fully comply with the regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No.202, adopted on 16.04.2013 (available in Latvian <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/256157-kartiba-kada-izsniedz-valsts-atzitus-augstako-izglitiba-apliecinoss-dokumentus>). The information about the awarded level of a professional qualification should be also reflected on the page that corresponds to the 3rd page of the diploma (Regulations no.202, Annex No.4).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: UL provides the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in the Bachelor study programme "Business administration" (Decision of the FBME Council of 3.12.2019.). Besides, the mutual agreement is signed on 25.11.2019 between UL and Riga Technical University about the mutual acceptance of students from partner University. The agreement cover the study programmes within the study fields "Economics" and "Management, administration and real estate management", including the programme "E-business Management". Both documents are available in Latvian as attachments to the SAR.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The confirmation No. 7-41/258 signed by the Rector on 14.02.2020 states that the UL guarantees to the students compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the license of the study programme is revoked and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme (attached to the SAR in Latvian).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language.
Official confirmation No. 22-7/27 was signed by the Rector on 17.02.2020. (attached to the SAR).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification: The study programme is implemented in Latvian.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The sample of the study agreement (regarding to the Latvian version attached to the SAR) complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement, according to the requirements of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No 70 of January 23, 2007.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Study program is compliant with profession standard (<https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-112.pdf>) and the fifth level of professional qualification level. Compliance with the profession standard is discussed in detail in the annex "Compliance of the professional bachelor 's study programme "E-Business Management" with the Professional Standard".

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The programme complies with Cabinet Regulation No. 512 of 26 August 2014, Regulations Regarding the State Standard for Vocational Higher Education as documented in annex "Compliance of the study programme "E-Business Management" with the national education standard".

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Academic publications of programme faculty are presented in Appendix 19. The practical work experience of programme faculty is presented in Biographies of teaching staff involved in the study direction. Each member of the academic staff has either publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years, including international editions or a five-year practical work experience.

15 P5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: See comments on criterion No. 1 "The sample of the diploma..."

Requirements (R6-R8)

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The FBME has the necessary resources to implement the Bachelor study programme "E-business Management".

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The study programme is implemented by 28 lecturers in total; of them 61% has PhD and 39% master's degree. This includes 8 professors and 4 associate professors. Some of the courses are delivered by invited lecturers - industry professionals.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The study programme is implemented in an interesting and highly demanded field. However, the objectives of the program are not clearly defined and linked with the study material. There is also inconsistency in terms of the objectives: should the students gain the research skills or rather more specialized knowledge allowing them to work in the field? It is not clear from the course descriptions. The programme needs to definitely be better structured and described. The name of the study programme is closely interrelated to the qualification and degree acquired as well objectives, learning outcomes and aims are connected with the main goal of the study programme.

The content of the courses are relevant and the descriptions of the courses are good, but updates are needed. Despite the information provided by the teaching staff during the on-site visit about the frequent revision of course descriptions, some course descriptions require an update. The many small courses are not ideal for the learning process. Regular surveys are used for the improvement of the programme. The low number of outgoing students limits the international study experience for the students.

The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics has the necessary infrastructure, the necessary material and technical support, information support, financial support and a library.

Programme "E-Business Management" is delivered by highly qualified teaching staff. Significant

changes in the teaching staff have not taken place during the assessed period. The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme "E-Business Management" complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses. The academic staff is involved in scientific research both at the national and international levels. There is a mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members in place.

Strengths:

- 1 Study outcomes and tasks are compliant.
- 2 The study programme is compliant with employers' demands.
- 3 The qualification offered is compliant with the study courses.
- 4 The courses in the program use a varied portfolio of teaching and learning methods.
- 5 Regular and systematic surveys among students, graduates and employers are conducted and used for improvement of the courses and the programme.
- 6 The Faculty has the necessary resources for the implementation of the professional Bachelor study programme in "E-Business management".
- 7 Digital resources are also available outside the Faculty premises.
- 8 Library resources are regularly updated according to the needs of academic staff and students.
- 9 The study programme "E-business management" provides access to various platforms and user software.
- 10 High qualification of the teaching staff.
- 11 High level of scientific research of the programme faculty.

Weaknesses:

- 1 Objectives of the program are not clearly defined and linked with the study material.
- 2 Now, there is a limited influence of research and research results in the programme.
- 3 Lack of clearly defined prerequisites and skills allowing to successfully graduate from programmes.
- 4 The number of students is decreasing.
- 5 Many study courses with a small number of credit points.
- 6 Old literature sources and a disproportionately large number of learning outcomes in relation to the number of credit points that indicates the necessity to revise some course descriptions.
- 7 The mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course.
- 8 A low number of outgoing students' mobilities.
- 9 A low number of guest lecturers from Latvia and international professors/practitioners from the field.

Evaluation of the study programme "E-Business Management "

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "E-Business Management "

Short-term recommendations

- 1 Revise the objectives and aims of the program in a way they clearly state the benefits the program offered in terms of knowledge and skills. Please try to present it in a way that distinguishes the program from other programmes. Objectives of the programme have to be newly verified and linked with the learning outcomes and their verification methods.

2 Develop the mechanism in the form of an annual plan for the involvement of guest lecturers from Latvia and international professors/practitioners in the study courses (at least one per study course is recommended).

Long-term recommendations

1 It is recommended to incorporate more possibilities for students to be engaged in the research activities as well as providing them a possibility to get familiarized with the newest research projects and results (for instance, to incorporate the research projects in the study curriculum).

2 It is recommended to review the demands in study courses as well as information provided to students about the study programme (incl. the information provided to potential candidates on prerequisites necessary to study) to avoid a further increase in dropout students. It is recommended to improve the program description on the public scene showing the prerequisites needed to complete the program.

3 It is recommended to clarify what are the causes of low interest of students to the programme.

4 Revise the curriculum of the programme and consider the opportunity to decrease the number of “small CP” study courses. This is a recommendation for a 2-year period.

5 Revise course descriptions paying particular attention to the list of learning outcomes and literature list. This is a recommendation for a 2-year period.

6 Revise the mapping of study courses, following the format recommended by Latvian Academic Information Centre (https://www.aika.lv/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Vadlinijas-studiju-programmas-raksturojuma-izstradei_2019.pdf Annex 8).

7 Introduce the programme-specific mechanism for students’ motivation to participate in international mobility because the existing one seems not to be effective.

II. “Industrial Engineering Management” ASSESSMENT

II. “Industrial Engineering Management” ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

“Industrial Management Engineer”, corresponding to the fifth level of professional qualification and the sixth level of the Latvian Qualifications Framework. By Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers of 27 September 2016 “Procedures for the development of professional standards, professional qualifications requirements (if professional standards are not approved for the profession) and the structure of sectoral qualifications” entry into force, previous profession standard for the qualification of “System management engineer” expired. Instead of it, the Business Efficiency Association developed a new profession standard “Industrial Management engineer” that corresponds with the upper mentioned qualification levels. This profession standard has been submitted to the National Center for Education to be included to the standards of professions applicable and it is on the list of professional qualification requirements.

The study programme is new as it was developed in 2017. It is held in Latvian and English. Until now, the enrollment is stable, reaching approximately 20 students for Latvian Program and 11 for English. The Program offers Bachelor’s Professional Degree in “Industrial Management Engineer”. The aim of the programme has not been clearly defined stated in the Self-Assessment Report p.436-437 as: “to train specialists with such knowledge sets that corresponds not only to several EC

education priorities, but also to several goals and tasks of the strategic plan of the University of Latvia, for example, development of separate interdisciplinary and international programmes of excellence.” Consequently, the programme's objectives is “to enable program graduates to evaluate the operation of the engineering system of an industrial company in various aspects, which will ensure strategically based decision making regarding the sustainability of the company”. As it can be noticed the aim of the programme as well as their objectives are not clearly and closely interlinked. The University has to be more precise in terms of what it is exactly the aim of the programme, whom it targets, how it differentiates from, for example, “E-business management” programme, what kind of skills and knowledge the students can acquire. The programme content is highly practice oriented. However, it is not possible to state whether the objectives of the programme can be obtained by the learning outcomes and their assessment methods without a more precision of the aim of the programme and its objectives.

The development of the programme, among others, set of courses, number of CPs, study practice seem to be compliant with the Cabinet Regulation No. 512 of 26 August 2014, Regulations Regarding the State Standard for Vocational Higher Education (Document: Study programme “Industrial engineering management” compliance with the national education standard). The professional qualification to be acquired is “Industrial management engineer” that is compliant with 5th level of professional qualification as well as professional standard (<https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/ps0472.pdf>).

Since the programme is highly technical the admission criteria are compliant with the program nature, i.e., mathematics, physics and appropriate language are set as priorities. Admission criteria are not fully described in overall study programme description, however they are described in detail in the Self-assessment report p.437-438.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The program has been modified and is highly focused on qualifying engineering to work in the field. It offers a variety of technical courses and management courses making the whole program interdisciplinary. The program seems to be already well-positioned on the market. However, the aim and objectives of the program need to be defined more precisely.

Strengths:

1The professional programme contains many practical courses as well as practice.

Weaknesses:

1The aim of the study programme needs to be specified.

2 No connection between the goal of the program and the learning outcomes.

3 Still a relatively low number of students.

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.1 During the on-site visit, the programme director presented the idea of the programme and described its potential in preparing system engineers. The programme meets the current market needs and comply with the professional standards.

The content of the courses is relevant which was also confirmed in the meetings with employers and complies with the aim of the study programme. From an academic perspective, the content of the courses is also updated and relevant.

The high number of courses, many of which are 2 CP courses, is not ideal for students to engage in a

deep approach to learning. It should be considered if some of the courses can be integrated into fewer, larger courses. For example, it is not clear to the assessment panel why mandatory courses like Industrial Ergonomics (2 CP), Industrial LEAN (2CP) and Total Quality Management System (2CP) have to be small, specialized courses instead integrated parts of larger courses.

The descriptions of the courses are of high quality and include all relevant information. However, some course descriptions (with small number of credit points 1-2 CP) contain too many learning outcomes in relation to the number of credit points. For instance, the courses “Legal system and the most important aspects of labour law”, “Communication psychology”, “Environmental Protection in Industry”.

The mapping of the study courses within the programme “Industrial Engineering Management” does not allow understanding whether the aims of each course comply with the aims of the study programme (the outcomes themselves are not listed).

The tasks of the internship and regulations on writing internship reports are available in the several connected course descriptions (Practice I, Practice in specialization II, Practice in specialization III). The requirements on the development of the Bachelor Thesis are described in the course description “Bachelor Thesis Including Project” and in the general Methodological guidelines for the development and defence of final thesis (available at <https://www.bvef.lu.lv/>). The programme is new, and there were no defended final papers to check their quality.

2.2 The study methods contribute to achievement of the learning outcomes. The courses in the program use a varied portfolio of teaching and learning methods, including lectures, seminars, workshops and group assignments, and the students and graduates confirm that the teaching staff is accessible and attentive to student needs (evidenced in site visit meetings with students and graduates). During the meetings, students mentioned a big number of guest lectures conducted by professionals, practical workshops in every course, intensive usage of digital tools by teaching staff (for instance, group works on the CISCO platform), and visits to the companies. The principles of student-centred education are otherwise applied through regular communication and meetings between students and academic staff and the program director.

2.3 Feedback from students is systematically collected and used to improve the quality of the programme and the courses. Since the programme is only two years old, no students have graduated yet. This is a good reason for not doing graduate surveys and employer surveys yet, but surely the programme will need to implement those as soon as graduates are in the labor market. There is no evidence of surveys about traineeships.

During the meeting, students of the programme confirmed their involvement in the process of improving courses via discussions with Professors. Students mentioned the close communication with the Programme Director and his interest in students' opinion.

2.4 No ingoing or outgoing exchange so far. During the on-site visit, students confirmed that opportunities are provided, however, the support provided was treated as insufficient to encourage students to go abroad.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

All in all, the content of the studies is relevant and of high quality. The course descriptions are good, but the number of learning outcomes should be reviewed. The feedback from students is systematically collected and used to improve studies. The programme needs to pay attention to the low mobility of students which limits the international experience for the students.

Strengths:

- 1.The courses in the program uses a varied portfolio of teaching and learning methods
- 2.Feedback from students is systematically collected and used to improve the quality of the programme and the courses.
- 3.Close communication between students and the Programme director

Weaknesses:

- 1.Many study courses with a small number of credit points
- 2.A disproportionally large number of learning outcomes in relation to the number of credit points that indicates the necessity to revise some course descriptions.
- 3.The mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course.
4. Low mobility of students.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

During the visit, the experts made sure that the study provision, scientific support, informative provision, material and technical provision, and financial provision fully comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the professional Bachelor study programme "Industrial Engineering Management".

According to the self-assessment report, the faculty has good, renovated classrooms and computer rooms, comfortable lounges and halls for students, wireless internet is available. The study base is regularly updated with the most up-to-date information resources in accordance with the needs of the teaching staff and students, including digital resources. The engineering and technical basis necessary for the provision of professional specialization study courses in the study program area, will be provided in cooperation with Riga State Technical School, the new Centre of Practical Training, which is equipped with new and modern equipment for the provision of laboratory works for specialized study courses. Different software and statistical databases are available for scientific research. The new study programs for specialized study courses provide specialized user software.

When analysing students' assessments, one of the above-rated criteria are the provision of infrastructure, availability of scientific databases and library resources, e-course development etc. All libraries of the UL provide all services that facilitate independent study. The UL Library's collection is in compliance with the study programme's requirements. The priority is given to e-resources and especially to the subscribed databases such as, Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, EBSCO Academic Search Complete and etc. The e-book platform ProQuest Ebook Academic Complete, which includes materials in the field of Management is offered to the students.

According to the self-assessment report, Managers of academic activity directions twice a year organize in their departments methodological seminars not only on topical issues related to the improvement of study course content, organization of lectures and seminars, development of e-studies, but also on inclusion of the latest literature in the study courses.

There is also support from teachers during the distance learning period, they also use various IT tools. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, company study visits were organized.

The financial resources for the implementation of the study programme are provided by the state budget financing for studies and the faculty's own income and tuition fees. The financial resources at the disposal of the Faculty are planned each year in accordance with the UL budget and used in accordance with the estimates approved by the UL management, which ensures control of the use of financial resources.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics has the necessary infrastructure, the necessary material and technical support, information support, financial support and a library.

Strengths:

- 1The Faculty has the necessary resources for the implementation of the professional Bachelor programme "Industrial Engineering Management"

2Digital resources are also available outside the Faculty premises

3Library resources are regularly updated according to the needs of academic staff and students

4The study programme “Industrial Engineering Management” provides access to various platforms and user software

Weakness:

No

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

The professional Bachelor programme “Industrial Engineering Management” is new and there were no changes in the composition of the Teaching staff yet. The programme is delivered by highly professional academic and professional teaching staff.

The study programme is implemented by 33 lecturers in total; of them 64% has PhD and 36% master’s degree. This includes 5 professors and 6 associate professors (2 of which are guest professors with PhD degree).

The study programme is implemented by lecturers from different departments and different areas of science because the study programme incorporates not only classical management courses but also natural sciences and engineering study courses. The doctoral degrees of teaching staff correspond to the respective branches of science. Some of the courses are delivered by doctoral students or doctoral candidates. As the programme is professional, the delivered courses are interdisciplinary and have been developed and implemented by UL lecturers and guest lecturers, who also have professional experience in the appropriate field.

This shows that the qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme “Industrial Engineering Management” complies with the requirements for the implementation of the professional study programmes and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme.

Academic staff seem to be highly involved in scientific research which is evident from academic publications of programme faculty. The list of academic publications of professors and associate professors teaching in the programme “Industrial Engineering Management” range from 5 to 26 publications per faculty member (Appendix 19). The topics of the publications are generally related to the courses delivered by the academic staff members. The staff members take part in various programmes, increase their professional and pedagogical qualification and the knowledge gained is integrated in the study process. According to the CVs, staff members participated in the study programmes and courses for the purpose to increase general teaching competences, student curator competences and project management-related competences, which assure implementation of the study programme. International activities should be enhanced in order to provide more international impact and elements to the staff and the students.

The existence of cooperation was confirmed by the academic staff members and representatives of the employers and it seems that it takes place. The regular meetings of the departments, the regular e-learning training seminars for teachers, and methodological seminars, organized twice a year on the improvement of study courses, are good examples of such cooperation.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

Programme “Industrial Engineering Management” is delivered by the teaching staff, which was initially planned, no changes yet. The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme “Industrial Engineering Management” complies with the

requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses. The academic staff is involved in scientific research both at the national and international levels. There is a mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members in place.

Strengths

1 Motivated, highly qualified academic staff.

Weaknesses

1 Low number of international professors/practitioners from the field.

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Industrial Engineering Management"

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme does not fully comply with the regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No.202, adopted on 16.04.2013 (available in Latvian <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/256157-kartiba-kada-izsniedz-valsts-atzitus-augstako-izglitiba-apliecinosh-dokumentus>). The information about the awarded level of a professional qualification should be also reflected on the page that corresponds to the 3rd page of the diploma (Regulations no.202, Annex No.4).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The mutual agreement is signed on 25.11.2019 between UL and Riga Technical University about the mutual acceptance of students from partner University. The agreement cover the study programmes within the study fields "Economics" and "Management, administration and real estate management", including the programme "Industrial Engineering Management". The document is available in Latvian as an attachment to the SAR.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The confirmation No. 7-41/258 signed by the Rector on 14.02.2020 states that the UL guarantees to the students compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the license of the study programme is revoked and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme (attached to the SAR in Latvian).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language.
Official confirmation No. 22-7/27 was signed by the Rector on 17.02.2020. (attached to the SAR).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of English. The confirmation No. 22-7/26 was signed by the Rector on 17.02.2020. (attached to the SAR).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement, according to the requirements of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No 70 of January 23, 2007.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The study program complies with a valid professional standard "Industrial management engineer" (accepted on 10.06.2020. Available in Latvian <https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-135.pdf>).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The programme complies with Cabinet Regulation No. 512 of 26 August 2014, Regulations Regarding the State Standard for Vocational Higher Education as documented in the annex "Study programme "Industrial engineering management compliance with the national education standard".

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Academic publications of programme faculty are presented in the Appendix 19. The practical work experience of programme faculty is presented in Biographies of teaching staff involved in the study direction. Each member of the academic staff has either publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years, including international editions or a five-year practical work experience.

- 15 P5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: See comments in criterion No. 1 "The sample of the diploma..."

See comments in criterion No. 8 "The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement".

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

Requirements (R6-R8)

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The FBME has the necessary resources to implement the Bachelor study programme "Industrial Engineering Management"

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The study programme is implemented by 33 lecturers in total; of them 64% has PhD and 36% master's degree. This includes 5 professors and 6 associate professors (2 of which are guest professors with PhD degree).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The programme has been modified and is highly focused on qualifying engineering to work in the field. It offers a variety of technical courses and management courses making the whole program interdisciplinary. The programme seems to be already well-positioned on the market. However, the aim and objectives of the programme need to be defined more precisely.

The content of the studies is relevant and of high quality. The course descriptions are good, but the number of learning outcomes should be reviewed. The feedback from students is systematically collected and used to improve studies. The programme needs to pay attention to the low mobility of students which limits the international experience for the students.

The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics has the necessary infrastructure, the necessary material and technical support, information support, financial support and a library.

Programme "Industrial Engineering Management" is delivered by the teaching staff, which was initially planned, no changes yet. The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme "Industrial Engineering Management" complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses. The academic staff is involved in scientific research both at the national and international levels. There is a mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members in place.

Strengths:

- 1 The professional programme contains many practical courses as well as practice.
- 2 The courses in the program uses a varied portfolio of teaching and learning methods.
- 3 Feedback from students is systematically collected and used to improve the quality of the programme and the courses.
- 4 Close communication between students and the programme director.
- 5 The Faculty has the necessary resources for the implementation of the professional Bachelor programme "Industrial Engineering Management".
- 6 Digital resources are also available outside the Faculty premises.
- 7 Library resources are regularly updated according to the needs of academic staff and students.
- 8 The study programme "Industrial Engineering Management" provides access to various platforms and user software.
- 9 Motivated, highly qualified academic staff.

Weaknesses:

1. The aim of the study programme needs to be specified.
2. No connection between the goal of the programme and the learning outcomes.
3. Still a relatively low number of students.
4. Many study courses with a small number of credit points.
5. A disproportionally large number of learning outcomes in relation to the number of credit points indicates the necessity to revise some course descriptions.
6. The mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course.

7. Low mobility of students.
8. Low number of international professors/practitioners from the field.

Evaluation of the study programme "“Industrial Engineering Management”"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "“Industrial Engineering Management”"

Short-term recommendations

- | |
|--|
| 1 The aim and objectives of the program need to be defined more precisely. |
| 2 Please verify how the goals of the program can be linked with the learning outcomes. It will however depend on fulfilling the short-term recommendation No. 1 |
| 3 Develop the mechanism in the form of an annual plan for the involvement of guest lecturers from Latvia and international professors/practitioners in the study courses (at least one per study course is recommended). |

Long-term recommendations

- | |
|---|
| 1 It is recommended to clarify what are the causes of low interest of students in the programme. |
| 2 Evaluate the necessity and possible benefits of launching a joint or double diploma programme in the future. |
| 3 Revise the curriculum of the programme and consider the opportunity to decrease the number of “small CP” study courses. This is a recommendation for a 2-year period. |
| 4 Revise course descriptions and critically evaluate the number of learning outcomes that are planned to be achieved. This is a recommendation for a 2-year period. |
| 5 Revise the mapping of study courses, following the format recommended by Latvian Academic Information Centre
(https://www.aika.lv/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Vadlinijas-studiju-programmas-raksturojuma-izstradei_2019.pdf Annex 8). |
| 6 Introduce the programme-specific mechanism for students’ motivation to participate in international mobility because the existing one seems not to be effective. |

II. "Business Administration" ASSESSMENT

II. "Business Administration" ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

The Bachelor study programme “Business Administration” (43345) is a 3-year academic study programme full-time and 3 year, 5 months part-time. Until the 2019/2020 academic year the programme has functioned under the name of “Management Science”. Since then the program has changed the name from “Management Science” into “Business Administration”. The programme is offered in Latvian language. Moreover, starting from the 2014/2015 academic year the sub-programme “International Business” started to be offered within “Business Administration” in English in the form of full-time studies. The programme offers a Bachelor Degree of Social Science in

Management (Self-Assessment Report, p. 396; though on the website it is stated as: Bachelor of Social Sciences in Business Administration; probable in the Syllabuses the degree is not updated toward the new Program Name). However, in line with the education classification (coding 345) as well as given that the program has transformed from Management Science into Business Administration, the name of the degree offered should be also replaced as: Bachelor of Social Sciences in Management and Administration. Given the inconsistency in the provided documents as well as homepage, the UL has to make sure that the degree is offered in line with the existing regulation (Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 240, 13.05.2014, paragraph 12; Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 322, 13.06.2017). The same change applies to the Latvian version of the program.

The number of enrolled students in the academic year 2018/2019 was 138 in both full-time and part-time, as compared to 130 in the previous year. However, 92 in the former and more than 100 students have dropped out from the program.

The aim of the programme “Business Administration” is to “to provide students with academic education, competitive professional training and practical skills in management science and business management” to prepare students for the international job market. The structure of the Program has been designed in line with the Cabinet Regulation No. 240 “Regulations Regarding the State Academic Education Standard”, as adopted on 13 May 2014. Requirements related to specific programme content has been achieved (see: Document in the Appendix: Compliance of the Bachelor study programme “Business Administration” with the State Education Standard). The main objectives of the course relate to: “train competitive and highly qualified specialists in the field of economics and business for the Latvian and foreign labour market with in-depth knowledge in business management: organization management, marketing, international business, business analysis; to encourage students to develop business ideas and entrepreneurial skills, to become involved in the formation and development of their companies; to develop students' critical and creative thinking, to promote efforts for independent deepening of knowledge and strengthening of practical skills” (Self-Assessment Report, p. 383). The programme objective such as to obtain a Bachelor degree (Self-Assessment Report, p. 383) cannot constitute an objective of the study programme as it can not be verified by the learning outcome. It is rather a result of the program than “something” that students can gain and can be verified by any assessment form. The structure of the programme and mandatory number of CPs to be achieved fulfills the regulatory requirement by grating the academic qualification set by the Ministry of education and science of Latvia. Importantly, despite the academic nature of the Program it also requires students to fulfill the academic practice (internship) for 4CP which is a great plus for such programmes.

The scope of the programme includes the necessary courses needed to fulfill the necessary objectives of the program. Inter alia the programme offers courses related to development of soft skills such as: Decision Making Methods or Human Resources, of analytical thinking such as: Research Methods, Intelligent Analysis of Business Data, Financial Planning, Research Methods, of knowledge courses as: law, economics or corporate strategy. Finally, the programme offers courses in the field of management as: logistics, product development, strategy etc. (see: Curriculum of the Bachelor study programme in the Appendix). Analyzing the content of the individual classes it should be stated that the material is very advanced. The number of readings is also very long for many of the courses. Since it is a Bachelor programme one should consider to “flatten” the deepness of the material to make the courses more introductory. It might help to decrease the number of drop-outs among students, which are mainly due to not fulfilling the obligations of the program. In addition, it will give a room to more advanced modules at the Master level. In fact, currently, the Master programme “International Business” seems to be more introductory than the Bachelor level while comparing the CPs. A more detailed analysis of the Master programme will be

conducted in a separate document evaluating this programme. In sum, it can be stated that the content of the programme is closely interlinked to the name of the programme and nature of qualification. As stated during the on-site visit programme is reviewed annually, taking into considerations suggestions provided by students and teaching staff, as well as the Employers council.

The learning outcomes in different subjects are interrelated and allow the students to achieve the necessary knowledge and skills to address the aim of the program. Students' assessment criteria are diversified and well-suited to the nature of the courses. While knowledge courses have more bias toward the exams and tests, the skill development courses additionally include the case studies, works or discussions. The assessment criteria follow the student-centered approach.

Admission requirements are also wide (the requirement is only secondary education). However, given the Admission rules of the University of Latvia, competition criteria for persons who have obtained secondary education starting from 2004: CE in Latvian language, CE in mathematics; for English language group: CE in mathematics, CE in English; competition criteria for persons who have obtained secondary education before 2004: annual average grade in Latvian language and literature, annual grade in mathematics; in English language group: annual grade in mathematics, annual grade in English language. It is worth considering whether the entry criteria specifically for this programme should not have been broader. The programme is not heavily analytically oriented nor it requires any deep mathematical knowledge. Therefore, a simple average from the maturity exam would be sufficient. Additional admission criteria that concentrate on excellent results in secondary school, e.g., prize winning of Latvian National Olympiad in Economics. There are separate admission criteria especially for international students - "1) document of secondary education shall have positive evaluation in mathematics" and a B2 English level, attested by international English proficiency tests.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

Overall, the degree offered, the aim of the program, their objectives and learning outcomes are interrelated. The program offers a complex scope of topics and diversified assessment criteria needed to fulfill the objectives of the program and its learning goals. The program, however, suffers from quite high drop-out rate and relatively low graduates number (72 in 2018//2019 versus 82 to 2017/2018). One of the possibilities might be to offer the Program in one nature, probably only part-time. Alternatively, it is worth considering to offer a full-time Program in English and part-time in Latvian.

Strengths:

- 1The program has been developed in an important area.
- 2The number of students is increasing.
- 3The programme offers a wide range of classes aimed at gaining skills and knowledge.
- 4 Program requires academic practice which allows students to combine the theoretical with practical knowledge.

Weaknesses:

- 1The degree to be acquired is not in line with the education classification (coding 345).
- 2 High drop-out rate from the programme.
- 3 Advanced coverage of the material at Bachelor as compared to the Master programme "International Business".

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.1 The content of the courses is relevant which is also confirmed in the meetings with employers and complies with the aim of the study programme.

The reduction of specialisations (sub-programmes) to four is adequate to the number of students and the labor market needs. The offered sub-programmes are: "Organization Management", "Marketing", "International Business" and "Business Analysis". The students make their choice in the 5th semester of studies.

Academic internship (4CP) is possible within the programme that is very appreciated, considering that it is not obligatory for academic programmes. Thus, the students have the opportunity to get acquainted with the real environment of entrepreneurship. The link of the content with market needs is provided by inviting of Industry representatives as teaching staff members (several examples are provided in the SAR).

The content of the courses complies with the aim of the sub-programmes. However, it is impossible to evaluate the level of the achievement of the learning outcomes because the mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course (the outcomes themselves are not listed, just mentioned together as "outcomes" for each study course).

The descriptions of the courses are of high quality and include all relevant information. However, in some course descriptions, the list of literature contains mainly old sources (for instance, Sustainable business management models, Human Resource Management, International Business Environment). Some course descriptions contain too many learning outcomes in relation to the number of credit points (18 for 4 CP course "Enterprise creation and development", 12 for 2 CP course "Quality Management").

In the course descriptions, there is information about the course plan (number of teaching hours) only for one form of studies, but the programme is realized as full time studies (3 years) and part time studies (3,5 years).

The description of the Internship and the requirements on writing course papers separately for the programme are available at <https://www.bvef.lu.lv/studijas/studentiem/studiju-darbi-un-prakses-parskati/> The description of the requirements for development of the Bachelor Thesis are available in several connected course descriptions "Bachelor Thesis in Management" and in the general regulations at FBME (https://www.bvef.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/Apaksvietnes/Fakultates/www.bvef.lu.lv/2.STUDIJAS/2.1.Studentiem/5.Nosleguma_darbi/Methodological_guidelines_for_the_development_and_defence_of_final_thesis.pdf). The quality of the randomly selected Bachelor Thesis (defended in 2013) complies with the general requirements. Due to the fact that the only last version of the Regulations (Accepted on September 10, 2019) is available, it is not possible to make a fully reliable conclusion about the compliance (for instance, the volume of the work is 96 p. (excl. annexes), but the current requirement is "no more than 80 pages"). In turn, another Bachelor Thesis (defended in 2018 in English) is prepared, following other formatting rules (the Latvian and English students' works are not consistent).

2.2 The study implementation methods contribute to achievement of the aims and the learning outcomes of the courses and the study programme. The variety of study methods. i.e. lectures, practise seminars and case-based teaching, are appreciated by the students (evidenced in the site visit meeting with bachelor students and in feedback in evaluation surveys from students and graduates) and they include methods for active learning and problem-based learning. During the on-site visit, teaching staff members mentioned different testing opportunities in Moodle, presentation, group discussion. The students also confirm the accessibility of the lecturers. Principles for a student-centred approach, i.e. accessibility of teaching staff and variation in study methods, is

implemented and recognised by teaching staff and students (evidenced in site visit meetings with academics and students).

2.3 Feedback from students, graduates and employers are systematically collected and used to improve the quality of the programme and the courses. The meetings with both students, graduates, employers and lecturers provide evidence for this. The information is used systematically to review and improve courses.

2.4 The students are offered mobility opportunities and they do confirm that they are informed about these opportunities. The programme is offered in English and therefore also receives incoming exchange students, which contributes to an international study environment.

Nevertheless, the number of students using the opportunities for outgoing exchange are decreasing dramatically in recent years and this is an issue for the programme. As for recognition, the outcomes from mobilities are recognized according to the general rules of the UL "Credit Transfer Procedure of the University of Latvia" (https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_EN/3/23_CREDIT_TRANSFER_AT_THE_UL.pdf)

Students pointed to the insufficient support to motivate them. Students asked for the opportunity to speak with others who have experienced studies abroad, as well as for mentor help.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The bachelor study programme "Business Management" has several sub-programmes "Organization Management", "Marketing", "International Business" and "Business Analysis", so the students have wide opportunities to select between study courses. The content of courses is relevant and complies with the programme's goals. The descriptions of the courses are prepared following the unified format and are regularly updated (confirmed by the teaching staff during the on-site visit). However, some course descriptions need to be revised (learning outcomes, and literature list). Teaching staff members implement different teaching and assessment methods in the study process. Stakeholders regularly provide their feedback on the quality of the programme. Students have the opportunity to participate in international mobility but do not really use it. The need for additional support was mentioned during the discussion with students.

Strengths:

1 Feedback from students, graduates and employers are systematically collected and used to improve the quality of the programme and the courses.

Weaknesses:

1 Old literature sources and a disproportionately large number of learning outcomes in relation to the number of credit points that indicates the necessity to revise some course descriptions.

2 The mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course.

3 Insufficient support for students to motivate them to participate in study mobility.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

During the visit, the experts made sure that the study provision, scientific support, informative provision, material and technical provision, and financial provision fully comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the BA study programme "Business administration". According to the self-assessment report, all the resources available at the University of Latvia and the FBME are available for the implementation of the Bachelor's degree programme in "Business Administration".

The premises of the FBME, such as auditoriums and other rooms are functional and well equipped. A

state-of-the-art Photo and Video Studio available at the FBME provides the possibility for students to use modern equipment in the study process. The study process is conducted through the E-Studies platform Moodle, which includes necessary study resources (e.g. course descriptions, practical work descriptions, snippets of study book chapters, software to be used and etc.). The necessary methodological resources are also available in the FBME Portal. The access to E-studies platform from students' homes using a virtual private network provided by the UL let the students to study outside the UL premises.

Informative provision, including libraries, comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme. The library of the UL maintains the status of a nationally important library and offers a number of services to the staff and students. The UL library's collection is in compliance with the study programme's requirements. The priority is given to e-resources and especially to the subscribed databases such as, Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, EBSCO Academic Search Complete and etc. The e-book platform ProQuest Ebook Academic Complete, which includes materials in the field of Management is offered to the students. The financial resources for the implementation of the study programme are provided by the state budget financing for studies and the faculty's own income and tuition fees. The financial resources at the disposal of the Faculty are planned each year in accordance with the UL budget and used in accordance with the estimates approved by the UL management, which ensures control of the use of financial resources. Around 60-70% students study for a fee.

However, the number of students enrolled in the programme has significantly decreased during the reporting period and high drop-out of students is also observed (especially in the English language group). In overall, graduates rated the study environment by 5.6 points out of 7 on average, slightly below than graduates' evaluation of the study environment in the case of the Master study programme "Business Administration". The graduates survey revealed the positive assessment of the study environment, literature, databases and other electronic resources available in the library. Following up on the recommendations of students and employers, the BA study programme "Business administration" has become more effective and shortened from 4 years to 3 years.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics has the necessary infrastructure, the necessary material and technical support, information support, financial support and a library.

Strengths:

- 1.The Faculty has the necessary resources for the implementation of the Bachelor's degree programme in "Business Administration".
- 2.Student tuition fees are the main source of financing for the study program however some part relies on the state funding budget.
- 3.Digital resources are also available outside the Faculty premises.
- 4.Library resources are regularly updated according to the needs of academic staff and students,

Weaknesses:

No

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

4.1. According to the self-assessment report, 55 teaching staff members are involved in the implementation of bachelor study programme "Business Administration". However, this information does not correspond to the information provided in the study plan. Based on the study plan, 33 staff

members represent the programme (in all sub-programmes). Almost all of them work at UL on the permanent basis (elected staff). 22 of 33 staff members hold Doctoral degree (mostly Dr.oec. or Dr.sc.admin.). 18 staff members are employed as Professors or Associate Professors. The evidence for these figures is provided in the Annex 16. Despite the inconsistency in the provided information, the composition of staff complies with the requirement of the Law on Higher Education Institutions regarding the number of Professors in the academic study programmes (Section 55, part (1)3).

4.2 The teaching staff members have sufficient knowledge and qualification to realize the study programme. 12 Professors involved in the programme have the expert status of the Latvian Council of Science (checked in sciencelatvia.lv on 08.01.2021.). This indicates a high level of the engagement of teaching staff into research activities, because the prerequisites for expert status are the high-level publications indexed in SCOPUS/Web of Science or scientific monographs published during the last three years (Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 320, 09.07.2019.) Most teaching staff members have a substantial teaching experience (more than 10-15 years). Thus, the qualification of staff complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements of the regulatory enactments.

4.3. Not applicable

4.4 During the on-site visit, the director of the programme and teaching staff members provided several concrete examples about the implementation of results of staff's conducted research into the study process. Some of the programme's representatives defended their Doctoral dissertation in the topics corresponding to the study courses taught, and they continue their research in the field. The results of the research are discussed with students and have been introduced into study content. Students of the programme confirmed that they receive a large amount of information from the programme director about the research opportunities.

4.5. One of the tools to ensure cooperation between teaching staff is the hospitation that is a common practice for all FBME programs. Besides, during the on-site visit, teaching staff members mentioned regular workshops to share the experience organized by the Management Department. Professors engaged in teaching of the connected courses meet to discuss the content and avoid overlapping.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The qualification of teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programme "Business Administration" complies with the requirements of legal regulations. Most teaching staff members have a substantial list of scientific achievements and long-term pedagogical experience. The mechanism for mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members is in place.

Strengths:

- 1 High qualification and long-term pedagogical experience of teaching staff.
- 2 Hospitation procedure obligatory for all staff members.

Weaknesses:

No

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Business Administration"

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The sample of the diploma is attached to the SAR (section "Other mandatory attachments"). The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No.202, adopted on 16.04.2013 (available in Latvian <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/256157-kartiba-kada-izsniedz-valsts-atzitus-augstako-izglitiba-apliecinoss-dokumentus>). But the degree in the diploma should be "Bachelor of Social Sciences in Management and Administration".

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: For students of bachelor level programme "Business Administration" will be offered the following options: continue studies in bachelor level programme "Economics", bachelor level programme "Accounting, Analysis and Audit" or academic bachelor level programme "International Economics and Commercial Diplomacy" (Decision of the FBME Council No. 22-3/135 of 3.12.2019.) Besides, the mutual agreement is signed on 25.11.2019 between UL and Riga Technical University about the mutual acceptance of students from partner University. The agreement cover the study programmes within the study fields "Economics" and "Management, administration and real estate management", including the programme "Business Administration". Both documents are available in Latvian as attachments to the SAR.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The confirmation No. 7-41/258 signed by the Rector on 14.02.2020 states that the UL guarantees to the students compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the license of the study programme is revoked and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme (attached to the SAR in Latvian).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language.
Official confirmation No. 22-7/27 was signed by the Rector on 17.02.2020. (attached to the SAR).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of English. The confirmation No. 22-7/26 was signed by the Rector on 17.02.2020. (attached to the SAR).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Among the teaching staff involved in study programme "Business administration", 18 staff members are employed as Professors or Associate Professors at the UL. The composition of staff complies with the requirement of the Law on Higher Education Institutions regarding the number of Professors in the academic study programmes (Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement, according to the requirements of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No 70 of January 23, 2007.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Academic study programme "Business Administration" is provided for more than 250 full-time students, based Annex attached to the SAR "Statistical Data on the Students of the Bachelor study programme "Business Administration".

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: The acquired degree is not compliant with the State academic education standard (Regulation No. 240, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia on 13.05.2014, Regulations Regarding the National Standard for Academic Education) and education classification (code 345) (Regulation No.322 approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia on 13.06.2017). It should be "Bachelor of Social Sciences in Management and Administration".

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: One staff member does not have publications within the last six years (based on the SAR, Annex 19). It is not possible to check information about work experience (CV is not attached).

- 15 P5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: See comments in criterion No. 8 "The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement."

See comments in criterion No. 12 "The study program complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard."

See comments in criterion No. 14 "Each member of the academic staff has either publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years, including international editions... or a five-year practical work experience (except for the experience in the implementation of the study programme)..."

Requirements (R6-R8)

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The FBME has the necessary resources to implement the Bachelor study programme "Business Administration"

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The qualification of the academic staff members complies with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the Law on Higher Education Institutions. Twenty two staff members involved implementation of the programme hold a Doctoral degree (mostly Dr.oec. or Dr.sc.admin.). Eighteen staff members are employed as Professors or Associate Professors. Twelve staff members have the expert status of the Latvian Council of Science.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The aim of the program, their objectives and learning outcomes are interrelated. The program offers a complex scope of topics and diversified assessment criteria needed to fulfill the objectives of the program and its learning goals. The program, however, suffers from quite a high drop-out rate and a

relatively low number of graduates.

The programme "Business Management" has several sub-programmes "Organization Management", "Marketing", "International Business" and "Business Analysis", so the students have wide opportunities to select between study courses. The content of courses is relevant and complies with the programme's goals. The descriptions of the courses are prepared following the unified format and are regularly updated (confirmed by the teaching staff during the on-site visit). However, some course descriptions need to be revised (learning outcomes, and literature list). Teaching staff members implement different teaching and assessment methods in the study process. Stakeholders regularly provide their feedback on the quality of the programme. Students have the opportunity to participate in international mobility, but do not really use it. The need for additional support was mentioned during the discussion with students.

The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics has the necessary infrastructure, the necessary material and technical support, information support, financial support and a library.

The qualification of teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programme "Business Administration" complies with the requirements of legal regulations. Most teaching staff members have a substantial list of scientific achievements and long-term pedagogical experience. The mechanism for mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members is in place.

Strengths:

1. The program has been developed in an important area.
2. The number of students is increasing.
3. The programme offers a wide range of classes aimed at gaining skills and knowledge.
4. Program requires academic practice which allows students to combine the theoretical with practical knowledge.
5. Feedback from students, graduates and employers are systematically collected and used to improve the quality of the programme and the courses.
6. The Faculty has the necessary resources for the implementation of the Bachelor's degree programme in "Business Administration".
7. Student tuition fees are the main source of financing for the study program however some part relies on the state funding budget.
8. Digital resources are also available outside the Faculty premises.
9. Library resources are regularly updated according to the needs of academic staff and students.
10. High qualification and long-term pedagogical experience of teaching staff
11. Hospitation procedure obligatory for all staff members

Weaknesses:

1. The Degree to be acquired is not in line with the education classification (coding 345)
2. High drop-out rate from the program.
3. Advanced coverage of the material at Bachelor as compared to the Master Program "International Business".
4. Old literature sources and a disproportionately large number of learning outcomes in relation to the number of credit points that indicates the necessity to revise some course descriptions.
5. The mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course.
6. Insufficient support for students to motivate them to participate in study mobility.

Evaluation of the study programme "Business Administration"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Business Administration"

Short-term recommendations

1. Make changes in the relevant documents regarding the acquired degree (should be "Bachelor of Social Sciences in Management and Administration").

Long-term recommendations

1. Undertake the steps to decrease the dropout ratio at the programme. Potential solutions might be developing the double-degree program or offering joint program with the business partners. Alternatively, think about scholarships for outstanding students offered by the partner companies or Mentoring sessions.
2. Revise the structure of the course in a way that the introductory courses can be offered at the Bachelor level while more advanced in the Master programme. Currently, the structure seems to be the opposite. This is a recommendation for a 2-year period.
3. Revise course descriptions paying particular attention to the list of learning outcomes and literature list. This is a recommendation for a 2-year period.
4. Revise the mapping of study courses, following the format recommended by Latvian Academic Information Centre (https://www.aika.lv/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Vadlinijas-studiju-programmas-raksturojuma-izstradei_2019.pdf Annex 8).
5. Introduce the collaboration mechanism between students experienced in Erasmus+ mobilities and students with no experience to help them in the initial stage of decision-making about participation in international mobility.

II. "Public Administration" ASSESSMENT

II. "Public Administration" ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

The academic master's study programme "Public Administration" is implemented in full-time (2 years, 80 CP) form in Latvian. Degree to be acquired is "Master of Social Sciences in Public Administration" as stated in the Self-assessment report (SAR) p.189. According to the legal regulations (Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 240, 13.05.2014, paragraph 22; Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 322, 13.06.2017) the degree should be Master of Social Sciences in Management and Administration.

Programme was established in 1994. Most students in the programme study for a fee. The number of students has been increasing constantly and it seems to be stable. However, the number of dropouts is very high (around 50%). Importantly, similarly as in other Master Programs, the main reason was a personal nature. The Program seems to be well-recognized on the market and specialists seem to be highly demanded (according to the on-site interviews with the Employers). The Program must comply with Regulations Regarding the National Standard for Academic Education approved in 2014. According to the provided Document in the Appendix: "Compliance with the national education standard of the academic Master's study programme "Public Administration" the Program fulfills the necessary requirements to offer such a program.

The aim of the AMSP is "to provide academically educated and professionally qualified personnel to Latvian society, public administration and local governments, which would enhance the capacity of

the public sector development for the development of the Latvian state, as well as insure its competitiveness within the European and global economies” (Self-Assessment Report, p. 192). Consequently, the main objectives of the program are to “equip students with management knowledge and skills, including change management, organizational management, strategic leadership and research, to provide the prerequisites for professional performance”. The content of the study programme integrates strategic management of public sector organizations and human resources, public law, project management, change and risk management, public and local government financial policy or socio-economic analysis and forecasting. The learning outcomes are interlinked with the course objectives and aims of the program. The students’ assessment is diversified and complies with the student-centered approach.. Aim and goals are interlinked.

Admission requirements are in line with the nature of the course - weighted average grade in undergraduate studies, overall (or average) grade in undergraduate examinations, and work experience in public sector organizations, or an entrance examination. Previous education: bachelor's degree or second level higher professional education (or equivalent) in social sciences or equivalent. Prospective students are also required to take an entrance examination: it consists of a written test of the theoretical and professional aspects of management science and public administration.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

Overall, it should be stated that the study program fulfills the necessary regulatory requirement. The program is well-recognized on the market. The objectives and aims of the program are in line with the learning outcomes. The admission criteria are strictly linked with the desired prerequisites for such a Master Program.

Strengths:

- 1.Recognition on the job market.
- 2.Stable student interest.
- 3.Aims and objectives of the programme are interlinked.

Weaknesses:

- 1.The Degree to be acquired is not in line with the education classification (coding 345)
- 2.Amount of dropout students.

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.1 The content is relevant which is also confirmed by the employers who find this program particularly relevant for public sector performance in Latvia. From an academic perspective the content is also up-to-date and relevant. During the on-site visit, students confirmed that the latest trends and practical cases in public administration are discussed, and guest lectures from professionals regularly take place (including the lectures provided by graduates of the programme employed in the public administration sector). During the meeting with programme graduates, they stated that the programme aims were “overachieved”.

The structure of the programme is clear and logical. The descriptions of the study courses are of high quality and regularly reviewed and updated.

The mapping of the study courses within the programme “Public Administration” does not allow understanding whether the learning outcomes of each course comply with the learning outcomes of the study programme (the outcomes themselves are not listed, just mentioned together as

“outcomes” for each study course).

The Final paper randomly selected during the on-site visit (defended in 2014) generally complies with the Requirements for development and defending of the graduation papers (available on FBME website

https://www.bvef.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/Apaksvietnes/Fakultates/www.bvef.lu.lv/2.STUDIJA/AS/2.1.Studentiem/5.Nosleguma_darbi/Methodological_guidelines_for_the_development_and_defence_of_final_thesis.pdf). Due to the fact that the only last version (Accepted on September 10, 2019) is available it is not possible to make a fully reliable conclusion about the compliance (for instance, the volume of the work is 107 p., but the current requirement is “no more than 100 pages”).

2.2 The study methods are varied and include active learning formats such as workshops and seminars. The study methods contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes which is also confirmed by students and graduates (site visit meetings). Students and graduates mentioned a large number of guest lectures, regular visits to the institutions (European Parliament, Ministries). The assessment methods are varied and contribute to the learning outcomes.

Student-Centred Learning principles are taken into account, both by program director and by academic staff. Examples which are mentioned are related to variation in teaching methods (using games, cases etc). There is no shared interpretation of SCL and how it is implemented among academic staff. However, it is confirmed by the students and graduates that the teachers and the programme director are all accessible and attentive to student requests.

2.3 Feedback from students, graduates and employers are systematically collected and used to improve the quality of the programme and the courses. For example, in some cases changes have been made due to student feedback about practise orientation. The meetings with both students, graduates, employers and lecturers provide evidence for this. In addition to the surveys, the opinion of students and graduates is collected through their participation in a Forum organized by the programme director in social network Facebook. Close collaboration with the programme director was mentioned frequently by students and graduates during the meeting.

2.4 The students are informed and encouraged to go on exchange, but the number of outgoing students can be increased. Based on statistics (SAR, Annex 22), the number of outgoing mobilities was zero in all the years, excluding 2013/2014 and 2017/2018, when it was equal to 1. From the students we heard that they don't want to go because it is difficult with jobs and families but the lack of international experiences during the studies is nevertheless a challenge for the programme.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The content of studies is relevant to the latest trends in public administration (confirmed by students, graduates and employers). The descriptions of the courses are qualitative and prepared following the unified format. The evidence for close and successful collaboration between the programme director and students was received during the on-site visit. There is a lack of students' international mobilities in the programme.

Strengths:

- 1.The extremely high level of loyalty to the programme expressed by all stakeholders (students, graduates, employers).
- 2.Close collaboration with graduates and employers to improve the quality of the programme.
- 3.Relevant and up-to-date content of the programme

Weaknesses:

- 1.Low number of students' international mobilities.
- 2.The mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

During the visit, the experts made sure that the study provision, scientific support, informative provision, material and technical provision, and financial provision fully comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme “Public administration”. The financial resources at the disposal of the Faculty are planned each year in accordance with the UL budget and used in accordance with the estimates approved by the UL management, which ensures control of the use of financial resources. The financial resources for the implementation of the study programme are provided by the state budget financing for studies and the faculty's own income and tuition fees. There is no separate procedure or budget line for the study programme. All the resources available at the UL and the FBME are available for the implementation of the Master's degree programme in “Public administration”.

According to the self-assessment report, most students in the programme study for a fee. The total number of government budget positions from 2012/2013 through the 2018/2019 academic year, there were 2 budget places in each study course, from 2019/2020 - 3 budget places.

The study process is conducted through the E-Studies platform Moodle, which includes necessary study resources (e.g. course descriptions, practical work descriptions, snippets of study book chapters, software to be used and etc.). The necessary methodological resources are also available in the FBME Portal. The access to E-studies platform from students' homes using a virtual private network provided by the UL let the students to study outside the UL premises.

Informative provision, including libraries, comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme. The library of the UL maintains the status of a nationally important library and offers a number of services to the staff and students. The UL Library's collection is in compliance with the study programme's requirements. The priority is given to e-resources and especially to the subscribed databases such as, Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, EBSCO Academic Search Complete and etc. The e-book platform ProQuest Ebook Academic Complete, which includes materials in the field of Management is offered to the students. The support of research activities is provided by offering students the software (e.g. SPSS, MathLab), intelligent data analysis tools (e.g. MicroStrategy, QlickView, Simul8, NVivo) and databases (MarketLine, Orbis, Passport).

All resources are available to students and academic staff in the study process. There is cooperation with public institutions, for example, with the State Chancellery who recognizes the learning outcomes of the students and readiness for the labour market at a high level, despite the fact that graduates rated the statement Study programme prepared me for the labour market with a comparatively low rate. Technical equipment, classrooms are assessed as appropriate for studies according to graduates.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics has the necessary infrastructure, the necessary material and technical support, information support, financial support and a library.

Strengths:

- 1.The Faculty has the necessary resources for the implementation of the Master study program “Public administration”
- 2.Digital resources are also available outside the Faculty premises
- 3.Library resources are regularly updated
- 4.Academic staff have access to support for scientific activities and are involved in research projects

Weakness:

No

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

4.1. According to the SAR, 21 lecturers teach courses in the programme "Public Administration", 15 of them have a doctoral degree (71%). Based on the SAR and list of teaching staff members provided in the Study plan, 9 professors and 1 associate professor are involved in the study process (all of them work at UL on the permanent basis). The composition of staff complies with the requirement of the Law on Higher Education Institutions regarding the number of Professors in the academic study programmes (Section 55, part (1)3). The changes in the composition of teaching staff are treated positively (the number of professors and associate professors increased, new lecturers from the field were involved).

4.2. Eight staff members involved in the programme have the expert status of the Latvian Council of Science (checked in sciencelatvia.lv). This indicates a high level of the engagement of teaching staff into research activities, because the prerequisites for expert status are the high-level publications indexed in SCOPUS/Web of Science or scientific monographs published during the last three years (Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 320, 09.07.2019.) Most of the teaching staff members have a substantial teaching experience.

The programme also employs professionals from the public administration sector (some of them are graduates of the programme) that increases the value of the programme and its relevance to the latest trends in the sector.

The qualification of staff complies with the regulatory enactments.

4.4. Most teaching staff members are actively engaged in research activities. The evidence is provided in Annex 18, Annex 19 and in the SAR 4.5 (10 of teaching staff members are/were involved in the national and international projects). Students and graduates confirmed that academic staff uses the research results in the study process. Some teaching staff members with Master degrees involved in the study process do not have scientific publications during the reporting period (based on the information in Annex 19 and CVs). However, these staff members represent professional sector of public administration and have professional work experience that could be treated as strength.

4.5. During the on-site visit, the academic staff members provided examples about collaboration within the programme and Department: hospitiation, informal discussion about the connections between the courses, colleagues' conducted workshops to share experience about online teaching, seminars organized by the Department to discuss methodological issues.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The qualification of teaching staff complies with the requirements of the legal regulations for academic study programmes. Most teaching staff members have scientific publications and participate in research projects. The mechanism for mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members is in place.

Strengths:

1. Not only representatives of the academic environment but also professionals from the public sector are involved in teaching
2. Close collaboration between the colleagues within the programme

Weaknesses:

No

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Public Administration"

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The sample of the diploma is attached to the SAR (section "Other mandatory attachments"). The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No.202, adopted on 16.04.2013 (available in Latvian <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/256157-kartiba-kada-izsniedz-valsts-atzitus-augstako-izglitiba-apliecinoss-dokumentus>). But the degree in the diploma should be "Master of Social Sciences in Management and Administration".

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: For students of master programme "Public Administration" will be offered the following options: continue studies in master level programme "Management Sciences" or master level programme "European Studies and Economic Diplomacy" at the UL Decision of the FBME Council No. 22-3/140). Besides, the mutual agreement is signed on 25.11.2019 between UL and Riga Technical University about the mutual acceptance of students from partner University. The agreement covers the study programmes within the study fields "Economics" and "Management, administration and real estate management", including the programme "Public Administration". Both documents are available in Latvian as attachments to the SAR.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The confirmation No. 7-41/258 signed by the Rector on 14.02.2020 states that the UL guarantees to the students compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the license of the study programme is revoked and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme (attached to the SAR in Latvian).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language.
Official confirmation No. 22-7/27 was signed by the Rector on 17.02.2020. (attached to the SAR).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification: The study programme is implemented in Latvian.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: 9 professors and 1 associate professor are involved in the study process (all of them work at UL on a permanent basis). The composition of staff complies with the requirement of the Law on Higher Education Institutions regarding the number of Professors in the academic study programmes (Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The sample of the study agreement (regarding to the Latvian version attached to the SAR) complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement, according to the requirements of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No 70 of January 23, 2007.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The Council of Higher Education supported the request of the University of Latvia to offer academic master level study programme "Public administration" to less than 250 full time students (letter No. 62, attached to the SAR in Latvian).

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: The acquired degree is not compliant with the State academic education standard (Regulation No. 240, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia on 13.05.2014, Regulations Regarding the National Standard for Academic Education) and education classification (code 345) (Regulation No.322 approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia on 13.06.2017). It should be "Master of Social Sciences in Management and Administration".

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Not all the members of the academic staff have publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years (SAR, Annex 19). All of them are Master degree holders. However, all of them have 5 or more years practical work experience outside the UL (based on the information in CVs, SAR Annex).

- 15 P5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: See comments for the criterion 12 "The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard"

Requirements (R6-R8)

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The FBME has necessary resources to implement the Master study programme "Public Administration"

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The qualification of the academic staff members complies with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the Law on Higher Education Institutions. Twenty one staff members are involved in the programme "Public Administration", 15 of them have a doctoral degree (among them, 9 professors and 1 associate professor). Eight staff members involved in the programme have the expert status of the Latvian Council of Science.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The programme is implemented, considering the latest trends in public administration. The details are provided in the SAR, "Description of the study programme", "Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof". There is also a specific study course "Topical Issues of Public Administration" in the study plan. The evidence has been received during the on-site visit, meeting with programme's students, graduates and involved professionals from the public sector.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The study program fulfills the necessary regulatory requirement. The program is well-recognized on the market. The objectives and aims of the program are in line with the learning outcomes. The admission criteria are strictly linked with the desired prerequisites for such a Master Program. The content of studies is relevant to the latest trends in public administration (confirmed by

students, graduates and employers). The descriptions of the courses are qualitative and prepared following the unified format. The evidence for close and successful collaboration between the programme director and students was received during the on-site visit. There is a lack of students' international mobilities in the programme.

The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics has the necessary infrastructure, the necessary material and technical support, information support, financial support and a library.

The qualification of teaching staff complies with the legal regulations requirements for academic study programmes. Most teaching staff members have scientific publications and participate in research projects. The mechanism for mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members is in place.

Strengths:

1. Recognition on the job market.
2. Stable student interest.
3. Aims and objectives of the programme are interlinked.
4. The extremely high level of loyalty to the programme expressed by all stakeholders (students, graduates, employers).
5. Close collaboration with graduates and employers to improve the quality of the programme.
6. Relevant and up-to-date content of the programme.
7. The Faculty has the necessary resources for the implementation of the Master study program "Public administration".
8. Digital resources are also available outside the Faculty premises.
9. Library resources are regularly updated.
10. Academic staff have access to support for scientific activities and are involved in research projects.
11. Not only representatives of the academic environment, but also professionals from the public sector are involved in teaching.
12. Close collaboration between the colleagues within the programme.

Weaknesses:

1. The Degree to be acquired is not in line with the education classification (coding 345).
2. Amount of dropout students.
3. A low number of students' international mobilities.
4. The mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course.

Evaluation of the study programme "Public Administration"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Public Administration"

Short-term recommendations

1. Make changes in the relevant documents regarding the acquired degree (should be "Master of Social Sciences in Management and Administration").

Long-term recommendations

1. Undertake the steps to decrease the dropout ratio at the program. Potential solutions might be developing the double-degree program or offering a joint program with the business partners. Alternatively, think about scholarships for outstanding students offered by the partner companies or Mentoring sessions.
2. Introduce the programme-specific mechanism for students' motivation to participate in international mobility, because the existing one seems not to be effective.
3. Revise the mapping of study courses, following the format recommended by Latvian Academic Information Centre
(https://www.aika.lv/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Vadlinijas-studiju-programmas-raksturojuma-izstradei_2019.pdf Annex 8).

II. "Business Administration" ASSESSMENT

II. "Business Administration" ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

The program is a two-year Master academic program. The Program is offered as a full-time 80 CP program in Latvian language and should comply with the Cabinet Regulation No. 240 "Regulations Regarding the State Academic Education Standard". Requirements related to specific program content has been achieved, as of information provided in Document Appendix: Compliance of the Master study programme "Management Science" with the State Education Standard. The degree is granted in Master of Social Sciences in Management Science. The degree however should be offered in line with the Business Administration as of: Master of Social Sciences in Management and Administration (Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 240, 13.05.2014, paragraph 22; Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 322, 13.06.2017). The same change should also apply to the Latvian translation. The UL has to modify the name of the degree according to the appropriate qualification it offers.

Within the Master's study programme "Management Sciences" there are 7 sub-programs: Strategic management and leadership, Environment and business management, International economics and business, Management information systems, Property valuation management, Marketing management, Quality assurance and valuation. Many of these sub-programs have not started due to the low number of students. According to the "Curriculum of the Master study programme "Management Science" only three sub-programs are offered: Strategic Management and leadership, Marketing Management, Business analysis and management systems. Other sub-programs seem to be deactivated. In general, the number of students in the program is low and has been decreasing constantly (65, 63, 61 in 2018/2019, 2018/2017 and 2016/2017, respectively. Moreover, the drop-out from the program is also quite high, as of 15, 15 and 25 respectively. However, differently than in other programs the dropouts are mainly due to personal reasons and not program legal restrictions. Definitely, the program needs to be restructured and the number of sub-programs needs to be limited. The University of Latvia should consider creating synergies between different programs offered such as: "Management information systems" and "E-business" which would allow it to keep the students at the University at the same time reducing the number of sub-programs it offers.

The aim of the program is "to provide students with academic education and advanced professional education in management science, to develop this field of science in order not only to preserve the existing intellectual potential of the Republic of Latvia, but also to promote its further effective development in accordance with globalization processes in the world." (Self-Assessment Report, p.

221). The objectives of the study program, among others, are: to prepare competitive and highly qualified specialists in the field of economics and business for the Latvian and foreign labour market and research with in-depth and / or extended knowledge in management science: marketing management, strategic management and leadership, business analysis and management systems; to develop analytical and critical thinking in students, the ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the latest trends and discoveries in the field of management sciences, ability to efficiently use own high professional expertise and initiative for the preparation of management decisions, using new approaches (Self-Assessment Report, p. 220-221). It is very difficult to link the aim of the program with its objectives. The aim of the programme is too general, making it difficult to understand whom it targets and what kind of specialists it wants to "create". Consequently, it is difficult to link how the objectives allow the program to realize its mission (aim). In general, the objectives of the programme can be linked to a great extent with the content of the course and the learning outcomes, though it is highly advisable that the objectives of the programme would have been more precise than stated in general terms. Especially, because it is a Master programme and the prospective students want to exactly know how they will profit from the programme. There is a lack of such courses as negotiation, human resources or cultural management. To sum up, overall the learning outcomes seem to be achieved by the program content, however the program needs to be significantly restructured. The study direction does not clearly define its aim which should be clearly linked with the objectives. The objectives are stated at a very general level, the program offers many sub-programs with very limited number of students.

The admission requirements are wide. They especially include applicants, who have acquired: a) Bachelor's degree or second level professional higher education in Economics and Business / Economics and Management Sciences; b) Bachelor's or Master's degree in other social sciences; c) Bachelor's or Master's degree in the following related sciences - mathematics, computer science, information technologies, physics or engineering, in such case the applicant shall have 2 years of experience in business or economics; d) Bachelor's or Master's degree in other sciences and at least 5 years of experience in business and economics. Consequently, it can be stated that the admission rules are interlinked with the field of studies and comply with the Section 57 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

In general, it can be stated the aim of the program and the objectives are not precisely stated and interlinked. The aim of the program is too general and should be more precisely specified, especially as it is a Master programme. Moreover, though in general the content of the programme allows students to acquire necessary knowledge and skills in the programme field, the programme structure and description should be reconsidered. The programme should aim at developing more general knowledge and skills in the mandatory part, including negotiation, communication, HR and more specialized knowledge in the sub-programs. Currently, the content of the mandatory courses does not allow to obtain general knowledge and skills in the management.

Strengths:

- 1 The programme is in a very prospective area.
- 2 Three sub-programmes are offered, allowing more specified studies.
- 3 Wide admission criteria provide opportunities for more potential students to enroll.

Weakness:

- 1.The Degree to be acquired is not in line with the education classification (coding 345)

2 Aim of the programme is not linked to the degree offered and it is not interlinked with objectives and learning outcomes.

Objectives and learning outcomes should be verified.

3 High amount of dropouts as well as low number of applicants should be addressed in context with the needs of the employment market as well as study programme topicality.

4 The content of the mandatory courses does not allow to obtain general knowledge and skills in management.

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.1 During the meeting with students, they confirmed that the content of the programme is up-to-date and the courses are useful for career development (most of students are employed).

The programme has three sub-programmes: "Strategic Management and Leadership", "Marketing Management" and "Business Analysis and Management Systems". The content of all three sub-programmes have relevant and up-to-date content. However, the structure of the compulsory part seems to be required some revisions.

The number of courses are high and therefore some courses are small in terms of credit points (CP), even some courses of 1 CP. It can be questioned if such small courses should be incorporated into larger chunks. And even though some topics (Civil Protection and Environmental protection) are required by law, it might be possible to fulfill the requirements in a different way.

In addition to the high number of courses, the content of some of the mandatory courses can be questioned and if they need to be mandatory in a business administration programme. For example, it can be considered if some of the smaller courses (Record Keeping and Correspondence (2 CP), Philosophy (2 CP) and Business Ethics and CSR (2 CP) can be merged into fewer, larger courses.

Besides, a compulsory part of the programme contains several small courses and does not contain the course, for instance, about modern management theories.

The mapping of the study courses within the programme "Management Sciences" does not allow understanding whether the aims of each course comply with the aims of the study programme (the outcomes themselves are not listed).

The descriptions of the study courses are of high quality and include all relevant information. However, the compulsory reading list in some course descriptions has not been updated (for instance, the courses "Project Management", "Financial Management").

The requirements for development of the Master Thesis are provided in the course description "Master's Thesis in Management" and in the Requirements for development and defending of the graduation papers (available at <https://www.bvef.lu.lv/studijas/studentiem/studiju-darbi-un-prakses-parskati/>). The quality of the randomly selected Master Thesis (defended in 2013, specialization in Marketing) complies with the general requirements. However, it is impossible to make a fully reliable conclusion due to the fact that the only last version (Accepted on September 10, 2019) is available. For instance, in the selected work the number of pages exceeds the maximum limit of "no more than 100 pages").

2.2 The study implementation methods are varied and contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes, for example, are active learning formats such as seminars and workshops used together with laboratory classes. This is also evidenced in the meetings with students and graduates. Students mentioned practical works, discussions, case studies. Based on the SAR, there are regular guest lectures delivered by professionals. Student-centred learning is taken into account and directed by some principles of how to focus on the individual student in the study process.

The assessment methods are also varied, for example using reports, group work and business games, and contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

2.3 Feedback from students, graduates and employers are systematically collected and used to

improve the quality of the programme and the courses, for example have some of the optional courses been moved to the compulsory part. The meetings with both students, graduates, employers and lecturers provide evidence for this.

2.4 There was no feedback from the students of the programme regarding mobilities during the on-site visit. It is not possible to judge their viewpoint. Based on the SAR (Annex No. 22), the number of student mobilities is 4-6 per year (2016-2019) that is 3-5% of the total number of students in the programme.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The programme "Management Sciences" is a traditional Master programme that is absolutely necessary for the Management study field. Obviously, this programme is a "bridge" between the Bachelor programme "Business administration" and Doctoral programme "Economics and Business". The programme has three sub-programmes: "Strategic Management and Leadership", "Marketing Management" and "Business Analysis and Management Systems". The content of all three sub-programmes have relevant and up-to-date content. However, the structure of the compulsory part should be critically revised. Special attention should be paid to the courses with a small number of CP. Student-centered learning principles are taken into account in the study process. There is a small, but stable number of international student mobilities.

Strengths:

- 1 The students have a choice to select between three different sub-programmes.
- 2 The study implementation methods are varied and contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes.
- 3 Feedback from students, graduates and employers are systematically collected and used to improve the quality of the programme and the courses.
- 4 Stable number of students' international mobilities.

Weaknesses:

- 1 Many study courses with a small number of credit points.
- 2 Old literature sources that indicates the necessity to revise some course descriptions.
- 3 The mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

During the visit, the experts made sure that the study provision, scientific support, informative provision, material and technical provision, and financial provision fully comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the Master study programme "Management Sciences". The financial resources at the disposal of the Faculty are planned each year in accordance with the UL budget and used in accordance with the estimates approved by the UL management, which ensures control of the use of financial resources. There is no separate procedure or budget line for the study programme.

According to the self-assessment report, all the resources available at the UL and the FBME are available for the implementation of the Master's degree programme "Management Sciences". Number of students who are studying by own funding is decreasing, in 2018/2019 academic year they amount to a half of the total number - the students apply mostly to budget-funded places. Part of the funding comes from the central budget, although new books are ordered through departments, and the same goes for digital resources.

The study process is conducted through the E-Studies platform Moodle, which includes necessary

study resources (e.g. course descriptions, practical work descriptions, snippets of study book chapters, software to be used and etc.). The necessary methodological resources are also available in the FBME Portal. The access to E-studies platform from students' homes using a virtual private network provided by the UL let the students to study outside the UL premises.

Informative provision, including libraries, comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme. The library of the UL maintains the status of a nationally important library and offers a number of services to the staff and students. The UL Library's collection is in compliance with the study programme's requirements. The priority is given to e-resources and especially to the subscribed databases such as, Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, EBSCO Academic Search Complete and etc. The e-book platform ProQuest Ebook Academic Complete, which includes materials in the field of Management is offered to the students. The support of research activities is provided by offering students the software (e.g. SPSS, MathLab), intelligent data analysis tools (e.g. MicroStrategy, QlickView, Simul8, NVivo) and databases (MarketLine, Orbis, Passport).

Although all support is available and creates the preconditions for achieving learning outcomes, those master students who do not have bachelor's degree in business administration face greater difficulties in the learning process. Besides, graduates rated the statement "Study programme prepared me for the labour market" with a comparatively low rate. Students themselves assess the material and technical provision (premises, computers and internet access) as almost appropriate for studies (average 5.3 points out of 7).

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics has the necessary infrastructure, the necessary material and technical support, information support, financial support and a library.

Strengths:

- 1 The Faculty has the necessary resources for the implementation of the Master study program "Management Sciences".
- 2 Digital resources are also available outside the Faculty premises.
- 3 Library resources are regularly updated.
- 4 Academic staff have access to support for scientific activities and students are involved in research projects.

Weakness:

No

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

4.1 Based on the information in the SAR, 26 teaching staff members are involved in the study process within the programme (among them – 9 professors and 3 associate professors). The information is consistent with the information provided in the Study plan.

Based on the SAR, the number of teaching staff members decreased significantly compared with the previous accreditation period. This is explained by the decrease in the number of students and restructuring of the programme (decrease of the number of sub-programmes). The ratio of lecturers to students is 1: 3.5, that is an absolutely adequate value considering the statistics of OECD (in average 15 students to 1 teacher).

4.2. The qualification of staff is appropriate and allows achieving the goals of the study programme. 18 persons with the Doctor degree are teaching in the programme (approx. 70%). The degree is consistent with the study course taught (for instance, Dr.oec. – Financial management; Dr.iur. – Public law; Dr.psych. – Social psychology). The number of professors and associate professors is

sufficient to implement the academic study programme (according to the Law on Higher Education Institutions, Section 55, part (1)3). Eight staff members have the expert status of the Latvian Council of Science (LCS) - checked in sciencelatvia.lv.

4.3. not applicable

4.4. The most of staff members are involved in research that is confirmed by the scientific publications (Annex 19) and LCS expert status that requires at least 3 scientific publications in editions indexed in Web of Science or SCOPUS within the last three years. 18 of 26 staff members have research projects (Annex 18). However, not all staff members involved in implementation of the programme have publications in the reporting period (based on Annex 19 and information from CVs). During the meeting, students and graduates confirmed that the teaching staff introduces their research results in the study process.

4.5 During the on-site visit, the academic staff members provided examples about collaboration within the programme and Department: hospitiation, informal discussion about the connections between the courses, colleagues' conducted workshops to share experience about online teaching, seminars organized by the Department to discuss methodological issues.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The qualification of teaching staff complies with the requirements of the legal regulations for academic study programmes. Most teaching staff members have scientific publications and participate in research projects. The mechanism for mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members is in place.

Strengths:

- 1 The composition of the teaching staff fully complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme.
- 2 Most of teaching staff members actively participate in research.

Weaknesses:

- 1 Some teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the programme have no scientific publications in the reporting period.

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Business Administration"

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The sample of the diploma is attached to the SAR (section "Other mandatory attachments"). The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No.202, adopted on 16.04.2013 (available in Latvian <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/256157-kartiba-kada-izsniedz-valsts-atzitus-augstako-izglitiba-apliecinosh-dokumentus>). But the degree in the diploma should be "Master of Social Sciences in Management and Administration".

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: UL provides the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in the Master study programmes "Economics" or "International Business". (Decision of the FBME Council No. 22-3/139 of 3.12.2019.). Besides, the mutual agreement is signed on 25.11.2019 between UL and Riga Technical University about the mutual acceptance of students from partner University. The agreement cover the study programmes within the study fields "Economics" and "Management, administration and real estate management", including the programme "Management Sciences". Both documents are available in Latvian as attachments to the SAR.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The confirmation No. 7-41/258 signed by the Rector on 14.02.2020 states that the UL guarantees to the students compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the license of the study programme is revoked and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme (attached to the SAR in Latvian).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language.

Official confirmation No. 22-7/27 was signed by the Rector on 17.02.2020. (attached to the SAR).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification: The study programme is implemented in Latvian.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: 9 professors and 3 associate professors are involved in the study process. The composition of staff complies with the requirement of the Law on Higher Education Institutions regarding the number of Professors in the academic study programmes (Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The sample of the study agreement (regarding the Latvian version attached to the SAR) complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement, according to the requirements of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No 70 of January 23, 2007.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The Council of Higher Education supported the request of the University of Latvia to offer academic master level study programme "Business administration" to less than 250 full time students (letter No. 1.12/119, attached to the SAR in Latvian).

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: The acquired degree is not compliant with the State academic education standard (Regulation No. 240, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia on 13.05.2014, Regulations Regarding the National Standard for Academic Education) and education classification (code 345) (Regulation No.322 approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia on 13.06.2017). It should be "Master of Social Sciences in Management and Administration".

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: Not all the members of the academic staff have publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years (SAR, Annex 19). One of those also does not have practical work experience outside UL (based on the information in CVs, SAR Annex).

- 15 P5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: See comments for criterion No. 12 "The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard" and criterion No. 14.

Requirements (R6-R8)

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The FBME has necessary resources to implement the Master study programme "Management Sciences".

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The qualification of the academic staff members complies with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the Law on Higher Education Institutions. Twenty six teaching staff members are involved in the study process within the programme (among them – 9 professors and 3 associate professors). The information is consistent with the information provided in the Study plan. Eighteen teaching staff members hold a Doctor degree. Eight staff members have the expert status of the Latvian Council of Science.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The programme is implemented, considering the latest trends in management science, business and market development. The details are provided in the SAR, "Description of the study programme", "Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof". During the on-site visit, students confirmed that the lecturers introduce their research results into study courses.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The aim of the program and the objectives are not precisely stated and interlinked. The aim of the program is too general and should be more precisely specified, especially as it is a Master programme. Moreover, though in general the content of the program allows students to acquire necessary knowledge and skills in the programme field, the programme structure and description should be reconsidered. The programme should aim at developing more general knowledge and skills in the mandatory part, including negotiation, communication, HR and more specialized knowledge in the sub-programs. Currently, the content of the mandatory courses does not allow to obtain general knowledge and skills in management.

The content of courses is relevant and useful for career development on the viewpoint of students. The descriptions of the courses are prepared following the unified format. However, some course descriptions need to be revised by updating the literature list. The structure of the programme is disputable due to the courses with a small number of credit points. Teaching staff members implement different teaching and assessment methods in the study process. Stakeholders regularly provide their feedback on the quality of the programme.

The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics has the necessary infrastructure, the necessary material and technical support, information support, financial support and a library.

The qualification of teaching staff complies with the requirements of the legal regulations for academic study programmes. Most teaching staff members have scientific publications and participate in research projects. The mechanism for mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members is in place.

Strengths:

- 1 The programme is in a very prospective area.
- 2 Three sub-programmes are offered, allowing more specified studies.
- 3 Wide admission criteria provides opportunity for more potential students to enroll.
- 4 The students have a choice to select between three different sub-programmes.
- 5 The study implementation methods are varied and contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes.
- 6 Feedback from students, graduates and employers are systematically collected and used to improve the quality of the programme and the courses.
- 7 Stable number of students' international mobilities.
- 8 The Faculty has the necessary resources for the implementation of the Master study program "Management Sciences".
- 9 Digital resources are also available outside the Faculty premises.
- 10 Library resources are regularly updated.
- 11 Academic staff have access to support for scientific activities and students are involved in research projects.
- 12 The composition of the teaching staff fully complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme.
- 13 Most of teaching staff members actively participate in research.

Weaknesses:

- 1 The Degree to be acquired is not in line with the education classification (coding 345)
- 2 Aim of the programme is not linked to the degree offered and it is not interlinked with objectives and learning outcomes.
Objectives and learning outcomes should be verified.
- 3 High amount of dropouts as well as low number of applicants should be addressed in context with the needs of the employment market as well as study programme topicality.
- 4 The content of the mandatory courses does not allow to obtain general knowledge and skills in management
- 5 Many study courses with a small number of credit points.
- 6 Old literature sources that indicates the necessity to revise some course descriptions.
- 7 The mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course.
- 8 Some teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the programme have no scientific publications in the reporting period.

Evaluation of the study programme "Business Administration"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Business Administration"

Short-term recommendations

1. Make changes in the relevant documents regarding the acquired degree (should be “Master of Social Sciences in Management and Administration”).
2. Revise the objectives and aims of the program in a way they clearly state the benefits the program offered in terms of knowledge and skills. Please try to present it in a way that distinguishes the program from other programs.

Long-term recommendations

- 1 Revise the content of the mandatory courses to allow students to obtain general knowledge and skills in management. This is a recommendation for a 2-year period.
- 2 Undertake the steps to decrease the dropout ratio at the program. Potential solutions might be developing the double-degree program or offering a joint program with the business partners. Alternatively, think about scholarships for outstanding students offered by the partner companies or Mentoring sessions.
- 3 Revise the curriculum of the programme and consider the opportunity to decrease the number of “small CP” study courses. This is a recommendation for a 2-year period.
- 4 Revise course descriptions paying particular attention to the literature list. This is a recommendation for a 2-year period.
- 5 Revise the mapping of study courses, following the format recommended by Latvian Academic Information Centre (https://www.aika.lv/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Vadlinijas-studiju-programmas-raksturojuma-izstradei_2019.pdf Annex 8).
- 6 Introduce the programme-specific mechanism for research collaboration between staff members with Doctor degree and staff members with Master degree in order to engage the latter in research activities. Joint research and joint papers could be a proposed solution.

II. "Project Management" ASSESSMENT

II. "Project Management" ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

The PMSP “Project management” is a two year 80 CP professional Master Program. Programme is offered full-time both in Latvian and English and should comply with Cabinet regulation No 512. “Regulations regarding the State second level higher education standard” as adopted on 26th August 2014. The study programme is compliant with the standard, more in detail described in Appendix “Study programme “Project management” compliance with the State Professional Higher Education Standard”. It corresponds to the seventh European and Latvian education framework level. The degree acquired is “Professional Masters degree in Project Management”. The acquired professional qualification is Project manager that corresponds to 5th qualification level (<https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-129.pdf>).

The aim of the study programme is “to provide professional Master's degree studies in project management that correspond to the development of the national economy, promoting the competitiveness of highly qualified project managers in the Latvian and European labour market, as well as to develop students' research skills and project management skills”. Tasks described are compliant with professional higher education regulations as well as profession standard, offered courses within the project management specification that are aligned with need both in Latvia as

well as abroad, more detailed in Self-assessment report p. 327. Study courses contain both professional and theoretical courses, allowing students to analyze, develop and implement knowledge, competences and skills regarding project management (Self-assessment report, p. 333). Study courses are designed to comply with professional standard requirements, discussed in detail in Document Annex: "Compliance with the profession standard "Project manager" study programme "Project management".

The number of students has decreased, both admission-wise as well as in total number of students. Most of the students study on their own expenses. The amount of dropout students is stable, students dropping out mostly because of inability to meet study contract requirements both in timely fulfillment of demands as well as not passing tests. Although the absolute number of dropouts is low, the relative amount is about 10 percent (see: Annex "Statistic data about students in professional masters study programme "Project management").

Admission requirements are wide - Bachelor's degree or second level professional higher education in any of the following - economics, management science, other social sciences, other related science (mathematics, computer science, information technologies), latter being topped with study courses on basics of management science or economics mastered in basic study programmes. For other sciences there is also a requirement to have at least two year experience in project management. For studies in English an international English proficiency test shall be at least B2, except where education is obtained in English. The requirements are compliant with the aim and goals of the study programme.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The programme is compliant with normative regulations in both content and volume of studies. Admission requirements are clear and wide, allowing for a wider range of potential students. Aim, tasks, admission requirements as well as learning outcomes are interlinked and provide the necessary requirements for professional qualification as well as second level higher professional education.

Strengths:

- 1 Aim of the study programme, tasks, learning outcomes and admission criteria are interlinked.
- 2 Programme is available in both Latvian and English, allowing a wider range of students as well as promoting internationalisation.
- 3 The requirements of normative regulation of professional higher education standard as well as profession standard are met.

Weaknesses:

- 1 Small number of students.
- 2 About 10% of students dropout.

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.1 The content of the courses is relevant which is also confirmed in the meetings with employers and complies with the aim of the study programme. From an academic perspective, the content of the courses is also updated and relevant.

The high number of courses, many of which are 2 CP courses, is not ideal for students to engage in a deep approach to learning. It should be considered if some of the courses can be integrated into

fewer, larger courses. For example, the courses Managing Risks in Projects (2 CP) and Managing Quality in Projects (2 CP) could potentially be integrated into one 4 CP-course.

The descriptions of the courses are of high quality and include all relevant information. However, some course descriptions contain too many learning outcomes in relation to the number of credit points (for instance, "Project Management theory" (4 CP – 17 learning outcomes), "Business Management" (2 CP – 19 learning outcomes)). The compulsory reading list in some course descriptions has not been updated (for instance, the courses "The New Economics and Projects", "Social aspects of project management").

The mapping of the study courses within the programme "Project Management" does not allow understanding whether the aims of each course comply with the aims of the study programme (the outcomes themselves are not listed).

The high volume of traineeship during the studies is appreciated by students and employers.

The tasks of the internship are described in the course descriptions "Practice I" and "Practice II". The information is also provided at <https://www.bvef.lu.lv/studijas/studentiem/studiju-darbi-un-prakses-parskati/> separately for the programme "Project Management". However, the amount of the information in Latvian and English differs (the programme is realized in Latvian and English).

The requirements for development of the Master Thesis are provided in the course description "Master's Thesis". General requirements are available in the Requirements for development and defending of the graduation papers (available in Latvian and English at <https://www.bvef.lu.lv/>). The quality of the randomly selected Master Thesis (defended in 2017) complies with the general requirements.

2.2 The study methods contribute to achievement of the learning outcomes. The courses in the program uses a varied portfolio of teaching and learning methods, such as seminars and workshops and individual work with problem solving, and the students and graduates confirm that the teaching staff is accessible and attentive to student needs. During the visit, students mentioned group work to provide solutions for businesses mentored by the Professors. Graduates confirmed that there were many practical tasks during the studies, guest lectures from the professionals (including foreign lecturers). The responsiveness and attention from the Programme director was highly appreciated.

2.3 Regular and systematic surveys among students, graduates and employers are conducted and used for improvement of the courses and the programme. For example are guest lectures introduced and computer class sessions are implemented. This is evidenced in the self-assessment report as well as in the meetings with students, graduates and employers.

2.4 Incoming and outgoing mobility is low and it was mentioned during the site visit meetings that the program director would like numbers to increase. The double degree agreement with Dortmund is surely a step forward towards this. During the meeting with the students, they mentioned the possibility to study in Dortmund and also participate in the Cambridge programme. Other possibilities for consideration could be short-term exchange and cohort-exchange as ways of increasing mobility.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The content of the programme is up-to-date and relevant. However, the structure requires revision. A critical evaluation of the necessity of study courses with a small number of credit points is needed. Course descriptions are also should be revised, paying special attention to learning outcomes and literature. Students and graduates mentioned a close and successful collaboration with the programme director. The programme is oriented towards internationalization, however, the number of international mobilities should be increased.

Strengths:

- 1 The high volume of traineeship during the studies
- 2 The courses in the program use a varied portfolio of teaching and learning methods
- 3 Feedback from students is systematically collected and used to improve the quality of the programme and the courses.

Weaknesses:

- 1 Many study courses with a small number of credit points.
- 2 A disproportionately large number of learning outcomes in relation to the number of credit points that indicates the necessity to revise some course descriptions.
- 3 The mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course.
- 4 Low mobility of students.

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

During the visit, the experts made sure that the study provision, scientific support, informative provision, material and technical provision, and financial provision fully comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the professional Master study programme "Project management".

The financial resources at the disposal of the Faculty are planned each year in accordance with the UL budget and used in accordance with the estimates approved by the UL management, which ensures control of the use of financial resources. However, there is no separate procedure or budget line for the study programme. According to the SAR and its supplements, since its introduction, the study programme "Project management" has had a tuition fee, however since 2016/2017, the programme has some state funded study place.

The premises of the FBME, such as auditoriums and other rooms are functional and well equipped. The study process is conducted through the E-Studies platform Moodle, which includes necessary study resources (e.g. course descriptions, practical work descriptions, snippets of study book chapters, software to be used and etc.). The necessary methodological resources are also available in the FBME Portal. The access to E-studies platform from students' homes using a virtual private network provided by the UL let the students to study outside the UL premises.

Informative provision, including libraries, comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme. The library of the UL maintains the status of a nationally important library and offers a number of services to the staff and students. The UL Library's collection is in compliance with the study programme's requirements. The priority is given to e-resources and especially to the subscribed databases such as, Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, EBSCO Academic Search Complete and etc. The e-book platform ProQuest Ebook Academic Complete, which includes materials in the field of Management is offered to the students. The support of research activities is provided by offering students the software (e.g. SPSS, MathLab), intelligent data analysis tools (e.g. MicroStrategy, QlickView, Simul8, NVivo) and databases (MarketLine, Orbis, Passport). However, graduates recommended to use more interactive methods in the study process and provide students with computers with MS Project application during the study process.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics has the necessary infrastructure, the necessary material and technical support, information support, financial support and a library.

Strengths:

1. The Faculty has the necessary resources for the implementation of the Master study program "Project management"

- 2.Digital resources are also available outside the Faculty premises
 - 3.Library resources are regularly updated
 - 4.Academic staff have access to support for scientific activities and are involved in research projects
- Weakness:
- No

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

The professional master study programme “Project Management” is delivered by highly professional academic and professional teaching staff. Significant changes in the teaching staff have not taken place during the assessed period (only one staff member left the faculty).

The study programme is implemented by 11 lecturers in total; of them 64% has PhD and 36% master’s degree. This includes 5 professors, 2 docents, 4 lecturers. As the programme is professional, the delivered courses are interdisciplinary and have been developed and implemented by UL lecturers and guest lecturers, who also have professional experience in the appropriate field.

This shows that the qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme “Project Management” complies with the requirements for the implementation of the professional study programmes and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme.

Academic staff seem to be highly involved in scientific research which is evident from academic publications and projects of programme faculty. The topics of the publications are generally related to the courses delivered by the academic staff members. The staff members take part in various programmes, increase their professional and pedagogical qualification and the knowledge gained is integrated in the study process. According to the CVs, staff members participated in the study programmes and courses for the purpose to increase general teaching competences, student curator competences and project management-related competences, which assure implementation of the study programme. International activities should be enhanced in order to provide more international impact and elements to the staff and the students.

The existence of cooperation was confirmed by the academic staff members and representatives of the employers and it seems that it takes place. The regular e-learning training seminars for teachers and observation of colleague’s classes are good examples of such cooperation.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

Programme “Project Management” is delivered by highly qualified teaching staff. Significant changes in the teaching staff have not taken place during the assessed period. The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme “Project Management” complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses. The academic staff is involved in scientific research both at the national and international levels. There is a mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members in place.

Strengths

- 1 Motivated, highly qualified academic staff.

Weaknesses

- 1 Low number of international professors/practitioners from the field.

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Project Management"

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme does not fully comply with the regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No.202, adopted on 16.04.2013 (available in Latvian <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/256157-kartiba-kada-izsniedz-valsts-atzitus-augstako-izglitiba-apliecinosh-dokumentus>). The information about the awarded level of a professional qualification should be also reflected on the page that corresponds to the 3rd page of the diploma (Regulations no.202, Annex No.4).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: UL provides the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in the Master study programmes "Economics" or "Management Sciences" [in the SAR, the title is "Business administration"] (Decision of the FBME Council No. 22-3/138 of 3.12.2019.). Besides, the mutual agreement is signed on 25.11.2019 between UL and Riga Technical University about the mutual acceptance of students from partner University. The agreement cover the study programmes within the study fields "Economics" and "Management, administration and real estate management", including the programme "Project Management". Both documents are available in Latvian as attachments to the SAR.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The confirmation No. 7-41/258 signed by the Rector on 14.02.2020 states that the UL guarantees to the students compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the license of the study programme is revoked and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme (attached to the SAR in Latvian).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language.
Official confirmation No. 22-7/27 was signed by the Rector on 17.02.2020. (attached to the SAR).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of English. The confirmation No. 22-7/26 was signed by the Rector on 17.02.2020. (attached to the SAR).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement, according to the requirements of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No 70 of January 23, 2007.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Study program is compliant with the fifth level of professional qualification and a valid professional standard (<https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-112.pdf>). Compliance is analysed in detail in annex "Compliance with the profession standard "Project Manager" study programme "Project management".

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: See annex: "The compliance of the "Project Management" study programme with the National Education standard for professional higher education".

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Academic publications of programme faculty are presented in Appendix 19. The practical work experience of programme faculty is presented in Biographies of teaching staff involved in the study direction. Each member of the academic staff has either publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years, including international editions or a five-year practical work experience.

- 15 P5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: See comments for criterion No. 1 "The sample of the diploma..."

See comments for criterion No. 8 "The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement"

Requirements (R6-R8)

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The FBME has necessary resources to implement the Master study programme "Project Management"

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The study programme is implemented by 11 lecturers in total; of them 64% has PhD and 36% master's degree. This includes 5 professors, 2 docents, 4 lecturers. Some of the courses are delivered by invited lecturers - industry professionals. Moreover, 1 of the invited faculty members hold PhD.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The programme is implemented, considering the latest trends in business project management. The details are provided in the SAR, "Description of the study programme", "Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof".

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The programme is compliant with normative regulations in both content and volume of studies. Admission requirements are clear and wide, allowing for a wider range of potential students. Aim, tasks, admission requirements as well as learning outcomes are interlinked and provide the necessary requirements for professional qualification as well as second level higher professional education.

The content of the study programme is relevant and complies with programme's objectives. However, the programme's structure should be revised, because there are many courses with a small number of credit points. The descriptions of the courses are qualitative and prepared following the unified format. Some course descriptions need to be updated, paying a special attention to the learning outcomes and recently published literature. The feedback from stakeholders is regularly collected and analysed.

The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics has the necessary infrastructure, the necessary material and technical support, information support, financial support and a library.

The programme is delivered by highly qualified teaching staff. Significant changes in the teaching staff have not taken place during the assessed period. The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme "Project Management" complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses. The academic staff is involved in scientific research both at the national and international levels. There is a mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members in place.

Strengths:

1. The aim of the study programme, tasks, learning outcomes and admission criteria are interlinked.
2. Programme is available in both Latvian and English, allowing a wider range of students as well as promoting internationalisation.
3. The requirements of normative regulation of professional higher education standard as well as profession standard are met.
4. The high volume of traineeship during the studies.
5. The courses in the program uses a varied portfolio of teaching and learning methods.
6. Feedback from students is systematically collected and used to improve the quality of the programme and the courses.
7. The Faculty has the necessary resources for the implementation of the Master study program "Project management".
8. Digital resources are also available outside the Faculty premises.
9. Library resources are regularly updated.
10. Academic staff have access to support for scientific activities and are involved in research projects.
11. Motivated, highly qualified academic staff.

Weaknesses:

1. A small number of students.
2. About 10% of students dropout.
3. Many study courses with a small number of credit points.
4. A disproportionately large number of learning outcomes in relation to the number of credit points that indicates the necessity to revise some course descriptions.
5. The mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course.
6. Low mobility of students.
7. Low number of international professors/practitioners from the field.

Evaluation of the study programme "Project Management"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Project Management"

Short-term recommendations

1. Develop the mechanism in the form of an annual plan for the involvement of guest lecturers from Latvia and international professors/practitioners in the study courses (at least one per study course is recommended).

Long-term recommendations

- 1 It is recommended to clarify what are the causes of low interest of students to the programme.
- 2 Establish procedures to solve the problem with a high drop-out rate in the programme. For example, it is recommended to establish a Mentoring programme or offer students more friendly assessment criteria. Besides, it is recommended to help students financially (to solve the financial problem of students dropping the studies due to financial problems), maybe by offering some scholarships or discounts for the best students. Currently, there is a trend at European Universities to offer scholarships funded. Employers. It is recommended to consider the opportunity of cooperating with employers in this regard.
- 3 Revise the curriculum of the programme and consider the opportunity to decrease the number of "small CP" study courses. This is a recommendation for a 2-year period.
- 4 Revise course descriptions (especially those with the small number of credit points that are absolutely necessary for the programme) in order to find a balance between the volume of the content and expected learning outcomes. This is a recommendation for a 2-year period.
- 5 Revise the mapping of study courses, following the format recommended by the Latvian Academic Information Centre (https://www.aika.lv/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Vadlinijas-studiju-programmas-raksturojuma-izstradei_2019.pdf Annex 8).
- 6 Introduce the programme-specific mechanism for students' motivation to participate in international mobility, because the existing one seems not to be effective.

II. "International Business" ASSESSMENT

II. "International Business" ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

"International Business" is a 2-year 80 CP professional Master Study which has been established already in 2002. In the Self-Assessment Report p.257 it is written that it is held in English, though the program is also presented in the document as held in English and Latvian language (Self-Assessment Report, p. 254-256). Consequently, the program has to comply with the fifth level of professional qualification and seventh level of Latvian qualification framework. The program qualifies to the fifth profession standard - Head of the organization" (Cabinet of Minister Rules 626, of October 9th, 2018, "Rules on the List of Mandatorily Applying Profession Standards and the Publication of Included Profession Standards and Professional Qualification Requirements"). The program seems to enroll quite a high number of students, as compared to other programs. In the academic year of 2018/2019, there were 53 students in the programme, of which 30 were foreign. In the previous year, the number was quite similar. Importantly, the dropout ratio is very low and insignificant. The Program is offered as a double-diploma with University Paris-Est Créteil (Paris XII, France). Consequently, it can be stated that a program is well-established on the market and internationally recognized.

The aim of the program is to “educate highly qualified professionals in fields important to the state and its economy, to foster their competitiveness in the changing socio-economic circumstances and in the international labour market. The programme aims to prepare top-level managers for enterprises and organisations in all fields of economy, and to provide every graduate with the necessary preconditions for a successful performance in international business” (Self-Assessment Report, p. 259). However, the objectives of the program are mainly related to the following knowledge and skills as: ability to think creatively and critically, ability to see the complexity of international business in the context of globalisation, integration and rapid change; to gain knowledge that would allow to comprehend and further analyse an enterprise as an element of the international business environment, to understand the link between an enterprise and environment and the manager’s role in creating this link (Self-Assessment Report, p. 259). Consequently, it can be stated that the aim and the objectives of the program are interrelated as well as closely linked to the qualification the students obtain.

The admission to the program requires the entry exam in international economics. All applicants must have at least two-year experience in business and good command of English in order to fully achieve the learning objectives of the study programme. Foreign applicants must submit a relevant certificate of their English language skills.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

In general, the course is well-structured. The granted qualification is in line with the program content, its aims and objectives. The learning outcomes are interlinked with the granted qualification.

Strengths:

- 1 Well-recognized programme.
- 2 All required criteria to grant a qualification are met.
- 3 Low drop-out ratio.

Weaknesses:

No

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.1 Analyzing the content of the Program it can be stated that it is closely interlinked with the qualification granted. The program structure includes courses related to HR, Finance, Strategic Management, International Economics, Law and Marketing. However, the majority of courses are offered at 2CP. The Master programs, however, should pay attention to curriculum not being repeated from the Bachelor level of studies, even though it can be difficult to avoid it completely. The basic coverage generally comes with the risk that some material is repeated from the Bachelor level which is always the issue of complaints by students continuing the education at the same University.

In general, the content of the programme complies with the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 512 (Regulations regarding the State Standard of Vocational Higher Education of the Second Level), i.e., the programme contains study courses, which ensure the acquisition of the latest achievements in the theory and practice of the sector (professional field) – 10 CP; study courses in research, creative work, design work and management -6 CP; the internship (26 CP), Master Thesis

(20 CP), study courses that provide the achievement of the professional competence in entrepreneurship ("Project management in international business", "Managerial accounting"). However, based on the study plan (SAR, Annex "Curriculum of the professional Master"), it is not clear how the programme is structured. The programme has 1 sub-programme (10 CP), but it seems to be obligatory for everyone – otherwise, it will not be 80 CP.

Study programme is compliant with the fifth level of professional qualification and a valid profession standard "Head of an organization" – the compliance is given in detail in annex "Compliance of the Professional Master's Degree Programme "International Business" with the Profession Standard of a "Head of Organization"".

The content of the courses is relevant which is also confirmed in the meetings with employers and complies with the aim of the study programme.

However, the mapping of the study courses within the programme "International Business" does not provide the full information. The first column of the mapping table does not contain the learning outcomes of each specific course (but titles of the courses), thus, it is not possible to see whether the learning outcomes of the courses correspond to the learning outcomes defined for the programme.

The descriptions of the courses are of high quality and include all relevant information. However, the compulsory reading list in some course descriptions has not been updated (for instance, the courses "State's Support Policy for Entrepreneurship and Export", "Project management in international business").

The tasks and the requirements for the development of the Internship report are described in several course descriptions and also in the Internship Regulations at https://www.bvef.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/lu_portal/projekti/bvef/metodiskie_norad/metod_norad_2018/Starptautiskais_bizness_Prakses_nolikums_02_2018.pdf

To finalize the program students must successfully finish the study courses as well as defend the internship report and Master thesis. It is required that the Master's thesis must be an original research paper which may be based on a research project on international business problems. The requirements for development of the Master Thesis are described in several course descriptions (Master Thesis (International Business), Master Thesis I (subject presentation), Master Thesis II (writing and defence)). General requirements are described in the Requirements for development and defending of the graduation papers (available at <https://www.bvef.lu.lv/studijas/studentiem/studiju-darbi-un-prakses-parskati/>). Besides, specific requirements for the programme "International Business" are described in the separate document available at the website. Information is available in Latvian and English. The quality of the randomly selected Master Thesis (defended in 2020) complies with the requirements.

2.2. The study implementation methods are varied and appropriate in order for the students to achieve the learning outcomes. Teaching methods such as case studies, round table discussions and interactive lectures are used together with traditional lectures. The Student-Centred Learning is by a large accomplished with more than 50 % of the studies organized as individual studies during traineeship and master thesis. During the meeting with students, they pointed to the necessity to organize more guest lectures, more visits to companies. Besides, there was a request for more real cases to involve students into business environment. In turn, simulation games used in the programme were highly appreciated. Both students and graduates positively evaluated possibilities to get additional training (for instance, seminar about the development of Master Thesis and time management training).

2.3 Feedback from students, graduates and employers are systematically collected and used to improve the quality of the programme and the courses. For example have teaching formats been changed in a course due to feedback from students. The meetings with both students, graduates,

employers and lecturers provide evidence for this.

2.4 This is the most internationally oriented programme in the study direction as it is taught in English and has established a double degree agreement. From the meetings with students and graduates it was evidenced that the students also felt informed and encouraged to go on international exchange. Students participated in the meeting were also those with the successful Erasmus+ experience. Besides, the students have an opportunity to study at the partner University in France. Number of outgoing Erasmus+ mobilities is relatively stable (5-7 students per year in 2016-2019, and it has increased compared with previous periods.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The content of the study programme is relevant and complies with programme's objectives. The descriptions of the courses are qualitative and prepared following the unified format. The programme complies with the professional standard "Head of organization". The feedback from stakeholders is regularly collected and analysed. The programme is internationally-oriented one, and has a close cooperation (a double diploma agreement) with the University Paris-Est Creteil (France). The learning outcomes and the methods of their assessment are interlinked and diversified allowing to achieve the objectives of the program. Therefore, the assessment criteria and requirements to finalize the program are in line with the Latvian professional qualification standards. Finally, the structure of the Program is compliant with Latvian regulatory requirements with regard to seventh level of professional framework (in terms of number of CPs, requirements regarding Master Thesis and Internship etc.).

Strengths:

- 1 The courses in the program use a varied portfolio of teaching and learning methods
- 2 Feedback from students is systematically collected and used to improve the quality of the programme and the courses.
- 3 Orientation towards internationalisation

Weaknesses:

- 1 A low number of CP offered in each of the course
- 2 The old literature source in the compulsory reading list in some course descriptions.
- 3 The mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

During the visit, the experts made sure that the study provision, scientific support, informative provision, material and technical provision, and financial provision fully comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the professional master study programme "International Business". The financial resources at the disposal of the Faculty are planned each year in accordance with the UL budget and used in accordance with the estimates approved by the UL management, which ensures control of the use of financial resources. However, there is no separate procedure or budget line for the study programme.

According to the self-assessment report, since its introduction, the study programme "International business" has had a tuition fee, however since 2018/2019, the programme has one state funded study place. All the resources available at the UL and the FBME are available for the implementation of the professional Master programme "International Business".

The study process is conducted through the E-Studies platform Moodle, which includes necessary study resources (e.g. course descriptions, practical work descriptions, snippets of study book chapters, software to be used and etc.). The necessary methodological resources are also available

in the FBME Portal. The access to E-studies platform from students' homes using a virtual private network provided by the UL let the students to study outside the UL premises.

Informative provision, including libraries, comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme. The library of the UL maintains the status of a nationally important library and offers a number of services to the staff and students. The UL Library's collection is in compliance with the study programme's requirements. The priority is given to e-resources and especially to the subscribed databases such as, Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, EBSCO Academic Search Complete and etc. The e-book platform ProQuest Ebook Academic Complete, which includes materials in the field of Management is offered to the students. The support of research activities is provided by offering students the software (e.g. SPSS, MathLab), intelligent data analysis tools (e.g. MicroStrategy, QlickView, Simul8, NVivo) and databases (MarketLine, Orbis, Passport). Digital resources and access to electronic databases play an important role and are regularly updated.

In overall, the study environment is assessed as good (6.1 points out of 7). It can be assumed that the study environment and study process have a good impact on learning outcomes as the statement Study programme prepared me for the labour market rated as good. Undoubtedly, the professional direction of the program is of great importance. Access to books and digital resources are rated higher than technical and material supply, indicating that there is room for improvement.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics has the necessary infrastructure, the necessary material and technical support, information support, financial support and a library.

Strengths:

- 1.The Faculty has the necessary resources for the implementation of the professional Master study programme "International Business"
- 2.Digital resources are also available outside the Faculty premises
- 3.Library resources are regularly updated
- 4.Academic staff have access to support for scientific activities and students are involved in research projects

Weakness:

No

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

The professional master study programme "International Business" is delivered by highly professional academic and professional teaching staff. The changes in the teaching staff have taken place due to generational change, changes of teaching language (all courses are delivered in English at the moment), involvement of professionals from business and foreign lecturers.

The study programme is implemented by 16 lecturers in total; of them 75% has PhD and 25% master's degree. This includes 4 professors, 3 associate professors. Some of the topics are delivered by doctoral students. As the programme is professional, the delivered courses have been developed and implemented by UL lecturers and guest lecturers, who also have professional experience in the appropriate field.

This shows that the qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme "International Business" complies with the requirements for the implementation of the professional study programmes and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme. In order to ensure high academic quality, students have opportunities to attend

lectures delivered by foreign lecturers and attend start-up boot camps in Cambridge, Great Britain. There is a great number of foreign guest lecturers provided in the assessment report.

Academic staff seem to be highly involved in scientific research which is evident from academic publications, national and international projects of programme faculty. The topics of the publications are generally related to the courses delivered by the academic staff members. The staff members take part in various programmes and the knowledge gained is integrated in the study process. According to the SAR and CVs, staff members participated in the programmes under Erasmus+ framework and other courses for the purpose to increase general teaching competences, project management-related competences, statistical modelling competences, which assure implementation of the study programme.

The existence of cooperation was confirmed by the academic staff members and representatives of the employers and it seems that it takes place. The regular meetings of the department, cooperation with other departments, meetings of methodical groups responsible for the content and quality provision of the study courses, collaboration with other study programmes are good examples of such cooperation.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

Programme "International Business" is delivered by highly qualified teaching staff. Significant changes in the teaching staff have taken place aiming to improve content and quality of study courses. The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme "International Business" complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses. The academic staff is involved in scientific research both at the national and international levels. There is a mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members in place.

Strengths:

- 1 High qualification of the teaching staff.
- 2 High level of scientific research of the programme faculty.

Weaknesses:

No

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "International Business"

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme does not fully comply with the regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No.202, adopted on 16.04.2013 (available in Latvian <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/256157-kartiba-kada-izsniedz-valsts-atzitus-augstako-izglitiba-apliecinosh-dokumentus>). The information about the awarded level of a professional qualification should be also reflected on the page that corresponds to the 3rd page of the diploma (Regulations no.202, Annex No.4).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: UL provides the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in the Master study programmes "Management Sciences" [in the SAR the title is "Business Administration"] and "European Studies and Economic Diplomacy"(Decision of the FBME Council No. 22-3/136 of 3.12.2019.). Besides, the mutual agreement is signed on 25.11.2019 between UL and Riga Technical University about the mutual acceptance of students from partner University. The agreement cover the study programmes within the study fields "Economics" and "Management, administration and real estate management", including the programme "International Business". Both documents are available in Latvian as attachments to the SAR.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The confirmation No. 7-41/258 signed by the Rector on 14.02.2020 states that the UL guarantees to the students compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the license of the study programme is revoked and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme (attached to the SAR in Latvian).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language.

Official confirmation No. 22-7/27 was signed by the Rector on 17.02.2020. (attached to the SAR).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of English. The confirmation No. 22-7/26 was signed by the Rector on 17.02.2020. (attached to the SAR).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement, according to the requirements of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No 70 of January 23,2007.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Study program is compliant with the fifth level of professional qualification and a valid profession standard "Head of an organization" – the compliance is given in detail in annex "Compliance of the Professional Master's Degree Programme "International Business" with the Profession Standard of a "Head of Organization"".

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: See annex: Compliance of the professional Master`s study programme "International Business" with the State Education Standard.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Academic publications of programme faculty are presented in Appendix 19. The practical work experience of programme faculty is presented in Biographies of teaching staff involved in the study direction. Each member of the academic staff has either publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years, including international editions or a five-year practical work experience.

- 15 P5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Justification: See comments for criterion No. 1 "The sample of the diploma..."
See comments for criterion No. 8 "The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement"

Requirements (R6-R8)

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The FBME has necessary resources to implement the Master study programme “International Business”

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The study programme is implemented by 16 lecturers in total; of them 75% has PhD and 25% master’s degree. This includes 4 professors, 3 associate professors. Some of the courses are delivered by invited lecturers - industry professionals. Moreover, 1 of the invited faculty members hold PhD.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The programme is implemented, considering the latest trends in international business. The details are provided in the SAR, “Description of the study programme”, “Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof”. During the experts’ visit, students mentioned the specific research tasks in each study course devoted to the analysis of scientific papers.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The programme is well-structured. The granted qualification is in line with the program content, its aims and objectives. The learning outcomes are interlinked with the granted qualification. There is however an issue related to a small number of CPs granted to each of the courses which might point toward a basic nature of the courses.

The content of the study programme is relevant and complies with programme’s objectives. The descriptions of the courses are qualitative and prepared following the unified format. The programme complies with the professional standard “Head of organization”. The feedback from stakeholders is regularly collected and analyzed. The programme is an internationally-oriented one, and has close cooperation (a double diploma agreement) with the University Paris-Est Creteil (France).

The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics has the necessary infrastructure, the necessary material and technical support, information support, financial support and a library. Programme “International Business” is delivered by highly qualified teaching staff. Significant changes in the teaching staff have taken place aiming to improve content and quality of study courses. The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme “International Business” complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses. The academic staff is involved in scientific research both at the national and international levels. There is a mutual collaboration between the teaching staff members in place.

Strengths:

1. Well-recognized program.

2. All required criteria to grant a qualification are met.
3. Low drop-out ratio.
4. The courses in the program use a varied portfolio of teaching and learning methods.
5. Feedback from students is systematically collected and used to improve the quality of the programme and the courses.
6. Orientation towards internationalisation.
7. The Faculty has the necessary resources for the implementation of the professional Master study programme "International Business".
8. Digital resources are also available outside the Faculty premises.
9. Library resources are regularly updated.
10. Academic staff have access to support for scientific activities and students are involved in research projects.
11. High qualification of the teaching staff.
12. High level of scientific research of the programme faculty.

Weaknesses:

- 1 A low number of CP offered in each of the course.
- 2 The old literature source in the compulsory reading list in some course descriptions.
- 3 The mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course.

Evaluation of the study programme "International Business"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "International Business"

Short-term recommendations

Long-term recommendations

- | |
|--|
| 1. Revise the CPs for the courses. At the Master level, the courses should be more advanced with more CPs as compared to the Bachelor level. This is a recommendation for a 2-year period. |
| 2. Revise course descriptions paying particular attention to the literature list. This is a recommendation for a 2-year period. |
| 3. Revise the mapping of study courses, following the format recommended by Latvian Academic Information Centre
(https://www.aika.lv/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Vadlinijas-studiju-programmas-raksturojuma-izstradei_2019.pdf Annex 8). |

II. "Economics and Business" ASSESSMENT

II. "Economics and Business" ASSESSMENT

1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

The programme is a doctoral study programme offering full time 3 year studies in Latvian and English, as well as part time studies for 4 years in both languages as well. The study programme

should comply with Regulations of the study programmes and further education programmes of the University of Latvia, approved by the Senate decision No. 102 of 24.04.2017. Degree acquired is Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Economics and business. The study programme was consolidated to comply with recommendations given by Sursock A. "Latvian doctoral and promotion system", 2016 (https://www.izm.gov.lv/sites/izm/files/latvian_doctoral_studies_and_promotion_system1_0.pdf).

The number of students has been stable, about 130 students for the last three academic years. There is a decrease in dropout students in 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 compared to 2017/2018. Main reasons for dropping out are due to inability to fulfill the requirements stated by the study contract or by one's personal unwillingness to continue studies, as stated by the Appendix "Statistic data about students in doctoral study programme "Economics and business"".

Goal of the study programme is "to prepare highly qualified researchers, industry and organization leaders, as well as academics capable of developing independent research in the field of economics and business, obtaining scientifically original and proven results, thereby demonstrating their competence in research, organization and management in economics, addressing business and educational development and innovation challenges; to prepare highly qualified professionals with internationally comparable competencies in the field of economics and business and an internationally comparable Doctor in Science degree, providing the national economy with highly qualified professionals." The tasks concentrate on developing critical and analytical thinking, teaching, research, that comply with the study programme aim (Self-assessment report, p. 357). Main task to reach the aim is for students to develop independent original research in the field of economics and business. Learning outcomes concentrate on providing knowledge for the latest theories and insights in the upper mentioned field as well research methodology, ability to do research as well as communicate the results of it and application in practice. The learning outcomes are connected with tasks of the study programme that have been derived from the aim of it.

The admission requirements are demanding previous education - Masters degree in management, economics and business or equivalent; Master's degree in other social sciences, education or equivalent complemented with at least experience in business and institution management; masters degree in natural sciences, engineering or a comparable education for a person with at least two year experience in management of enterprises and institutions; entrance examination. The admission requirements seem appropriate to the aims of the study program.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The doctoral study programme "Economics and Business" is well connected in terms of the aim, goals and learning outcomes by deriving the tasks from the aim, as well providing learning outcomes of the programme in compliance with upper mentioned. One of the main improvements is in reducing the fragmentation of doctoral programmes and consolidating previously three programs in the same field into one, offering students the opportunity to choose a specification later on. Programme is compliant with UL internal regulation for further education study programmes.

Strengths:

- 1 Aim and the goals, as well as learning outcomes of the programme are closely interrelated.
- 2 Programme is provided in both Latvian and English, promoting internationalisation.
- 3 Admission criteria are appropriate for meeting the study programme aims.

Weaknesses:

No

2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.1 The content of the courses is relevant which was also confirmed in the meetings with employers and complies with the aim of the study programme. The students can select one of three sub-programmes covering the sub-fields of the science field "Economics and Management". The sub-programme "Global Economics and Leadership" is realized in English.

The content of all three sub-programmes ensures the achievement of the defined learning outcomes. For instance, each sub-programme contains the course on the latest trends in the relevant sub-field ("The Latest Trends in Human Resources Management" and "Microeconomic Concepts in Economic Research" in "Economics and Management"; "Leadership problems and tendencies of global economy" in "Global economics and Leadership"; "Educational Management and Organisation" in "Educational Management"). All sub-programmes has a strong orientation on development of students' research skills, e.g. application of research methods. The compulsory part for all sub-programmes contains the course "Doctoral Research Seminar" that is aimed to help students to develop their proposal of the doctoral thesis and research design.

However, the disputable question is the number of study courses devoted to the issues regarding research methodology and application of the research methods in the sub-programmes. For instance, the sub-programme "Economics and Management" has two such courses: "The latest research methods in management and economic sciences" (2CP) and "Methodological aspects of quantitative and qualitative approaches to research" (2CP). The sub-programme "Global Economics and Leadership" has another course "Research methodological aspects - quantitative and qualitative approaches" (2 CP). The sub-programme "Educational management" has four! Relevant study courses: "Quantitative research methods for education under management" (4CP), "Methodology for Education Management Studies" (4CP), "Methodology for Education Studies" (4CP), and "Qualitative research methods in education management" (4CP). Thus, the programme has seven different study courses within the same topics. However, the methodology and procedures of application of the research methods are the same in the field of science "Economics and entrepreneurship". It is recommended to revise the content of the programme and evaluate the opportunity to provide all students (in all sub-programmes) the same compulsory courses on research methods (probably, in the compulsory part) in order to avoid overlapping.

The descriptions of the courses are of high quality and include all relevant information.

The mapping of the study courses within the programme "Economics and Business" does not allow understanding whether the aims of each course comply with the aims of the study programme (the outcomes themselves are not listed).

There is information about the course plan (number of teaching hours) only for one form of studies, but the programme is realized as full time studies (3 years) and part time studies (4 years).

2.2 The study implementation methods contribute to the achievement of the aims and the learning outcomes of the courses and the study programme. During the meeting with students, they mentioned combinations of lectures and workshops, visits to companies with interviewing, working on case studies, group work. The assessment of the progress in the development of the Doctoral Thesis directly and indirectly is performed by encouraging students to participate in scientific conferences and present their current research results, by organizing Doctoral seminars and by the formal attestation each academic year. The above is done in close collaboration with research faculty and fulfills the demands for student-centered learning.

2.3 Regular and systematic surveys among students, graduates and employers are conducted and used for the improvement of the courses and the programme. This is evidenced in the self-assessment report as well as in the meetings with students, graduates and employers. The program is regularly updated and students and graduates are taken into account in these updates (evidenced in meetings with doctoral students and graduates, for example regarding the opportunities to engage in research projects).

In some courses, the evaluation surveys are handed out manually on paper in class, which

challenges the anonymity of responses.

2.4 There are ingoing and outgoing mobility opportunities in the programme and students feel that they are informed and encouraged to take advantage of these. Examples of both ingoing and outgoing mobility are provided (in the self-assessment report), but it is not common to use the opportunities. There were no mobilities at all in the sub-programme "Educational Management" during the 6-year period. There is no information separately about the sub-programmes "Economics and management" and "Global Economics and Leadership" (SAR, Annex No. 22). However, the internationalization of the sub-programme "Global Economics and Leadership" is obvious, because it is implemented in cooperation with German and Austrian partners.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The content of the programme was developed in line with the specialization in three sub-programmes. The content is relevant and ensures the achievement of the defined learning outcomes. However, there is a question about the necessity for having seven different study courses about research methodology and application of research methods.

The surveys among students, graduates and employers are conducted systematically. The results are taken into account to update the content of the programme.

Orientation towards internationalization is different in the sub-programmes. The sub-programme "Global Economics and Leadership" is implemented in cooperation with German and Austrian partners, and its internationalization is obvious. In turn, the sub-programme "Educational Management" has zero number of international mobilities in the whole reporting period.

Strengths:

1 The structure of the Doctoral programme with the opportunity to select between three sub-programmes.

2 Study courses about the research structure and the application of the research methods help students in the process of the development of their Doctoral Thesis.

Weaknesses:

1 Too many different courses in the sub-programmes about research methods and research methodology.

2 The mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course.

3 Lack of outgoing students' mobilities in the sub-programme "Educational Management".

3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

During the visit, the experts made sure that the study provision, scientific support, informative provision, material and technical provision, and financial provision fully comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the doctoral study programme "Economics and Business". The financial resources for the implementation of the study programme are provided by the state budget financing for studies and the faculty's own income and tuition fees. The financial resources at the disposal of the Faculty are planned each year in accordance with the UL budget and used in accordance with the estimates approved by the UL management, which ensures control of the use of financial resources. There is no separate procedure or budget line for the study programme, all is for faculty. According to the self-assessment report, studies in the sub-programme "Global Economy and Leadership" are based on personal funding, there are no state budget-funded places in the sub-programme. The tuition covers the costs of the sub-programme.

According to the self-assessment report, BVEF doctoral programme in "Economics and Business" has united three accredited doctoral programmes - Economics, Demography, and Education

Management - on the basis of the doctoral programme "Management Sciences", thus reducing programme fragmentation, merging teaching staff of BVEF and PPMF and strengthening resource sharing. It should be emphasized that the academic staff is actively involved in relevant research areas, incl. large-scale research projects. Academic staff not only share their experience of the projects' results and process, but also involve doctoral students in project implementation.

Informative provision, including libraries, comply with the specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme. The library of the UL maintains the status of a nationally important library and offers a number of services to the staff and students. The UL Library's collection is in compliance with the study programme's requirements. The priority is given to e-resources and especially to the subscribed databases such as, Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, EBSCO Academic Search Complete and etc. The e-book platform ProQuest Ebook Academic Complete, which includes materials in the field of Management and Economics is offered to the students. The study courses are placed and constantly updated in the e-studies platform, which is also used in the evaluation of knowledge and communication between students and lecturers.

The support of research activities is provided by offering students the software (e.g. SPSS, MathLab), intelligent data analysis tools (e.g. MicroStrategy, QlickView, Simul8, NVivo) and databases (MarketLine, Orbis, Passport).

The faculty's initiative and practice, that "the doctoral student, who has completed his studies and is still working on the completion of the doctoral thesis, also has access to the scientific information databases of the University of Latvia", is to be welcomed.

Doctoral students acknowledged that they receive support, for example, they can get support for high-level conferences, however, such subjective factors like student's performance in the classroom and/or supervisor activity in research projects may play a role in assessing research projects. At the level of the study programme, the Faculty has extensive cooperation with other universities by organizing doctoral courses, in the last stage of defending doctoral thesis at doctoral councils, the Faculty organize annual conferences together with other universities, academic staff participate in editorial boards, also invite foreign lecturers (the Faculty has good cooperation with the University of Tartu, Klaipeda University, Kaunas University of Technology), the Faculty realized common international projects (for example, with the support of Norway Grants). Overall, the forms of cooperation have remained unchanged and little progress has been made. There is some cooperation with industry, for example, with Latvijas valsts meži, as they need scientific calculations. However, as recognized by the study programs directors themselves, the Faculty is not very tight in research with industry.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics has the necessary infrastructure, the necessary material and technical support, information support, financial support and a library.

Strengths:

- 1.The Faculty has the necessary resources for the implementation of the Doctoral study program "Economics and Business"
- 2.Student tuition fees is main source of financing for the study program
- 3.Digital resources are also available outside the Faculty premises and after the completion of the studies, but still working on the doctoral thesis
- 4.Library resources are regularly updated
- 5.Academic staff and students have access to support for scientific activities

Weaknesses:

No

4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

4.1. Based on the self-assessment report (SAR), the most changes in the composition of the teaching staff occurred due to the changes in programme's structure. Besides, new foreign-based Professors were involved in the implementation of the program, as well as the program's graduates. All these changes are treated positively.

4.2. The goal of the doctoral programme is to prepare highly qualified researchers, industry and organization leaders, highly qualified professionals with internationally comparable competencies in the field of economics and business. Based on the SAR, 17 professors, 2 associate professors, 1 docent, 1 visiting docent, 1 lecturer are involved in the study process within the programme (13 of them are experts of the Latvian Council of Science (LCS) in the field of Economics and Business, and Education Science). Based on the information from the Study plan, the number of professors is 15 (2 associate professors, 1 assistant professor, 1 lecturer, 1 guest lecturer); the evidence is provided in the Annex 16. The number of LCS experts is 10 (checked in sciencelatvia.lv). Besides, no one of them has an expert status in the field of Education (as for evaluation date and a year before). Despite the inconsistency in the provided information, the qualification of teaching staff involved into the implementation of the Doctoral programme complies with the requirements of the programme and the requirements of the regulatory enactments (The Law on Higher Education Institutions, paragraph 55(1)3).

4.3. Based on the information provided in the Annex No. 19, as well as the information from SCOPUS and Web of Science databases (checked for 2013-2018), many teaching staff members have scientific publications indexed in SCOPUS/WoS, published both in conference proceedings and scientific journals. Three of staff members have no publications in SCOPUS/WoS in 2013-2018; six staff members do not have journal publications (only papers in conference proceedings); 4 staff members have only 1-2 publications during the whole reporting period. However, the formal requirement is met: each staff member within the programme has publications published in reviewed editions within the reporting period of six years.

Professors who are actively engaged in research activities, use their research results to improve the quality of the doctoral programme. Moreover, they engage doctoral students into joint research work (joint scientific papers, joint participation in scientific conferences).

4.4. The academic staff members are involved in research activities both at national and international level. Almost all teaching staff members participate in research projects (based on Appendix No. 18). Doctoral students are also involved in the projects together with their scientific supervisors.

4.5. There is a common practice at the Faculty – hospitation procedure that is obligatory for all staff members. During the on-site visit, professors mentioned it and highly appreciated this initiative. There are also regular administrative meetings and the faculty's/ department's organized training workshops that allows teaching staff sharing their experience.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

Strengths:

1 The high quality of the involved academic personnel: 10 of 20 staff members are LCS experts; all staff members have publications in the reviewed editions; most of them participate in research projects.

2 Well-established mechanism of mutual collaboration between academic staff members

Weaknesses:

1 Some teaching staff members have only 1-2 scientific publications during the whole reporting period.

5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Economics and Business"

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The sample of the diploma is attached to the SAR (section "Other mandatory attachments"). The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No.202, adopted on 16.04.2013 (available in Latvian <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/256157-kartiba-kada-izsniedz-valsts-atzitus-augstako-izglitiba-apliecinosh-dokumentus>)

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The mutual agreement is signed on 25.11.2019 between UL and Riga Technical University about the mutual acceptance of students from partner University. The agreement cover the study programmes within the study fields "Economics" and "Management, administration and real estate management", including the Doctoral programme "Economics and Business". The document is available in Latvian as an attachment to the SAR.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The confirmation No. 7-41/258 signed by the Rector on 14.02.2020 states that the UL guarantees to the students compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the license of the study programme is revoked and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme (attached to the SAR in Latvian).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language.
Official confirmation No. 22-7/27 was signed by the Rector on 17.02.2020. (attached to the SAR).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of English. The confirmation No. 22-7/26 was signed by the Rector on 17.02.2020. (attached to the SAR).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Eighteen teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of the study programme (plus 1 guest staff member with a Doctoral degree), ten of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Fifteen professors and two associate professors are involved in the programme. It complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement, according to the requirements of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No 70 of January 23, 2007.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The Council of Higher Education supported the request of the University of Latvia to offer academic doctor level study programme "Economics and Business" to less than 250 full time students (letter No. 1.12/55, attached to the SAR in Latvian).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Justification:

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: Each member of the academic staff has publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years (SAR, Annex 19)

15 P5 - Overall rating

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The programme has the evaluation "fully compliant" regarding all relevant criteria.

Requirements (R6-R8)

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The FBME has the necessary resources to implement the Doctoral study programme "Economics and Business"

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The qualification of the academic staff members complies with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the Law on Higher Education Institutions. Nineteen staff members involved in the implementation of the programme (18 permanent staff members and 1 guest staff member) hold a Doctor degree. Ten of them are experts of the Latvian Council of Science. Seventeen persons are employed as Professors and Associate Professors.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Justification: The programme is implemented, considering the latest trends in the global economy, Latvian economics, entrepreneurship, educational management. The details are provided in the SAR, "Description of the study programme", "Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof". During the experts' visit, staff members provided examples of introducing their research results into study courses. There are specific study courses about new trends in economics, human resource management, education, entrepreneurship. Doctoral Theses cover research topics on the solution to current issues in economics, business, and education.

Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The doctoral study programme "Economics and Business" is well connected in terms of the aim, goals and learning outcomes by deriving the tasks from the aim, as well providing learning outcomes of the programme in compliance with upper mentioned. One of the main improvements is in reducing the fragmentation of doctoral programmes and consolidating previously three programs in the same field into one, offering students the opportunity to choose a specification later on.

Programme is compliant with UL internal regulation for further education study programmes. The Faculty of Business, Management and Economics has the necessary infrastructure, the necessary material and technical support, information support, financial support and a library. The programme is delivered by qualified teaching staff. Most staff members are engaged in research activities and actively collaborate with students in doing research. The collaboration mechanism between teaching staff members is in place.

Strengths:

- 1 Aim and the goals, as well as learning outcomes of the programme are closely interrelated.
- 2 Programme is provided in both Latvian and English, promoting internationalization.
- 3 Admission criteria are appropriate for meeting the study programme aims.
- 4 The structure of the Doctoral programme with the opportunity to select between three sub-programmes.
- 5 Study courses about the research structure and the application of the research methods help students in the process of the developing of their Doctoral Thesis.
- 6 The Faculty has the necessary resources for the implementation of the Doctoral study program "Economics and Business".
7. Digital resources are also available outside the Faculty premises and after the completion of the studies, but still working on the doctoral thesis.
- 8 Library resources are regularly updated.
- 9 Academic staff and students have access to support for scientific activities.
- 10 The high quality of the involved academic personnel: 10 of 20 staff members are LCS experts; all staff members have publications in the reviewed editions; most of them participate in research projects.
- 11 Well-established mechanism of mutual collaboration between academic staff members.

Weaknesses:

- 1 Too many different courses in the sub-programmes about research methods and research methodology.
- 2 The mapping of study courses does not contain the formulated learning outcomes of each course.
- 3 Lack of outgoing students' mobilities in the sub-programme "Educational Management".
- 4 Some teaching staff members have only 1-2 scientific publications during the whole reporting period.

Evaluation of the study programme "Economics and Business"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Economics and Business"

Short-term recommendations

Long-term recommendations

- 1 Revise the content of the sub-programmes in order to create a more logical structure and avoid overlapping in the content of the courses related to research methods.

2 Revise the mapping of study courses, following the format recommended by Latvian Academic Information Centre (https://www.aika.lv/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Vadlinijas-studiju-programmas-raksturojuma-izstradei_2019.pdf Annex 8).
3 Introduce the programme-specific mechanism for students' motivation to participate in international mobility because the existing one seems not to be effective.
4 Introduce the in-programme mechanism for monitoring the results of scientific activities, because in Doctoral programme all the staff members should be actively and regularly engaged in research.
5 Introduce the programme-specific mechanism for encouraging staff members involved in the implementation of the Doctoral programme to produce scientific papers.

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

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

Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation			Comment
Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 21 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction whilst implementing their internal quality assurance systems:	Fully compliant			Continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction are ensured. The evidence was received during the meetings with administrative staff, academic staff, students, graduates and employers. Internal quality assurance system is established, working and the progress has been monitored.

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation			Comment
R2 - The cooperation with different organisations from Latvia and abroad implemented within the study direction ensures the achievement of the aims of the study direction.	Fully compliant			148 Erasmus+ and Campus Europae agreements with foreign HEIs and Cooperation agreements (60 agreements within professional master's study programme "International Business"; 152 agreements within bachelor's study programme "Business Administration"; 82 agreements within study programme professional bachelor's study programme "E-Business Management" and 47 agreements within study programme professional master's study programme "Project Management") with private local and international enterprises, government organizations, NGOs and other HEIs serve as evidence of cooperation.
R3 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the development level thereof (if applicable).	Fully compliant			Teaching staff members are committed to do research (confirmed during the on-site visit). Most of the teaching staff members have scientific publications (Annex 19 of the SAR). 45 percent of persons with Doctor Degree are experts of the Latvian Council of Science. The evidence for staff's participation in research projects is provided in Annex 18 of the SAR.
R4 - Elimination of the shortcomings and deficiencies identified during the previous assessment of the study direction, if it has been conducted, or the implementation of the provided recommendations.	Fully compliant			All recommendations given previously have been implemented as stated in Self-assessment report (part 6), as well are discussed in detail in annex No. 25 "Overview of the implementation of the provided recommendations".

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)

No.	Study programme	R5	R6	R7	R8	Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)
1	E-Business Management (42345)	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Not relevant	Good
2	"Industrial Engineering Management" (42526)	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Not relevant	Good
3	Business Administration (43345)	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Not relevant	Good
4	Public Administration (45345)	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
5	Business Administration (45345)	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
6	Project Management (47345)	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
7	International Business (47345)	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
8	Economics and Business (51345)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good

The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts

Regarding the assessment of the Study Direction, there were two cases, when experts had different opinions.

1. Criterion 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. "

Most of the experts had the decision "fully compliant", except one expert Aneta Hryckiewicz-Gontarczyk. Her decision was "partially compliant". Justification:

The plagiarism system as well as plagiarism procedures are not well-established. The system does

not detect the English documents as well as does not enable the comparison of works between different European Universities. Moreover, the procedures of monitoring and reporting of plagiarism detection has not been established in a way it allows constant monitoring and efficient reporting.

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

Most of the experts had the decision "fully compliant", except one expert Aneta Hryckiewicz-Gontarczyk. Her decision was "partially compliant". Justification:

In some programs the aims and the objectives of the programs are not clearly developed which does not allow to assess the learning outcomes. Please see the Documents on Analysis of individual Programs.