

Expert group joint opinion

Evaluation Procedure: Assessment of Study Field

Higher Education Institution: Riga Aeronautical Institute

Study field: Transport Services

Experts:

1. Stephen Wright (Chair of the Experts Group)
2. Ruta Bogdane (Secretary of the Experts Group)
3. Janusz Narkiewicz (Secretary of the Experts Group)
4. Anastasija Stepanova (Employers' Confederation of Latvia)
5. Marta Viļuma (Student Union of Latvia)

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

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

The study field "Transport Services" is implemented in Riga Aeronautical Institute (further in text - RAI) with 4 study programmes: 3 Professional Bachelor study programmes (Professional bachelor study program "Air Traffic Control"; Professional bachelor study program "International transport logistics"; Professional bachelor study program "International Transportation Enterprise Management") and 1 Professional Master study programme (Professional master study program "Business management of International Transport").

The study field has been reviewed, and generally, it meets most of the requirements.

RAI management system is well organized. The RAI has identified and analysed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the study field. RAI provides European professional training as such National and European professional aviation approvals, which are considered by industry and aviation academia to be the most valuable "offering" of an institute. The ability of a student to study for a European approved professional qualification in addition to a degree is the unique attraction that organisations such as RAI, making the graduating students highly valuable to the professional workplace. This value was recognised and corroborated by the Latvian Air Navigation Services company, during the companies panel interview phase.

RAI has established a quality assurance system that is monitoring student satisfaction on the study courses and lecturers. RAI has established complaints and suggestions mechanisms where students can submit their proposals and deliver complaints regarding various types of issues. Feedback mechanism in regard to employers and graduates is limited to informal communication. RAI summarizes the data collected and makes analysis. However, some shortcomings remain, particularly with some of the Quality Assurance aspects associated with the degree provision.

Overall, the resources of the institution were considered as a strength. RAI facilities include classrooms, a library, an auditorium-amphitheatre, laboratories and rooms for practical classes and simulators, that were observed during the on-site visit. The technical base is regularly renewed, new equipment, computers are purchased, the library is replenished. WiFi is available throughout RAI, and the Moodle learning system is available for students and faculty at any time from anywhere. The methodical resources in library of RAI are available both in Latvian and in English and fully corresponds to the objectives of the study field and study programs, their type and the language of study. The RAI library has books, CDs, DVDs and access to computers. The library is equipped with an online catalog and subscribed to the database "Britanica". In addition, databases such as Zentralblatt MATH, SpringerLink, De Gruyter, Cambridge University Press, Emerald Publishing and Open Access are available to students. Specially mentioned highly positive support from library staff.

There are in RAI very motivated and professional teaching staff team members. Teaching staff has a good connection with professional bodies and regulate update of teaching materials. Staff publications were positive in terms of numbers, but the placement of the articles/ papers can be further improved by placement in journals and other traditional dissemination means. The scientific research aspects is considered positive and enthusiastic within the faculty and staff. The acquisition of some additional external resources needs to be enhanced in order to obtain more publishable materials in noteworthy journals.

RAI has good contacts and cooperation with Latvian institutions and with local enterprises. This reflects mainly the employers. Regional employers support study field by providing internships for

students and internship organizing system has been well developed within the study field. A very good cooperation exists between Latvian Navigation Services Provider as RAI is an important source of prospective air controllers, and in the other direction LNSP uses simulator facilities in RAI. The cooperating partners activities are in line with the RAI educational needs and study programme. During the meeting employers expressed satisfaction with both the study process and the knowledge that graduates have obtained during their studies.

The internationalisation activities are being developed and improved. RAI has cooperation agreement with universities in Ukraine, Lithuania, Poland and Qatar. The flagship of foreign activity is Erasmus+ project. Should be noted that not many students are engaging in the Erasmus + programme and a limited number of staff participated in the international mobility due to Covid-19 restrictions. The international cooperation is successful and should be further promoted within staff and students bodies, leading to increasing numbers of staff and students participation across both the partner and Erasmus+ network.

The international student and staff come from at least 9 countries, among which the main direction is Kazakhstan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan. There is no declared (meeting with staff and students) motivation actions for students and staff to participate in foreign exchange. On the other hand students (meeting with students) have not express any strong will to go abroad for enhancing their teaching and other experiences. No visible action to acquire more grants/contracts for students exchange. There is a lack of international cooperation policy. It is not clear how the ambitious internationalization goals related to the study field will be achieved without setting a policy and principles for international cooperation.

RAI has taken into account the recommendations given by the previous expert group and has tried to make the relevant changes based on the indicated shortcomings. Altogether, It is still of high necessity to involve both lecturers and students in ERASMUS+ or other international projects as well as it is important that the lecturers are active in their research work.

The study programmes in the study field are all considered to be very successful.

The “Air Traffic control” study programme (42840) professional Bachelor degree is considered a unique combination of professional education qualification and the award of the degree. This combination is excellent as it allows the graduating students to enter the workplace effectively and efficiently to perform their professional duties, and is considered a significant strength.

The study programmes “International transport and logistics” (42840) and “International transport and enterprise management” (42840) professional Bachelor degree`s considered a popular and successful taught course. The students, employers and local industry likewise recognise the programmes continued success.

The professional Master study programme “Business management of international transport” (47840) includes as results very successful combination of necessary knowledge and skills with professional qualification for both the domestic, EU and international market.

Students and graduates really appreciate knowledge and experience shared in RAI environment. Some graduates have strong interest in RAI doctoral studies if it there were to become available.

I - Assessment of the Study Field

I - Assessment of the Study Field

1.1 Management of the Study Field

Analysis

1.1.1.

RAI's aims of the study field are explained appropriately in the self assessment document, and the objective to "educate comprehensively trained air traffic controllers, managers of transport companies and engineers with analytical abilities and professional skills for work in the modern transport sector, as well as to prepare students for further studies in the master's program" are both defined and attainable. The study programme reviewed is Number 1, "Transport Services" - as stated in the self assessment document section 1.1. Four separate professional programmes are stated, namely: 1. Professional bachelor study program "Air Traffic Control"; 2. Professional bachelor study program "International transport logistics"; 3. Professional bachelor study program "International Transportation Enterprise Management"; 4. Professional master study program "Business management of International Transport". The enrolled student numbers from 2017/18 to 2021/22 appears to be reasonably consistent ranging between 356 to 328 students. Naturally, the recent pandemic of 2020 onwards explains the minor fluctuation in these values.

The study field and the relevant study programmes complies with the in the Latvian Government National Development Plan 2021-2027, and is cited in the self assessment as a core objective which is excellent. Additionally, the Logistics services and infrastructure aspects for Latvia and Europe are well justified and explained. For example the preconditions required for competitiveness and economic growth is a significant factor.

The interconnection of the submitted study programmes in the study field are clear and logical; during the face to face interviews with the senior staff members and the panel, these links were well elaborated and demonstrated (for example the requirements of "Business English" Language training) by RAI staff, which has been duly noted. The emphasis on professional skills that RAI imparts is noted as a significant strength, demonstrated by the various European approvals that the organisation holds, such as EASA Part 147 and Air Traffic Controller approved basic training.

1.1.2.

The RAI has identified and analysed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the study field, as evidenced in 2.1.2. The SWOT evaluation in Strength criteria does not include the list of European professional training approvals held by RAI, as such National and European professional aviation approvals, which are considered by industry and academia to be the most valuable "offering" of an institute. The ability of a student to study for a European approved professional qualification in addition to a degree is the unique attraction that organisations such as RAI, making the graduating students highly valuable to the professional workplace. This value was recognised and corroborated by the Latvian Air Navigation Services company, during the companies panel interview phase. The representative of ANS Latvia confirmed that candidates from the RAI courses pose a significant advantage to his organisation, and the company attempts to attract and retain as many graduates as possible in Latvia, which is considered highly advantageous to the National Development plan. Furthermore, the Latvian Air Navigation Services company representative commented that because of recent staff relocations of controllers to another European employer, he was forced to send his new ATC cadets overseas (i.e. outside of Latvia and RAI) to gain their ATC education at a competing training establishment.

The weaknesses that are described are an accurate and fair evaluation of the current position, however, the lack of mathematical and natural science ability for the local students is not

adequately resolved: the additional bridging education to raise the students to the minimum expected level of the normal entry level remains unexplained.

The lack of state funding for this professional education is noted. Likewise, the lack of international cited publications is named as a factor. The lack of International students and teachers is stated, yet the recent pandemic appears to be the factor behind that matter, and with air-travel resuming to pre-COVID levels, this perhaps is not such a significant threat.

The opportunities that are contained in the self assessment are well explained and fully logical/convincing.

Lastly, the threats that are described are evaluated and mostly well elaborated.

Overall, the "plan for the development of the study field" including the scope for improvement is mostly well described.

1.1.3.

The management structure of the study field is evidenced in section 1.2 of the self assessment, naming the six main representation levels of RAI, namely: Board, Senate, Rector, Vice-Rector, Dean of Faculty of Engineering and Management and lastly the Directors of the Study programmes. The EASA expositions were not inspected during the visit, because they are inspected regularly by the Latvian CAA on behalf of EASA: naturally, any noted shortcomings in those critical documents would be monitor and measured by the regulator.

The four study programmes are well oriented towards the study field and the development and potential changes were explained clearly in the discussions with the senior management. The day to day management and decision-making that takes place is considered efficient and effective partly due to the small student numbers and enthusiastic staff members. Lastly, administrative and pastoral support provided by the administrative and technical staff ensures all the needs of the study programmes corresponding to the study field, as explained and the panel interviews with both staff and students.

A minor concern that arose during the panel interviews with current students was the students lack of understanding of the Senate function/ membership, or the working presence of the student board. The students were not aware who was the student programme representative, how the student selection was performed etc.

1.1.4.

The student admission processes and procedures claimed to be defined in the Quality Management manual documentation (available in electronic format via <http://rai.lv/lv/doc>, http://rai.lv/doc/doc-1_5_lv.pdf and http://rai.lv/doc/doc-1-13_en.pdf). Evidence of international student applications (study agreement) is included in the self assessment and the document and processes are comprehensive and fully appropriate. The required duration and planning of the study period are defined via the same web portal and pdf documents. Students prior professional experience, prior formal and non-formal education are clearly explained in both the quality document and the self assessment materials submitted (including http://rai.lv/rasspisanie/doc-2-2_en.pdf). Likewise the assessment of the learning outcomes are clearly defined, logical and effective, as defined in self assessment 2.1.5 text. As the quality documentation is freely available via the RAI website, it can be deduced that all the involved stakeholders are informed about the system.

1.1.5.

As a number of the courses are approved by the Latvian Civil Aviation Authority, the Methods, principles, procedures for assessing achievements of students that are employed with these degrees are both approved (by the Lat-CAA) and effective. Additionally, the RAI processes are well described in document http://rai.lv/doc/doc-1-11_en.pdf.

The numerical analysis of the total student achievement at the field level is not well defined, and this minor evaluation remains unclear. Finally, for the approved CAA professional programmes, these statistics are evaluated externally (i.e. by the Lat-CAA).

1.1.6.

The RAI self assessment includes a full description of the aspects of the Code of Academic Integrity, and is further defined by the document (http://rai.lv/rasspisanie/doc-10_en.pdf). The self assessment states, "Given the small number of students, the procedure for approving bachelor's thesis topics and the procedure for storing bachelor's theses defended in previous years in the RAI library, the probability of plagiarism should be assessed as very low." This statement is of specific concern as student plagiarism appears undetected. During the interviews of the staff and students, all parties were unable to explain the formal processes that RAI would follow in the event of plagiarism being detected by an academic member of staff, i.e. detection, C of A I panel interview, application of sanctions and for repeated offences the potential early exit from the programme due to academic misconduct. Furthermore, the interview with the RAI teaching staff was the suggestion that detected plagiarism events of students would be informed orally that they had not passed the assessment, and that the work would be returned for correction. This admission, combined with the weak processes stated in http://rai.lv/rasspisanie/doc-10_en.pdf is not satisfactory. A defined process of academic integrity evaluation is missing. The teaching staff stated that the students written thesis's are submitted to the electronic plagiarism check, but not the other written assignments. ALL written assignments (electronic submission via Moodle) must be electronically scanned by the various plagiarism detection tools and processes must be created and published.

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

The management of the study field is considered to be positive in general.

The RAI has identified and analysed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the study field. The most significant strengths of the fields are the professional European professional qualifications that allow RAI to conduct both professionally approved education and award the degrees at the same time. These European professional qualification approvals are noted. This is also reflected in the international students that come to RAI, which is considered as a positive. Some weaknesses with the academic integrity processes and the Code of Academic Integrity are identified.

Strengths:

1. RAI holds EASA and Latvian CAA approvals for the conduct of approved professional training for Air Traffic controllers and Ground Engineers;
2. The facilities, equipment and infrastructure are considered a strength;
3. The close relationships with external related industries is a significant strength across all disciplines, for example, the recognised support and relationship from Air Navigation Service national provider to Latvia;
4. The small group teaching for the approved professional courses was considered a strength.

Weaknesses:

1. The attraction of small numbers of new local students is a concern, as is the admission that the mathematics and natural science standards on entry (and barrier to student success) remain problematic. The necessary bridging studies to raise the standards of such students are not adequately described;
2. The academic integrity processes and the Code of Academic Integrity are not sufficiently developed or applied. The process at present is limited to the students written final thesis: If

malpractice is detected, the student simply resubmits their assignment as there is no formal panel interview process (including applied sanctions) to be followed.

1.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System

Analysis

1.2.1.

According to the SAR p.16, RAI has an established system of inner quality assurance which is a part of the Quality Manual document that is published on the webpage of the RAI under documents section. The link to the document is accessible here: http://rai.lv/doc/doc-3_en.pdf.

Expert group believes that RAI as a higher education institution has a rather unique quality assurance system which rather differs from the usual system of quality maintenance that has been observed elsewhere. As this study field requires a specific approach in regard to licensing requirements and necessary training provided to the students, the procedure of quality maintenance receives more attention which is a good thing.

According to the Quality Manual p.10 subsection 2.6., there exist different kinds of components on which RAI assesses the quality which are the following: 1. Monitoring of the training services and training processes; 2. Monitoring of actual training sessions; 3. Monitoring of personnel qualifications and ratings; 4. Performance of internal audits; 5. Performance of external audits.

Regarding the questionnaires, according to the students who met on the onsite visit, they stated that they receive questionnaires 2 times a year, once per semester. Students rate their satisfaction with the courses. They fill surveys of every study course they are participating in. The surveys are anonymous and mandatory, but students feel free they can also sign their name and express their views freely of the courses. Students stated that they feel free to write their names if they do not like something in the study courses which is a positive indicator. The questionnaires are conducted in Moodle. The institute is providing also different kinds of professional trainings. Expert group was shown certificates and forms that are filled and made by the administration. It was seen that there are some misspellings in the titles of the documents such as Assessor Training Course - Training Certificate (the paper has misspelling in the name of "Assessor Training Course"). It is advisable that more attention is being paid so that when the student receives their paper of certificate, it is seen as valid. Misspellings have an impact of questioning the credibility.

RAI periodically once in 6 years accredits study fields not only in accordance with Latvian education legislation, but also periodically under-goes international certification performed by international organizations which audit the aviation industry.

1.2.2.

As outlined during the onsite visit, most importantly, the development and review is ensured by the feedback received from students, employers and graduates in regard to the study programmes and study course quality. When asked by the head of quality assurance, it was outlined that there is no formal way of QA monitoring graduate and employer satisfaction. It was stated that even though such a mechanism does not exist, they ensure close connection with them as they are a rather small institute in the numbers of its students and their rotation. Graduates are not that many, and they are working in the sector, and they visit the premises frequently. Employers are also reaching out to RAI in regard to students that they could employ as during Covid, there was a crisis in the field as there was no work and no one knew for how long and thus people close to retirement age were fired and they are hesitant to come back. There are not a lot of air traffic controllers in the market. It can be concluded that formal feedback is not provided to the graduates and employers as such a

mechanism as survey conduction is not implemented. In regard to students, during onsite visit when Moodle platform was shown, it was said that there is a procedure of review in place, but it was not exactly clarified whether there are summaries made by the QA of the results, whether students can actually see it or not.

1.2.3.

According to the SAR p.17, due to the small number of students and staff of the institute, students have a wide range of opportunities to receive information and consultations, as well as opportunities to express their proposals, complaints and suggestions. They can do this by personally contacting the lecturer, the director of the study programme or the management of the institute (rector, vice-rector, dean of the faculty, deputy dean), as well as proposing consideration of the issue to the Student Self- Government, RAI Board and Senate.

1.2.4.

According to the SAR p.17, the institute is using a data processing and storage program Winstudents is used to collect and analyze statistical data. The database Winstudents contains statistical data of the institute - students enrolled in the 1st study year, total number of students, graduates, drop-out students, teaching staff and results of students' success. One of the examples mentioned how Winstudents has contributed in the improvement process is on the SAR p.18. Based on the results of the quality assessment of the study process (years 2020 and 2021), RAI improves or includes in the development plan the organization of the study process, material and technical support, informational support, etc.

The mechanism for obtaining and providing feedback is analyzed under 1.2.2. Overall, RAI is focusing closely on the improvement of the study field. As shown, during onsite visits, there are different tools of assessment of study quality, student satisfaction. Based on the opinions of students, graduates and employers, all are satisfied with the existing process. Although, the expert group would highly advise to implement also a formal way of proof of employer and graduate involvement and close cooperation with the institute.

1.2.5.

According to the SAR p.18, all the relevant information about the study field and study programmes is published on the RAI website <http://rai.lv/lv> . The information is provided in both - English and Latvian. There is a separate section with a table that reflects the tuition fees. It is accessible here: http://rai.lv/en/abit/abit_obuc. In the website, there is also an online registration form for admission to the institute which is accessible here: <http://rai.lv/registren/step1.php>. All the available study programmes for application of students are outlined here: http://rai.lv/en/obuc/obuc_logis.

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

RAI has established a quality assurance system that is monitoring student satisfaction on the study courses and lecturers. Feedback mechanism in regard to employers and graduates is limited to informal communication. Students feel that their feedback matters and is taken into account. RAI summarizes the data collected and makes analysis. RAI has established complaints and suggestions mechanisms where students can submit their proposals and deliver complaints regarding various types of issues. It is being conducted through direct communication.

RAI has close cooperation with employers but at this point it is not through surveys but rather through more informal types of information delivery. It is unclear how often and how graduates are participating in quality assurance maintenance processes. Information about the study programmes is accessible on the RAI website in English and in Latvian.

Strengths:

1. Proactive management and administration of the institute;
2. RAI periodically under-goes international certification performed by international organizations which audit the aviation industry.

Weaknesses:

1. The formal documents that the institution has evidenced contains a number of spellings errors (in English language);
2. Lack of formal involvement of graduates and employers in the QA processes.

Assessment of the requirement [1]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The RAI has managed to establish internal quality assurance system that works effectively in regards to student satisfaction and quality of the study courses implemented. However, it has been stated in the onsite visit that graduates and employers are not formally involved in the QA processes while the SAR provides the opposite information. It makes a confusion and is contradicting.

- 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

RAI's quality assurance policy is set out in Quality Management Manual and Operations organization manual published by RAI on the website (<http://rai.lv/lv/doc>).

- 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

According to the SAR p.10, the proposal for the development of a new study programme usually comes from employers, university management, staff or students.

There are various procedures in place for purposes of improvement of study programme content, which is a crucial part of development procedure - to review the content based on the work market needs and newest tools of the study field. There is a formal reviewal system in place, which allows for the changes to be made and implemented in the study programmes. The procedures has been described in detail in SAR.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The criteria are accessible and published on the RAI website (<http://rai.lv/lv/doc>):

1. Admission rules for study programs in Riga Aeronautical Institute for the year 2022/2023;
- 2.Regulation of RAI assessment and recognition of the study result achieved during previous education

- or professional experience
 - 3. Quality management manual;
 - 4. Regulations for bachelor's thesis and master's thesis development and defence;
 - 5. For other documents, see RAI Home page.
- 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

According to SAR p.10, RAI has developed and published on the website clear and transparent staff selection and

recruitment rules (<http://rai.lv/lv/doc>):

- 1. Law on Election to Academic Positions;
 - 2. Rules of internal procedure;
 - 3. Rules for scientific methodological work organization at the Riga Aeronautical Institute.
- 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

RAI has established a study data processing and storage programme Winstudents where all the required information is regularly compiled and entered in regard to data monitoring and analysing the relevant data as student dropouts, incoming students, admitted students every study year.

The formal monitoring mechanisms of graduates and employers could be improved, but this fact does not affect the compliance.

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Internal quality assurance is performed regularly within students and their satisfaction.

According to the information received during onsite visit, there are occasional surveys of graduates and employers which is in contradiction to the information outlined in the SAR p.10., stating that "RAI regularly conducts employer, graduate and student surveys."

1.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field

Analysis

1.3.1.

RAI financial resources comes from income from studies (fees paid by students) as well as income from specific qualification courses (for example, recurrent courses for aviation personnel). RAI does not have government financial support.

RAI income allows institute to ensure that teaching staff salaries are competitive and in accordance with Latvian regulatory requirements (Rules of Cabinet of Ministry of Latvia Nr. 455 "Pedagogu darba samaksas noteikumi"). In accordance with RAI self-assessment, salaries of teaching staff forms 50% of RAI expenses. 7% of expenses takes equipment, 6% hardware update and 6% library updates.

A Scientific Research Center has been established on the basis of RAI (RAI ZPC). Financial support, income and expenses of ZPC are kept and calculated separately from RAI and income from ZPC activities are re-invested to ZPC activities. The ZPC is a research activity support tool that promotes the development of strategically important research areas.

1.3.2.

RAI has been operating at a profit since its foundation and is also the owner of its buildings and facilities. RAI facilities include classrooms, a library, an auditorium-amphitheatre, laboratories and rooms for practical classes and simulators, that were observed during the on-site visit. The technical base is regularly renewed, new equipment, computers are purchased, the library is replenished. WiFi is available throughout RAI, and the Moodle learning system is available for students and faculty at any time from anywhere.

1.3.3.

As it was observed during the on-site visit, the methodical resources in library of RAI are available both in Latvian and in English and fully corresponds to the objectives of the study direction and study programs, their type and the language of study. The RAI library has books, CDs, DVDs and access to computers. The library is equipped with an online catalog and subscribed to the database "Britanica". In addition, databases such as Zentralblatt MATH, SpringerLink, De Gruyter, Cambridge University Press, Emerald Publishing and Open Access are available to students. The library is open from 09:00 to 17:30, but working hours can be extended if it is necessary for the needs of students and teaching staff, that was also confirmed by RAI students.

RAI library fund is regularly replenished, that was also confirmed during on-site visit. In the last two years, the literature of the "Transport services" library fund was supplemented by 115 items, 58 of which are in English. Four periodicals were purchased, three of them in English - International Airport Review, Air Traffic Control and Global Railway Review, as well as the local magazine "Bilance". Students and faculty are informed about the library's latest literature on the RAI website once every four months. The purchase of the necessary literature is decided at the Senate session after discussing the proposals. Proposals for the purchase of literature are usually made by teaching staff, students, directors of study programs, the head of the library and the management of the university.

1.3.4.

RAI website www.rai.lv is available in Latvian, English and Russian and contains information for both current and prospective students. Using the RAI website, you can easily switch to both the RAI Moodle platform and the internal system, which contains information about the student's studies, invoices, payments ("My Data").

The Moodle system is updated every year to the latest available version, which significantly increases its functionality.

By connecting to the e-study environment - Moodle, students can receive methodological, content and organizational support online. The teaching staff places the study course materials, as well as the description of the study course, the requirements for completing the course, and the descriptions of the independent work in the Moodle e-environment of the institute.

BBB system, provided by Moodle, is used to organize remote training. It allows lecturers and students to communicate actively, students can present assigned tasks, participate in seminars, discussions and group work.

1.3.5.

RAI representatives during the meeting informed, that teaching staff consists of elected academic staff and guest lecturers hired on the basis of a contract. The guest lecturers consists of highly qualified specialists of the Latvian transport industry and teaching staff of other universities.

Faculty members are elected to academic positions by the RAI Senate. An open competition is announced for the vacant academic position on the RAI website. According to the results of the competition, an employment contract is concluded with the elected teaching staff in accordance with the procedure established by RAI.

RAI academic staff participates in continuing education programs for improving and supplementing knowledge. In 2016, in order to improve their pedagogical qualifications, the staff studied the continuing education program "Innovations in the higher education system" by the teaching staff of the Faculty of Education and Management of Daugavpils University. The next pedagogical qualification improvement of RAI teaching staff is planned for December 2022 at Daugavpils University.

In order to strengthen their knowledge of the English language, RAI teaching staff are provided with the opportunity to attend English language classes within RAI. RAI English teachers were met during the on-site visit and it was confirmed that language knowledge of teachers are sufficient, however it was confirmed, that RAI do not have native English speakers as language teachers.

1.3.6.

For ATC program teaching staff, qualification improvement measures are provided in accordance with EU regulation Nr. 2015/340 requirements. Both internal resources and training programs offered by external organizations are used to improve qualifications.

The director of the study area and the management of RAI ensures that teaching staff pedagogical qualifications and skills are sufficient by regularly attending classes as observing lectures. RAI Quality Manager during the on-site visit made an overview of the audits performed during the lectures.

1.3.7.

Based on self-assessment provided by RAI, the responsibilities of RAI teaching staff overlap and all elected representatives of the academic staff have both academic and research workloads, and in some cases administrative work is also performed. RAI does not strictly separate the academic and research load, its proportion is determined individually for each member of the academic staff.

The implementation of the study direction is ensured by 20 representatives of the teaching staff, 15 of whom have been elected to RAI docent or lecturer academic positions.

1.3.8.

It was confirmed during the on-site visit by RAI employees and students, RAI has a student coordinator available who is employed full-time and whose duties include providing support to RAI students.

Students are provided with assistance in matters of recognition of educational documents, processing of entry and residence documents and solving issues of place of residence, including RAI service hotel services. Although there are no students with special needs at the university, RAI has all the necessary equipment so that persons with special needs can participate in the events organized by RAI and in the training process.

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

As RAI, being private institute, do not receive government financial support, all resources required to ensure study process are gained through RAI teaching activities. Taking into account that overall, facilities are well equipped and provides all the information and resources required it can be concluded, that RAI has enough resources to keep the study process on high competitive level.

Strengths:

1. Well equipped laboratories, classrooms;
2. Simulator for ATC studies kept up-to date, in accordance with latest industry practices;
3. Library contains books, publications and e-resources in both English and Latvian languages.

Weaknesses:

Not identified

1.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation

Analysis

1.4.1.

RAI is a professional higher education institution that implements professional bachelor's and professional master's study programs, as well as engages in applied research.

Scientific research is performed in RAI via participating in conferences and/or making publications.

Performed scientific research deals with the solution of a specific, practical problem in the field of transport.

Results of the research work of the teaching staff are implemented through international cooperation (participation in scientific conferences).

International cooperation in science and research usually takes place through regular international scientific conferences (every two years) abroad or in Latvia. Teaching staff is required to participate during these conferences.

Whilst the self assessment (1.1, para 1) claims that RAI offers the degree education and engages in "applied research," such activities appear to be limited to low level conference papers and occasional journal papers: RAI senior management (in the have claimed around 101 papers) of which 2 or 3 have been cited papers/ journals(Annex 5- List of publications). The application of applied research was claimed in both the self assessment and the discussions with management/ teaching staff, with RAI stating some of the current research is investigating the CO2 gaseous increases, but these details are not included or evidenced sufficiently to be fully convincing in the self assessment Management of the Study Field. Likewise, the peer review process for the conference material submission was not adequately explained.

As per SAR p.2.4.1, number of publications of academic staff members in last 6 years is 101. RAI has implemented motivation system (SAR p.2.4.4) therefore is ensured increase of publications. Motivation system for academic staff aims to encourage academic and scientific activities of staff, preparation and publication of scientific publications, teaching and study materials, scientific and methodological work at the Riga Aeronautical Institute. Motivation system consist of KPI where each academic staff can collect points based on his activities performed and later it will be reflected as bonus on his salary.

RAI has established a Scientific Research Center which was founded on May 25, 2009. The main goal of the RAI Scientific Research Center is to increase the competitiveness of the institute by creating a strong scientific infrastructure and human resources base and implementing the results of research work in the RAI studies and academic work.

The members of Scientific Research Center carry out research work on topics relevant to the field of study such as Air traffic control technology; - Research on aviation and transport systems;- Transport management optimization; etc.

The members of the Scientific Research Center also are developing a number of practical research projects such as Research of air traffic control system based on the use of the simulator; Development of an aircraft control simulator based on virtual reality systems etc. (refer to SAR p. 2.4.1).

The results of the research work of the teaching staff have been presented at scientific conferences and reflected in their scientific publications.

This is to conclude that the directions of scientific research and / or applied research and / or artistic creation of the study field correspond to the development goals of the higher education institution and are mostly relevant for the study field and industry.

1.4.2.

The connection of scientific research of the study field with the study process is logical and justified. Academic staff participates in scientific research and therefore can apply its' results in study materials. Scientific research and the outcomes thereof are integrated in the study process in the study programmes.

Topics of research work is included in the courses led by the lecturers. If the research projects carried out by the lecturers coincide with the issues of the course, then the lecturers usually demonstrate the results of the scientific work, as well as, if possible, involve students in the research work.

As per SAR p.2.4.1, in established RAI Scientific Research Center practical research projects such as Research of air traffic control system based on the use of the simulator; Development of an aircraft control simulator based on virtual reality systems etc. The results of research projects are being implemented by RAI in all study programs.

Because is necessary between connection with modern development trends and technical innovations it is important that knowledgeable, experienced specialists (as teaching staff) from transport companies and well-known Latvian companies with a master's or doctoral degree are attracted and involved in study process. For instance, in ATC program involved lecturers from Latvian Air Traffic (AS "Latvijas Gaisa Satiksme"), Airport "Riga", Civil Aviation Agency. Results from scientific research is linked in study process.

The connection of scientific research with the study process is ensured by involving students in research, for example, RAI established Student Scientific and Research Group; introducing the students with current research results, giving the opportunity to perform independently and collaboratively (in group work) research activity.

The connection of scientific research with the study process is also ensured by involvement of guest lecturers.

As well as it is ensured with active participation of students in international conferences and seminars, preparing international scientific publications thus developing their research skills throughout their studies, while promoting students to become young researchers.

1.4.3.

All RAI study programmes benefit from international cooperation in the field of scientific research. During scientific research are obtained competencies and improved skills of academic staff as well is possibility to gain experience of the research field.

Therefore following benefits can be obtained from International cooperation in the field of scientific research: new experience of academic staff, recruited new academic staff in RAI, existing lectures can be improved with new ideas, new technologies etc. Also new equipment could be purchased to be used in study fields, laboratories can be modernized.

International cooperation also is in the field with employers. Employers are attracted by working in industry associations. As stated in SAR p. 2.4.3 a cooperation agreement has been concluded with the Kazakhstan state company "Kazaeronavigacija", which provides for the training of specialists in the field of aviation services, practice and organization of practice, as well as scientific and practical cooperation).

RAI quality department can measure via KPIs if listed above benefits give in the field of scientific research from the international cooperation. As the one of the KPI is to measure feedback from the students which are positive. Feedback from students are collected via surveys in moodle which are anonymous but students can choose to put their names.

Elsmore during interviews with students and graduates, interviews proved that international cooperation is valuable and experience gained during conferences and seminars improves lectures of the study fields.

Future plans for the development of international cooperation in the field of scientific research and/or artistic creation are stated in RAI Strategy 2021-2027 (Strategy) (as per SAR p.2.1.2 and p.2.4.3). Strategy states plans to improve international cooperation, more participation in different conferences, ERASMUS, scientific research, includes English courses for teaching staff.

It is to conclude that international cooperation in the field of scientific research within the study field and the relevant study programmes is ensured and it is being purposefully developed.

1.4.4.

Since 2021 RAI has implemented motivation system which is part of RAI quality assurance system as mechanisms for the involvement of the teaching staff in scientific research (SAP p.2.4.4.).

Motivation system for academic staff aims to encourage academic and scientific activities of staff, preparation and publication of scientific publications, teaching and study materials, scientific and methodological work at the Riga Aeronautical Institute as well participation in scientific and practical conferences. Motivation system consists is like KPI where each academic staff can collect points based on his activities performed and later it will be reflected as bonus on his salary.

RAI quality department can measure via KPIs if motivation system is effective. So it can be concluded that motivation system is well-functioning and efficient from the feedback from the students which are positive. Elsmore during interviews with students and graduates, interviews proved that international cooperation is valuable and experience gained during conferences and seminars improves lectures of the study fields.

1.4.5.

RAI has developed mechanisms for involving students of all study levels and programs in research activities. This motivation system for students to promote their involvement in scientific researches. RAI has following opportunities: participation in scientific conferences, availability of research infrastructure and Scientific Research Center, availability of necessary software and databases etc.

From September 29, 2020, the Riga Aeronavigation Institute approved the Student Scientific Research Group (SZPG). Students from SZPG to show their creative abilities in the acquisition of advanced education programs, work in a scientific group and participation in international projects within the framework of RAI ZPC (SAP p.2.4.5.).

1.4.6.

As provided in SAR p. 2.4.6, RAI utilizes following innovation technical solutions for study organization in the study field:

- Use of BigBlueButton bimodal education system for teaching staff and students in Moodle environment - online audio, video, chat, and other ways;
- Using the "brainstorming" method to solve problems in student classes and staff meetings;
- Use of the "Crawford map" method for conflict resolution.

All these innovations allow RAI to organize the study process more efficiently and allow students to master the topics covered in the course of their studies more fully and thoroughly.

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

Scientific research activities in RAI are developing and corresponds to study fields and industry. The connection of scientific research of the study field with the study process is logical and justified.

International cooperation in the field of scientific research within the study field and the relevant study programmes is ensured and it is being purposefully developed. All RAI study programmes benefit from international cooperation in the field of scientific research.

Since 2021 RAI has implemented motivation system which is par of RAI quality assurance system as mechanisms for the involvement of the teaching staff in scientific research.

RAI has also developed mechanisms for involving students of all study levels and programs in research activities.

Strengths:

1. Very good motivation system for involvement of the teaching staff in scientific research;
2. The motivation system for involvement of the teaching staff and students in research activities is implemented in RAI quality system.

Weaknesses:

1. The staff's production of peer reviewed materials and the placement of such papers in cited journals remains somewhat weak. Additionally, the research activities that take place and allow the teaching materials to be updated and incorporate the latest findings are not adequately identified or explained.

Assessment of the requirement [2]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The scientific research with the level of development of scientific research is partially compliant, as the scientific outputs claimed are deemed to be low level and mostly limited to regional conference papers. The impact assessment of the cited papers and their weightings could not be determined, and likewise, it was not fully evident if these papers had been peer reviewed externally.

1.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation

Analysis

1.5.1.

RAI has good contacts and cooperation with Latvian institutions. This reflects mainly the employers. Several RAI lecturers are employed also in other institutions (see CVs), which positively contributes

to contact with local enterprises. There are several agreements of cooperation between RAI and Latvian enterprises (6_app_List of Cooperation Agreements.pdf). Regional employers support study field by providing internships for students and internship organizing system has been well developed within the study field (information during meeting).

The students internships are organized with cooperating institutions (confirmed in meeting with staff and 8_annex_Practice regulations.pdf). A very good cooperation exists between Latvian Navigation Services Provider as RAI is an important source of prospective air controllers, and in the other direction LNSP uses simulator facilities in RAI. The cooperating partners activities are in line with the RAI educational needs and study programme. During the meeting employers expressed satisfaction with both the study process and the knowledge that graduates have obtained during their studies. Employers are contributing as members of state examination committees, they evaluate defence of Master and Bachelor Theses.

There are several agreements between RAI and Latvian research institutes and universities, but there are no visible results in student or staff exchange. The exchanging ideas about improving study fields is declared in self assessment report, but no examples provided..

1.5.2.

RAI has cooperation agreement with universities in Ukraine (1), Lithuania (2), Poland (2) and Qatar (1). There is a limited number of students and staff mobility within these agreements. The flagship of foreign activity is Erasmus project (name to be added) lasting to 2027, in frame of which students and staff visited and will visit other countries. The student and staff exchange might have slow down during last two years due to COVID. But it should be noted that a limited number of staff (only three persons, Statistikas dati pasniedzeji mobil ENG.pdf) participated in the international mobility.

1.5.3.

The international student and staff come from at least 9 countries, among which the main direction is Kazakhstan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan due to traditional links with this region. There is no declared (meeting with staff and students) motivation actions for students and staff to participate in foreign exchange. On the other hand students (meeting with students) have not express any strong will to go abroad for enhancing their teaching and other experiences. No visible action to acquire more grants/contracts for students exchange. There is a lack of international cooperation policy. It is not clear how the ambitious internationalization goals related to the study field will be achieved without setting a policy and principles for international cooperation.

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

In conclusion, RAI has demonstrated a strategy and implementation for cooperation and internationalisation with both external companies and other institutions nationally and overseas.

Strengths:

1. Several agreements are signed with Latvian industry, institutes and universities;
2. There are a few agreements on collaboration with foreign universities signed;
3. Participation in ERASMUS project is a main international activity;
4. The contacts with local enterprises is vivid (internships, graduates placement, programmes updating). It is well assessed by students, staff and industry.

Weaknesses:

1. The international collaboration is not adequately promoted within staff and students;
2. Only a small number of staff participated in international exchange;
3. No attempts undertaken for expanding international activities;

4. No reported results of agreements with Latvian institutes and universities.

Assessment of the requirement [3]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The cooperation with Latvian and foreign organisations is fully compliant with the study programs and in line with the study field. It expands the practical skills for the students due to internships, improves the study programmes due to participation of external organisations in programs modernisations.

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

Analysis

1.6.1.

According to the SAR p.37, the previous regular evaluation of the study field was performed in 2017, but in 2019 the study field was evaluated due to the request of RAI to allow the implementation of the study programmes in English.

Overall, in the previous accreditation term RAI received 6 recommendations from the expert group which are outlined in the Annex 10.

First recommendation from the previous expert group was to make improvements to course offerings and content and to pay more attention to such topics as info mobility, navigation, cargo identification, tracking and tracing, transportation of dangerous goods, either by introducing special courses or by adding new content to the existing curricula. RAI has managed to develop new study courses several existing study courses have been modernized. The following new study courses have been introduced in the Professional Bachelor's study programme "International Transport Logistics": 1. Green logistics; 2. Urban logistics; 3. International transport policy and law; 4. Intermodal freight networks; 5. New technologies in logistics; 6. Warehousing and on-storage systems; 7. Study work in transport logistics; 8. Study work in transport economics and systems; 9. Study work in freight transportation.

The following new study courses have been introduced in the Professional Bachelor's study programme "International transport company management": 1. New technologies in logistics; 2. Ecology and green logistics; 3. Information, communication and CALS technologies; 4. Study work in the design and development of management systems. The following new study courses have been introduced in the Professional Master's study programme "International transport company management": 1. Latvia's national and EU transport policy; 2. Innovation management; 3. Innovative Economy and Marketing; 4. Information, Communication and CALS Technologies. Improvements in more than 20 study courses in all 4 study programmes are performed. In the opinion of expert group, the recommendation has been fully implemented.

Second recommendation received was regards to English language - that the acquisition and use of English in study activities should be promoted, and academic staff should aim to acquire a satisfactory level of English (the Air Traffic Management programme is also, in the best position in this respect).

In that regard, RAI has managed to provide English language courses for teaching and administrative staff as well as have established level of English language proficiency as a criterion

for recruitment at the RAI. Teaching and administrative staff attend weekly RAI English language courses and significant improvements have been indicated in their language skills. New academic staff has been recruited: one foreign lecturer with very good English language skills and 5 new local lecturers with good English language skills. In the opinion of expert group, the recommendation has been fully implemented while it is highly advisable to continue the language improvement for the academic staff.

Third recommendation was in regard to library and resources. It was stated that the RAI library services are of a very good standard and are worthy of praise, but the availability of up-to-date, international (published in English) literature (books, specialized journals) should be significantly improved. Subscriptions to international databases could be considered to address this problem. RAI has worked on widening their resources and international databases since the last accreditation and has managed to buy 58 new English language books and four periodicals were purchased from which three of them are in English: 1. International Airport Review; 2. Air Traffic Control; 3. Global Railway Review and 4. Journal "Bilance". Students and staff have access to the online catalogue and database Britannica, as well as such databases as Zentralblatt MATH, SpringerLink, De Gruyter, Cambridge University Press, Emerald Publishing and Open Access. In the opinion of expert group, the recommendation has been fully implemented.

Fourth recommendation received was in regard to openness of RAI in participation in ERASMUS+ and other projects. It was stated by the previous expert group that participation in Erasmus projects and exchange programmes should be strengthened to prepare students for the international labour market. The justification and activities that are provided as activities based on the recommendation are not seen as relevant to this specific recommendation. Openness to ERASMUS+ projects and preparation of students for international labour market is not related to improvements of literature as stated in the Annex 10. Based on the information gathered onsite, it is clear that some activities are taking place in regard to participation in projects. As noted, 3 lecturers have participated in Erasmus mobilities offered by the institute. One lecturer was in Kaunas, another one stated that they are planning to open cooperation with a university in Turkey where they are planning to go in January 2023. Another lecturer has been travelling a lot due to participating in conferences, representation of the institute or others (Miami, Florida/US, Minsk/Belarus) 3 years ago. When asked to students, one student did not go because he felt like he was going to lose time from the courses he has here. Air traffic controllers go to Miami for training, so they don't think it is necessary to go abroad. One student from another programme stated that she is planning to go to Portugal on Erasmus. It can be concluded that some improvements are taken place, but the recommendation is considered to be partially implemented.

Fifth recommendation was in relation to Internal Quality Assurance. Previous expert group has stated that significant improvements have been noted, but further action is needed in this area, in particular as regards the public availability of documents and the regular updating of quality monitoring procedures. RAI has worked on the development of the QA. The content of the Quality Management Manual has been updated, and quality monitoring procedures have been renewed. Quality Management Manual and other documents are published on RAI website (<http://rai.lv/doc>). In the opinion of expert group, the recommendation has been fully implemented.

Sixth recommendation received was in relation to research of academic staff and their involvement. It was observed that there is rather limited involvement of the academic staff in research activities. In the onsite visit, it was stated that since last year they have improved the motivation system which is a part of the QA system. For example, their lecturer has to take part in conferences, seminars in mobilities: They must do some research work. They need to gain a specific amount of

points and then there is a commission that evaluates them.

RAI representatives stated that they have a scientific conference organized once a year for lecturers. They have lecturers from the industry as from the Riga Airport, Latvian Air Traffic, logistic companies. They of course prefer for a lecturer to have a PhD but it is hard to find such lecturers with doctoral degrees. In the opinion of expert group, the recommendation has been partially implemented.

According to the SAR p.38, during the reporting period, no licensing of new study programmes was performed and no procedure for inclusion of new study programmes in the accreditation page was implemented.

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

RAI has taken into account the recommendations given by the previous expert group and has tried to make the relevant changes based on the indicated shortcomings. Altogether, there was 6 recommendations given to the RAI. Four of them are seen to be fully implemented while two of them are seen to be partially implemented and requires extra attention to be paid. It is of high necessity to involve both lecturers and students in ERASMUS+ or other international projects as well as it is important that the lecturers are active in their research work. It is not good if lecturers cannot name papers they have written in the last few years or name a mobility where they have been in the recent years sent from RAI.

Strengths:

1. The formation of the international ERASMUS + network and recent expansion is considered very positive.

Weaknesses:

1. Lack of involvement of lecturers and students on Erasmus+ and other similar international projects;
2. Lack of involvement of the teaching staff in externally funded research activities.

Assessment of the requirement [4]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Not all of the deficiencies have been rectified since the previous assessment.

Whilst it is recognised that RAI has made significant effort and work, that has been devoted to the elimination of the deficiencies and it is praised by the expert group, however, it is still necessary to make the necessary further improvements for 2 of the recommendations that were received in regard to ERASMUS+ projects and teaching staff involvement in funded research.

1.7. Recommendations for the Study Field

Short-term recommendations

Revise the formal documents in order to eliminate misspellings in formal documents and take a closer look/double check the documents before giving them out.

The international cooperation should be promoted and incentivised within staff and students leading to increasing number of staff and students participation.

Attempt should be undertaken to make existing national and international links more vivid. This concerns also national universities and institutes leading to regular exchanging ideas and experiences in teaching and research and experience gained implemented in subjects modernization.

Questionnaires' used for monitoring quality of teaching should be anonymous to allow students to express opinions more freely.

Long-term recommendations

RAI needs to make further advancements of the processes and expand engagement and involve graduates and employers in QA processes by filling out the internship surveys, sending out surveys after graduation. These changes require further validation that they are part of QA procedure.

Involve more of the students and teaching staff in Erasmus+ mobility projects. There have been noticed improvements based on the previous term recommendation, but it is not sufficient that only 3 of the lecturers and only 1 student in 6-year term has taken the opportunity. (As far as expert group was able to identify onsite).

More of the academic staff are required to actively engage in externally funded research activities (or similar). The existing level of participation in this activity is rather low and is considered to be insufficient.

II - "Air traffic control" ASSESSMENT

II - "Air traffic control" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1.

The professional bachelor's study programme "Air traffic control", complies with indicators, conditions and criteria of the study field of "Transport services". The length of the implementation of the study programme, which is 4 years for full-time studies and 4 years and 6 months for part-time studies, are evaluated as sufficient for acquiring the necessary skills and way of thinking to enter the labor market.

2.1.2.

According to the SAR p. 61, the title of the study programme is "Air traffic control" in the study field of "Transport services" with education classification code 42840. with the last 3 numbers (840) standing for transport services according to the classification of Latvian education which can be accessed here: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>. There is a qualification given "Enterprise manager" after graduating as it is a professional bachelor's study programme according to the SAR p.62.

According to the SAR p.61, the aim of the programme is to prepare highly qualified and comprehensively developed air traffic controllers with creative and analytical abilities in the management of air traffic and transport companies. According to the information provided in the SAR p.61.-62, the admission requirements of this programme differ for English and for Latvian as this programme is being implemented in both of these languages. For the study programme in

Latvian the admission requirements are secondary education while for the programme in English it is secondary education and knowledge of English at the level of B2.

It has been stated in the SAR p.62 that after successful completion of the studies, students are awarded with Professional bachelor's degree in air traffic management. According to the SAR p.62, the study programme is both full-time and part-time study programme with 160 CP to be gathered during the study process of 4 years or 4 years and 6 months.

2.1.3.

According to the SAR p.64, there are no significant changes in the parameters of the study programme, however, minor changes have been made as 1. Change of titles for specific courses; 2. Three study papers have been added - study work in air traffic control, study work in air traffic control technology and study work in the design and development of management systems; 3. The study course "Latvian language for foreign students" has been introduced for foreign students; 4. Certain engineering courses, such as Technical Mechanics, have been replaced by management courses "Marketing in an aviation company", "Innovation management", "Accounting and tax policy in an aviation company" and "Business and management"; 5. The block of study courses "Elective courses" has been supplemented with two study courses - "Business English" and "Economic Statistics".

2.1.4.

According to the SAR p.67, During the last three years, 7 of RAI graduates have been working as air traffic controllers at SJC "Latvijas Gaisa satiksme". All foreign students who studied under the order of the state from Kazakhstan have been successfully employed as air traffic controllers in the state company "Kazaeronavigatsia". According to the SAR p.67, the number of students is quite small. Overall, the number of those who want to study, and therefore the number of students, does not increase. According to the SAR p.68, the number of students enrolled in full-time studies in the last two years has decreased by about 30% compared to the previous three years. In the reporting period, there has been a noticeable instability of the admitted students. In the study year of 2018./19. in total 22 students were admitted while during the years of Covid pandemic in 2020./21. - 4 and 2021./22. - 5 students. In the 2022./23, most of the students were foreign students - 11 and Latvian students - 2. Very few students are getting involved in study mobility.

2.1.5. N/A

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

All of the indicators of the study programme are in compliance with the existing preconditions of the implementation of the study programme. The study programme "Air traffic control" "complies with the study field indicators, conditions and criteria. The study programme is implemented in Latvian and English. The goals, objectives, learning outcomes are in line and in compliance. There has been a significant level of decrease in admitted students in the last study years which causes instability. There is also a rather low involvement of students in study mobility.

Strengths:

None.

Weaknesses:

1. Low involvement of students in study mobility;
2. Decrease of admitted students due to various reasons (e.g. COVID 19).

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1.

The main goal of the programme is to “ To prepare highly qualified and comprehensively developed air traffic controllers with creative and analytical abilities in the management of air traffic and transport companies”. The goal should be realized by specified tasks: 1. To provide students with the acquisition of theoretical knowledge (natural sciences, information technologies, technical, humanitarian and professional study courses); 2. To provide students with opportunities to acquire practical skills and abilities that allow them to manage an air traffic and transport company. 3. To develop the ability to formulate and solve problems specific to the aviation industry, which are determined by the theoretical knowledge and professional skills necessary for the manager of an air traffic and transport company” (description of study fields in self assesment report).

The contents of the subjects corresponds to the objectives above and leads to achieve results of the study program . As fulfillment of the previous assessment recommendations the program was improved by renaming seventeen subjects for more precise contents description. It is assessed that these requirements were fulfilled, as also three study papers have been added - Study work in air traffic control, study work in Air Traffic Control technology and study work in the design and development of management systems. The study course "Latvian language for foreign students" has been introduced for foreign students. Certain engineering courses, such as Technical Mechanics, have been replaced by management courses "Marketing in an aviation company", "Innovation management", "Accounting and tax policy in an aviation company" and "Business and management".

The block of study courses "Elective courses" has been supplemented with two study courses - "Business English" and "Economic Statistics". The changes should be acknowledged.

Two types of courses background knowledge and professional skills are well balanced and rationally implemented to the study schedule . The first part of education reflects more basic knowledge (first 3 semesters) both general and related to the field, and the later courses are more related to professional skills. The contents of the courses provide opportunities to obtain practical knowledge and skills, including simulator practice. The adequate quality of the courses is achieved and controlled by yearly monitoring the results of teaching, taking into account opinions of representatives of external enterprises.

The study program was initially developed in accordance Latvian regulations taking into account the Cabinet of Ministers' regulations of August 26, 2014 No. 512 "Regulations on the state standard of second-level professional higher education", the standard of the profession of the company manager (Appendix 13) which fulfils the Cabinet of Ministers of August 14, 2015 regulations of July No. 408 "Licensing regulations of study programs", as well as the University Law and RAI Satversme: Furthermore, the programme remains complaint with the updated pertinent regulation (superceding 408). The full - time programmes are 4 years, and the part time studies - 4, 5 years of both Latvian and English versions. The CP number for all programmes of studies is 160, including: elective courses - 6 CP (required 6 CP) and internship - 24 CP (required 20 CP min).

The Aviation English (6CP) course is the subject in all (LV and ENG) full-time and part time programmes. The Business English courses (2 CP) is the subject in both Latvian and in part-time English programmes. The Business English courses (2 CP) is also offered an elective subject to all four programmes. Latvian language classes (2CP) are offered to full time English programme (file Study program plans_ATC(GSV).xlsx).

To meets the requirements of the Law on Environmental Protection and the Law on Civil Protection and Disaster Management and be Compliant with Latvian national educational standards the study course "Environment and human protection" (2 CP) and “Ecology and green logistics” (2 CP) are included in the program. The compliance with standard of the ATR profession is assured due to close

contacts with Latvian Air Navigation Service Provider.

The compliance with respective regulations and professional standards assessed as good.

2.2.2. N/A

2.2.3.

Several teaching methods are applied depending on the subject structure including lecturing, situation analysis, group work, problem-oriented studies, use of information technology. The classes are well equipped with multimedia devices, which allows to illustrate the lectures by presentations. The laboratory courses are provided according to the study programme. Laboratories are sufficiently equipped for obtaining at least general technical and other professional skills. The air traffic simulator is widely used in teaching process.

The students opinions expresses in questionnaires filled up after the courses, which are analysed on yearly basis and conclusions implemented. In the self-assessment report the students participation in “the development of the program, its discussion and approval” is mentioned but there was no opportunity to meet with student council representatives. Alignment of schedule of classes and test times to the working students availability is a positive example of student centred approach, especially that it is combined with strict and controlled requirements for the students presence in the class. The ratio of contact time and student's independent working time (4/6 in full-time studies, 2/8 or 1.5/8.5 in part-time studies) is adequate. Application of Moodle environment for operating courses and e-learning is appreciated, as it is standardized approach for students and staff, the software has good reputation.

There are small groups of students especially in laboratory courses, which allows individual approach to each student, and this is considered to the highly beneficial.

The learning outcomes specified are clear, achievable and fully inline with the required syllabus of both the EASA ATC materials content and additionally the BSc degree programme. The experts consider this degree to be unique in it's offering to combine the European Aviation Safety Agency license requirements for qualified Air Traffic Control basic training in addition to a degree.

2.2.4.

The internships are organized providing students opportunity to acquire practical skills. The internships are organized due good links with local enterprises, with which cooperation agreements were signed. The main place for internship is Latvian Air Navigation Service Provider. The organization aspects of internships are well defined and structured. The document provides rules for the internship goals, requirements for students, organization aspect, reporting and safety issues. The idea of presenting the internship results in public should be acknowledged. The internship manager supports both parts i.e. student and enterprise in efficient cooperation. The internships for foreign students are organized in the companies in which ability of communicate in English is provided.

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6.

The topics of the student thesis are selected according to their relevance to professional skills to be acquired during the studies. The thesis topics are offered in accordance of various companies, which may suggest and support the subjects. The LANSP (ANS provider) is the key partner here, as confirmed in the panel discussion. The subjects of thesis provided to assessment team were in line with the study objectives and programme and of good quality.

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

In conclusion, the Air Traffic control study programme is considered to be a very good programme that combines both the bachelor degree content in addition to the professional EASA qualifications, and achieves these outcomes to a high recognised European standard.

Strengths:

1. The programme is in line with national regulations and tasks to achieve educational goals;
2. The programme periodical assessment and modernization is and should be a continuous practice;
3. The low number of students allows for individual approach to students development;
4. Students, graduates and representatives of industry share the good opinion of skills and background knowledge received at RAI;
5. The close contact with Latvian Air Navigation Services Providers has a very positive influence on study contents, internship and students motivation.

Weaknesses:

1. Questionnaires used for monitoring quality of teaching should be anonymous to allow expressing opinions more freely;
2. The contacts with other higher educational institutions in Latvia and abroad should be more visible and experience gained implemented in subjects modernization.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1.

In the four study programs implemented in the field of study, information about program resources and material and technical support, including teaching staff, is practically common to all programs and was analysed in the Chapter 1.3..

Additionally, a large amount of professional literature is available in the RAI library to support the study program (publishers recognized in the industry – Oxford, Jeppessen).

An ATC student simulator is available to ensure quality training and basic knowledge delivery. The simulator provides an opportunity to simulate the work of the Air Traffic Control Center, its functioning and service in real time. In the modelling process, various means of displaying and processing information and various types of communication are implemented. The simulator is used by students to learn technical methods of servicing ground electronic aviation equipment.

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3.

The financial resources of the Riga Aeronautical Institute consist of income from studies paid by students, as well as income from the implementation of qualification improvement courses and professional education improvement programs (including EASA Part-147 courses). RAI does not receive funding from the state budget. The income allows RAI to provide a competitive salary for

teaching staff, which meets the norms set by Regulation No. 445 of the Ministry of Education "Teachers' Salary Regulations". Salaries of teaching staff make up 50% of RAI's expenses. 7% is allocated to equipment, 6% to hardware renewal, 6% to the purchase of study literature.

15 students study in the study program, of which 14 study in Latvian, one in English. The tuition fee for full-time students studying in Latvian is 7,700 Euro per year, and for those studying in English - 11,300 Euro per year on average.

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

In the four study programs implemented in the field of study, information about program resources and material and technical support, including teaching staff, is practically common to all programs (with the deviation related to particular study program specifics, such as ATC simulator that is used by ATC program students only) and overall can be considered as sufficient to ensure high quality of study process.

Strength:

1. Good library resources;
2. ATC Centre simulator availability for students.

Weaknesses:

Not identified

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements, facilities are well equipped and provides all the information and resources required to ensure high quality of study process.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.

The qualifications of teaching staff involved in the second-level professional higher education study program "Air Traffic Control" complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments and the implementation of RAI's strategic goals and tasks. In addition, teaching staff professional work experience in the relevant sector, regular improvement of knowledge in the relevant continuing education program of university teachers fully comply with the conditions of the implementation of the study program and the requirements of regulatory acts.

In total of 20 teaching staff are involved in the "Air Traffic Control" study program, of which:

- 15 teaching staff or 75% are employed in the main work of RAI and 5 guest teaching staff, which is 25% of the total number of teaching staff,
- 15 teaching staff have been elected to RAI docent or lecturer academic positions,
- Eight of RAI's teaching staff members have a doctorate degree (7 RAI appointed academic positions), and 12 lecturers with a master's degree.

Teaching staff has good English knowledge, at least B2 level.

There are organised regular English classes for teachers once a week. Before they started to take the English course, there is a test to assess their level of knowledge. Next year RAI plans to take IELTS Academic to assess the improvement of teaching staff' language skills.

Because is necessary between connection with modern development trends and technical innovations it is important that knowledgeable, experienced specialists (as teaching staff) from transport companies and well-known Latvian companies with a master's or doctoral degree are attracted and involved in study process. For instance, Dr.sc.ing. Yevgenijs Mingalovs, who currently is employed by Latvian ANSP as a controller, has been elected to the academic position of assistant professor at RAI and leads study courses related to his professional activity such as Aviation devices and navigation systems, Study work in Air Traffic Control, Meteorological support of air traffic control, etc.

RAI has a special procedure of recruitment of the teaching staff. They attract staff by providing interesting job, scientific work opportunities to develop their skills in participating in these projects together with companies and other universities/institutes.

Aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses are assessed as reached. It was proved during interviews with students and graduates.

2.4.2.

Since 2013 there is decrease in teaching staff team. It has decreased from 28 to 20. This decrease is because several teaching staff have left RAI, reaching retirement age. Also, part-time lectures has quit form lectures position in RAI.

This reduction has been compensated in RAI and some teaching staff have been rehired. Very important is to point out that teaching staff from abroad and teaching staff with extensive work experience from the industry (aviation and transport services sector) have been recruited.

Reduction of teaching staff do not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the study programme and the compliance of the study programme with the requirements specified in regulatory enactments because involvement of new teaching staff mentioned before gives possibility to improve the management of the theoretical basic courses of the industry and the professional specialization courses of the industry.

In addition, existing staff has improved their degree. From existing teaching staff 4 obtained a master's degree from RAI. Also involved new teaching staff has also doctoral degree.

RAI quality assurance department is involved in evaluation of study program to assess if composition of teaching stuff does not negatively impact study program., There is an internal Lecture Inspection Checklist for the study subjects implemented in RAI quality department. It is done by the Quality and Compliance Monitoring Manager of the RAI of the lectures based on specific parameters (e.g. Is the training material available? Is the room properly prepared for the lecture? Is the lighting, heating and ventilation, seat arrangement as specified in ATS TO training and operations manual? Are all the course records properly filled in and stored? Etc.).

Therefore changes in composition of teaching staff is monitored by RAI and is to conclude that do not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the study program.

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4.

The members of the academic staff has publications or five years of practical experience as required

by the Law on Higher Education Institutions. The number of publication considered as positive. However, the placement in the higher level of professional journals recommended for fulfilling.

2.4.5.

There is ensured mutual cooperation between teaching staff in RAI implementation of the study programme. This is ensured via performing self-evaluation of the study programs of the study direction takes place once in a study year.

As a part of the self-evaluation, a methodological meeting of the teaching staff is held at the beginning of the study year. During methodological meeting, the teaching staff can give feedback and suggestions and proposals for the necessary clarifications in the content of individual study courses.

As per SAR p.3.4.5. the teaching staff of the professional specialization study courses of the industry, discovering insufficient knowledge of the students on one of the topics of the higher mathematics course, make a proposal to the higher mathematics teaching staff to strengthen the learning of the relevant topic.

This is to conclude that through the cooperation of the teaching staff of the study courses, the content of the study courses can be improved to ensure that the goals of the study program are achieved.

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

Professional bachelor study programme "Air Traffic Control" teaching staff complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments and the implementation of RAI's strategic goals and tasks.

Changes in composition of teaching staff is monitored by RAI and is to conclude that do not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the study program.

Through the cooperation of the teaching staff of the study courses, the content of the study courses can be improved to ensure that the goals of the study program are achieved.

Strengths:

1. Possibility to involve industry experts to join RAI as teaching staff;
2. Implemented in the quality system the motivation system for research activities.

Weaknesses:

Not identified

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements of the 26.08.2014. Cabinet of Ministers Regulation Nr.512 "Regulations on the State Standard of second-level professional higher education". Annex 12_1_annex_GSV_Compliance national education standard.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study programme complies with a valid professional standard of the Company's manager profession from 18 September 2019, registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-115.pdf
Annex 13_1_annex_Professional bachelor's study program ATC comparison of content compliance with the standard of the Company's manager profession.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study courses and the study materials prepared in Latvian and English. Annex ATC(GSV).rar

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements. Annex ATC(GSV)_diploma sample (working translation).pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Language standards of the staff meets the requirements. Annex 047_RAI-confirm-languageLV.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Language standards of the staff meets the requirements. Annex 046_RAI-confirm-English.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements. Annex SPUV.Foreign.st._day_2022-2023.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements. Annex Vienošanās_TSI_RAI_2022_MMS.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements. Annex 048_RAI-acknowledgement.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study programme meets all the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other relevant regulatory enactments

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

The Air Traffic control bachelor degree is considered a unique combination of professional education qualification (i.e. Air Traffic Control basic license) and the award of the degree. This combination is excellent as it allows the graduating students to enter the workplace effectively and efficiently to perform their professional duties, and is considered a significant strength.

An observed the involvement in the Erasmus+ scheme for staff and students could be improved.

Strengths:

1. Unique Bachelor's programme that provides studies in the study field (combining the EASA ATC basic qualification with the BSc);
2. ATC Centre simulator availability for students;
3. The close contact with Latvian Air Navigation Services Providers has a very positive influence on study contents, internship and students motivation;
4. Implemented in the quality system the motivation system for research activities.

Weaknesses:

No significant deficiencies affecting the assessment identified

Evaluation of the study programme "Air traffic control"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Excellent

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Air traffic control"

Short-term recommendations

Encourage staff and students to participate in the Erasmus + programme. The student's flight training to the USA sites are not considered as equivalent exchange programmes.

Long-term recommendations

The contacts with Air Navigation Services Providers in other countries should be established for improving the scope of prospective internship and employment of the graduates.

II - "International transport logistics" ASSESSMENT

II - "International transport logistics" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1.

The professional bachelor's study programme "International transport logistics", complies with indicators, conditions and criteria of the study field of "Transport services". The length of the implementation of the study programme, which is 4 years for full-time studies and 4 years and 6 months for part-time studies, are evaluated as sufficient for acquiring the necessary skills and way of thinking to enter the labor market.

2.1.2.

According to the SAR p. 81, the title of the study programme is "International transport logistics" in the study field of "Transport services" with education classification code 42840. with the last 3 numbers (840) standing for transport services according to the classification of Latvian education which can be accessed here: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>. There is a qualification given "Logistics manager" after graduating as it is a professional bachelor's study programme according to the SAR p.82.

According to the SAR p.81, the aim of the programme is to prepare highly qualified and comprehensively developed specialists with creative and analytical abilities in international transport logistics.

According to the information provided in the SAR p.81.-82, the admission requirements of this programme differ for English and for Latvian as this programme is being implemented in both of these languages. For the study programme in Latvian the admission requirements are secondary education while for the programme in English it is secondary education and knowledge of English at the level of B2. It has been stated in the SAR p.82 that after successful completion of the studies, students are awarded with Professional bachelor's degree in air traffic management. According to the SAR p.82, the study programme is both full-time and part-time study programme with 160 CP to be gathered during the study process of 4 years or 4 years and 6 months.

2.1.3.

According to the SAR p.84.-85, there are no significant changes in the parameters of the study programme, however, minor changes have been made as 1. Change of titles for specific courses; 2. Three study papers have been added - Study work in transport logistics, Study work in transport economy and systems and study work in freight transportation. As well as industry study courses such as: "New technologies in logistics", "Green logistics", "City logistics" and "Retail logistics". 3. The study course "Latvian language for foreign students" has been introduced for foreign students; 4. The block of study courses "Elective courses" has been supplemented with two study courses - "Organization of scientific work" and "Fundamentals of strategic management".

2.1.4.

According to the SAR p.87, the official statistics reflect on graduates of higher education institutions (monitoring of graduates), which is carried out in accordance with the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of June 25, 2019 No. 276 "Regulations of the State Education Information System", Riga Aeronautical Institute ranks 8th among private universities, which is 78.2% employment of graduates by profession (excluding foreign graduates). Many of graduates associate their careers with such companies as: SJSC "Latvijas gaisa satiksme", SJSC "Latvijas Dzelzceļš", Ltd "LDZ Cargo", Ltd "LDZ Rolling Stock Service". Logistics programme graduates work in logistics companies such as Ltd "A&A Logistic", Ltd "Unik", Ltd "Solution", while management program graduates work in the following international transport companies Ltd "Kreiss", "Havas", and other transport companies Ltd "CARGOFLEX".

According to the SAR p.88, the number of students enrolled in full-time studies in the last two years has decreased by about 30% compared to the previous three years. On the other hand, part-time students have not been admitted at all in the last two years. Despite the demand from employers and the labour market for air traffic control specialists, the number of those who want to study, and therefore the number of students, does not increase. The highest number of admitted students were in the study year of 2018./19. with admitted 27 students. Comparing to "Air Traffic Control programme" there was a lower decrease of admitted students during Covid pandemic period. In 2020./21 there were 17 students admitted and in 2021./22. - 21 student. In 2022./23.

study year 22 students were admitted. No data is provided on Erasmus+ mobility and student involvement.

2.1.5. N/A

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

All of the indicators of the study programme are in compliance with the existing preconditions of the implementation of the study programme. The study programme "International transport logistics" complies with the study field indicators, conditions and criteria. The study programme is implemented in Latvian and English. The goals, objectives, learning outcomes are in line and in compliance. There is also a rather low involvement of students in study mobility.

Strengths:

None

Weaknesses:

1. Low involvement of students in study mobility.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1.

The main goal of the programme is to "To prepare highly qualified and comprehensively developed specialists with creative and analytical abilities in international transport logistics." The goal is realized by specified tasks: "1. To provide students with the acquisition of theoretical knowledge (natural sciences, information technologies, technical, humanitarian and professional study courses); 2. To provide students with opportunities to acquire practical skills and abilities that allow them to professionally manage processes in international transport logistics; 3. To develop the ability to formulate and solve problems specific to the transport industry, which are determined by the necessary theoretical knowledge and professional skills of a logistics specialist" (description of programme).

The study program was developed in accordance Latvian regulations taking into account the Cabinet of Ministers' regulations of August 26, 2014 No. 512 "Regulations on the state standard of second-level professional higher education", the standard of the profession of the company manager (Appendix 13) which fulfills the Cabinet of Ministers of August 14, 2015 regulations of July No. 408 "Licensing regulations of study programs", as well as the University Law and RAI Satversme. The full - time studies for both Latvian and English versions are 4 years, the part time - 4, 5 years. The CP number for all form of studies is 160, including for elective courses - 6 CP (required 6 CP), internship - 24 CP (required 20 CP min). To meets the requirements of the Law on Environmental Protection and the Law on Civil Protection and Disaster Management and be Compliant with Latvian national educational standards the study course "Environment and human protection" (2 CP) and "Ecology and green logistics" (2 CP) are included in the program. The compliance with standard of the profession of the company manager standards is assured. The Foreign language classes (3CP) are in all four programmes. The Business English classes (2 CP) are in both Latvian programmes and in part-time English programme. The Business English classes (2 CP) are also offered to all programmes as an elective subject. The Latvian language for foreign students is only in full-time English programme (flie Study program plans_ITEM(SPUV).xlsx).

The contents of the subjects corresponds to the objectives above. As fulfillment of the previous assessment recommendations the programme was improved by renaming ten subjects for more precise contents description. Three study papers have been added - Study work in transport logistics, Study work in transport economy and systems and Study work in freight transportation. As well as industry study courses such as: "New technologies in logistics", "Green logistics", "City logistics" and "Retail logistics". The study course "Latvian language for foreign students" has been introduced for foreign students. The block of study courses "Elective courses" has been supplemented with two study courses -"Organization of scientific work" and "Fundamentals of strategic management. It is assessed that these requirements were fulfilled.

Two types group of courses background knowledge and professional skills are well balanced and rationally implemented to the study schedule. The first part of education reflects more basic knowledge (first 3 semesters) both general and related to the field, and the later courses are more related to professional skills. Elected subject are also offered. The logic of the subject sequence is that follow up courses profit from the previous ones (explained during the visit), which is positive for student to understand relations and interdependencies between various parts of professional knowledge. The contents of the courses provide opportunities to obtain practical knowledge and skills, The adequate quality of the courses is achieved and controlled by yearly monitoring the results of teaching, taking into account opinions of representatives of external enterprises.

2.2.2. N/A

2.2.3.

Several teaching method are applied depending on the subject structure including lecturing, situation analysis, group work, problem-oriented studies, use of information technology. The classes are well equipped with multimedia devices, which allows to illustrate the lectures by presentations. The laboratory courses are provided according to the study programme. Laboratories are sufficiently equipped for obtaining at least general technical and other professional skills. The students opinions expresses in questionnaires filled up after the courses, which are analysed on yearly basis and conclusions implemented. In the self assessment report the students participation in "the development of the program, its discussion and approval" is mentioned but there was no opportunity to meet with student council representatives. Alignment of classes schedule and test times to the working students availability is a positive example of student centred approach, especially that it is combined with strict and controlled requirements for the students presence in the class (logbook). The ratio of contact time and student's independent working time (4/6 in full-time studies, 2/8 or 1.5/8.5 in part-time studies) is adequate. Application of Moodle environment for operating courses and e- learning is appreciated, as it is standarized approach for students and staff, the software has good reputation.

There are small group of students especially in laboratory courses, which allows individual approach to each student.

The aims of the study programme are clearly defined, and the learning outcomes described are both realistic and achievable, which was good.

2.2.4.

The internships are organized providing students opportunity to acquire practical skills. The internships are organized due good links with local enterprises, with which cooperation agreements were signed. The organization issues of internships are well defined and structured. The document provides rules for the internship goals, requirements for students, organization aspects, reporting and safety issues. The idea of presenting the internship results in public should be acknowledged. The internship manager supports both parts i.e. student and enterprise in efficient cooperation. The

internships for foreign students are organized in the companies in which ability of communicate in English is provided.

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6.

The topics of the student thesis are selected according to their relevance to professional skills to be acquired during the studies. The thesis topics are offered in accordance of various companies, which may suggest and support the subjects. The subjects of thesis provided to assessment team were in line with the study objectives and programme.

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

In conclusion, the study programme is considered to be a very good programme that combines both the bachelor degree content and addresses the requirements to educate students to the appropriate level in the field to a high standard.

Strengths:

1. The programme is in line with national regulations and well defines tasks to achieve educational goals;
2. The programme periodical assessment and modernization is and should be a continuous practice;
3. The low number of students allows for individual approach to students development;
4. Graduates and representatives of industry share the good opinion of skills and background knowledge obtained in RAI.

Weaknesses:

1. Questionnaires used for monitoring quality of teaching should be anonymous to allow expressing opinions more freely;
2. The contacts with other higher educational institutions in Latvia and abroad should be more visible and experience gained implemented in subjects modernization.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1.

In the four study programs implemented in the field of study, information about program resources and material and technical support, including teaching staff, is practically common to all programs and was analysed in the Chapter 1.3.. Classrooms, a library, an auditorium-amphitheatre, laboratories and rooms for practical classes are available in the premises of RAI.

Modern learning management tools, including the Moodle system, are successfully used in the student training process. The BigBlueButton (BBB) system allows teaching staff to cooperate with students online in audio, video, chat, etc. way.

RAI's library fund is regularly replenished. In the last two years, the literature of the "Transport

services" library fund was supplemented by 115 items, 58 of which are in English. Four periodicals were purchased, three of them in English - International Airport Review, Air Traffic Control and Global Railway Review, as well as the local magazine "Bilance". Students and faculty are informed about the library's latest literature on the RAI website once every four months.

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3.

The financial resources of the Riga Aeronautical Institute consist of income from studies paid by students, as well as income from the implementation of qualification improvement courses and professional education improvement programs (including EASA Part-147 courses). RAI does not receive funding from the state budget. The income allows RAI to provide a competitive salary for teaching staff, which meets the norms set by Regulation No. 445 of the Ministry of Education "Teachers' Salary Regulations". Salaries of teaching staff make up 50% of RAI's expenses. 7% is allocated to equipment, 6% to hardware renewal, 6% to the purchase of study literature.

35 students study in the study program, of which 29 study in Latvian, six in English. The tuition fee for full-time students studying in Latvian is 1,800 Euro per year, and for those studying in English - 2,300 Euro per year.

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

The International transport and logistics programme is considered highly positive, and the evidence presented on the subject material update was noted as ensuring taught materials remain fully compliant and updated. In the four study programs implemented in the field of study, information about program resources and material and technical support, including teaching staff, is practically common to all programs (with the deviation related to particular study program specifics, such as ATC simulator that is used by ATC program students only) and overall can be considered as sufficient to ensure high quality of study process.

Strengths:

1. Regular updates to the taught materials;
2. Excellent facilities.

Weaknesses:

Not identified

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements, facilities are well equipped and provides all the information and resources required to ensure high quality of study process.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.

The qualifications of teaching staff involved in study program " International transportat logistics" complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments and the implementation of RAI's strategic goals and tasks. In addition, teaching staff professional work experience in the relevant sector, regular improvement of knowledge in the relevant continuing education program of university teachers fully comply with the conditions of the implementation of the study program and the requirements of regulatory acts.

Total of 14 teaching staff are involved in the implementation of the " International transportat logistics " study program, of which 10 teaching staff are employed in the main work of RAI and 4 guest teaching staff.

From 14 teaching staff there are 5 doctors (3 RAI appointed academic positions) and 9 lecturers with a master's degree;
68% of study program are provided by RAI's academic staff, while 32% are provided by RAI's guest teaching staff (SAR p.3.4.1).

Teaching staff has good English knowledge, at least B2 level.

There are organised regular English classes for teachers once a week. Before they started to take the English course, there is a test to assess their level of knowledge. Next year RAI plans to take IELTS Academic to assess the improvement of teaching staff' language skills.

Aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses are assessed as reached. It was proved during interviews with students and graduates.

2.4.2.

Since 2013, there is decrease in teaching staff team. It has decreased from 26 to 14. This decrease is because several teaching staff have left RAI, reaching retirement age. Also, part-time lectures has quit form lectures position in RAI.

This reduction has been compensated in RAI and some teaching staff have been rehired. Very important is to point out that teaching staff from abroad and teaching staff with extensive work experience from the industry (aviation and transport services sector) have been recruited.

Reduction of teaching staff do not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the study programme and the compliance of the study programme with the requirements specified in regulatory enactments because involvement of new teaching staff mentioned before gives possibility to improve the management of the theoretical basic courses of the industry and the professional specialization courses of the industry.

RAI quality assurance department is involved in evaluation of study program to assess if composition of teaching stuff does not negatively impact study program. There is an internal Lecture Inspection Checklist for the study subjects implemented in RAI quality department. It is done by the Quality and Compliance Monitoring Manager of the RAI of the lectures based on specific parameters (e.g. Is the training material available? Is the room properly prepared for the lecture? Is the lighting, heating and ventilation, seat arrangement as specified in ATS TO training and operations manual? Are all the course records properly filled in and stored? Etc.).

Therefore changes in composition of teaching staff is monitored by RAI and is to conclude that do not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the study program.

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4.

The members of the academic staff has publications or five years of practical experience as required by the Law on Higher Education Institutions. The number of publication considered as positive. However, the placement in the higher level of professional journals recommended for fulfilling.

2.4.5.

There is ensured mutual cooperation between teaching staff in RAI implementation of the study programme. This is ensued via performing self-evaluation of the study programs of the study direction takes place once in a study year.

As a part of the self-evaluation, a methodological meeting of the teaching staff is held at the beginning of the study year. During methodological meeting, the teaching staff can give feedback and suggestions and proposals for the necessary clarifications in the content of individual study courses.

As per SAR p.3.4.5. teaching staff can detect insufficient knowledge of the students in one of the study courses, he discusses and expresses his proposal to the teaching staff of the relevant study course of the bachelor's program about the need to correct the course content, methodology, literature or another issue. For instance, teaching staff of the professional specialization study courses of the industry, finding insufficient knowledge of the students on one of the topics of the higher mathematics course, can suggest to the higher mathematics teaching staff to strengthen the learning of the relevant topic.

This is to conclude that through the cooperation of the teaching staff of the study courses, the content of the study courses can be improved to ensure that the goals of the study program are achieved.

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

Professional bachelor study programme " International transport logistics " teaching staff complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments and the implementation of RAI's strategic goals and tasks.

Changes in composition of teaching staff is monitored by RAI and is to conclude that do not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the study program.

Through the cooperation of the teaching staff of the study courses, the content of the study courses can be improved to ensure that the goals of the study program are achieved.

Strengths:

1. Cooperation system with teaching staff for necessary improvements in study program;
2. Implemented quality system;
3. Good English knowledge of academic staff.

Weaknesses:

Not identified

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements of the 26.08.2014. Cabinet of Ministers Regulation Nr.512 "Regulations on the State Standard of second-level professional higher education", Annex 12_2_annex_SPL_Compliance national education standard.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study programme complies with a valid professional standard of the Logistics manager profession from 16 October 2019,
registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-119.pdf
Annex 13_3_annex_Professional bachelor study program.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study courses and the study materials prepared in Latvian and English. Annex ITL(SPL).rar

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements. Annex ITL(SPL)_diploma sample (working translation).pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Language standards of the staff meets the requirements. Annex 047_RAI-confirm-languageLV.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Language standards of the staff meets the requirements. Annex 046_RAI-confirm-English.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements. Annex SPUV.Foreign.st._day_2022-2023.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements. Annex Vienošanās_TSI_RAI_2022_MMS.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements. Annex 048_RAI-acknowledgement.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study programme meets all the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other relevant regulatory enactments

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

The International transport and logistics bachelor degree is considered a popular and successful taught course. The students, employers and local industry likewise recognise the programmes continued success. The participation in Erasmus+ programmes for both staff and students could be promoted. Additionally, it is recommended that the staff fully anonymise the feedback documentation from students.

Strengths:

1. Unique Bachelor's programme that provides studies in the study field;
2. ATC Centre simulator availability for students;
3. Regular updates to the taught materials;
4. Excellent facilities.

Weaknesses:

No significant deficiencies affecting the assessment identified

Evaluation of the study programme "International transport logistics"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Excellent

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "International transport logistics"

Short-term recommendations

The international cooperation should be promoted within staff and students leading to increasing number of staff and students participation.

Attempt should be undertaken to make existing national and international links more vivid.

Long-term recommendations

Questionnaires used for monitoring quality of teaching should be anonymous to allow students to express opinions more freely

II - "International transportation enterprise management" ASSESSMENT

II - "International transportation enterprise management" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1.

The professional bachelor's study programme "International transportation enterprise management", complies with indicators, conditions and criteria of the study field of "Transport services". The length of the implementation of the study programme, which is 4 years for full-time studies and 4 years and 6 months for part-time studies, are evaluated as sufficient for acquiring the necessary skills and way of thinking to enter the labour market.

2.1.2.

According to the SAR p. 41, the title of the study programme is "International transportation enterprise management" in the study field of "Transport services" with education classification code 42840. with the last 3 numbers (840) standing for transport services according to the classification of Latvian education which can be accessed here: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>. There is a qualification given "Enterprise manager" after graduating as it is a professional bachelor's study programme according to the SAR p.42.

According to the SAR p.41, the aim of the programme is to prepare highly qualified and comprehensively developed managers of international transport with creative and analytical abilities in modern entrepreneurship and company management. According to the information provided in the SAR p.41.-42, the admission requirements of this programme differ for English and for Latvian as this programme is being implemented in both of these languages. For the study programme in Latvian the admission requirements are secondary education while for the programme in English it is secondary education and knowledge of English at the level of B2.

It has been stated in the SAR p.62 that after successful completion of the studies, students are awarded with Professional bachelor's degree in air traffic management. According to the SAR p.62, the study programme is both full-time and part-time study programme with 160 CP to be gathered during the study process of 4 years or 4 years and 6 months.

2.1.3.

According to the SAR p.44-45, there are no significant changes in the parameters of the study programme, however, minor changes have been made as 1. Combining two study courses into one with a specified name of the combined course; 2. Study course titles are defined more precisely; 3. Three studies have been added - study work in project

management, study work in the design and development of management systems and study work in transport hubs and terminals. As well as industry study courses, for example: "New technologies in logistics" and "Ecology and green logistics"; 4.. The "Latvian language for foreign students" study course has been introduced for foreign students; 5. The block of study courses "Elective courses" has been supplemented with two study courses -

"City logistics" and "Organization of scientific work".

2.1.4.

According to the SAR p.47, the official statistics reflect on graduates of higher education institutions (monitoring of graduates), which is carried out in accordance with the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of June 25, 2019 No. 276 "Regulations of the State Education Information System", Riga Aeronautical Institute ranks 8th among private universities, which is 78.2% employment of graduates by profession (excluding foreign graduates). Many of graduates associate their careers with such companies as: SJSC "Latvijas gaisa satiksme", SJSC "Latvijas Dzelzceļš", Ltd "LDZ Cargo", Ltd "LDZ Rolling Stock Service". Logistics programme graduates work in logistics companies such as Ltd "A&A Logistic", Ltd "Unik", Ltd "Solution", while management program graduates work in the following international transport companies Ltd "Kreiss", "Havas", and other transport companies Ltd "CARGOFLEX".

According to the SAR p.48, the number of students enrolled in full-time studies in the last two years has decreased by about 30% compared to the previous three years. On the other hand, part-time students have not been admitted at all in the last two years. Comparing to "Air traffic control" and "International transport logistics" programmes, the numbers of admitted students in this programme are comparably way higher. Interestingly, during Covid pandemic period, this programme had the highest admitted students in the amount of 88 students in 2020./21. and 123 students in 2021./22. In the year of 2022./23. there have been 84 students admitted. Comparing to the years before, 2019./20 there were 24 students admitted. Very few students are getting involved in study mobility.

2.1.5. N/A

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

All of the indicators of the study programme are in compliance with the existing preconditions of the implementation of the study programme. The study programme "International transportation enterprise management" complies with the study field indicators, conditions and criteria. The study programme is implemented in Latvian and English. The goals, objectives, learning outcomes are in line and in compliance. There is also a rather low involvement of students in study mobility.

Strengths:

None

Weaknesses:

1. Low involvement of students in study mobility.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1.

The main goal of the programme is to "prepare highly qualified and comprehensively developed managers of international transport with creative and analytical abilities in modern entrepreneurship and company management" The goal should be realized by specified tasks: "1. To provide students with the acquisition of theoretical knowledge (natural sciences, information technologies, technical, humanitarian and professional study courses); 2. To provide students with opportunities to acquire practical skills and abilities that allow them to professionally manage processes in modern entrepreneurship and company management; 3. To develop the ability to formulate and solve problems specific to the transport industry, which are determined by the necessary theoretical knowledge and professional skills of the entrepreneur and the manager." (description of study programme).

The study program was developed in accordance Latvian regulations taking into account the Cabinet of Ministers' regulations of August 26, 2014 No. 512 "Regulations on the state standard of second-level professional higher education", the standard of the profession of the company manager (Appendix 13) which fulfills the Cabinet of Ministers of August 14, 2015 regulations of July No. 408 "Licensing regulations of study programs", as well as the University Law and RAI Satversme. The full - time studies are 4 years, the part time - 4, 5 years for both Latvian and English versions. The CP number for all form of studies is 160, including for elective courses - 6 CP (required 6 CP), internship - 24 CP (required min 20 CP). To meets the requirements of the Law on Environmental Protection and the Law on Civil Protection and Disaster Management and be Compliant with Latvian national

educational standards the study course "Environment and human protection" (2 CP) and "Ecology and green logistics" (2 CP) are included in the program. The compliance with the profession of the company manager standards is assured.

The Foreign language classes (3CP) are in all four programmes. The Business English classes (2 CP) are in both Latvian programmes and in part-time English programme. The Business English classes (2 CP) are also offered to all programmes as elective subject. The Latvian language for foreign students is only in full-time English programme (file Study program plans_ITL(SPL).xlsx).

The compliance with respective regulations and professional standards may be assessed as good.

The list of the subjects corresponds to the objectives above. As fulfillment of the previous assessment recommendations the programme was improved by combining two subjects into one (two cases) and renaming ten subjects for more precise contents description. It is assessed that these requirements were fulfilled.

Two types group of courses background knowledge and professional skills are well balanced and rationally implemented to the study schedule. The first part of education reflects more basic knowledge (first 3 semesters) both general and related to the field, and the later courses are more related to professional skills. Elected subject are also offered. The logic of the subject sequence is that follow up courses profit from the previous ones (explained during the visit), which is positive for student to understand relations and interdependencies between various parts of professional knowledge. The contents of the courses provide opportunities to obtain practical knowledge and skills, The adequate quality of the courses is achieved and controlled by yearly monitoring the results of teaching, taking into account opinions of representatives of external enterprises (confirmed during visit and meeting with employers).

2.2.2. N/A

2.2.3.

Several teaching method are applied depending on the subject structure including lecturing, situation analysis, group work, problem-oriented studies, use of information technology. The classes are well equipped with multimedia devices, which allows to illustrate the lectures by presentations. The laboratory courses are provided according to the study programme. Laboratories are sufficiently equipped for obtaining at least general technical and other professional skills.

The students opinions expresses in questionnaires filled up after the courses, which are analysed on yearly basis and conclusions implemented. In the self assessment report the students participation in "the development of the program, its discussion and approval" is mentioned but there was no opportunity to meet with student council representatives. Alignment of classes schedule and test times to the working students availability is a positive example of student centered approach, especially that it is combined with strict and controlled requirements for the students presence in the class (logbook). The ratio of contact time and student's independent working time (4/6 in full-time studies, 2/8 or 1.5/8.5 in part-time studies) is adequate. Application of Moodle environment for operating courses and e- learning is appreciated, as it is standardized approach for students and staff, the software has good reputation (expressed by staff and students).

There are small group of students especially in laboratory courses, which allows individual approach to each student.

2.2.4.

The internships are planned and organized providing students opportunity to acquire practical skills. The internships are organized due good links with local enterprises, with which cooperation

agreements were signed. The organisation aspects of internships are well defined and structured. The document provides rules for the internship goals, requirements for students, organization aspect, reporting and safety issues. The idea of presenting the internship results in public should be acknowledged. The internship manager supports both parts i.e. student and enterprise in efficient cooperation. The internships for foreign students are organized in the companies in which ability of communicating in English is provided. The internship is fully in line with education goals.

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6.

The topics of the student thesis are selected according to their relevance to professional skills to be acquired during the studies. The thesis topics are offered in accordance of various companies, which may suggest and support the subjects. The subjects of thesis provided to assessment team were in line with the study objectives and programme and of adequate quality.

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

In conclusion, the study programme is considered to be a very good programme that combines both the degree content and addresses the requirements to educate students to the appropriate level in the field to a high standard.

Strengths:

1. The programme periodical assessment and modernization is and should be a continuous practice;
2. The low number of students allows for individual approach to students development;
3. Graduates and representatives of industry shared a good opinion of the skills and background knowledge acquired at RAI.

Weaknesses:

1. Questionnaires used for monitoring quality of teaching should be anonymous to allow expressing opinions more freely;
2. The contacts with other higher educational institutions in Latvia and abroad should be more visible and then experience gained implemented in continuous subjects modernization.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1.

In the four study programs implemented in the field of study, information about program resources and material and technical support, including teaching staff, is practically common to all programs and was analysed in the Chapter 1.3.. Classrooms, a library, an auditorium-amphitheatre, laboratories and rooms for practical classes are available in the premises of RAI.

Modern learning management tools, including the Moodle system, are successfully used in the

student training process. The BigBlueButton (BBB) system allows teaching staff to cooperate with students online in audio, video, chat, etc. way.

RAI's library fund is regularly replenished. In the last two years, the literature of the "Transport services" library fund was supplemented by 115 items, 58 of which are in English. Four periodicals were purchased, three of them in English - International Airport Review, Air Traffic Control and Global Railway Review, as well as the local magazine "Balance". Students and faculty are informed about the library's latest literature on the RAI website once every four months.

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3.

The financial resources of the Riga Aeronautical Institute consist of income from studies paid by students, as well as income from the implementation of qualification improvement courses and professional education improvement programs (including EASA Part-147 courses). RAI does not receive funding from the state budget. The income allows RAI to provide a competitive salary for teaching staff, which meets the norms set by Regulation No. 445 of the Ministry of Education "Teachers' Salary Regulations". Salaries of teaching staff make up 50% of RAI's expenses. 7% is allocated to equipment, 6% to hardware renewal, 6% to the purchase of study literature.

125 students study in the study program, of which 62 study in Latvian, 63 in English. The tuition fee for full-time students studying in Latvian is 1,800 Euro per year, and for those studying in English - 2,300 Euro per year.

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

The International transport and enterprise management programme is considered highly positive, and the evidence presented on the subject material update was noted as ensuring taught materials remain fully compliant and updated. In the four study programs implemented in the field of study, information about program resources and material and technical support, including teaching staff, is practically common to all programs (with the deviation related to particular study program specifics, such as ATC simulator that is used by ATC program students only) and overall can be considered as sufficient to ensure high quality of study process.

Strengths:

1. Regular updates to the taught materials;
2. Excellent facilities.

Weaknesses:

Not identified

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements, facilities are well equipped and provides all the information and resources required to ensure high quality of study process.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.

The qualifications of teaching staff involved in study program " International transportation enterprise management" complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments and the implementation of RAI's strategic goals and tasks. In addition, teaching staff professional work experience in the relevant sector, regular improvement of knowledge in the relevant continuing education program of university teachers fully comply with the conditions of the implementation of the study program and the requirements of regulatory acts.

Total of 14 teaching staff are involved in the implementation of the " International transportation enterprise management" study program, of which 10 teaching staff are employed in the main work of RAI and 4 guest teaching staff.

From 14 teaching staff there are 5 doctors (3 RAI appointed academic positions) and 9 lecturers with a master's degree;

68% of study program are provided by RAI's academic staff, while 32% are provided by RAI's guest teaching staff (SAR p.3.4.1).

Teaching staff has good English knowledge, at least B2 level.

There are organised regular English classes for teachers once a week. Before they started to take the English course, there is a test to assess their level of knowledge. Next year RAI plans to take IELTS Academic to assess the improvement of teaching staff' language skills.

Aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses are assessed as reached. It was proved during interviews with students and graduates.

2.4.2.

Since 2013, there is decrease in teaching staff team. It has decreased from 26 to 14. This decrease is because several teaching staff have left RAI, reaching retirement age. Also, part-time lectures has quit form lectures position in RAI.

This reduction has been compensated in RAI and some teaching staff have been rehired. Very important is to point out that teaching staff from abroad and teaching staff with extensive work experience from the industry (aviation and transport services sector) have been recruited.

Reduction of teaching staff do not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the study programme and the compliance of the study programme with the requirements specified in regulatory enactments because involvement of new teaching staff mentioned before gives possibility to improve the management of the theoretical basic courses of the industry and the professional specialization courses of the industry.

RAI quality assurance department is involved in evaluation of study program to assess if composition of teaching stuff does not negatively impact study program. There is an internal Lecture Inspection Checklist for the study subjects implemented in RAI quality department. It is done by the Quality and Compliance Monitoring Manager of the RAI of the lectures based on specific parameters (e.g. Is the training material available? Is the room properly prepared for the lecture? Is the lighting, heating and ventilation, seat arrangement as specified in ATS TO training and operations manual? Are all the course records properly filled in and stored? Etc.).

Therefore changes in composition of teaching staff is monitored by RAI and is to conclude that do

not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the study program.

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4.

The members of the academic staff has publications or five years of practical experience as required by the Law on Higher Education Institutions. The number of publication considered as positive. However, the placement in the higher level of professional journals recommended for fulfilling.

2.4.5.

There is ensured mutual cooperation between teaching staff in RAI implementation of the study programme. This is ensued via performing self-evaluation of the study programs of the study direction takes place once in a study year.

As a part of the self-evaluation, a methodological meeting of the teaching staff is held at the beginning of the study year. During methodological meeting, the teaching staff can give feedback and suggestions and proposals for the necessary clarifications in the content of individual study courses.

As per SAR p.3.4.5. teaching staff can detect insufficient knowledge of the students in one of the study courses, he discusses and expresses his proposal to the teaching staff of the relevant study course of the bachelor's program about the need to correct the course content, methodology, literature or another issue. For instance, teaching staff of the professional specialization study courses of the industry, finding insufficient knowledge of the students on one of the topics of the higher mathematics course, can suggest to the higher mathematics teaching staff to strengthen the learning of the relevant topic.

This is to conclude that through the cooperation of the teaching staff of the study courses, the content of the study courses can be improved to ensure that the goals of the study program are achieved.

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

Professional bachelor study programme " International transportation enterprise management " teaching staff complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments and the implementation of RAI's strategic goals and tasks. Goal of the programme is to prepare highly qualified and comprehensively developed air traffic controllers with creative and analytical abilities in the management of air traffic and transport companies.

Changes in composition of teaching staff is monitored by RAI and is to conclude that do not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the study program.

Through the cooperation of the teaching staff of the study courses, the content of the study courses can be improved to ensure that the goals of the study program are achieved.

Strengths:

1. Cooperation system with teaching staff for necessary improvements in study program;
2. Implemented quality system;
3. Involvement of teaching staff from industry.

Weaknesses:

Not identified

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements of the 26.08.2014. Cabinet of Ministers Regulation Nr.512 "Regulations on the State Standard of second-level professional higher education", Annex 12_3_annex_SPUV_Compliance national education standard.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study programme complies with a valid professional standard of the Company's manager profession from 18 September 2019, registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-115.pdf.

Annex 13_3_annex_Professional bachelor study programs ITEM comparison of content compliance with the standard of the Company's manager profession.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study courses and the study materials prepared in Latvian and English. Annex ITEM(SPUV).rar

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements. Annex ITEM(SPUV)_diploma sample (working translation).pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Language standards of the staff meets the requirements. Annex 047_RAI-confirm-languageLV.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Language standards of the staff meets the requirements. Annex 046_RAI-confirm-English.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements. Annex SPUV.Foreign.st._day_2022-2023.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements. Annex Vienošānās_TSI_RAI_2022_MMS.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements. Annex 048_RAI-acknowledgement.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study programme meets all the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other relevant regulatory enactments

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

The International transport and enterprise management bachelor degree is considered a popular and successful taught course. The students, employers and local industry likewise recognise the programmes continued success.

The participation in Erasmus+ programmes for both staff and students could be promoted. Additionally, it is recommended that the staff fully anonymise the feedback documentation from students.

Strengths:

1. Unique Bachelor's programme that provides studies in the study field;
2. Regular updates to the taught materials;
3. Excellent facilities.

Weaknesses:

No significant deficiencies affecting the assessment identified

Evaluation of the study programme "International transportation enterprise management"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Excellent

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "International transportation enterprise management"

Short-term recommendations

The international cooperation should be promoted within staff and students leading to increasing number of staff and students participation.

Attempt should be undertaken to make existing national and international links more vivid.

Long-term recommendations

Questionnaires used for monitoring quality of teaching should be anonymous to allow students to express opinions more freely.

II - "Business management of international transport" ASSESSMENT

II - "Business management of international transport" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1.

The professional master's study programme "Business management of international transport", complies with indicators, conditions and criteria of the study field of "Transport services". The length of the implementation of the study programme, which is 1 year and 6 months for full-time studies and 2 years for part-time studies, are evaluated as sufficient for acquiring the necessary skills and way of thinking to enter the labor market.

2.1.2.

According to the SAR p. 101, the title of the study programme is "Business management of international transport" in the study field of "Transport services" with education classification code 47840. with the last 3 numbers (840) standing for transport services according to the classification of Latvian education which can be accessed here: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>. There is no qualification given after graduating as it is a professional master's programme with no qualification provided.

According to the SAR p.101, the aim of the programme is to prepare highly qualified and comprehensively developed masters with creative and analytical abilities in business management of international transport. According to the information provided in the SAR p.101.-103, the admission requirements of this programme differ for English and for Latvian as this programme is being implemented in both of these languages. For the study programme in Latvian the admission requirements are professional bachelor's degree or second level

professional higher education obtained after completing a full-time study program of at least four years in the following fields: natural sciences, transport services, economics, management sciences and other related fields, sectors. For the programme in English, it is professional bachelor's degree or second-level professional higher education obtained after completing a full-time study program of at least four years in the following fields: natural sciences, transport services, economics, management sciences and other related fields, sectors. English language proficiency "B2 level" at least.

It has been stated in the SAR p.102, that after successful completion of the studies, students are awarded with Professional master's degree in Business Management of International Transport. According to the SAR p.102, the study programme is both full-time and part-time study programme with 60 CP to be gathered during the study process.

2.1.3.

According to the SAR p.103-104, there are no significant changes in the parameters of the study programme, however, minor changes have been made as 1. Combining two study courses into one with a specified name of the combined course; 2. Study course titles are defined more precisely; 3. There are replacements and additions of the new study courses. Replaced courses- Business English, Strategic Management. Added courses - Innovative economics and marketing, Information, communication and CALS technologies. 4. The "Latvian language for foreign students" study course has been introduced for foreign students.

2.1.4.

According to the SAR p.107, the official statistics reflect on graduates of higher education institutions (monitoring of graduates), which is carried out in accordance with the regulations of the

Cabinet of Ministers of June 25, 2019 No. 276 "Regulations of the State Education Information System", Riga Aeronautical Institute ranks 8th among private universities, which is 78.2% employment of graduates by profession (excluding foreign graduates). Many of graduates associate their careers with such companies as: SJSC "Latvijas gaisa satiksme", SJSC "Latvijas Dzelzceļš", Ltd "LDZ Cargo", Ltd "LDZ Rolling Stock Service". Logistics programme graduates work in logistics companies such as Ltd "A&A Logistic", Ltd "Unik", Ltd "Solution", while management program graduates work in the following international transport companies Ltd "Kreiss", "Havas", and other transport companies Ltd "CARGOFLEX".

According to the SAR p.88, the number of students enrolled in full-time studies in the last two years has decreased by about 30% compared to the previous three years. On the other hand, part-time students have not been admitted at all in the last two years.

According to the SAR p.108, in the year 2019./20 there was 8 students admitted, in 2020./21. - 13 students. There has been a significant increase in 2021./22.with a number of 19 students admitted and in 2022./23. - 40 students.

2.1.5. N/A

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

All of the indicators of the study programme are in compliance with the existing preconditions of the implementation of the study programme. The study programme "Business management of international transport" complies with the study field indicators, conditions and criteria. The study programme is implemented in Latvian and English. The goals, objectives, learning outcomes are in line and in compliance. There has been a significant level of decrease in admitted students in the last study years which causes instability. There is also a rather low involvement of students in study mobility.

Strengths:

None identified

Weaknesses:

None identified

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1.

As provided in SAR, the main goal of the professional master study programme "Business management of international transport" (47840) is to to prepare highly qualified and comprehensively developed masters with creative and analytical abilities in business management of international transport. The goal is realized by specified tasks: "1. To provide students with the acquisition of theoretical knowledge (modern management systems, management of transport companies, information technologies in the management of transport systems) about the latest achievements in the transport industry; 2. To provide students with opportunities to acquire practical skills and abilities that allow them to manage international transport; 3. To develop the ability to formulate and solve the problems specific to the transport industry, which are determined by the theoretical knowledge and professional skills necessary for the business management specialist of international transport."

The study program was developed in accordance Latvian regulations taking into account the Cabinet

of Ministers' regulations of August 26, 2014 No. 512 "Regulations on the state standard of second-level professional higher education", the standard of the profession of the company manager (Appendix 13) which fulfills the Cabinet of Ministers of August 14, 2015 regulations of July No. 408 "Licensing regulations of study programs", as well as the University Law and RAI Satversme. The full - time studies for both Latvian and English versions are 1,5 years, the part time - 2 years. The CP number for all form of studies is 60, including 6 CP (required 6 CP) practices. To meets the requirements of the Law on Environmental Protection and the Law on Civil Protection and Disaster Management and be Compliant with Latvian national educational standards, if the student has not learned the respective subjects in a lower-level the study course study program, she / he learns them in addition to the master program.

The compliance with standard of the profession of the company manager standards is assured via admission requirement to have bachelor degree entering the master programme. The Business English classes (2 CP) are offered to Latvian students and part time English studies. The Latvian language classes are offered only to full time English programme (see Study program plans_BMIT (SPUVm).xlsx file). This is inconsistency between part time and full time English programmes.

The contents of the subjects corresponds to the objectives and tasks above. As fulfillment of the previous assessment recommendations the programme was improved by combining two subjects into one (two cases), renaming five subjects for more precise contents description, two courses replacement and adding Latvian language course for foreign students. It is assessed that these requirements were fulfilled.

The contents of the courses provide opportunities to obtain extend knowledge and skills, obtained during the bachelor studies. The adequate quality of the courses is achieved and controlled by yearly monitoring the results of teaching, taking into account opinions of representatives of external enterprises. The close contact with industry allows to align the study contents to labor market needs. The industry representatives are involved in MSc thesis preparation starting for creating the subject, contents monitoring and defense.

2.2.2.

Students are focused mainly of practical aspects of the field. There are two study papers to be prepared based on literature survey and internship outcome. The degree is based on thesis but no clear requirements for scientific contents is required.

2.2.3.

Several teaching method are applied depending on the subject structure but the main form is lecturing. The teaching methods are individually selected by the lecturer and discuss during methodological meetings. The classes are well equipped with multimedia devices, which allows to illustrate the lectures by presentations. The students opinions expresses in questionnaires filled up after the courses, which are analyzed on yearly basis and conclusions implemented. In the self assessment report the students participation in "the development of the program, its discussion and approval" is mentioned but there was no opportunity to meet with student council representatives. Alignment of schedule of classes and test times to the working students availability is a positive example of student centered approach, especially that it is combined with strict and controlled requirements for the students presence in the class. Application of Moodle environment for operating courses and e- learning is appreciated, as it is standarized approach for students and staff, the software has good reputation.

There are small group of students especially in laboratory courses, which allows individual approach to each student.

2.2.4.

The internships are organized providing students opportunity to acquire practical skills. The internships are organized due good links with local enterprises, with which cooperation agreements were signed. The organisation aspects of internships are well defined and structured. The document provides rules for the internship goals, requirements for students, organization aspect, reporting and safety issues. The idea of presenting the internship results in public should be acknowledged. The internship manager supports both parts i.e. student and enterprise in efficient cooperation. The internships for foreign students are organized in the companies in which ability of communicate in English is provided.

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6. The topics of the student thesis are selected according to their relevance to professional skills to be acquired during the studies. The thesis topics are offered in accordance of various companies, which may suggest and support the subjects. The subjects of thesis provided to assessment team were in line with the study objectives and programme. The document regulating preparing BSc and MSc Thesis is available for the students.

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

Professional Master study programme "Business management of international transport" (47840) provide the theoretical knowledge about the latest achievements in the transport industry, provide students with opportunities to acquire practical skills and abilities to manage international transport and to solve the problems specific to the transport industry.

Strengths:

1. The programme is in line with national regulations and tasks to achieve educational goals;
2. The EASA certificates are valuable assets to RAI offer;
3. The programme periodical assessment and modernization is and should be a continuous practice;
4. The low number of students allows for individual approach to students development;
5. Graduates and representatives of industry share the good opinion of skills and background knowledge received at RAI.

Weaknesses:

1. Questionnaires used for monitoring quality of teaching should be anonymous to allow expressing opinions more freely;
2. The contacts with other higher educational institutions in Latvia and abroad should be more visible and experience gained implemented in subjects modernization.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The master thesis are selected taking into account the suggestions of local Enterprise's, which allows to align the subjects of thesis to needs of local industry. There is a weak contribution of scientific contents.

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1.

In the four study programs implemented in the field of study, information about program resources and material and technical support, including teaching staff, is practically common to all programs and was analysed in the Chapter 1.3.. Classrooms, a library, an auditorium-amphitheatre, laboratories and rooms for practical classes are available in the premises of RAI.

Modern learning management tools, including the Moodle system, are successfully used in the student training process. The BigBlueButton (BBB) system allows teaching staff to cooperate with students online in audio, video, chat, etc. way.

RAI's library fund is regularly replenished. In the last two years, the literature of the "Transport services" library fund was supplemented by 115 items, 58 of which are in English. Four periodicals were purchased, three of them in English - International Airport Review, Air Traffic Control and Global Railway Review, as well as the local magazine "Bilance". Students and faculty are informed about the library's latest literature on the RAI website once every four months.

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3.

The financial resources of the Riga Aeronautical Institute consist of income from studies paid by students, as well as income from the implementation of qualification improvement courses and professional education improvement programs (including EASA Part-147 courses). RAI does not receive funding from the state budget. The income allows RAI to provide a competitive salary for teaching staff, which meets the norms set by Regulation No. 445 of the Ministry of Education "Teachers' Salary Regulations". Salaries of teaching staff make up 50% of RAI's expenses. 7% is allocated to equipment, 6% to hardware renewal, 6% to the purchase of study literature.

18 students study in the study program, five of whom study in Latvian, 13 in English. The tuition fee for full-time students studying in Latvian is 2000 Euros per year (1500 Euros for RAI graduates), and 2300 Euros per year for those studying in English (2000 Euros for RAI graduates).

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

The Business management of International transport Masters degree programme resources is considered highly positive, and the evidence presented on the subject material update was noted as ensuring taught materials remain fully compliant and updated. In the four study programs implemented in the field of study, information about program resources and material and technical support, including teaching staff, is practically common to all programs (with the deviation related to particular study program specifics, such as ATC simulator that is used by ATC program students only) and overall can be considered as sufficient to ensure high quality of study process.

Strengths:

1. ATC Centre simulator availability for students;
2. Regular updates to the taught materials;
3. Close collaboration with industry.

Weaknesses:

Not identified

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements, facilities are well equipped and provides all the information and resources required to ensure high quality of study process.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.

The qualifications of teaching staff involved in study program " Business management of international transport" complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments and the implementation of RAI's strategic goals and tasks. In addition, teaching staff professional work experience in the relevant sector, regular improvement of knowledge in the relevant continuing education program of university teachers fully comply with the conditions of the implementation of the study program and the requirements of regulatory acts.

Total of 9 teaching staff are involved in the implementation of the "Business Management of International Transport" study program, of which 6 teaching staff or 67% are employed in the main work of RAI and 3 guest teaching staff; 3 doctors (3 RAI appointed academic positions) and 6 lecturers with a master's degree participate in the implementation of the study program; 85% of study program are provided by RAI's academic staff, while 15% are provided by RAI's guest teaching staff (SAR p.3.4.1).

Teaching staff has good English knowledge, at least B2 level.

There are organised regular English classes for teachers once a week. Before they started to take the English course, there is a test to assess their level of knowledge. Next year RAI plans to take IELTS Academic to assess the improvement of teaching staff' language skills.

Aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses are assessed as reached. It was proved during interviews with students and graduates.

2.4.2.

Since 2013, there is decrease in teaching staff team. It has decreased from 12 to 9. This decrease is because several teaching staff have left RAI, reaching retirement age. Also, part-time lectures has quit form lectures position in RAI.

This reduction has been compensated in RAI and some teaching staff have been rehired. Very important is to point out that teaching staff from abroad and teaching staff with extensive work experience from the industry (aviation and transport services sector) have been recruited.

Reduction of teaching staff do not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the study programme and the compliance of the study programme with the requirements specified in regulatory enactments because involvement of new teaching staff mentioned before gives possibility to improve the management of the theoretical basic courses of the industry and the professional specialization courses of the industry.

RAI quality assurance department is involved in evaluation of study program to assess if composition of teaching staff does not negatively impact study program. There is an internal Lecture Inspection Checklist for the study subjects implemented in RAI quality department. It is done by the Quality and Compliance Monitoring Manager of the RAI of the lectures based on specific parameters (e.g. Is the training material available? Is the room properly prepared for the lecture? Is the lighting, heating and ventilation, seat arrangement as specified in ATS TO training and operations manual? Are all the course records properly filled in and stored? Etc.). Therefore changes in composition of teaching staff is monitored by RAI and is to conclude that do not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the study program.

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4.

The members of the academic staff has publications or five years of practical experience as required by the Law on Higher Education Institutions. The number of publication considered as positive. However, the placement in the higher level of professional journals recommended for fulfilling.

2.4.5.

There is ensured mutual cooperation between teaching staff in RAI implementation of the study programme. This is ensued via performing self-evaluation of the study programs of the study direction takes place once in a study year.

As a part of the self-evaluation, a methodological meeting of the teaching staff is held at the beginning of the study year. During methodological meeting, the teaching staff can give feedback and suggestions and proposals for the necessary clarifications in the content of individual study courses.

As per SAR p.3.4.5. teaching staff can detect insufficient knowledge of the students in one of the study courses, he discusses and expresses his proposal to the teaching staff of the relevant study course of the bachelor's program about the need to correct the course content, methodology, literature or another issue. In this way, through the cooperation of teaching staff of study courses and study programs of different study blocks, the content of study courses and study programs is improved and their mutual connection to achieve the goals of the study programs takes place.

This is to conclude that through the cooperation of the teaching staff of the study courses, the content of the study courses can be improved to ensure that the goals of the study program are achieved.

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

Professional master study program "Business management of international transport" teaching staff complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments and the implementation of RAI's strategic goals and tasks. Goal of the programme is to prepare highly qualified and comprehensively developed air traffic controllers with creative and analytical abilities in the management of air traffic and transport companies.

Changes in composition of teaching staff is monitored by RAI and is to conclude that do not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the study program.

Through the cooperation of the teaching staff of the study courses, the content of the study courses can be improved to ensure that the goals of the study program are achieved.

Strengths:

1. Good cooperation system of teaching staff for necessary improvements in study program;
2. Staff motivation implemented in quality system.

Weaknesses:

Not identified

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements of the 26.08.2014. Cabinet of Ministers Regulation Nr.512 "Regulations on the State Standard of second-level professional higher education". Annex 12_4_annex_SPUVm_Compliance national education standard.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Professional qualification not provided after completing of study program

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study courses and the study materials prepared in Latvian and English. Annex BMIT(SPUVm).rar

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements. Annex BMIT(SPUVm)_diploma sample (working translation).pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Language standards of the staff meets the requirements. Annex 047_RAI-confirm-languageLV.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Language standards of the staff meets the requirements. Annex 046_RAI-confirm-English.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements. Annex SPUV.Foreign.st._day_2022-2023.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements. Annex Vienošānās_TSI_RAI_2022_MMS.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Meets the requirements. Annex 048_RAI-acknowledgement.pdf

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study programme meets all the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other relevant regulatory enactments

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

The Business management of international transport Masters degree is considered a popular and successful taught course for both the domestic EU and international market. The students, employers and local industry likewise recognise the programmes continued success. The participation in Erasmus+ programmes for both staff and students could be promoted. Additionally, recommended anonymise the feedback from students.

Strengths:

1. Excellent degree standard that is well considered by the industry both nationally and internationally;
2. Strong employment opportunities for graduates of this qualification;
3. ATC Centre simulator availability for students;
4. Regular updates to the taught materials;
5. Close collaboration with industry.

Weaknesses:

No significant deficiencies affecting the assessment identified

Evaluation of the study programme "Business management of international transport"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Excellent

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Business management of international transport"

Short-term recommendations

The international cooperation should be promoted within staff and students leading to increasing number of staff and students participation.

Attempt should be undertaken to make existing national and international links more vivid.

Long-term recommendations

Questionnaires used for monitoring quality of teaching should be anonymous to allow students to express opinions more freely.

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

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

Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation		Comment
R1 - Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 2.1 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field whilst implementing its internal quality assurance system:		Partially compliant	The RAI has managed to establish internal quality assurance system that works effectively in regards to student satisfaction and quality of the study courses implemented. However, it has been stated in the onsite visit that graduates and employers are not formally involved in the QA processes while the SAR provides the opposite information. It makes a confusion and is contradicting.
R2 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the level of development of scientific research and artistic creation (if applicable)		Partially compliant	The scientific research with the level of development of scientific research is partially compliant, as the scientific outputs claimed are deemed to be low level and mostly limited to regional conference papers. The impact assessment of the cited papers and their weightings could not be determined, and likewise, it was not fully evident if these papers had been peer reviewed externally.

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation		Comment
R3 - The cooperation implemented within the study field with various Latvian and foreign organizations ensures the achievement of the aims of the study field.	Fully compliant		The cooperation with Latvian and foreign organisations is fully compliant with the study programs and in line with the study field. It expands the practical skills for the students due to internships, improves the study programmes due to participation of external organisations in programs modernisations.
R4 - Elimination of deficiencies and shortcomings identified in the previous assessment of the study field, if any, or implementation of the recommendations provided.		Partially compliant	Not all of the deficiencies have been rectified since the previous assessment. Whilst it is recognised that RAI has made significant effort and work, that has been devoted to the elimination of the deficiencies and it is praised by the expert group, however, it is still necessary to make the necessary further improvements for 2 of the recommendations that were received in regard to ERASMUS+ projects and teaching staff involvement in funded research.

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

No.	Study programme	R5	R6	R7	R8	Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)
1	Air traffic control (42840)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Excellent
2	International transport logistics (42840)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Excellent

No.	Study programme	R5	R6	R7	R8	Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)
3	International transportation enterprise management (42840)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Excellent
4	Business management of international transport (47840)	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Excellent

The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts

None recorded