

Expert group joint opinion

Evaluation Procedure: Assessment of Study Field

Higher Education Institution: State Police College

Study field: Internal Security and Civil Protection

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

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The State Police College (hereinafter - SPC) is a professional higher education institution established by the Cabinet of Ministers under the authority of the State Police, which implements the short-cycle professional higher education study programme 'Police Work.' This programme falls under the study field of Internal Security and Civil Protection, and effectively serves as the foundational programme within the professional education system managed by the Internal Security Academy.

The mission of the College is to prepare well-educated police officers for professional service in the State Police. The College is a modern, prestigious and recognisable educational institution, which provides short-cycle professional higher education in the work-based environment, in accordance with the Standard of Junior Officer of State Police, preparing graduates for work in the State Police and further studies.

The academic staff of SPC consists of both theoretical legal scholars and practical police workers who are capable of providing the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical skills within the study programme.

The Strategy of SPC is linked to the Strategy of the State Police. Close cooperation with the State Police ensures the evaluation of the study programme and adjustments according to changing life situations and the demands of the work environment. SPC has also established an internal quality system that includes gathering opinions from all involved parties for the evaluation of the study programme. Internal regulations stipulate the involvement of all staff in collegiate institutions within SPC. However, the development of a unified document outlining the evaluation of the study programme would be desirable.

The SPC has effectively managed resources and developed modern facilities, providing strong student support and practical training environments. Its efficient financial allocation system ensures continuous improvement, while flexible learning options cater to diverse student needs. Additionally, SPC aligns its research with strategic goals, addressing industry needs and enhancing professional training through the Internal Security Academy. The institution has built strong national partnerships that reinforce the relevance of its study programme and leveraged Erasmus+ and international collaborations to enrich the curriculum through shared best practices and joint events.

Nevertheless, the SPC needs to improve its use of external funding opportunities, such as EU grants, and adopt a standardised approach to digital learning tools like Moodle. Attracting qualified teaching staff and balancing teaching and research workloads remain significant challenges. Limited international research participation and insufficient involvement of teaching staff in research activities restrict the institution's academic impact. Furthermore, increasing student engagement in research projects and conferences is essential to develop a robust research culture. Addressing these issues, along with expanding teaching exchange opportunities and establishing long-term Erasmus+ student exchanges, will be crucial for enhancing SPC's global quality, professional development, and international competitiveness.

SPC has almost successfully implemented all the expert made recommendations after the licensing of the first-level professional higher education study programme "Police work" except clarification in the admission requirements for 120 ECTS and 150 ECTS study programmes.

The content of the study programme corresponds with the state professional standard, State educational standard and the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia and international standards regulating police work and the rule of law. After graduation the students are guaranteed a job in the structural units of the state police. The SPC puts a lot of emphasis on practical classes with different kinds of methods – real-life and XVR simulations to prepare students for different situations. The study programme includes internship in State police structural units throughout Latvia.

I - Assessment of the Study Field

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1.1 Management of the Study Field

Analysis

1.1.1. The study field and the relevant study programme complies with the main directions of the strategic development of the college and meet the needs and the development trends of the society.

The State Police College (hereinafter - SPC) is a professional higher education institution under the authority of the State Police, founded by the Cabinet of Ministers. The strategic vision of the college is created in accordance with the priorities and mechanisms for the implementation of these priorities set by the State Police. The priorities and directions of the strategic development of the SPC are related to the development of the State Police in connection with the public interests, the state of crime and general social, economic, geopolitical and foreign policy risks, legal and other factors that also affect criminogenic processes and determine crime trends. (State Police College development strategy for 2024-2027).

The aim of the SPC is to ensure the acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary for practical police work, to promote further education and professional development, as well as to increase the level of interest and satisfaction of students with the chosen studies (training), chosen profession, as well as employers with the prepared specialists.

Core policy directions of the SPC:

1. to develop and implement a short-cycle higher vocational education programme;
2. to implement the educational process, to promote the personal development of students in the short-cycle higher vocational education programme and to provide them with the opportunity to acquire short-cycle higher vocational education and the fifth level of professional qualification, as well as to issue a diploma regarding short-cycle higher vocational education in accordance with the procedures specified in regulatory enactments;
3. to provide students with the opportunity to prepare for the continuation of education to acquire first cycle higher vocational education and the sixth level of professional qualification;
4. to develop and implement vocational education and training programmes, including further vocational education and non-formal education;
5. to organise work-based studies and training and prepare students and learners of vocational education programmes for service in the State Police.

Vision of the SPC is that the College as a modern, competitive research and educational institution for the largest institution subordinate to the Ministry of the Interior – the State Police. (State Police College development strategy for 2024-2027)

It should be noted that the SPC provides studies of a sufficiently high level, but the level of research in the field of law and security indicated in its strategy needs to be increased. Qualitative research in any field of science forms the basis of qualitative studies.

The mission of the SPC is to provide educational opportunities for employees of the State Police and other law enforcement authorities and to develop research activities in the field of national internal security.

The goals of the studies are sufficiently clearly defined and they correspond to the development trends of the society and its needs in the specific period of time - to prepare proficient specialists (Responding police officer); Cabinet Regulations on the Occupational Classification, Basic Tasks Corresponding to the Profession, and Basic Qualification Requirements: junior state police officer with profession code 3355 39) for the State police and aim of study programme complies with the needs of society and the national security with a strong emphasis on developing professional skills

and giving respective basic knowledge. (SAR of SPC 1.1.section)

Taking into account the fact that all structural units of the SPC participate in providing studies in one way or another and it receives full support (including financial) from the employer (State Police), it can be considered that the study goals meet the employer's requirements and are fully achievable.

1.1.2. In the self assessment report (SAR 2.1.2. section) of SPC, an evaluation of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities, and threats has been conducted. The SPC indicates that the current situation has been taken into account for strategic development planning.

During the visit, the experts received confirmation that the evaluation corresponds to reality. They particularly emphasized specific points from the SWOT analysis. It is positively noted that the SPC collaborates closely with the State Police in organizing study work, updating programmes, and developing strategy of SPC. Insufficient infrastructure for practical classes as a weakness mentioned in the self assessment report (hereinafter - SAR) by the experts' observation during the visit that the infrastructure and technical support are good. One exception is the deficiency of open air sports facilities for physical education classes.

The SPC's awareness of opportunities to improve infrastructure, attract external funding, develop innovative teaching methods, recruit teachers, and other initiatives is also commendable, with specific activities highlighted. This indicates that the SWOT analysis is not merely formal but realistically assesses the development of the programme and the SPC.

In the self-assessment report (SAR 2.1.2 section), low remuneration is indicated as a threat. However, during the visit, the experts confirmed that academic staff receive various types of bonuses, and the SPC requests appropriate funding from the State Police each year.

1.1.3. Within the study field, the SPC implements one short-cycle programme, therefore there is no separate management structure for the study field and the study programme. Considering that the implementation of this programme is the main task of the College, its structure is completely subordinated to the effective implementation of the programme. In the SPC officials with special ranks and staff employed under contract operate in a single hierarchical system, where one official has been subordinated to another official. (SAR of SPC 1.1.section)

The director of SPC is the highest ranking official of the College In accordance with the procedures for organisation of work laid down in the SPC, the deputy director (for study and training matters) of the SPC and the deputy director (for service and administrative matters) of the SPC are directly subordinate to the director of the SPC. (SAR of SPC 1.2.section)

The Education Coordination Unit, the Department of Humanities, the Department of Police Law, the Department of Law and the Department of Sports are under the direct authority of the deputy director (for study and training matters).

The Cadet Unit, the Career Development and Professional Training Centre, Administrative Unit, Library and K-9 Unit are under the direct authority of the deputy director (for service and administrative matters). (SAR of SPC 1.2.section)

The director of the SPC issues orders to officials / staff and heads of departments reporting directly to him / her. The director of the SPC may give direct orders to any official / staff member. The deputy director of the SPC organises the work of the departments reporting directly to him / her and may give orders to the officials / staff of the departments reporting to him / her (to the deputy director of the SPC). The head of the departments of the SPC manages the work of his / her department and issue orders to the officials / staff of his / her department. (SAR of SPC 1.2.section)

The work organisation at the SPC is determined by the internal laws and regulations issued by the director of the SPC, which are available on the website of the SPC: available at <http://www.policijas.koledza.gov.lv/> under „Normatīvie akti” (Normatīvie akti | Valsts policijas koledža (koledza.gov.lv)).

The competences of officials / staff and departments and the verification of management decisions

are laid down in the Rules of Procedure of the College, Rules of Procedure of units and departments and the job descriptions of officials / staff.

The study and examination procedures of the short-cycle higher vocational education programme "Police Work" are laid down in the Study Regulations of the College.

The regulation of these procedures shows that the study process at SPC is quite strictly regulated and managed. The regulation of these procedures shows that the study process at SPC is quite strictly regulated. In addition, the SPC's internal regulatory acts describe in sufficient detail the procedure for conducting tests and contesting their results, which allows us to consider that the student achievement evaluation system has been developed in a qualitative manner.

The direct management of the study programme is carried out by the Deputy Director of the SPC for studies. In cooperation with the director and council of the college, he carries out the selection of teaching staff, organizes cooperation between them, as well as participates in the evaluation of teaching staff and monitoring the quality of the learning process, strengthening practical orientation in the study process, including the organisation of internships, promotion of the research-based study process and cooperation with the employer - State police. (SAR of SPC 1.2. section)

Evaluation visit comments from lecturers and students indicate that they receive adequate technical and administrative support. The experts found during the visit and discussions with the teaching staff, they are not sufficiently informed about collegial decision-making related to the development and updating of the SP. The experts do not dispute that the college has a system in place according to which representatives of teachers and students can formally participate in decision-making. The experts emphasize that during the interviews with the teaching staff and students, it became clear that in practice, the participation of the general college community (not through representatives, heads of departments, but directly) in decision-making is lacking, e.g. by applying open community discussions, deliberation sessions, the opportunity to participate in council or other group meetings as listeners, to observe meetings remotely, etc. There were no examples of this or that kind of participation in the interviews.

1.1.4. As mentioned in the SAR (2.1.4. Section) Admission to the College is in accordance with the Admission Rules, which are approved for each academic year. <https://www.policijas.koledza.gov.lv/lv/media/3807/download?attachment> Recognition of non-formal education is in accordance with the College's Regulation No 7 of 17 June 2019 "Recognition of education acquired outside formal education or professional experience competences and learning outcomes achieved in prior learning. Regulations of the Recognition Committee" <https://www.policijas.koledza.gov.lv/lv/media/1193/download?attachment> (both in Latvian).

The entrance exams are determined by external regulatory acts (the Service Law and Cabinet of Ministers regulations) and include a physical fitness and health examination, including a psychological assessment. Additionally, the SPC has established entrance exams for attentiveness, memory, and Latvian language proficiency. It can be concluded that the selection criteria set by the SPC for admission to the college are justified and optimal.

The admission requirements are publicly available on the SPC website, and applicants can freely familiarise themselves with them (<https://www.policijas.koledza.gov.lv/lv/isa-cikla-profesionala-augstaka-izglitiba-programma-policijas-darbs-ida>). As can be seen, the study programme's credit point volume is indicated as 80 or 100 CP (depending on the type of study—full-time or part-time, either for persons with a secondary education or for those currently in service). In general, it can be concluded that the information on the website is determined according to credit points, which was valid until October 10, 2022, after which amendments to the Law on Higher Education Institutions came into force, providing that the volume of programmes must be determined according to the ECTS credit point system (the action should be carried out until December 31, 2024 and official changes may only be made after the Study Quality Commission has made a decision on changing the volume of the programme).

Additionally, the admission requirements have not addressed a previous accreditation deficiency that specified the need for detailed requirements for individuals with the professional qualification of junior inspector. (In the SPC SAR, section 2.6 Implementation of Recommendations from Previous Assessment Procedures, it is noted that this requirement was only partially implemented.)

In developing the admission requirements, the State Police and the SPC take into account both the legal requirements and the personal qualities necessary for the latest police officer. Therefore, it can be said that the developed system is logical and informationally accessible to all involved parties.

Since the SPC cadets are officers serving in the State Police, the selection and admission of students take place according to the allocated budget for the cadets positions assigned to the SPC. As noted by the SPC leadership, SPC management staff and employer representatives during the visit, it is challenging to complete the existing study places. The reasons for this include high school graduates' reluctance to study at the SPC and subsequently work in the State Police (due to low pay and lack of prestige of police work in society), as well as candidates inability to pass the physical fitness entrance exams and health assessments.

The SPC organises various recruitment events, including visits to high schools, signing agreements with high schools for cooperation, open house days at the SPC, and participation in various popular community events and education fairs.

The SPC has developed an internal normative Act Regulations of the Commission for Recognizing Study Results Obtained through Non-Formal Education or Competencies Gained through Professional Experience and Previous Education. This document complies with the requirements set forth by the Cabinet of Ministers.

It can be concluded that the SPC has developed procedures for the admission of applicants and the recognition of prior educational achievements, which are publicly accessible, logical, and in compliance with external and internal regulatory acts. The publicly available information on the study program reveals a discrepancy in the credit point volume, which does not comply with Cabinet Regulation requirements, as well as the failure to address previously identified deficiencies. Additionally, the SPC carries out various activities to attract applicants with secondary education to study at the SPC.

1.1.5. The assessment of students' achievements is regulated by Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 305 On the State Professional Higher Education Standard. In SAR Section 2.1.5, it is stated that the established principles are followed, and the assessment is carried out using a 10-point scale. During the visit, the experts had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the Moodle system and IPAS (Education Process Administration System), which confirmed that the assessment methods used are in compliance with external regulations.

The assessment of student achievements and study results is specified in the course descriptions (Section 56.1 of the Higher Education Law. Study Course). During the visit, the experts did not gain full confidence that the course descriptions are accessible to students. Specifically, the course descriptions were not completely uploaded to the Moodle platform (for the evaluation of Moodle, please see section 1.3.4). The experts understand that the Moodle platform is being completely prepared and improved, with a deadline set for November 1, 2024, and there is some deficiency (noted by the deputy director of the SPC and individual lecturers).

In meetings with students during the visit, there was no assurance that students knew where to find the course descriptions with specific requirements and assessment criteria for study courses. Students and representatives of the academic and administrative staff indicated that all course requirements are explained in detail to students both verbally and in the course presentation materials. Additionally, there is always an opportunity to consult with teachers' staff, who consistently inform students before assessments.

The Study reglament of the State Police College specifies the procedures for taking assessments and the types of assessments. The regulations do not include a procedure for appealing grades. The

assessment system as mentioned before complies with the regulations set by the Cabinet of Ministers (Regulations on the State Professional Higher Education Standard point 58), using a 10-point scale. However, course descriptions that specify the knowledge, skills, and competencies to be acquired are not available for all study courses yet. Students have the opportunity to view all their grades in the Moodle and IPAS system, retake failed assessments, and monitor their progress. The internal regulations of SPC do not specify the procedure for appealing grades, given that a grade in Latvia is an administrative act.

It can be concluded that not all developed procedures have been implemented and are functioning. Instead, there is effective collaboration between students and instructors.

The procedure for assessing student achievements is outlined in the Study Reglament. The SAR (2.1.5. section) indicated that “the requirements for the study course, assessment procedures, interim evaluations, and other information necessary for completing the course are available in the course descriptions. The teacher of the study course is responsible for the course content and assessment”.

During the visit, the experts did not gain confidence that a methodology or legal regulation for the unified development of course descriptions had been established. If the SPC had approved a standardized template, it would ensure a uniform approach to the development of course descriptions. Additionally students can view their grades and assessments in the IPAS system. Both teachers and students confirmed during the visit that assessments and evaluations are clearly outlined and accessible. In any case, direct communication with the teacher or the head of department is possible. Consultations for each study course are also scheduled and registered in the IPAS system in accordance with the regulations for planning, ensuring, executing, controlling, and surveying the educational process at the SPC.

It can be concluded that the evaluation of student achievements at the SPC is in place and is being analyzed, but not all procedures are clearly defined. Study results and student opinions on the course delivery are being analyzed.

1.1.6. The SPC internal normative Act on the Guidelines for Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Assessment and Control at the State Police College has been developed. The document specifies delicts of academic integrity, their types, measures for prevention, and the organisation of the work of the Plagiarism Review Commission. The guidelines are aimed at student delicts of academic integrity, although the document also identifies the staff of the SPC, including teachers, as subjects. Another document that prohibits academic integrity delicts by students is the Study Regulations, which bans plagiarism and the use of unauthorised aids.

SPC has established an Ethics Committee, whose results and regulatory framework are publicly available on the website (<https://www.policijas.koledza.gov.lv/lv/etikas-komisija>). The Ethics Code outlines the principles and the committee's actions to ensure adherence to ethical standards within SPC.

The SPC has not implemented its own anti-plagiarism tools for checking tests and papers during the study process. During the visit, the academic and administrative staff expressed hope that anti-plagiarism tools will be implemented. The qualification papers at that moment are 100% checked using the plagiarism tool from the University of Latvia, which is used by most higher education institutions in Latvia. Collaboration has begun with the Riga Technical university to develop a similar tool specifically for the SPC.

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

Taking into account that SPC implements a programme related to national internal security, no environmental procedures can be publicly disclosed. Overall, SPC has established an optimal internal quality policy that allows for the evaluation of study quality. Both in the SAR and in discussions with

SPC academic staff, it was clarified that many stakeholders are involved in the review and assurance of the study programme. There is a risk that this mechanism is fragmented, and the necessity for a unified regulatory act should be assessed, which would establish the procedure and timelines for programme review.

SPC regularly collects data to obtain feedback from students, graduates, and employers. Data on applicants is also analysed. The internal regulations should specify the procedure by which students have the right to appeal grades and the assessment process.

Strengths:

- 1.Regular feedback collection.
- 2.Good collaboration among all parties involved - SPC, employers, and students.

Weaknesses:

1. No specific regulation prohibiting academic misconduct for academic staff.
2. Not specified the procedure for appealing students` assessment. The study courses 'final grades or grades that may impact the student's status are an administrative act in Latvia.

1.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System

Analysis

1.2.1. The SAR of the SPC indicates that a quality policy has been established, defined by an internal order that is not publicly accessible. It is justified by the fact that the SPC is part of Latvia's internal security system, and some information is classified or designated for service use only, for which the Ministry of the Interior is responsible. Annual activity reports of the SPC are publicly available on the Web page (<https://www.policijas.koledza.gov.lv/lv/publikacijas-parskati>).

The internal quality assurance system includes the following elements: there is an internal regulation developed for organising the study process, selecting and developing academic staff, and establishing assessment criteria. Regular professional qualification courses are organised for academic staff (SAR 2.2.1.section). Research and innovations are supported, promoting the growth of academic staff and improving the quality of higher education (SAR 2.2.1.section).

As determined during the visit, most elements of the quality system are functioning well. Various types of committees have been established, data is collected from both students and employers (confirmed during on-site visit), and staff is involved in decision-making (confirmed by the director of SPC and teaching staff). The college has developed a survey system for academic staff, students and employers, which is regularly implemented (according to SAR p.21 and on-site visit). This allows for the identification of necessary changes and their prompt incorporation into the study programme. Research and its motivation is analysed in 1.4. Section of this report.

One of the internal quality assurance system`s criteria is evaluation of teachers work. This work, the chosen teaching methods, and engagement with the audience are evaluated through the process of classroom observation (hospitation) and during open classes conducted by the instructors. As far as the internal regulations of the SPC allow for evaluation, the procedure for this process is established. During the visit, both teachers and administrative staff pointed out that classroom observation is considered one of the criteria for assessing the quality of study programmes. Similarly, during the visit, the experts were convinced that the teaching methods are diverse and appropriate to the specifics of the study course.

The work of teachers and the achievement of study programme objectives are evaluated through the process of surveying students and employers. During the visit, the experts confirmed that surveys are being conducted. However, doubts were raised regarding the anonymity of student surveys: although it was claimed during the visit that the surveys are anonymous, according to the regulations of the State Police College's educational event administration system, each IPAS user is

assigned an ID, which undermines anonymity. During the visit, students could not assert that the surveys are conducted anonymously.

It can be concluded that the quality policy implemented by the SPC overall ensures the monitoring, improvement, and development of study programmes.

1.2.2. The study programme "Police Work" has been developed in accordance with external normative acts to meet the needs of the State Police – to prepare reactive police officers. The programme was licensed on February 10, 2021. It is reviewed based on requests from the State Police and the results of various surveys.

The internal quality processes at SPC ensure the involvement of different staff groups in the evaluation of previous activities (SAR 2.2.2. section). This is facilitated through internal documents – orders – creating working groups, commissions, and other collegial institutions. The study programme is also evaluated by the Consortium "Internal Security Academy" (where there is an opportunity to continue education after graduating from SPC). Study Programme Council, which is a collegial decision-making body for the development, implementation and improvement of the Consortium's IDA study programmes are involved in this process.

It is positively noted that student representation is ensured in SPC decision-making bodies. For example, out of 15 members of the SPC Council, 3 are student representatives, and the SPC Student Parliament Regulations stipulate that the students' self-government must submit proposals for the improvement of the study process.

According to on-site visit and SAR p. 10 feedback is obtained both through direct communication and surveys. During the visit, representatives of employers and graduates could not provide experts with specific examples of how the study programme had been reviewed based on survey results and said that they do not receive feedback from surveys, but confirmed that surveying is a valuable feedback tool, because according to on-site visit the SPC makes visible changes, if information about such is indicated in the questionnaires. A representative from the State Police emphasised the close collaboration between SPC and the State Police to implement changes in the study programme that aligns with the goals and tasks of internal security and civil protection field.

It can be concluded that SPC has established the prerequisites to review the study programme's compliance with external legislation and the orders of the State Police. Internal normative acts define the establishment of various collegial institutions, which are available on the SPC website. There is no single normative act that establishes the procedure and deadlines for reviewing the programme.

1.2.3. In the SAR (2.2.3.section), the procedure for students to express complaints and suggestions regarding both the study process and living conditions at SPC is detailed. Specific examples for changes that have been made are also provided. During the visit, experts were confirmed that both students and staff are mostly aware of their rights to submit proposals and complaints. While students were unable to point out/indicate the legal regulations. They stated that, in practice, there are no obstacles to submitting complaints. There is always the option to discuss any issues with academic and support staff and to receive feedback.

At the end of each semester, the SPC organises a student survey with the aim of finding out the students' assessment of the educational programme and the effectiveness and quality of the work of the academic and general staff (according to the "Regulations of planning, ensuring, executing, controlling and surveying the study (training) process of the State Police College" 5 . chapter "Surveying procedure"). Student surveys are conducted in accordance with the survey rules ("Rules for planning, provision, execution, control and surveys of the study (training) process of the State Police College" Chapter 5 "Surveying procedure") and it is not anonymous (according to on-site visit). According to the previously mentioned regulations the surveys conducted by the SP's Education Coordination Department are anonymous and the results of the surveys are used only in

aggregated form. According to the SPC board, during the semester, students turn to lecturers in case of study problems and everyday complaints - related to rooms, uniforms, etc. appeals to the head of the Cadet Department. This was also confirmed by student representatives during the visit. They confirmed that they are aware of the possibility of submitting complaints anonymously to the State Police system, which is then reviewed by a committee with a representative of the SPC. During the on-site visit, it was mentioned that monthly meetings are organised between the student self-government and the Deputy Director of the SPC (for teaching and learning issues), with whom problems are discussed, and during these visits both students and the Deputy Director of the SPC exchange feedback and improvements made. According to on-site visit Students have the opportunity to initiate changes in the study programme through the student self-government, which the Student Self-Government has used. According to SAR p.25, a hierarchy is observed in the submission of complaints - a student, as a cadet, can address complaints to the employees of the Cadet Department, to the teacher of the specific study course or to the head of the specific department. If the complaint is related to the study process, then the head of the Department includes this issue in the agenda of the department meeting. If necessary, the SPC Education Coordination Department and the Deputy Director of the SPC (teaching and study issues) are also involved in resolving the complaint. The SPC responds appropriately to student complaints. The complaints system is adequate, students are aware of where to go for help and see improvement based on complaints being implemented.

In conclusion, despite the noted shortcomings, the mechanism for complaints and suggestions is functioning, though improvements are needed in certain areas.

1.2.4. SPC regularly collects and compiles statistical data (SAR 2.2.4. section). Specifically, student surveys are conducted at the end of each study course and at the finish of the study programme. Employers are surveyed six months after SPC graduation. The data is analysed and compiled, and it is published on the SPC website and in the annual SPC public report (<https://www.policijas.koledza.gov.lv/lv/publikacijas-parskati>). Data is also collected regarding the candidate admission process and expulsions from SPC. Academic staff is surveyed as well.

According to on-site visit students are convinced that the college takes into account the opinions mentioned in the surveys, because they have observed changes in the study programme and college itself even though they do not receive feedback in the form of a report about the changes made.

According to the visit, graduates and employers do not receive feedback as well on their surveys.

During the visit, experts were convinced that the surveys are conducted regularly and the data is collected and analysed. As emphasised by representatives from the State Police, the programme aligns with professional standards and the needs of the State Police for reactive police officers, as SPC ensures the necessary changes are made to improve the study programme.

In conclusion, SPC has established a data collection and analysis mechanism that provides opportunities for the enhancement of the study programme.

1.2.5. Evaluating the information published on the SPC`s website about the study programme "Police Work" and comparing it with the information available on the E-platform/VIIS, it can be concluded that the information matches completely. In addition to the qualification obtained, the SPC specifies that the qualification "Junior Officer of the State Police" is a "reactive" police officer programme. This information is not included on the E-platform.

It can be concluded that the information available on the SPC website provides prospective students with a more accurate understanding of the accredited programme's nature.

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

Taking into account that SPC implements a programme related to national internal security, no environmental procedures can be publicly disclosed. Overall, SPC has established an optimal internal quality policy that allows for the evaluation of study quality. Both in the SAR and in discussions with SPC academic staff, it was clarified that many stakeholders are involved in the review and assurance of the study programme. There is a risk that this mechanism is fragmented, and the necessity for a unified regulatory act should be assessed, which would establish the procedure and timelines for programme review.

SPC regularly collects data to obtain feedback from students, graduates, and employers. Data on applicants is also analysed. The internal regulations should specify the procedure by which students have the right to appeal grades and the assessment process.

Strengths:

- 1.Regular feedback collection.
- 2.Good collaboration among all parties involved - SPC, employers, and students.

Weaknesses:

- 1.The study programme's evaluation mechanism is too fragmented which creates a risk of lack of transparency in the quality of the study programme. A unified regulatory document outlining the evaluation process for the study programme has not been developed. For example, there are no established guidelines (or other regulation) for the timelines for distributing and collecting surveys, data analysis, proposing recommendations, or designating responsible persons and units.

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 close cooperation between SPC and the State Police, as well as the expressed opinions of students, graduates, and employers, allows experts to conclude that the study programme meets the internal security and civil protection needs and that its operation is sufficiently effective. However, certain aspects of internal quality need to be improved.

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

SPC has developed a quality policy that, due to national internal security considerations, is not publicly available. This policy overall ensures the quality of the study programme.

- 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: Partially compliant

The SPC has developed a mechanism for the internal strengthening of study programmes, operational oversight, and periodic review. However, it is necessary to develop internal regulations that would outline in one document the involved parties in these processes, their responsibilities, rights, specific timelines for actions, etc. The current regulation is fragmented and does not provide transparency for the internal quality system.

- 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: Partially compliant

SPC has established a procedure for evaluating study results, incorporating the satisfaction of all involved stakeholders. Data on the implementation of the study programme is analysed, and the evaluation results are publicly available as part of SPC's annual reports. However, it is necessary to develop a procedure for contesting student achievement evaluations, especially when the evaluation is an administrative act.

- 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: Partially compliant

SPC has developed internal procedures and established regulations for how academic staff can improve their qualifications and how the work of the academic staff is monitored. However there is no unified regulation how and how often the evaluation is happening.

- 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: Partially compliant

SPC conducts data collection and analysis on students' academic achievements, satisfaction with their studies, and the opinions of graduates and employers regarding the quality of the study programme.

However if changes in study programme are made according to complains and collected data, the College does not make this information public for staff and students to see that their opinion is taken into account.

- 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

Overall, SPC evaluates and improves the study programme to ensure it aligns with the internal security and civil protection study direction. It is necessary to improve the procedure for appealing student achievement evaluations and to inform students about it.

1.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field

Analysis

1.3.1. After analysing the data provided (SAR, p. 29-30), as well as from conversations with representatives (specifically director of SPC and employers), the experts found that the SPC has established a structured system for determining and redistributing the financial support needed to implement the fields of study and related programmes. The financial resources are allocated annually on the basis of the specific needs outlined in the SPC's acquisition plans, which include the necessary material and technical support for the "Internal Security and Civil Protection" (hereinafter - study field). These resources come from the State budget, in particular from the funds allocated to the State Police. In addition, the SPC regularly improves its allocation of financial resources in order to ensure the continuous development and improvement of the material and technical provisions

necessary for quality education. Therefore, a system for funding applied research is defined and implemented. Nevertheless, from the data presented, it was observed that the financing possibilities of EU funds are not sufficiently used, especially in promoting the internationality of research and studies. Therefore, in the future, it is recommended to look for funding opportunities not only from the state budget, but also from other sources that are usually available to higher education institutions when providing projects in the fields of research and studies.

1.3.2. During the onsite visit, experts found that SPC has various infrastructure resources and material and technical support that are essential for the implementation of the study field. These include modern classrooms equipped with the necessary technology for theoretical instruction and practical skills development. Special facilities such as police simulation environments and tactical training areas are available to provide realistic learning experiences. The SPC has secure premises, including rooms for classified studies, which are essential for Internal security and civil protection programme (SAR, p. 30-32; site visit).

In addition, the library is equipped with resources specific to policing, including textbooks, databases and other educational materials. For physical training, there are dedicated sports facilities for students to improve their fitness, a key requirement for police officers. Vehicles and equipment used in police operations are also available for practical training. In addition, the SPC ensures that material and technical resources are regularly updated to keep pace with evolving security needs. SPC also has an information technology infrastructure, including e-learning platforms, to support distance learning and administrative functions (SAR, p. 30-32; site visit).

Overall, SPC provides the necessary infrastructure to support comprehensive police education and training. Resources are available to students and teaching staff. A unified system and procedures have been established for the improvement and purchase of material, methodological, informative, etc. provision.

1.3.3. SPC has established a process for the improvement and acquisition of methodological and informational resources to support its fields of study. This system includes annual assessments of the need for training materials and resources, which are incorporated into the SPC's purchasing plans. A dedicated working group regularly reviews and updates methodological resources to ensure that they reflect the latest developments in policing and educational standards. Administrative units work with academic staff to prioritise necessary purchases to ensure timely procurement of resources. This system ensures that the SPC maintains a modern and comprehensive supply of materials to support effective teaching and learning (Development Strategy of the State Police College 2024-2027, p. 12-25; discussions with the administration, library staff, teaching staff) By the end of 2023, the college library held 27,240 printed works, mainly focused on legal sciences (64%) and police work (19%). It offers up-to-date resources, including important legal monographs and first publications from Latvian publishers. The entire collection is available through an electronic catalogue, with e-borrowing services and personalised access via the "My Library" system. In addition to its own collection, the library collaborates with the National Library of Latvia for access to international library subscriptions. It also expanded digital resources in 2023, adding key databases like "Lursoft," "News.lv," and several HeinOnline legal databases. Taking into account the above, it can be argued that, library resources and databases are available to students and meet the needs of the study field (SAR, p. 32-35; site visit).

1.3.4. Experts note that the information and communication technology solutions used by SPC are appropriate and effective in supporting the study process. To digitise and streamline the administration of both formal and non-formal educational activities, SPC implemented the IPAS system. This system automates key processes, including planning, organisation, analysis, control, monitoring of educational activities, and the accounting of pedagogical workloads. IPAS is accessible

to students at different user levels, enabling them to track their academic progress, view schedules, and access relevant study materials. It is integrated with the SPC's e-learning platform and the e-library, providing students with easy access to digital resources, including books, journals, and research databases. The e-library feature allows students to search, borrow, and download materials remotely, enhancing the accessibility of learning materials. This integration ensures a seamless academic experience for both traditional and distance learning formats, making study resources and administrative tools available in one system (SAR, p. 35; site visit).

It should be noted that the SPC also uses the Moodle Learning Platform, which supports the e-learning environment and gives students access to course materials, assignments and interactive learning activities. Nevertheless, following a discussion with the director of the study field and the study programme, as well as a review of the Moodle environments, it became evident that there is no unified procedure for preparing and utilising the Moodle Learning Platform (note: the technical instructions for the preparation of the Moodle tool are provided in the Annex_fro_point_1, but there are no unified requirements for content submission and placement in study subjects to meet the requirements specific to methodological tools, as well as quality assurance procedures for such learning tools). It may be assumed that not all study subjects utilise the possibilities of the Moodle, for example, in order to communicate with students, provide self-assessment tasks, provide feedback on learning progress and results, submit written assignments, ensure academic integrity (e.g. checking for plagiarism), and so forth. Furthermore, an examination of the results of teaching staff training indicates that there is no encouragement of individual or collective knowledge related to the preparation and application of electronic learning tools in the Moodle Learning Platform.

1.3.5. Taking into account the information provided by(SAR p.35-38), it can be said that SPC has established some procedures for attracting qualified teaching staff for its study field and corresponding programmes. These procedures involve open competitions for academic positions, ensuring that all candidates meet the necessary educational and professional criteria. This process is described in "The requirements of the applicant for the academic position of the State Police College and the procedure for the election and appointment to the academic position (hereinafter - The requirements of the applicant for the academic position). The recruitment process is publicly announced, allowing interested and qualified individuals to apply (The requirements of the applicant for the academic position, p. 20). Stakeholders, including students and staff, are informed about the selection process through official communication channels, ensuring transparency. The college regularly reviews and updates these procedures to align with the evolving needs of the study field and to maintain high standards in teaching.

However, it is also worth noting that in order to attract new, especially younger specialists, who have doctorate degrees, it is necessary to form a strategy for attracting specialists and motivating employees. According to experts, it would also be possible to think about promotion measures and create favourable working conditions for teaching staff to study in doctoral studies at other universities and to pursue a doctorate degree.

The experts found that the SPC has a sufficient number of assistant professor positions for the implementation of a quality study process. However, it should be noted that teachers whose qualifications are confirmed by long-term work experience in a certain field, and not by a scientific degree or the results of research work, are appointed to the positions of assistant professors. In general, this does not interfere with the implementation of the study process, but is reflected in the quality of professional work and research achievements in the industry. According to experts, in rapidly changing times, in order to promote professional development and the competitiveness of teaching staff, it is important to motivate staff to develop research in the field of police law. Investment in research work is necessary for long-term development, especially being aware of the specifics of the field.

1.3.6. During the expert assessment it was established that the needs for professional and didactic development of the teaching staff are identified through regular assessments, feedback from students, and analysis of teaching performance . SPC uses improvement measures such as workshops, seminars, and professional development courses to enhance the skills of educators. These measures are tailored to address both the specific subject matter and teaching methodologies. The effectiveness of the implemented development programmes is evaluated through student feedback, peer reviews, and the performance outcomes of teachers. Continuous monitoring and analysis ensure that the improvement measures meet the evolving needs of both staff and the study programme (SAR, p. 39 , Regulations on the Education and Professional Qualifications of Teachers and the Procedure for Professional Development of Teachers”, discussions during the site visit).After analysing the reports on the improvement of teaching qualifications (Annex 8), it was found that the training for qualification improvement are usually organised with the help of Latvian rather than foreign training service providers. Qualification is raised mostly in the areas of professional activity or application of learning methods, but there is a lack of qualification raising (individual or group) related to academic and applied research methods and performance techniques.

Experts recommend conducting a detailed assessment of the academic staff's skills in order to identify competencies that need to be developed, as the teaching staff is involved in the study process on different bases (contracts, officials), and there are also different needs for taught study courses. It would be advisable to create an environment in the SPC that would allow educators to exchange experience and knowledge, for example external cooperation with other higher education institutions (hereinafter- HEI). Learning specific skills requires time and effort, which means that it is necessary to create a motivating system that includes financial and professional benefits for those who improve their knowledge. A significant number of pedagogues who combine positions are involved in the learning process. The institution should also offer flexible training schedules and sufficient support to allow employees to balance learning with work responsibilities.

1.3.7. The workload of the SPC teaching staff is managed in accordance with the "Procedures for Determining the Number of Teachers of the State Police College, Planning, Accounting, Controlling, and Remuneration for Workload" (hereinafter - "Procedures for Workload"). This document outlines guidelines for the fair calculation and distribution of teachers' responsibilities based on their roles. It also establishes rules for regular monitoring and reporting of teachers' work to ensure compliance with established standards and provides criteria for determining salaries and additional compensation based on workload, qualifications, and specific duties.

Feedback from teaching staff shows that the current methodology and workload distribution are generally effective, allowing them to perform their duties effectively and on time. Workloads of teachers are developed in accordance with the Ministry of the Interior Regulation No. 1-10/2 of 13 February 2020, which stipulates that a workload of a teacher consists of study work, methodological work, research work and other types of work.

However, the workload structure often places a heavier emphasis on teaching or administrative tasks, leaving insufficient time for research. The limited number of publications and the low engagement of educators in research activities suggest that research is often secondary or overlooked, which could hinder academic progress in the study field.

To achieve a better balance between teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities, more efficient planning of work time and resources is crucial. Strategic planning could offer staff the necessary support for conducting research, foster innovation, and contribute to both professional development and academic excellence.

1.3.8. The SPC has identified necessary support for students through regular assessments of student

needs, including part-time work for learners. A support system has been developed to meet these needs, offering personal academic support, career guidance and psychological support. Flexible scheduling and online resources are available for part-time students. This system is regularly evaluated and improved based on student feedback and performance (SAR, p. 40, discussion with students and alumni).

After an in-depth evaluation, it must be concluded that students with special needs and foreign students cannot be involved in the College study process. These restrictions are defined in the external regulatory framework. (Law on the Course of Service of Officials with Special Service Ranks Working in Institutions of the System of the Ministry of the Interior and the Prison Administration, Section 4. Mandatory Requirements for Service, <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/138750>). In the study process, remote learning is provided if necessary, as was the case during the Covid 19 pandemic. If necessary, students are provided with study materials on the Moodle platform to learn the necessary study material remotely.

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

The SPC excels in resource management, modern facilities, and student support, creating a foundation for comprehensive education. However, it faces challenges in utilising external funding, standardising digital learning tools, attracting new staff, and balancing teaching and research workloads.

Strengths:

1. An efficient system for allocating financial resources, ensuring ongoing development and improvement.
2. Modern facilities and specialised training environments that support comprehensive education and practical skills.
3. Flexible learning options, career guidance, and personalised support to address diverse student needs.

Weaknesses:

1. Insufficient utilisation of external funding opportunities, such as EU grants.
2. Inconsistent use of the Moodle Learning Platform and lack of a standardised approach across disciplines.
3. Challenges in attracting qualified teaching staff with doctoral degrees.
4. Unbalanced workloads, with a heavy focus on teaching, limiting time for research and academic development.

1.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation

Analysis

1.4.1. According to the SAR (p. 40-41) SPC's applied research activities are aligned with its strategic development goals, especially in the area of "Internal Security and Civil Protection". The establishment of the Internal Security Academy (IDA) strengthens this alignment by bringing together several institutions, including the Ministry of the Interior, the State Police College, the Riga Stradiņš University and the University of Latvia, to pool resources and train highly qualified law enforcement professionals. This collaborative approach enhances research and professional development, ensuring that studies remain relevant to the field and meet national security needs.

During the site visit, in discussion with the director of the field of studies and the programme, it became clear that it is sought that research attention be given to the promotion of work related to

police activity. It is envisaged that research, especially applied research, should be an integral part of the study process, solving practical issues of police activity and focusing on the needs of employers, especially the State Police. This includes the development of methodological materials, qualification papers' topics and the implementation of applied research that supports police work.

In discussion with the academic staff of the programme it was found that SPC provides theoretical and methodological support to the State Police, ensuring that research activities contribute directly to practical law enforcement efforts.

However, despite the ongoing and planned research activities in the study field there is a lack of clearly defined research directions (priority research topics, etc.), indicators for tracking and evaluating research results, as well as mechanisms for ensuring results (SAR, Development Strategy of the State Police College 2024-2027).

1.4.2. SAR (p. 41-42) states that the connection between research and the study process at the SPC is supported by active involvement of the teaching staff in applied research relevant to internal security and police work. During interviews with SPC representatives (programme director, teaching staff) it was indicated that teachers at SPC, some of which also hold roles in the State Police and legal institutions, integrate their practical experience and research findings into course development and teaching materials, ensuring that the content remains current and directly applicable to law enforcement challenges. Teachers use their research outcomes to prepare class materials, develop textbooks, teaching aids, and define topics for qualification papers, further reinforcing the link between research and teaching.

During the expert assessment it was established that research is not only a theoretical exercise but is also embedded in practical applications within the curriculum, particularly in the short-cycle higher vocational education programme "Police Work," where students are required to complete a qualification paper involving applied or methodological research. This paper allows students to address real-world problems in police work, strengthening their understanding of the subject while enhancing their readiness for professional duties.

SPC also seeks to ensure that the topics of research paper and student qualification paper are aligned with priority research directions set by the State Police, ensuring that research remains relevant to the field and beneficial to the employer. Through these mechanisms, applied research outcomes aim to integrate into the study process, enhancing both the theoretical and practical training of students. These statements are confirmed by the list of topics of the qualification papers presented to the experts (Annex_for_point_6 and Annex_for_point_6-2).

1.4.3. The SPC (SAR p. 42); discussions with the director of the SPC and the director of the field of study and the programme) points out that it has international cooperation in the field of research through joint projects and research initiatives. Examples include participation in the Erasmus+ mobility activities with institutions such as the Estonian Academy of Security Sciences and the Police Academy in Poland. Another project is the "Reducing Psychosocial Risks in Law Enforcement: Training as a means to Wellbeing - PROTECT" under the Erasmus+ KA2 programme. Joint conferences, like those organised with the Association of European Police Colleges (AEPC), further solidify these international partnerships.

The "Police Work" study programme benefits from this international cooperation, as students and teachers can familiarise themselves with the best practices of partner institutions in the field of police and public security

Looking forward, the SPC aims (SAR p.42) to deepen its international cooperation by establishing agreements with organisations like CEPOL to ensure that external experts contribute to the evaluation and development of study programmes. Furthermore, it plans to expand its cooperation with AEPC and other European law enforcement training institutions, which will enhance opportunities for joint research, study exchange, and programme development.

Despite the efforts to establish international relations with higher education institutions of other countries, after analysing the data of the ongoing activities, experts note that international cooperation:

- 1) in research areas is fragmented and insufficient;
- 2) is more based on raising qualifications, as well as sharing practical or teaching knowledge (e.g. through staff mobility programmes), rather than seeking to establish international contexts and become more actively involved in international academic research activities.

Therefore, it is recommended to look for greater opportunities to participate in international academic conferences abroad, as well as to join international research organisations (e.g. EGPA or others), thus expanding the network of possible partners in the field of study in applied research.

1.4.4. According to SAR (p. 43-44) SPC has established mechanisms for involving teaching staff in applied research:

- 1) The internal normative regulation specifies that academic staff are required to perform research work as part of their professional duties. This includes planning and participating in research activities, developing teaching materials, and attending conferences and seminars.
- 2) The research work is also reflected in teaching, with teachers applying their findings in course development and classroom instruction.
- 3) Financial support is provided for teachers to attend national and international conferences, contributing to professional growth and research output.

During the meeting with the teaching staff of the programme, it was stated that teachers are encouraged to present their research findings and publish articles, to participate in research conferences and seminars ensuring continuous engagement in academic discourse. It was also claimed that SPC incentivizes teaching staff participation in research through workload planning, where research and methodological work are counted as part of their official duties.

However, after analysing the data of the research outputs of the teaching staff (SAR Annex No. 2.4.1, Annex No.2.4.2), it was noticed that there are study subjects whose teachers, according to data, do not have research results (publications or presentations in conferences). It can be concluded that most taught subjects have a good practical basis, because they are mostly taught by professionals in their field - practitioners, but at the same time, it can be presumed that the basis of internal research in the taught subjects may be insufficient.

Research publications of teaching staff are mostly published in conference material. The internationality of research, research publications and presentations at conferences is not high (Annex Nr.2.4.2). In order to strengthen the sharing of research results in the study field, as well as improving the content of teaching with the comparative practice of various countries, there could be more publication in foreign research journals or books from international publishing houses, as well as more joint publications with foreign researchers. There may also be more research publications and presentations with students.

The research output of the teaching staff in the study field (articles, presentations at conferences) is not always related to the taught subjects and their content. Thus, greater attention could be paid to research related to security issues, its environment and management specifics (Annex No.2.3.7, Annex "Study Course IDA"; Annex Nr.2.4.2) .

It was also identified that nor all teachers of the study subject include their latest research publications in the lists of the main or additional literature of the taught subject. In this way, the dissemination of research conducted at SPC and its results among students in the context of the subject being studied may be insufficient (Annex No.2.3.7, Annex "Study Course IDA").

1.4.5. The data of SAR (p.44-45) shows that SPC promotes the involvement of students in research through these activities:

- 1) The development of a qualification paper is mandatory, allowing students to conduct applied or

methodological research relevant to police work. This task enables students to demonstrate their readiness to handle real-world issues in law enforcement (the analysis of the presented topics qualification paper (Annex_for_point_6 and Annex_for_point_6-2) showed that the topics are relevant and correspond to the field of study)

2) SPC encourages participation in research conferences such as the Latvian College Association's events and human rights moot courts organised by the Ombudsman's office.

3) Students also present papers during exchange programmes, furthering their engagement in academic discourse.

SAR p. 45 and interviews with representatives indicate that SPC offers opportunities for students to engage in research activities in cooperation with faculty members, strengthening their connection between theoretical and practical learning. These opportunities include participation in research projects that address current police work challenges, which are often supported by the employer, the State Police. Furthermore, it is indicated that SPC provides platforms for students to showcase their research outcomes in national and international academic venues, promoting their active involvement in applied research related to internal security.

However, after the experts performed a deeper analysis of the submitted data (SAR p. 44-45; Annex Nr.2.4.2), it was found that the involvement of students in research activities is insufficient. Although students prepare qualification papers and thus contribute to research relevant to the field and contractually useful for the State Police, their involvement in making presentations at research or practical conferences and events, contribution in participating in research projects and preparing publications (individually or together with teachers) is lacking.

1.4.6. After analysing the data provided in SAR, p. 45, as well as during the site visit, experts found that SPC applies innovative solutions that significantly impact the study process. One of the innovations is the introduction of the Integrated Process Automation System (IPAS), which facilitates the management of student achievements, e-journal entries, and e-internship diaries. Also, interactive methods such as group discussions, role-playing, and case-based problem-solving are central to the programme, encouraging active participation from students. Additionally, the curriculum integrates digital forensic research and advanced crime prevention techniques, fostering a modern approach to law enforcement education. Another major innovation is the use of the XVR system for immersive simulation training, allowing students to engage in realistic police scenarios and crisis management exercises.

To further support innovative teaching, SPC has introduced a coefficient-based remuneration system that incentivizes teachers to incorporate modern technologies and innovative methods into their teaching ("Regulations on the Education and Professional Qualifications of Teachers and the Procedure for Professional Development of Teachers", "Procedures for Workload"; Development Strategy of the State Police College 2024-2027;). According to the information provided by the director of SPC and the teaching staff during the interviews, the staff is encouraged with a 20 percent bonus to the salary for the implemented innovations. A digital forensics research and innovation lab is also under development, aimed at advancing crime prevention strategies and economic crime detection capabilities.

At the same time, however, the analysis of the data shows that the application of new research methods and the use of advanced technologies for research purposes is not clear. It is felt that innovation (available simulation platforms, other technologies or methods) should be encouraged not only to improve the management of the programme, the learning environment or the outcomes of the programme, but also to enable research. It is considered that attention should be paid both to the improvement of the research infrastructure (innovative data analysis programmes, etc.) and to the support of the teaching staff (material or non-material means).

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

The SPC's research aligns with its strategic goals in "Internal Security and Civil Protection," with the Internal Security Academy enhancing professional training and applied research that benefits employers like the State Police. However, experts noted limited student involvement in research projects and international research, and suggested further improvements in research infrastructure and methods.

Strengths:

1. Aligning research with strategic goals and industry needs.
2. Strong international cooperation in teaching and exchange programmes.
3. Implementation of innovative teaching methods (e.g. IPAS, XVR system).

Weaknesses:

1. Limited international participation in research.
2. Insufficient involvement of teaching staff in the conduct of research and the dissemination of its results.
3. Insufficient participation of students in research projects and conferences.

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 SPC's applied research activities align well with its strategic goals, particularly in the field of "Internal Security and Civil Protection." The establishment of the Internal Security Academy enhances this alignment, pooling resources from key institutions to train highly qualified law enforcement professionals. Applied research directly addresses the needs of employers, like the State Police, ensuring that research outcomes are practical and beneficial for law enforcement. The involvement of students in research activities is encouraged, with opportunities such as qualification papers and participation in conferences. However, experts identified weaknesses, such as insufficient student involvement in research projects and limited international participation in academic research. Moreover, while innovative teaching methods, like the XVR system and digital forensic labs, are being introduced, these innovations could be further extended to improve the research infrastructure and methods.

1.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation

Analysis

1.5.1. According to the information provided in SAR (p. 45-47), and after conversations with SPC representatives and employers, the experts determined that SPC actively cooperates with various institutions in Latvia, including higher education institutions, employers, municipalities and non-governmental organisations. It has established partnerships with key institutions such as the State Police, Riga Stradiņš University and the University of Latvia. These collaborations ensure that the curriculum is aligned with current industry needs and that students receive practical and relevant training. Employers contribute by offering internships and employment opportunities, helping students to apply their knowledge in a real-world setting. In addition, partnerships with communities and NGOs facilitate community engagement projects that enhance students' understanding of public safety and homeland security issues. The SPC also participates in the Internal Security Academy Consortium, which pools the resources of several institutions to provide comprehensive training for law enforcement professionals.

It can be argued that, the cooperation partners are selected in view of the specific features of the study field and the relevant study programmes. Such cooperation ensures that students acquire the skills and competencies required to meet the learning outcomes of their programme. These partnerships also promote the continuous development of the programme, aligning it with national and international security standards (The National Security Concept, 2023, European foreign and security policy, 2024).

However, experts also point out that there is a lack of wider cooperation in the fields of applied research, e.g. joint research projects with other HEI, universities, etc.

1.5.2. The SPC cooperates with foreign institutions through the “International Cooperation Development Plan”, which is updated annually (SAR, p. 47-48). This includes partnerships with higher education institutions such as the Estonian Academy of Security Sciences, the Lithuanian Police School and the Police University College in Norway. The SPC participates in the Erasmus+ programme, which enables both staff and student exchanges, enhancing learning experiences and promoting international cooperation. SPC is also a member of CEPOL and AEPC, enabling wider collaboration on law enforcement training across Europe.

International events, such as the conference on responding to domestic violence, bring together experts from different countries, further enriching the field of study. Cooperation with institutions in Iceland, Germany and Poland, among others, enhances the SPC's curriculum by integrating international best practice in policing and law enforcement (SAR, p. 48-49).

So, the cooperation partners are selected in view of the specific features of the study field and the relevant study programme.

1.5.3. According to the information provided in SAR (p. 49-52), SPC has developed a system for attracting foreign teaching staff and facilitating student exchanges through its participation in Erasmus+ and other international programmes. Awarded the Erasmus Charter in 2021, the SPC focuses on staff mobility for teaching and training while also hosting international events like the International Cadet's Weeks with students from Germany, Lithuania, and Estonia. Joint projects, such as the Baltic Sea Region Police Officers' training, strengthen international partnerships.

During the expert assessment it was established that teachers from SPC participate in international training, conferences and seminars, sharing knowledge with foreign colleagues, which directly contributes to the achievement of learning outcomes. However, experts note that the possibilities of Erasmus + teaching exchanges are not being used. By creating a system of motivating teachers to participate not only in training, but also in teaching exchange programmes, there would be greater experience of international cooperation, as well as opportunities to form cooperation networks both in the fields of study and research. In order to achieve this goal, it is also necessary to further strengthen the English language skills of the teaching staff.

During the conversation with current students and graduates, it was found out that students evaluate the opportunity to gain knowledge and experience in higher education institutions of foreign countries very positively. As well as the opportunity to make and maintain acquaintances with students and specialists of the same study field. However, during the review, it was found that the college is not implementing and has no real plans to implement long-term Erasmus + student exchange programmes (SAR, p. 51). Experts believe that such exchanges, even in such a specific study field, are possible after coordinating the content of study modules with partners, preparing the procedure for a long-term exchange programme, etc. The importance of such exchanges is significant - the cadets who went on a long-term exchange could gain wider international experiences, and the cadets from foreign countries who came to the SPC would share their experiences and take over the experience of training Latvian police officers, etc.

SPC has developed partnerships with other institutions, particularly at the national level, which have positively contributed to achieving the learning outcomes of its study programme. However, there is a need to expand international collaboration, with a focus on utilizing Erasmus+ teaching and longterm student exchange opportunities.

Strengths:

1. Partnerships with other higher education institutions, and employers of Latvia ensure relevant, practical training aligned with industry needs.
2. Participation in Erasmus+ and cooperation with foreign institutions enhances curriculum quality through shared best practices and joint events.

Weaknesses:

1. Opportunities for teaching exchanges are underutilised, limiting potential for international networking and experience sharing.
2. The absence of long-term Erasmus+ student exchanges results in missed opportunities for broader international student experiences.

Assessment of the requirement [3]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

SPC's collaboration with local and international institutions has strengthened its study programme by aligning training with industry needs and enriching the curriculum through Erasmus+ initiatives. However, opportunities for teaching exchanges and long-term student experiences remain underutilised. Expanding these areas will further enhance international networking and educational quality.

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

Analysis

The SPC indicated that the recommendations provided within the previous accreditation procedure of the study field are no longer applicable, as a new (recently licensed study programme) is currently being assessed within the field.

The following recommendations were made by experts during the licensing of the first-level professional higher education study programme "Police work". According to the decision on study program licensing Nr. 2021/04-L, the recommendations were given on February 10, 2021.

-To revise the course descriptions, excluding from the sources laws and regulations that are no longer in force and replacing them with regulatory enactments that are in force (Police Assignments and Response; International Police Cooperation; Strategy for Assessing Use of Firearms; Career Course of Service and Organisation of Police Work; Use of Firearms; Information Systems; Powers of Police) - has been fully implemented.

-To revise the course descriptions excluding non-working Internet links from the sources (General and Professional Ethics; First Aid; Civil Protection; General Physical Training; Human Rights in Police Work; Commercial Law; Environmental Law; Protection of Children's Rights; International Police Cooperation; Professional Physical Training; Prevention of Crime; Police Assignments and Response; Criminal Intelligence; European Law; Philosophy of Law) - has been fully implemented.

-Eliminate inconsistencies in the course descriptions with the study plan (First Aid and Criminal Intelligence study courses - number of contact hours and independent working hours) and avoid duplication between “additional literature” and “other information” sources in the literature and other sources of information of the course descriptions (First Aid; Information Systems) - has been fully implemented.

-Eliminate inconsistencies in the number of tests of the study course “Human Rights in Police Work”, it is stated on page 83 of the study course description (Attachment 8 of the Additional Information Application) that knowledge is assessed in four current tests, but only two current tests with study results and evaluation criteria are indicated. Concerning the study course “Career Course of Service and Organisation of Police Work” the information is missing in the thematic plan of the study course on page 245, point six - has been fully implemented.

Eliminate inconsistencies between the teaching staff indicated in Attachments 10 and 11 of the application - has been fully implemented.

-To reconsider the role of the Latgale branch of the State police college in the implementation of the study programme and in the system, strategically agreeing on its future development opportunities - has been fully implemented.

-To update the information available on the website as an informational platform, to reflect on the perspectives of its improvement - has been fully implemented.

-To supplement, as far as possible, the literature list of study course descriptions with sources in several foreign languages, taking into account the development of the necessary skills, competences and ability to communicate in at least two foreign languages, which are repeatedly indicated in the description of the study programme - has been fully implemented.

-To assess, as far as possible, the overhaul, energy efficiency, functionality of the existing premises of the SPC on Ezermalas Street, as well as look for solutions to ensure full-value opportunities for outdoor sports and tactical classes by building a stadium and tactical infrastructure - has been fully implemented.

-To instruct the SPC to submit to the Centre, prior to the enrolment of students in the Study Programme, but no later than 1 September 2023, a document confirming that the SPC guarantees compensation to students in the event that the Study Programme is discontinued or the Study Programme is not accredited and the student does not wish to continue studies in another Study Programme - has been fully implemented.

-To review the content and planning of study courses, evaluating the possibility of combining several small-volume courses into a larger study course, based on a large number of courses (15-16) with a value of 1 CP (according to the previous Latvian credit point system) - has been implemented. The college has revised the content of the courses and currently the lowest number of ECTS is 3 ECTS (according to the previous Latvian credit point system, it would be 2 CP).

-To instruct the SPC to clarify the admission requirements of the Study Programme 120 ECTS version prior to the enrolment of students in the Study Programme with “Secondary education and professional qualification of junior inspector of the state police (in the field of internal affairs)”, but no later than 1 September 2023, and to submit the clarified and SPC -approved admission requirements to the Centre - partially implemented. The admission requirements of the previous qualifications necessary to enrol 80 CP (120 ECTS) and 120 CP (150 ECTS) study programmes are clarified in “Admission requirements to State police college 2024./2025. Study year”

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

The SPC has successfully revised the course descriptions, updated information about the sources of current laws and regulation, removed non-working internet links from course descriptions, as well as mentioned number of contact hours and independent work hours, have removed such inconsistencies in study course descriptions as amount of tests, number of contact and independent

working hours. Eliminate inconsistencies between the teaching staff indicated in Attachments 10 and 11, have combined small amount courses. Overall the SPC has implemented recommendations.

Strengths:

1. The SPC has overlooked the content of the study courses, and combined smaller courses to reduce the workload.
2. The study materials mentioned in the course descriptions are up to date.
3. Students' opinions are taken into account in improving the study programme.

Weaknesses - none

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

All of the recommendations have been successfully implemented. Also, information should be taken into account and provided regarding the recommendations provided during the previous accreditation process.

1.7. Recommendations for the Study Field

Short-term recommendations

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| 1. Formulate and implement regulations that outline the systematic integration of Moodle Learning Platform. These regulations should include clear guidelines for the preparation, accreditation, and use of Moodle tools to enhance the overall learning experience (31.12.2025). |
| 2. Improve internal regulations: extend the prohibition of academic dishonesty to include academic staff; as well as establish students' rights to an appeals process regarding study assessment (30.04.2025). |
| 3. Ensure student anonymity in the assessment process of study courses and programmes (31.12.2025) |
| 4. Develop guidelines or establish a uniform template for creating course descriptions (31.12.2025.) |
| 5. Clarify in the admission requirements of the previous qualifications necessary to enrol 80 CP (120 ECTS) and 120 CP (150 ECTS) study programmes (31.12.2025.). |

Long-term recommendations

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| 1. Create a team to actively seek and apply for external funding, including EU grants, and provide training in grant writing. Building partnerships with international institutions can also enhance access to funding (31.12.2029). |
| 2. Develop a strategy to attract PhDs, offering competitive incentives and opportunities for career growth. Partnering with universities to support doctoral studies and implementing mentorship programmes would also help in staff development and retention (31.12.2027). |

3. Increase international research collaboration. Strengthen participation in international academic research by encouraging faculty to publish more in international journals and collaborate with foreign researchers. Joining global scholarly organisations and increasing participation in international conferences would also help expand research networks and visibility. Establish at least one - two new international research partnerships annually until the specified period (31.12.2029)
4. Define clear indicators for measuring research results and internationalisation within the academic staff. These indicators should encompass aspects such as publications in high-level research journals, participation in international conferences, and involvement in expert groups (31.12.2027)
5. Increase student participation in research. Provide more opportunities for students to participate in research projects and research collaborations with faculty. Encourage students to present at national and international conferences, to co-author publications with faculty, and to engage in research beyond their qualification papers. Ensuring at least 3 different cases of students' involvement in research activities every year. (31.12.2027)
6. Create a structured plan to promote and incentivize participation in Erasmus+ teaching exchanges. This could involve offering language training, providing financial or time-based incentives, and recognizing participation as part of professional development. Increasing awareness about the benefits of these exchanges, such as improved teaching methodologies and expanded international networks, would encourage more staff to engage in international mobility programmes (31.12.2029)
7. Develop and implement long-term Erasmus+ student exchange programmes by coordinating study modules with international partner institutions, preparing clear procedures for these exchanges, including agreements on credit recognition and academic alignment (31.12.2029)
8. Create a feedback system by collecting once a year the problems expressed in surveys and student meetings and how they were solved.
9. Experts recommend conducting a detailed assessment of the academic staff's skills in order to identify competencies that need to be developed, as the teaching staff is involved in the study process on different bases (contracts, officials).
10. The institution should also offer flexible training schedules and sufficient support to allow employees to balance learning with work responsibilities.

II - "Police work" ASSESSMENT

II - "Police work" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The short-cycle professional higher education study programme "Police Work" belongs to the field of internal security and civil protection, as defined in the annex to the Cabinet of Ministers regulations "Regulations on the Opening and Accreditation of Study Fields." According to the Ministry of Education and Science, accreditation sheet No. 31 indicates that the SPC implements the accredited study field "Internal Security and Civil Protection" and one corresponding short-cycle professional higher education programme "Police Work." The education classification code is 41 861. Since external normative acts do not define the framework for the study field, it is not possible to

perform an objective evaluation for this criterion.

In the National Development Plan 2021-2027, under the action direction "Security," it is stated that security can exist if a person independently identifies risks and can rely on the responsible state services. This action addresses threat situations, personal and public physical security, including violence, crime, general fire safety, water safety, road safety, data and digital security, property security, and civil protection. These areas of activity align with some of the duties of police officers outlined in the Law "On the Police".

In the State Police Development Concept (Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 248, 2015, Section 3.), one of the development directions is "Motivated and professional staff," with a section on "Personnel professional qualifications (education)." However, this section does not provide any detailed information. Therefore, it is necessary to evaluate the State Police College's development strategy for 2024-2027, which indicates that the strategic development priorities and directions are connected with the development of the State Police in relation to public interests and the actual levels of order and security, crime rates, as well as general social, economic, geopolitical, and foreign policy risks, legal and other factors that influence criminal processes and determine crime trends.

It can be concluded that the study programme is related to policy planning documents in the field of internal security and civil protection.

2.1.2. The programme title ("Police Work") correlates with the professional qualification to be obtained ("State Police Junior Officer"). The programme code (41861) is assigned in accordance with the procedures established by the state and is not subject to re-evaluation by the experts. The code part "41" indicates that the programme belongs to short-cycle professional programmes, which aligns with the scope of the "Police Work" programme.

The aim of the programme: to provide high-quality professional studies based on legal science, case law, and best practices in police work. Upon completion, students acquire the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for the fifth-level professional qualification of "State Police Junior Officer." (SAR section 2.1.1.) This enables them to professionally perform their duties, including the effective and high-quality prevention of offences, police response, and investigation of offences, while combating crime and protecting individuals' rights and legal interests. It corresponded to the Police Work programme and obtained professional qualification - State Junior Officer.

The SPC operational goal is to provide the acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary for practical police work, promote further education and professional development, and increase student engagement and satisfaction with their studies and chosen profession, as well as meet employer expectations with the specialists prepared. The State Police requires professional, motivated, and development-oriented employees. There are no contradictions with the development planning documents established in the country.

The study programme's tasks fully cover the programme's aim and corresponds with professional qualification - State Junior Officer.: 1) To prepare qualified State Police junior officers by ensuring practical readiness for work in the profession, in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of the Interior, the level of modern technological development, as well as factors such as demography, immigration, the globalisation of crime, and other factors that influence criminogenic processes and determine crime trends;

2) To ensure the acquisition of a fifth-level professional qualification in accordance with the professional standard of a State Police junior officer;

3) To optimise the studies in accordance with the requirements of the State Police, police development prospects, modern demands, and in line with the national standard for first-level professional higher education and quality criteria for professional education;

4) To implement and deliver a competency-based study programme suitable for individuals with secondary education as well as for those with prior professional qualifications in police work;

- 5) To introduce new, high-quality content and approaches in the professional education of police officers. To offer modern, balanced, and quality studies that ensure the acquisition of theoretical, research, and practical skills. To ensure effective and high-quality studies;
- 6) To provide students with comprehensive knowledge, to develop analytical, presentation, and argumentation skills necessary for police work, to improve communication and cooperation skills, self-assessment, independent work, decision-making, information acquisition, and processing skills, as well as the ability to think creatively and critically and analyse sectoral issues. To promote the development of attitudes and value understanding, as well as to foster practical work skills necessary for the professional activities, growth, and further education of a State Police junior officer;
- 7) To enhance students' interest and satisfaction with their chosen studies and profession, as well as employers' satisfaction with the prepared junior police officers;
- 8) To promote the holistic development of the personality and the formation of a socially responsible individual, ensuring that the knowledge, skills, and attitudes acquired during studies are in line with the basic principles of education quality and provide a solid foundation for further studies, professional development, and research activities;
- 9) To strengthen the prestige of the educational institution and increase accessibility;
- 10) To stimulate excellence in studies and research.

It can be concluded that the aforementioned tasks of the study programme correlate with the objectives of the study programme, and the expected outcomes ensure the professional qualification of a junior police officer.

The admission requirements are related to service in the State Police and are determined in accordance with external regulatory acts: the applicant is a citizen of Latvia; he/she has not been convicted of an intentional criminal offence—regardless of the erasure or removal of the conviction, has not been sentenced for an intentional criminal offence, released from punishment, and has not been brought to criminal liability for committing an intentional criminal offence, except in cases where the official has been brought to criminal liability, but the criminal proceedings against him/her were terminated on rehabilitative grounds (certificate from the Criminal Records Register); a certificate of proficiency in the state language (C1 level) (if secondary education was obtained before 2011 or abroad); compliance with physical fitness and health condition requirements as specified by the Cabinet of Ministers, no criminal record, Latvian citizenship (must meet the requirements specified in Sections 4 and 7 of the Law on the Service of Officials of Institutions of the Ministry of the Interior and the Prison Administration with special service ranks).

SPC has not implemented the previous recommendation regarding ECTS credit points in the admission regulations. Since the Cabinet of Ministers regulations have changed on 21.06.2023., it is necessary to update the credit points in programme and indicate them in the admission regulations. The Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 305, Regulations on the State Standard for Professional Higher Education, specifies that the volume of short-cycle professional higher education study programmes must be between 120 and 180 credit points (Clause 12). During the study field assessment procedure SPC has submitted programme with a volume corresponding to ECTS credit points - for full-time students after high school - 150 CP and and 120 credit points for officers in service.

The studies are conducted in the Latvian language, which is a practical and justified requirement, considering that the students are serving in the State Police, where one of the requirements is Latvian citizenship and/or proficiency in the state language at a specified level. If foreign students fully or partially complete the SPC study programmes, they would be required to undergo practical training implemented in the State Police structural units, which includes collaboration with local residents. This potentially poses a risk for foreign students to complete these programmes or specific study courses/modules. However, it must be noted that the requirement in Latvia is for police officers to be citizens of Latvia and to know the state language.

The SPC operational goal is to provide the acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary for practical police work, promote further education and professional development, and increase student engagement and satisfaction with their studies and chosen profession, as well as meet Faemployer expectations with the specialists prepared. The State Police requires professional, motivated, and development-oriented employees. There are no contradictions with the development planning documents established in the country.

2.1.3. The parameters of the study programme, such as its name, code, awarded qualification, and objectives, have not changed. The study programme "Police Work" has a code and title that comply with regulatory acts and are interrelated, aligning with the study field. Currently, there is a discrepancy in the credit point volume following the amendments to the Cabinet of Ministers regulations on 21.06.2023 (see section 2.1.2). The credit point volume is also not correctly indicated in the admission requirements (<https://www.policijas.koledza.gov.lv/lv/isa-cikla-profesionala-augstaka-izglitibas-programma-policijas-darbs-ida>).

As mentioned above in the evaluation report, in sections 1.1.4. and 1.6., the discrepancy in the credit points according to the Cabinet regulations results in non-compliance with the deficiency identified during the previous study programme evaluation – the admission requirements have not been organised, specifically clarifying the credit point volume for individuals with secondary education and those holding the junior inspector qualification.

As confirmed by the SPC director and lecturers during the visit, content changes in the programme are related to reforms initiated by the employer, the State Police. During the visit, lecturers indicated that they monitor changes within the State Police and legislative changes to adjust study courses without altering the credit point volume

2.1.4. Considering the colleges place in the education system, the legislator specified in the Vocational Education Law that colleges are institutions of higher professional education, implementing short-cycle professional study programmes that provide the opportunity to acquire the fifth level of professional qualification, preparing highly qualified mid-level specialists for the labour market in specialties needed by the economy. One of the strategic goals of short-cycle study programmes is to ensure studies that meet the needs of national defence and security (Cabinet of Ministers' regulations on the state professional higher education standard). The SPC and the State Police plan to discontinue vocational education programmes and transition to professional higher education as the foundational education for police officers.

The programme "Police Work" serves as a foundational programme within the context of the Internal Security Academy's professional education, where students have the opportunity to continue their education in the first-cycle professional higher education study programme "Police Work" (Bachelor's) offered by Riga Stradiņš University. Studies can further continue in the second-cycle professional higher education study programme "Economic Security Protection" (Master's), also implemented by Riga Stradiņš University (see on <http://www.ida.edu.lv/studiju-iespejas/tiesibaizsardzibas-iestazu-darbiniekiem/prof-studiju-programma-policijas-darbs/> or <https://www.rsu.lv/studiju-programma/policijas-darbs>).

Financial resources are allocated from the funding granted to the State Police. According to the informative report "On the Progress of Implementation of the Reform of the Education System for Law Enforcement Officials", 150 study places financed from the state budget are planned for the SPC each academic year until the end of 2026 in the short-cycle vocational higher education programme "Police Work" for full-time studies.

Taking into account the number of state-funded study places (students), it is planned to enrol 150 full-time students and 100 part-time correspondence students in the short-cycle vocational higher education programme "Police Work" each year. In turn, 100 study places financed from the state

budget are planned each academic year in the short-cycle vocational higher education programme “Police Work” for part-time correspondence studies.

The implementation of the short-cycle professional study programme “Police Work” is important for national and regional level - to provide the State Police with professional personnel. All graduates of the College are guaranteed a position (a workplace) in the State Police. Social guarantees and salary are paid during the training and study period (Cabinet of Ministers 806 Regulations on the Procedure and Amount for Determining the Monthly Salary and Special Allowance for Officials with Special Service Ranks in the Ministry of the Interior System Institutions and the Prison Administration, point 7.7.1.).

Thus, the dynamics of the number of students is closely tied to the availability of state-funded places. In 2021, 118 students were enrolled in full-time studies, and 87 in part-time studies. In 2022, the numbers were 110 and 34, respectively, and in 2023, 118 and 87 students. It is evident that the allocated state-funded spots are not being fully utilised. As the statistics show, the number of applicants each year is approximately 50% higher than the number of admitted students (SAR, Annex_1_1 Statistical data on students). According to lecturers during the meeting with academic staff, applicants often fail the physical fitness tests and do not pass the health examinations.

The dropout rate each year is around 40-50 students. The reasons for discontinuing studies include personal choice (50-80%), dismissal from service, and failure to meet programme requirements (SAR, Annex_1_1 Statistical data on students).

Since SPC students are individuals serving in the State Police (Law on the Service Career of Officials with Special Service Ranks in the Ministry of the Interior System Institutions and the Prison Administration, Point 3 of the second part of Section 47), who receive the compensation stipulated by regulatory acts for their studies (Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 806 on the Procedure and Amount for Determining the Monthly Salary and Special Allowance for Officials with Special Service Ranks in the Ministry of the Interior System Institutions and the Prison Administration, Point 7.7.1), it is the students' duty to continue their service in the State Police after completing the study programme. Therefore, it can be concluded that the employment rate of the students is 100%, unless the graduate chooses to discontinue their service.

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

When evaluating the compliance of the study programme with the study field, it must be concluded that it supports the field of Internal Security and Civil Protection. The programme's title, code, and awarded professional qualification meet the requirements of external regulations and are aligned with the study field. The objectives, tasks and learning outcomes are consistent with each other. The admission requirements of the programme do not comply with the deficiencies and recommendations identified in the previous study programme evaluation process (to specify the exact number of credit points for individuals with secondary education and those with the junior inspector qualification). The duration of the study programme is appropriate and justified. However, the volume of the study programme in credit points must be clarified to comply with the requirements of the Cabinet of Ministers regulations and to address the deficiencies identified in the admission requirements.

The language of instruction, as per regulatory requirements, is Latvian, which is a well-founded requirement. A potential risk for international student exchange visits can be seen, as studies conducted in Latvian may hinder these exchanges. The programme is regularly evaluated based on analyses conducted by the SPC and the needs of the State Police, with implemented adjustments that align with the study field and are deemed appropriate.

The economic and social justification is based on society's need for internal security and civil protection, as well as state budget funding. Students are admitted according to budgeted positions, and 100% of graduates are guaranteed employment.

Strengths

1. State funding (budget places) for students and a 100% job placement guarantee after graduation.
2. The close cooperation of SPC with the State Police reflects the requirements of the changing environment in the study programme.

Weaknesses

1. Admission requirements are not implemented for the deficiencies identified in the previous evaluation process (volume for credit points for persons with secondary education and with professional qualification junior inspector).

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. According to SAR p. 62 and experts' visit, the SPC has close cooperation with the state police, which ensures regular renewal of study content in accordance with the requirements of the state police.

After analysing annex No. 2.3.7. "Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard" the experts conclude that the study courses in the programme implement the competences to be acquired defined in the professional standard. It is possible to acquire several competencies in one course, as well as one competency in several courses, which ensures the strengthening and periodic repetition of this knowledge. In this way, it is ensured that the study courses are interconnected and complementary.

Analysing annex no. 2 "Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard", the parameters of the programme correspond to those determined in the State Education Standard.

Annex "Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field" states that the study programme "Police work" has been developed taking into account the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia and international standards regulating police work and the rule of law.

The programme is included in the field of study "Internal Security and Civil Protection".

In the SAR p. 65 the main objective of the programme is to prepare Qualified junior officers of the State Police, ensuring practical training of students for work in the profession in accordance with the requirements of the sector of internal affairs, the technological development of current times, as well as demographics, immigration, globalisation of crime and other factors which affect the criminality and determine the crime trends. In the SAR p.65 there are 9 objectives of the study programme. Those that affect the content of study courses will be analysed below.

Objective No. 3 (SAR p. 65). To introduce and implement a competency-based study programme suitable for both persons with secondary education and persons who have previously obtained vocational qualification in the field of police work. According to SAR p. 68 the SPC offers two programmes of different contents so that each target group gets the knowledge they need. The 150 ECTS programme is intended for students without previous experience in the police sector with secondary education; The 120 ECTS programme is intended either for National Police officers with experience or people with acquired qualification "Junior National Police Instructor".

Objective No. 4 (SAR p. 65). To introduce new, high-quality curriculum and approaches to professional police education. To offer contemporary, high-quality and balanced studies to ensure the acquisition of theoretical, research and practical skills. According to annex "Descriptions of the study courses/modules" and SAR p. 68, each ECTS in full-time study programme is equivalent to 22 contact hours and 6 hours self-directed work and in part-time correspondence programme 1 ECTS is equal to 8 contact hours and 20 self-directed work hours (VPK order No. 529 "on the transfer of credit points") that is in accordance with the regulatory framework. The number of 60 ECTS per study year (30 ECTS per semester) is observed in the full-time study plan. According to SAR. 66, 60

% of the study courses have practical lessons that ensure the acquisition of practical skills. Students learn research skills during individual work, going through police regulations and study materials (annex "Descriptions of the study courses/modules").

Objective No. 5 (SAR p. 65). To provide students with comprehensive knowledge, to develop analytical, presentation and argumentation skills and abilities necessary for police work, to improve communication and cooperation skills, self-assessment, independent action and decision-making, information acquisition and processing skills, the ability to think in a creative and critical manner and analyse the problems of the field, to promote the formation of attitudes and understanding of values, as well as to promote practical work skills necessary for the professional activity, growth and further education of junior officers of State the police. According to the annex "Descriptions of the study courses/modules" all the mentioned skills can be acquired in the study programme and ensures the achievement of learning outcomes.

Since the graduates of the study programme are guaranteed a job in the structural units of the state police (SAR p. 70), it is important for the college to provide students with the most current industry knowledge. By communicating with the State Police (SAR p. 66), it is ensured that study courses and modules meet the needs of the industry as well as the scientific trends without exceeding the programme licence (according to the experts' visit). However, already previously mentioned in experts' opinion research is lacking and more attention should be paid to it.

2.2.2. N/A

2.2.3. According to SAR p. 67, the methods used by the SPC to achieve learning outcomes are the organisation of lectures and seminars. The purpose of lectures is to convey theoretical information to a larger group of students, while seminars and supplementary assignments provide a more in-depth topic through discussions, group work and practical assignments.

The SPC puts a lot of emphasis on practical classes. In a conversation with the director of the SPC, he mentioned that nowadays students are much more interested in practical classes, which the SPC also implements as much as possible to improve the programme. This was confirmed by the students as well, that practical lessons provide the greatest confidence in their readiness to work in the industry and they want them as many as possible. The purpose of the practical tasks is to show the student how to apply theoretical knowledge in practice. The study has various practical tasks: development of procedural documents, work with various information systems, analysis of interrogation and investigation cases, as well as practice. In the appropriate rooms, which are also introduced to the expert group, tactical training and the acquisition of gunnery skills.

The SPC places great emphasis on group work and analysis of situations, either giving everyone a previously prepared situation description, or one part of the group carrying out a task - interrogation, tactical training, while the other part of the group observes what is happening on cameras and analyses the effectiveness of the applied strategies and the necessary improvements in the operation.

During the experts' visit, it was mentioned that to prepare the young officers, the SPC regularly plans practical simulations together with firefighters and board control. Such training is planned so as not to pose any risk to the civilian population. During the experts' visit it was concluded that the students appreciate these combined training, because they present the opportunity to learn cooperation with other Ministry of Interior's institutions.

The SPC also uses modern methods for the implementation of the curriculum and provides tactical training by simulating various situations through XVR simulations which the Experts during the visit were introduced to.

All the above-mentioned methods help to achieve the set goals "to provide high-quality professional education based on the good practice of practical police work, as a result of which students acquire the knowledge, skills and competences necessary for the fifth professional qualification level "Junior

officer. State Police", which enables the performance of professional duties, including effective and efficient crime prevention, police response and crime investigation, fighting crime and protecting the rights and legitimate interests of individuals.

According to SAR p. 67 all study materials are available for students on the college's e-study platform (Moodle) at any time. The experts' visit confirmed that there are no problems with finding materials, everything you need is available in the e-study environment.

According to SAR p. 68, the learning and teaching principles of the student centred education are ensured by including students in improving the study programme and adapting methods based on the needs and interests of each individual student. According to the students, they can choose which branch of the police they want to study, have an internship and work after their studies. The teachers encourage and support the choices made by the students. According to SAR p.68, 120 ECTS programme is tailored to students, either State Police officers with work experience in the State Police, or persons who have already obtained the "Junior State Police Instructor" qualification. The 150 ECTS programme is intended for the general acquisition of knowledge about police work for students with previous knowledge with secondary education.

2.2.4. The organization of the internship for both full-time and part-time students is described in Internal Regulation of the State Police College No.17 of 14 June 2014 "Rules of Qualification Practice of the First Level Professional Higher Education Programme "Police Work" of the State Police College" where the procedure for organising practice, preparation and evaluation of e-diary and practice report is described. This document defines all relevant terms and deadlines. According to students the internship is very well organised, they are informed about the dates, the content of the internship report and easily can receive help in case of questions. According to SAR 2.2.1.section and Internal Regulation of the State Police College No.17 of 14 June 2014 "Rules of Qualification Practice of the First Level Professional Higher Education Programme "Police Work" of the State Police College" The internship is implemented in State police structural units throughout Latvia and full-time students can do an internship near their declared place of residence.

According to State Police College short-cycle higher vocational education programme "Police Work" study course description of the internship, the internship is divided into two phases. Phase 1 of the internship is organised for both full-time and part-time students during the third study semester. Its aim is to acquire knowledge so that the student can adequately respond to calls and accidents, participate in maintaining public order, control road traffic and improve their physical fitness. Phase 2 of the internship is organised for full-time students during the fourth study semester and for part-time students during the sixth study semester with the aim of acquiring the skills and theoretical knowledge necessary for investigation, collecting and processing evidence and working with the necessary equipment.

Each of the Internship phases is worth 12 ECTS in total making 24 ECTS which according to the State Education Standard should be at least 16 ECTS.

The internship ensures the achievement of the following criteria mentioned in the Profession Standard Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 264 of 23 May 2017 "Regulations on the Classification of Occupations, Key Tasks and Basic Qualification Requirements:

- 1.Ability to carry out his or her work responsibly and on a high-quality;
- 2.Ability to carry out application of legal norms in an accurate and justified manner;
- 3.Use and apply the theoretical knowledge acquired in practice;
- 4.Ability to plan, organise and perform practical tasks based on an analytical approach in the relevant professional field.

According to academic staff, the methods used during the internship are designed for students to acquire tactical skills and theoretical knowledge in various positions. Students during the experts visit mentioned that the internship is one of the most important courses where after finishing they feel they are ready to start their service.

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6. According to SAR p. 70 the SPC by 1 March of each calendar year together with the State Police compose priority research directions. Based on these priority directions of research mentioned by the State Police and the goals of this programme, the SPC creates a list of topics for qualification papers. In the spring semester of each academic year, the SPC Council decides on the topics of the qualification papers as well as the supervisors. The SPC's communication about the main directions of research with the State Police was also confirmed by the head of the State Police and the SPC's administration during the experts visit. After reviewing several qualification works, the expert panel concluded that the topics are relevant to the field but they lack methodology. However, the qualification theses do not meet the research methodology requirements, indicating that the results of these research works are scientifically questionable or unlikely (not based on research). Although the SPC has issued the regulations for the development, submission, defense, and storage of qualification theses, as well as uniform formatting requirements (<https://www.policijas.koledza.gov.lv/lv/noteikumi>), which stipulate that the research methodology should include a general description of the problem under investigation, referencing other authors' work in addressing this problem, defining the research questions, objectives, subject, tasks, research question, research methods, and sources to be used (Section (35), the qualification theses either lack this methodology or include it only partially.

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

The study programme is compliant, continuously improved to adapt to the State Police requirements. Students acquire sufficient knowledge to correspond to a 2-year college education, which was confirmed by both the academic staff and the employer during the on-site visit.

The SPC ensures the implementation of the curriculum with the help of lectures and seminars. The theoretical basis is given to the students in the lectures and the application of the theory in practice is emphasised in the seminars. The SPC has developed a wide variety of practical classes to suit the needs of each course. Tactical and shooting training takes place in appropriately equipped rooms. Promoting the acquisition of interdisciplinary knowledge and the promotion of cooperation, training is also organised with such institutions as firefighters and board control. Modern methods are also used - applications for monitoring physical fitness and XVR simulations for learning tactical situations. The materials are placed in the e-study environment, where students can find them at any time.

The practice is well organised both at the level of practical and regulatory acts. Students are satisfied with the progress of the practice and are informed about the assessment deadlines, drawing up reports. Practice ensures the fulfilment of very important criteria, which are mentioned in the professional standard and also meet the requirements of the national education standard regarding the scope. Student testimonials make sure that the practice provides the goals mentioned in its description.

Every year there are talks between the SPC and the State Police about current research directions related to policing. In the spring semester, based on these directions, the college creates a list of topics for the qualification papers, and the college council decides both on it and on the leaders of the qualification papers. The samples of the qualification works proved that the topics are relevant to the industry, but the research competence needs to be raised and the works need to be made more meaningful.

Strengths:

1. The college is obliged to renew the study programme in accordance with the requirements of the State Police, therefore regular revision of the programme is ensured.

2. A variety of practical lessons have been developed and adapted to the needs of the courses. They are highly appreciated by students and ensure the acquisition of practical skills, which are usually lacking in study programmes.
3. Students' opinions are taken into account in improving the study programme.
4. The college communicates with the State Police about current research directions and develops the topics of qualification papers based on them.

Weaknesses:

1. The qualification theses either lack methodology or include it only partially.

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. SPC has developed comprehensive provisions across study, research, informational, material, and financial areas to support its study programme (see Joint report subsection 1.3). The study provision is supported by qualified teaching staff and a curriculum aligned with the needs of law enforcement, ensuring students acquire practical knowledge and skills necessary for police work. Research provisions, although in need of expansion, are integrated into the academic environment with a focus on internal security and policing. The library offers a broad collection of resources, including printed works and digital databases, which are accessible both on-site and remotely. Material and technical provisions include well-equipped classrooms, police simulation environments, and training facilities, ensuring practical skills development. Financially, the SPC relies on state budget allocations, regularly updated to maintain high-quality resources. These provisions collectively ensure that SPC provides the necessary tools and infrastructure for students to achieve learning outcomes and participate in a high-quality study process, while also meeting national security and policing needs.

After analysing the data provided (Annex 2.4.1; Annex 2.4.2, see Joint report subsection 1.4 and 1.5), experts notice areas that can be improved. One of the main concerns is the limited financial support involvement in research, both in terms of student engagement and international collaboration.

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3. The funding available to the study programme, funding sources and the use of funding ensures full implementation of the study process, the study programme has the minimum number of students to ensure the profitability of the study programme (by separately indicating the different implementation options of the study programme) and facilitates the development of the study programme.

The funding available for the study programme is fully provided by the state budget, ensuring the necessary financial resources for both full-time and part-time students (SAR, p. 29-30). The SPC has a stable source of funding through the Ministry of the Interior, which allows it to enrol 150 full-time and 100 part-time students each academic year. This allocation ensures that the programme is

financially sustainable and that students receive salary and social guarantees during their studies, which contributes to a secure learning environment. The state budget funding also supports the acquisition and improvement of material and technical resources, such as the procurement of modern classroom equipment and updates to simulation rooms. Although SPC has sufficient financial support from the state, the potential for accessing EU funds remains underutilised, particularly in promoting research and internationalisation opportunities.

The number of students enrolled each year (2021: full-time -118 students, part-time- 87 students; 2022: full-time -110 students, part-time - 34 students; 2023: full-time - 112 students, part-time: 21 students (1.1.Appendix_Statistical data on students), although lower than the allocated state-funded places (SAR, p. 30), remains sufficient to ensure the programme's viability. With all graduates guaranteed employment in the State Police, the funding model is aligned with the national need for law enforcement professionals.

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

Conclusions: The SPC has established a strong foundation in terms of study provision and support, library resources, material, technical, and financial infrastructure, ensuring the effective implementation of its “Police Work” study programme. However, there is room for improvement in expanding research opportunities, fostering international collaboration, and making better use of external funding sources to enhance the programme's scope and quality.

Strengths:

- 1.Comprehensive educational and technical resources - modern classrooms, police simulation facilities, and a well-resourced library, all of which support the achievement of practical and academic learning outcomes.
2. The programme is sustainably funded through the state budget, ensuring sufficient financial support for both full-time and part-time students, with salaries and social guarantees provided during their studies.
3. The programme is delivered by experienced teaching staff, with a curriculum designed to meet the practical and professional needs of law enforcement, ensuring graduates are well-prepared for careers in the State Police.

Weaknesses:

1. Limited financial support in research activities, impacting international research collaboration.
2. Underutilization of EU funding opportunities, particularly for research and internationalisation efforts, which restricts the “Police Work” study programme's potential growth and global networking.

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

SPC has developed strong provisions across study, research, informational, material, and financial areas, ensuring a high-quality educational experience aligned with law enforcement needs. While state funding provides stability and supports comprehensive training facilities, opportunities to enhance research activities and utilise EU funds remain underexplored.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. The qualifications of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programme comply with the required standards and regulatory enactments. According to SAR (2.3.5.p. 35-38), the teaching staff members possess the necessary qualifications, including four representatives holding doctoral degrees and 40 with master's degrees. Based on the CV analysis data of the teaching staff, the experts found that many programme teachers also have substantial professional backgrounds in law enforcement, which enhances their teaching effectiveness. These qualifications align with the requirements set out in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments. The academic staff are selected through an open competition in line with regulatory procedures, ensuring that they have the necessary qualifications and professional experience. The academic staff undergo regular evaluation and professional development, ensuring continuous improvement in their teaching capabilities. The teaching methods used align with the latest trends in police work and public security, and guest lecturers are occasionally involved to offer specialised expertise. These factors contribute to the effective delivery of the study programme, helping students achieve the intended learning outcomes.

However, the experts note that although the staff is highly qualified, there is room for increased participation in research and international cooperation. In particular, participation in international and national research projects and academic publications could be increased to further enhance the academic dimension of the programme. Another observation is the need to attract new teaching staff, as some of the current staff are approaching retirement age, which could lead to potential gaps in expertise.

Experts also emphasise the importance of continuing the continuous professional development of teaching staff, not only in the areas of innovative teaching methods and higher education didactics, but also in the areas of the use of teaching technologies (e.g. Moodle, anti-plagiarism systems), research methodology and foreign languages (particularly English).

2.4.2. After evaluating the data presented in SAR (p. 35-38, section 3.4), and after discussions with the college management, programme managers, and teachers, the experts determined that the SPC takes several measures to ensure that changes in the composition of teaching staff do not negatively affect the quality of the study programme.

1. It uses a structured recruitment process where academic positions are filled through open competitions to ensure that qualified professionals are selected.

2. The SPC continuously monitors and updates the professional development of its teaching staff, organizing regular raising the qualification.

3. Internal quality control mechanisms, such as the Methodological Commission and the Hospitation Commission, help maintain a high standard of teaching through regular evaluations and peer assessments.

4. To ensure the relevance of the curriculum, SPC collaborates with external stakeholders, such as the State Police, to keep the content of the study programme aligned with industry needs.

5. The SPC emphasises teamwork among teaching staff members, encouraging cooperation and knowledge sharing through joint development of teaching materials and participation in educational events.

The use of guest lecturers also helps cover any gaps when staff changes occur. Moreover, regular internal meetings are held to address any changes and ensure a smooth transition in staffing (SAR, p. 76; Annex_for_point_4). These measures ensure that the programme continues to meet both academic and practical needs, complying with regulatory requirements, including the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

The college can enhance several aspects related to managing changes in teaching staff to ensure that the quality of the study programme remains unaffected. First, implementing a teacher

replacement (substitution) plan would help prepare for unforeseen teaching staff departures, ensuring smoother transitions. Expanding the pool of guest lecturers would provide flexibility in covering gaps, maintaining the continuity of education. Strengthening partnerships with other educational institutions (including foreign cooperations under the Erasmus + teaching exchange programme) could allow for staff exchanges or shared resources, mitigating the impact of staff turnover.

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4. Each member of the academic staff in the last six years has published in peer-reviewed editions, including international editions (if the staff member has worked for a shorter period, the number of publications should be indicated in proportion to the period worked) or artistic achievements (for example, exhibitions, films, theater performances and concerts) or five years of practical experience (except for experience in the implementation of the study programme) in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

The qualifications of the teaching staff at SPC comply with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions. Based on the SAR of SPC, Section 2.4 and on-site discussions with the academic staff, it is evident that the teaching staff actively contribute to national publications and bring substantial real-world experience into the academic environment. However, there are opportunities for further strengthening international collaboration and research visibility, especially in the context of EU-funded projects like Erasmus+ and other initiatives supported by the European Commission.

At the same time, it was found that the majority of teaching staff do not have publications in internationally cited databases (e.g., SCOPUS, Web of Sciences). Only a few teaching staff members have publications in courses such as Human Rights in Police Work, Identification and Investigation of Hate Crimes and Criminal Offences in the Field of National and International Security, Career Course of Service, and Organisation of Police Work. Additionally, for the course Civil Defence, only one lecturer associated with it has a Hirsch index, though this is relatively low

It is these teaching staff who also have a doctorate in Law. The rest of the teaching staff has a master's degree in Law and professional experience in the State Police, as well as publications in national resources.

Publications: Several faculty members have contributed to peer-reviewed publications, particularly at the national level. According to the self-assessment report, 4 faculty members hold doctoral degrees and 40 members hold master's degrees (Pdf_3102_EN_v2_modified). The academic staff have contributed to national publications, but considering the College's involvement in various EU Commission-funded projects (e.g., Erasmus+), there is a clear opportunity to leverage these collaborations to increase participation in international publications. For instance, faculty members such as Angelina Bogdane and Sanita Rinkmane have attended and presented at various seminars and training courses on artificial intelligence and decision-making tools, highlighting their active engagement in research and professional development (Akademiskais personals...) (annex_for_point_8). Encouraging faculty members to publish more widely in international journals and actively disseminate research outcomes from EU projects can enhance the College's academic standing and international reputation (Development_Strategy_St...)(eplatforma.aika.lv_inde...).

Practical Experience::

Many faculty members have extensive practical experience, particularly in law enforcement and public security, which adds tremendous value to the academic programme. Faculty members, who serve in the State Police, and others bring in real-world expertise from the field of law enforcement (28.12.2022 Par darba gr...)(30.07.2024 On_amendment...). Additionally, faculty members not only have strong academic credentials but also hold significant professional experience in the State Police, Prosecution Office, and other law enforcement bodies (Pdf_3102_EN_v2_modified). This

alignment with real-world practices ensures that students are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary for immediate application in their professional careers. Furthermore, the teaching staff includes 5 individuals with special service ranks, and in addition to their direct duties, 10 general staff members contribute to pedagogical work by sharing their professional experiences (Pdf_3102_EN_v2_modified).

The integration of practical experience within the curriculum aligns with SPC's strategic goal of providing vocational education directly linked to the needs of the State Police. This ensures that students graduate with the practical and theoretical knowledge required for immediate implementation in their respective fields (Development_Strategy_St...)(Pdf_3102_EN_v2_modified). While the College meets the minimum qualifications required for higher education institutions, there remains an opportunity to enhance its research output on the international stage, aligning with the College's strategic priorities (Development_Strategy_St...)(eplatforma.aika.lv_inde...) (Pdf_3102_EN_v2_modified).

2.4.5. The college has established a mechanism for cooperation among its teaching staff, which plays a crucial role in ensuring the achievement of the aims of the study programme (SAR, p. 75-76). A working group involving staff from various departments was formed to develop the study programme, enabling them to define common objectives based on the needs of students. The interconnection between study courses is ensured through regular departmental meetings, where teachers collaborate on course content and discuss the implementation of the study programme. Additionally, teachers are involved in a Methodological Commission that oversees the coherence of course assessment criteria, further promoting alignment across courses. The interrelation of study courses is supported by the participation of teachers from different departments in the design and delivery of courses, ensuring that content is complementary and interconnected (SAR, p. 12-13, 76).

Moreover, the use of Hospitation commission, where teachers observe and assess each other's teaching, fosters continuous improvement and ensures that all staff are aligned with the programme's goals. Teachers also collaborate in developing teaching materials and participate in educational events, contributing to a unified approach. The combination of these mechanisms ensures the smooth integration of the curriculum and the achievement of the intended learning outcomes across all courses (SAR, p. 12-13, 24-25, 76, "Order for the commission and conduct of hospitation").

According to experts, the introduction of a mutual mentoring programme could be useful in improving the experience sharing mechanism. It relies on experienced teachers mentoring and helping newer colleagues to adopt expertise and consistency of teaching. Meanwhile, new professionals pass on the latest acquired knowledge (especially related to the use of innovative methods or technologies). The same can be applied to joint group research projects, where teachers share their best abilities (expertise, application of research methods, languages, and other knowledge and skills).

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

The teaching staff at the SPC possess the required qualifications, including doctoral and master's degrees, along with substantial professional experience in law enforcement. These qualifications ensure compliance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions and contribute to the successful delivery of the study programme. While SPC provides mechanisms for staff cooperation and continuous professional development, there are areas for improvement, particularly in terms of increased participation in research and international collaboration.

Strengths

1. The teaching staff have strong qualifications, with relevant academic degrees and extensive professional experience in law enforcement.
2. Established effective mechanisms for collaboration among teaching staff, ensuring the alignment of course content and the achievement of learning outcomes.
3. Internal quality control measures, such as the Methodological and Hospitation Commissions, ensure high teaching standards and continuous staff development.

Weaknesses:

1. The involvement of teachers in applied research and their results, both nationally and internationally, are insufficient.
2. The college faces challenges in attracting younger teaching staff.

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: Partially compliant

The well-qualified teaching staff, supported by cooperation mechanisms, ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and effective programme implementation, with peer evaluations and guest lecturers enhancing the curriculum. However, the research potential of academic staff is insufficient.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The scope of the study programme, which was submitted as part of the assessment procedure, as well as the specified programme structure, complies with the current Cabinet of Ministers regulations (in effect since 21.06.2023)

- 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

According to the Professions` Clasificator (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 264 of May 2017) and to the professional standart "Junior Police Officer" (<https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/ps0533.pdf>) this study programme has all the necessary courses to provide students with the necessary knowledge required for the performance of the basic tasks of the professional activity. According to the expert's opinion, the purpose of the courses is adequate to obtain the necessary knowledge.

- 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: Partially compliant

The course descriptions have been developed in Latvian, but they are not fully accessible to students. The SPC has set an internal deadline for uploading the course descriptions to the Moodle system by November 1, 2024.

- 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: Partially compliant

The diploma sample is according to state regulations for a short-cycle professional higher education diploma with professional qualification. The diploma supplement is outdated and is not according to state regulations

- 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

The teaching staff are proficient in Latvian according to the supplied CVs and the regulations of the official language knowledge (Cabinet regulation No. 157 of 8 March 2022 "Regulations on the amount of knowledge of the national language, the procedure for testing the national language proficiency and the state fee for the national language proficiency test" annex 1 included information of state language proficiency for staff profession mentioned in the "Basic information on the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study field")

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions according to Cabinet regulation No. 70 of 23 January 2007 "Mandatory provisions in the study agreement"

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The information that it is possible to continue studies in the higher education programme of the first cycle. It is included in the diploma annex.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The college has issued Certificate of loss compensation for students (document number: Nr. 20/8-941)

- 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: Fully compliant

The study programme has been developed taking into account the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia and international standards regulating police work and the rule of law.

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The study programme fulfils most of the requirements. However, study course descriptions are not available to students at all times and the diploma and its supplement should be specified in accordance with the current regulatory framework.

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

Overall, the study programme "Police Work" complies with the regulatory framework set for short-cycle professional higher education programmes.

The SPC has laid a foundation to support the "Police Work" study programme, offering robust study resources, technical infrastructure, and financial backing. SPC's qualified teaching staff, equipped with professional law enforcement experience, ensure compliance with higher education standards and quality instruction. Nonetheless, expanding research opportunities and enhancing international

partnerships would further enrich the programme. Leveraging external funding sources could also increase the programme's reach and effectiveness. Overall, SPC's commitment to growth in these areas will be key to the programme's continued success and impact.

Several shortcomings identified, can be addressed within the timelines indicated by the experts. In the experts' view, most of the deficiencies can be resolved within the two-year period. A longer time frame may be required for organising long-term exchange visits, offering the completion of study modules (improving lecturers' English language skills, developing study course modules in English, etc.), as well as regular involvement of lecturers in international research.

The study programme can be implemented in full-time intramural and part-time learning formats in the Latvian language.

Strengths:

1. Professional lecturers who meet the requirements of regulatory acts, as well as the involvement of practitioners in teaching from the State Police and other institutions.
2. Good material support and infrastructure (it is necessary to provide an outdoor stadium for sports activities).
3. Good cooperation with the State Police and other services, institutions.
4. State-funded places for students and guaranteed employment after completing the programme.

Weaknesses:

1. A unified course description development system (e.g., a standardised template) has not been implemented, and not all course descriptions are available to students.
2. Feedback is regularly obtained, but there is no evidence that the information providers are informed about the improvements made to the program.
3. Qualification theses contain weak research methodology.
4. Exchange visits (e.g., Erasmus+ program) are organised for short-term periods and are not suitable for completing study courses. As a result, there is no established procedure for recognizing the credit points earned during these visits.
5. Teaching personnel are minimally involved in international research; insufficient research published in international publishers, e.g. in journals with a citation index, in international professional journals.
6. The qualification theses either lack methodology or include it only partially.
7. The diploma supplement is outdated and is not according to state regulations.

Evaluation of the study programme "Police work"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Police work"

Short-term recommendations

- | |
|--|
| 1. Enhance International Research Output through EU Collaborations. |
| 2. Encourage SPC faculty to engage in joint research publications through Erasmus+ and CEPOL projects. This can be supported with dedicated resources such as research grants or time allocation to increase international academic contributions. (31.12.2025) |
| 3. Ensure that all the courses have available course descriptions with necessary information in Moodle or IPAS. |

4. Provide students with accessible study course evaluation criteria.
5. Improve internal regulations: extend the prohibition of academic dishonesty to include academic staff; as well as establish students' rights to an appeals process regarding study assessment (30.04.2025)
6. Ensure student anonymity in the assessment process of study courses and programmes (by December 31, 2025)
7. Develop guidelines or establish a uniform template for creating course descriptions (31.12.2025.)
8. Update the diploma supplement according to state regulations (31.12.2025.)

Long-term recommendations

1. Increase student engagement in research. Integrate research into the curriculum, offer incentives like grants for student research, and build partnerships with academic institutions to enhance student involvement in conferences, publications, and broader research activities (31.12.2029)
2. Maximise Erasmus+ opportunities. Raise awareness of Erasmus+ benefits, provide language training, and simplify the application process to encourage both staff and student participation in teaching exchanges and long-term mobility programmes (31.12.2029)
3. To enhance research involvement, introduce a structured incentive system with rewards for publishing and conference participation. Build partnerships with both foreign and national research institutions to support collaborative projects and increase access to resources. Offer targeted professional development in research methodologies to improve faculty skills. Provide dedicated time within teaching staff workloads to balance research and teaching effectively (31.12.2029)
4. To improve the attraction of younger teaching staff, should be implemented targeted recruitment strategies, defining motivational measures, professional development opportunities, and mentorship programmes (31.12.2027)
5. Consider Participation in Horizon Europe and Similar Programmes: SPC should explore expanding its involvement in European Commission-funded programmes like Horizon Europe, especially in security-related projects such as FCT (Fight against Crime and Terrorism) calls. This will strengthen research capabilities and increase SPC's visibility in the European research community. (Timeline: 31.12.2027)
6. Promote Faculty Contributions on National and International Platforms: Encourage SPC faculty to showcase their achievements on international stages by participating in conferences, workshops, and collaborative initiatives. This will increase recognition of the College's contributions to law enforcement and public safety education. (Timeline: 31.12.2028)
7. Succession Planning and Mentorship: Develop a structured mentorship programme to support younger faculty members as senior staff near retirement. This will ensure continuity in research and practical contributions, maintaining high standards. (Timeline: 31.12.2027)
8. Review the methodology of the qualification thesis so that all works are properly designed, methods and objects are correctly described, as is necessary in this field of study (31.12.2029.)

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 close cooperation between SPC and the State Police, as well as the expressed opinions of students, graduates, and employers, allows experts to conclude that the study programme meets the internal security and civil protection needs and that its operation is sufficiently effective. However, certain aspects of internal quality need to be improved.
R2 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the level of development of scientific research and artistic creation (if applicable)		Partially compliant	The SPC's applied research activities align well with its strategic goals, particularly in the field of "Internal Security and Civil Protection." The establishment of the Internal Security Academy enhances this alignment, pooling resources from key institutions to train highly qualified law enforcement professionals. Applied research directly addresses the needs of employers, like the State Police, ensuring that research outcomes are practical and beneficial for law enforcement. The involvement of students in research activities is encouraged, with opportunities such as qualification papers and participation in conferences. However, experts identified weaknesses, such as insufficient student involvement in research projects and limited international participation in academic research. Moreover, while innovative teaching methods, like the XVR system and digital forensic labs, are being introduced, these innovations could be further extended to improve the research infrastructure and methods.

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.		Partially compliant	SPC's collaboration with local and international institutions has strengthened its study programme by aligning training with industry needs and enriching the curriculum through Erasmus+ initiatives. However, opportunities for teaching exchanges and long-term student experiences remain underutilised. Expanding these areas will further enhance international networking and educational quality.
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	All of the recommendations have been successfully implemented. Also, information should be taken into account and provided regarding the recommendations provided during the previous accreditation process.

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

No.	Study programme	R5	R6	R7	R8	Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)
1	Police work (41861)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Partially compliant	Good

The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts

There are no differing expert opinions.