

APPLICATION

Study field "Religion and Theology" for assessment

Study field	<i>Religion and Theology</i>
Title of the higher education institution	<i>Latvijas Universitāte</i>
Registration code	<i>3341000218</i>
Legal address	<i>RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050</i>
Phone number	<i>67034301</i>
E-mail	<i>lu@lu.lv</i>

Self-evaluation report

Study field "Religion and Theology"

University of Latvia

Self-evaluation report	2
Study field	4
1. Information on the Higher Education Institution/College	4
2.1. Management of the Study Field	18
2.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System	44
2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field	62
2.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation	87
2.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation	98
2.6. Implementation of the Recommendations Received During the Previous Assessment Procedures	103
Annexes	108
Other annexes	109
Theology and Religious Studies (43221)	110
Study programme	112
3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme	112
3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof	120
3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme	130
3.4. Teaching Staff	134
Annexes	141
Theology and Religious Studies (45221)	142
Study programme	144
3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme	144
3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof	150
3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme	159
3.4. Teaching Staff	163
Annexes	169
Theology and Religious Studies (51221)	170
Study programme	173
3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme	173
3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof	180
3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme	193
3.4. Teaching Staff	197
Annexes	202

1. Information on the Higher Education Institution/College

1.1. Basic information on the higher education institution/ college and its strategic development fields,.

The University of Latvia (hereinafter - UL) was founded in 1919 and is the only classical university in Latvia, retaining its status as the largest higher education institution in the country in terms of the number of students in 2021. The University of Latvia is a university of science, incorporating and developing the country's main study and scientific research potential in the field of humanities, natural, technical, and social sciences.

Mission: The mission of the University of Latvia is expressed in its motto *Scientiae et Patriae* (For Science and Fatherland). The University of Latvia (UL) contributes to global science, higher education, knowledge, technology transfer and innovation, and ensures the growth of Latvian democracy and culture, the development of the Latvian language and the prosperity of the national economy.

Vision: Space for excellence, environment for development, time for responsibility. The UL is a university of science of high international standing. The UL creates an interdisciplinary, open and innovation-oriented, excellent work and study environment. The activities of the University of Latvia form the basis for the sustainable development and economic transformation of the Republic of Latvia.

Values:

- University community,
- Excellence,
- Science-based development,
- Openness,
- Cooperation,
- Academic freedom.

The University plays an important role not only in the development of the higher education system in Latvia, but also in the growth of the country's economy, providing cutting edge studies and research, based on the unity of higher education and science. The University actively participates in solving topical problems of the state and society, and is the centre of intellectual life in Latvia, where new knowledge is created, while nurturing the national language, culture and promoting the development of the state and society. The University of Latvia focuses its efforts on providing quality studies and developing scientific excellence, creating structures open to interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research and studies, ensuring high return on invested resources, sustainable and environmentally friendly use of resources. The University is evolving as a modern international academic centre, creating an environment and infrastructure for excellence in studies, research and innovation.

The study process at the University of Latvia is implemented at [13 faculties](#), [7 branches \(only in Latvian\)](#) and [3 medical colleges](#). Research activities are also performed at [18 research institutes](#), and various research, training and consultancy activities are conducted in [28 study centres](#). The [UL Regional Centre \(only in Latvian\)](#) coordinates and supervises the activities of the UL branches, as well as promotes cooperation between the University and local authorities in the fields of human resources development, education and interdisciplinary research. The UL has more than [230](#)

bilateral cooperation agreements with universities in 51 countries. The UL Culture Centre (*only in Latvian*) is represented by 21 amateur arts groups - choirs, dance groups, vocal ensembles, early music ensembles, theatre, a brass band and a ceramics studio. The UL Sports Centre organises UL sports activities for up to 40 different sports classes in 11 sports - basketball, wrestling, group fitness classes, football, floorball, table tennis, kendo, general fitness, volleyball, cheerleading and self-defence. The activities of the UL are also performed by the UL Museum, the UL Botanical Garden, the UL Rhododendron Nursery "Babīte", the UL Academic Publishing House, and the UL Baldone Observatory (*only in Latvian*). The UL Foundation and the Alumni Club (*only in Latvian*) have also been operating successfully.

As of 1 October 2021, the UL has 3,250 employees, including 1,420 UL academic staff and 1,830 UL general staff. The UL financial performance is characterised by a turnover of EUR 81 million and an equity ratio of 73%. The main activities of the University take place in Riga, at 19 Raiņa Boulevard and the UL Academic Centre in Torņkalns, as well as in several locations in Riga and in the UL regional branches in Alūksne, Bauska, Cēsis, Jēkabpils, Kuldīga, Madona and Tukums.

The UL is ranked 601-800 in the *Times Higher Education* World University Ranking of 2021, its academic staff and students publish more than nine hundred scientific publications annually in the *Scopus* and *Web of Science* databases.

The UL offers study programmes at all levels, covering 28 branches of science and 22 fields of study. The UL 13 faculties offer 140 study programmes. See Table 1 for the fields of study, the number of study programmes and the accreditation periods.

Table 1. Study fields, number of study programmes and accreditation periods (02.11.2021.)

No	Study fields	Number of study programmes	Accreditation period
1.	Architecture and Construction	1	08.06.2022-09.06.2028.
2.	Life Sciences	3	29.05.2013-31.12.2023.
3.	Economics	8	08.09.2021-09.09.2027.
4.	Physics, Materials Science, Mathematics and Statistics	7	29.05.2013-31.12.2023.
5.	Geography and Earth Sciences	6	24.04.2017-24.04.2023.
6.	Information Technology, Computer Engineering, Electronics, Telecommunications, Computer Management, and Computer Science	5	29.05.2013-22.08.2023.

No	Study fields	Number of study programmes	Accreditation period
7.	Internal security and Civil defence	3	05.06.2013-31.12.2024.
8.	Information and Communication Sciences	5	16.06.2021-17.06.2023.
9.	Education, Pedagogy and Sports	24	12.06.2013-31.12.2024.
10.	Chemistry, Chemical engineering and Biotechnology	3	24.05.2013-31.12.2023.
11.	Arts	1	24.11.2021-25.11.2027
12.	Psychology	3	21.06.2019-21.06.2025.
13.	Sociology, Political science and Anthropology	9	12.06.2013-31.12.2024.
14.	Social Welfare	2	14.09.2022-13.09.2028.
15.	Religion and Theology	3	22.05.2013-31.12.2023.
16.	Law	4	21.06.2019-21.06.2025.
17.	Translation	2	14.05.2013-31.12.2024.
18.	Management, Administration and Real estate <i>management</i>	8	29.09.2021-30.09.2027.
19.	Language and Culture studies, Native language studies and language programmes	21	26.06.2013-31.12.2024.
20.	Healthcare	13	31.05.2013-31.12.2022.
21.	History and Philosophy	6	24.05.2013-31.12.2023.

No	Study fields	Number of study programmes	Accreditation period
22.	Environmental protection	3	05.06.2013-31.12.2024.

UL study programmes in several fields of study are also available in seven UL branches located in the regions of Latvia. In the academic year 2021/2022, 11 different fee study programmes in 3 study fields, ranging from first-level (college) higher education study programmes, professional bachelor's study programmes to master's study programmes, are being implemented in the branches. See Table 2 for the number of study fields and study programmes in the branches.

Table 2. Number of study fields and study programmes implemented in the regional branches of the University of Latvia, data as of 2021.

Branches	Alūksne (founded 1997)	Bauska (founded 1997)	Cēsis (founded 1995)	Jēkabpils (founded 1996)	Kuldīga (founded 1996)	Madona (founded 1997)	Tukums (founded 1996)
Number of study fields	3	1	2	1	2	1	1
Number of study programmes	5	3	7	4	9	3	6
Number of students	75	146	428	99	302	99	333

As of 1 October 2021, the total number of students studying at the University of Latvia is 15 590, 40% of whom are financed from the state budget. Around 10% of students study at UL branches. In total, almost five thousand new students are enrolled every year. See Figure 1.

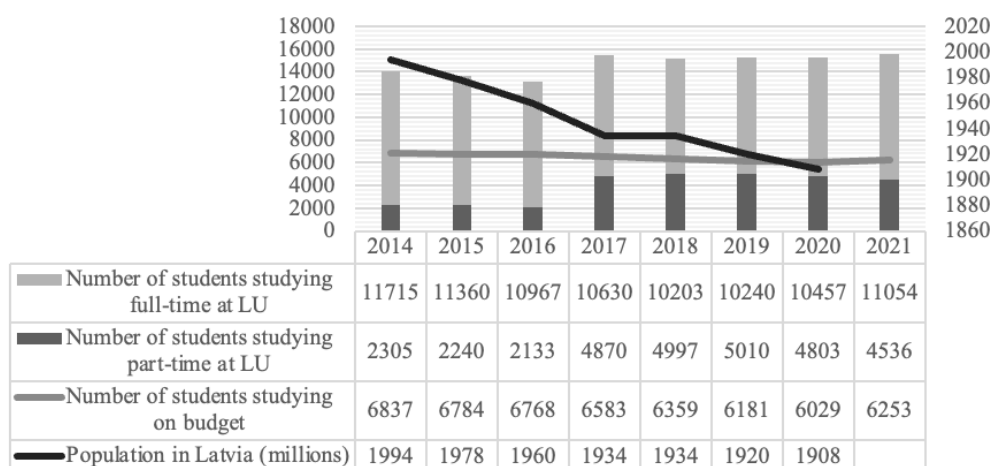


Figure 1. Number

of students at the University of Latvia against the population of Latvia, 2014-2021

The UL medium-term development strategy for the period from 2021 to 2027 ([UL Strategy 2027 LV, ENG](#)) was approved on June 28, 2021, by the Senate decision No.2-3/ 90. With the cooperation of the involved parties and the analysis of the national and international competitiveness of the University of Latvia, the mission of the University of Latvia has been revised and strategic goals have been defined in six development directions - three in each - in the core business and institutional areas. Development goals have been set for science, studies, public education, as well as in the domains of staff and organizational culture, environment and governance. The UL Strategy 2027 envisages the further development of the University as an internationally recognised science centre, the development of unique study and lifelong learning programmes, as well as the offer of competitive working and study conditions. The University continues the work initiated in the previous strategic period to achieve the highest level of scientific excellence, as well as to promote student-oriented studies and develop a modern study environment. The involvement and contribution of the University to the society of Latvia is being purposefully promoted. The University is improving the working conditions and environment necessary for talent development. Sustainable growth is playing an increasingly important role and is becoming a cross-cutting principle in all its areas of activity. Significant attention is paid to ensuring academic integrity and strengthening the value-oriented organisational culture of the University. See Table 3 for the current strategic goals and development directions of the University.

Table 3. UL Strategic Goals Map, 2021-2027

Development directions	Strategic goals
DEVELOPMENT OF PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES	
1.V. Scientific excellence	1.M. Internationally recognized research university
2.V. Development of studies	2.M. Unique study offer and high competitiveness of graduates
3.V. Contribution to society	3.M. University activities as a basis for the growth of Latvia
INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
4.V. Talent development	4.M. Development- and excellence-oriented HR policy
5.V. Environment and governance	5.M. Green thinking, attractive, sustainable university environment and effective administrative support
6.V. Organisational culture	6.M. Inclusive, cooperation- and innovation-focused culture

The outcomes of the implementation of the UL Strategy 2027 will be measured by twenty-one performance indicators, five of which have been designated as UL Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). - These are: research funding from foreign sources per full-time equivalent of academic staff in EUR, co-publications with foreign partners in SCOPUS and Web of Science databases (%), the

percentage of graduates who are satisfied (rated at least "good") with the quality of their studies (%); the percentage of foreign students at UL (%), as well as the commercialization revenue (EUR/thousands).

1.2. Description of the management structure of the higher education institution/ college, the main institutions involved in the decision-making process, their composition (percentage depending on the position, for instance, the academic staff, administrative staff members, students), and the powers of these institutions.

Up until the introduction of [the Higher Education Reform](#) (hereinafter - HER) (*only in Latvian*) , the Constituent Assembly, the Senate, the Rector and the Academic Arbitration Court were the governing, management and main decision-making bodies of the University. In 2022, a new governing body of the University has started its work - the Council of the University. Terms of electionrepresentation and terms of office of the main decision-making bodies of the University see table 4.

Table 4. Terms of election, representation and terms of office of the main decision-making bodies of the University

	Changes	Term of election	Total number of participants	Academic staff representation	General staff representation	Student representation
Constitutional Assembly	Prior to HER	3 years	300	66.7%	8.3%	25%
	After HER	3 years	200	>60%	<20%	>20%
University Council	From 2022	4 years	11	5		
Senate	-	3 years	50	76%	4%	20%
Rector	-	4 years	1	1		
Academic Arbitration	-	3 years	5	80%	0	20%
Constitutional Assembly						

<p>Prior to HER: The Constitutional Assembly is the supreme representative body of the UL.</p>	<p>After HER: The Constitutional Assembly of the University is the representative body of the academic staff, general staff and students of the University.</p>
<p>Competence prior to HER: adopt and amend the Constitution of the University of Latvia; adopt the Statutes of the Constitutional Assembly; approve the Statutes of the Senate; elect and dismiss members of the Senate; elect and dismiss the Rector; hear the Rector's report on the activities of the University of Latvia; approve the Statutes of the Court of Academic Arbitration; elect and dismiss members of the Audit Commission; elect and dismiss members of the Court of Academic Arbitration. The Constitutional Assembly has the right to adopt for consideration and decision other conceptual issues concerning the activities and development of the University.</p>	<p>Competence after HER: Approves the University's constitution and amendments thereto, elects the Rector; may propose the Rector's dismissal; hears the Rector's annual report on the university's activities; elects members of the Senate from among the academic and general staff; may recall members of the Senate; elects the Academic Arbitration Court.</p>
<p>University Council (after HER)</p>	
<p>Competence after HER: The Council of a state-run University is a collegial decision-making body of a state-run University, which is responsible for the sustainable development, strategic and financial supervision of the University, as well as ensures the operation of the University in accordance with its development strategy.</p>	
<p>University Council approves the University's constitution and amendments thereto and submit them for approval at the Constitutional Assembly; approves the university's development strategy and monitors the progress of its implementation; approves the University's budget and financial plan, as well as annual reports; monitors the functioning of the cooperation and financing agreement between the University and the State; monitors the functioning of internal control and risk management systems, reviews their adequacy and effectiveness; approves policies defining the University's management processes and general principles of their functioning; decides on: the structure of the University, the establishment, reorganisation and liquidation of the University's structural units, the establishment and liquidation of the University's branches and institutions, the University's participation in commercial companies, foundations and associations, the remuneration policy of the University's staff, the attraction of investments, the University's credit commitments, the University's real estate development plan, the appointment of the University's auditor; approves the regulations for the election of Rector; nominates one or more candidates for election to the position of Rector at the Constitutional Assembly, concludes an employment contract with the Rector and evaluates the activities of the Rector; may initiate the removal of the Rector from office, as well as decide on the removal of the Rector from office, observing the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions. The Council seeks the opinion of the Students' Council before taking decisions concerning the amount of tuition fees, the closure of study fields and programmes, and scholarships established by the University.</p>	
<p>Senate</p>	
<p>Prior to HER: The Senate is a collegial management and decision-making body established by the staff of the University, which approves the rules and regulations governing the activities of the University.</p>	<p>After HER: The Senate is a collegial supreme academic decision-making body of the University, responsible for the excellence, development and compliance with internationally recognised quality standards of the University's education, research and creative activities. The Senate regulates the academic, creative and scientific activities of the University.</p>

Competence prior to HER: Approves the rules and regulations governing the activities of the UL. The UL Senate elects Honorary Doctors and Honorary Members of the UL, the Court of Honour of the UL, the Advisory Council of the UL; elects and dismisses the Chair of the Senate (professor) and his/her deputy(s), organises the election of the Rector, approves the UL budget, Vice-Rectors and UL Directors, the UL Chancellor, Deans, Directors of UL Scientific Institutes and other heads of UL core structural units, the Regulations of the Advisory Council, Regulations of the Administration of the UL, upon the proposal of the Rector; approves study programmes and their directors, the Secretary of the Senate (on the proposal of the Chair of the Senate), approves the regulations or statutes of the associations, foundations, public agencies, commercial companies, institutions and other institutions established for the achievement of the objectives specified in the Satversme (Constitution), the regulations on academic and administrative positions, the Constitution of the Student Council of the University of Latvia, the conceptual documents regulating the study process, the Regulations of the Court of Honour of the University of Latvia, the Rules of Procedure of the University of Latvia, the decisions of the Academic Arbitration Court of the University of Latvia; decides on the establishment, reorganization or liquidation of faculties, scientific institutes and other core structural units, as well as associations, foundations, public agencies, commercial companies, institutions and other institutions, on the use of the name and attributes of the University of Latvia, on essential issues of economic activity, incl. acquisition, pledge or alienation of real estate, for convening a Constitutional Assembly. The Senate may also accept for consideration other significant issues of activities of the University of Latvia, as well as provide an explanation regarding the application of the norms of the Constitution of the University of Latvia.	Competence after HER: Develops the draft Constitution of the University and its amendments. The Senate is responsible for the compliance of the Constitution with the development needs of the University and regulatory enactments; approves the development plan of the study process of the University, submits proposals to the council regarding the fields of study to be developed; on the proposal of the Rector decides on: the opening, development and closure of study fields, the opening, content and development of study programmes, as well as the closure, requirements, procedures and examinations for the acquisition of degrees and qualifications; approves the development plan of the scientific and artistic creative activity of the University, encourages the implementation of specific directions of scientific activity; determines the requirements for election to academic positions and the evaluation criteria for the academic staff; determines the requirements and procedures related to the observance of academic integrity; nominates the members of the University Council in accordance with the procedures specified in the Constitution of the University; may initiate the removal of the Rector from office, as well as decide on the removal of the Rector from office; provide an opinion and make proposals regarding the development strategy, budget, establishment, reorganization and liquidation of the structural units of the University and the real estate development plan prior to their consideration by the Council. The Senate has the power to set up committees to coordinate and resolve individual issues.
--	--

Rector

prior to HER: The rector is the highest official of the UL who implements the general administration of the UL and represents the UL without special authorisation.	After HER: The Rector is the highest official of a higher education institution who implements the general administration of the higher education institution and represents the higher education institution without special authorisation.
---	--

<p>Competence prior to HER:</p> <p>The Rector is in charge of the activities of the University and is responsible for the compliance of these activities with the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments, as well as with the Constitution of the University. The Rector, in accordance with his competence, issues orders and determines the competences of the Vice-Rectors, Chancellor and Directors.</p>	<p>Competence after HER: The Rector ensures the management of the University and is responsible for the achievement of the goals set out in the University's development strategy, as well as for the efficient and lawful use of the University's financial resources in accordance with the law, other normative acts, as well as the University's constitution, decisions of the Council and the Senate. The Rector exercises the representative functions of the University, performs other activities to ensure the success of the University and represents the University in cooperation with other institutions and individuals. The Rector issues orders within the scope of his/her competence. The Rector ensures the elaboration of the study and scientific development plan of the University and submit it to the Senate for approval, ensures the elaboration of the development strategy of the University and submits it to the Council for approval after receiving the approval of the Senate of the University. The Rector, in cooperation with the University departments, ensures the implementation of the University development strategy.</p> <p>The Rector appoints and dismisses Vice-Rectors and Deans, as well as determines their areas of competence, authority and responsibility, in accordance with the objectives set out in the University's development strategy. The Rector is responsible for the successful implementation of the University's personnel policy. The Rector ensures the preparation of the budget of the University and, after obtaining the approval of the University Senate, submits it to the Council for approval. The Rector is responsible for the implementation of the budget and submits the annual accounts of the University to the Council for approval. The Rector, by the mandate of the Council, manages the funds of the University, including the necessary actions related to the University's credit obligations and the attraction of investments. The Rector takes decisions on the acquisition, encumbrance or disposal of immovable property in accordance with the real estate development plan approved by the University Council. The Rector, within the scope of his/her competence, is responsible for the compliance of the activities of the University with this Law and other regulatory enactments.</p>
Academic Arbitration Court	
<p>Competence prior to HER: Examines applications from students and academic staff concerning restrictions or violations of academic freedoms and rights outlined in the Constitution of the University, as well as disputes between UL officials, as well as administrative bodies of structural units in subordinate relations.</p>	<p>Competence after HER: Examines applications of students and academic staff concerning limitations or violations of academic freedoms and rights stipulated in the Constitution of the University, disputes between officials of the University, as well as governing bodies of departments in subordination relations, in the cases specified in the Law on Higher Education Institutions, examines applications regarding contestation of an administrative act or actual action and makes relevant decisions regarding the same, as well as performs other tasks stipulated in the Constitution of the University.</p>

For information on the governance structure of the UL ([UL Structure LV](#), [ENG](#)), its composition and competences, see Section 1.2 of the [UL Quality Management System Manual](#).

1.3. Description of the mechanism for the implementation of the quality policy and the procedures for the assurance of the quality of higher education. Description of the stakeholders involved in the development and improvement of the quality assurance system and their role in these processes.

The quality policy of the University is a continuous evolution towards excellence to ensure balanced and sustainable outcomes that meet the needs of all stakeholders. The [Quality Policy](#) and the resulting [Quality Action Policy](#) are a set of quality-related principles, objectives and the actions

necessary for their achievement, implemented by the University in accordance with internationally recognised standards in higher education and organisational governance. The Quality Policy aims to contribute to the achievement of the [mission, strategic objectives and sustainable development of the University](#) by setting out guidelines and principles that can be used to ensure a consistently high quality of performance. The Quality Policy and the Quality Action Policy, together with other policies and processes, ensure the coherent planning and implementation of the activities of the University. The Quality Policy and Quality Action Policy are an integral part of the Quality Management System, which is applied to all areas of UL activity and envisages its implementation at all levels of UL governance. Quality is defined as a measure of excellence, that characterises the ability of the UL to meet and exceed the foreseeable and future needs of its stakeholders, and to ensure that its processes comply with industry regulatory and standard requirements. The UL provides a set of activities and methods by which quality is planned, implemented, systematically assessed and continuously enhanced, thereby contributing to the achievement of the UL's stated objectives and to meeting the needs of its stakeholders.

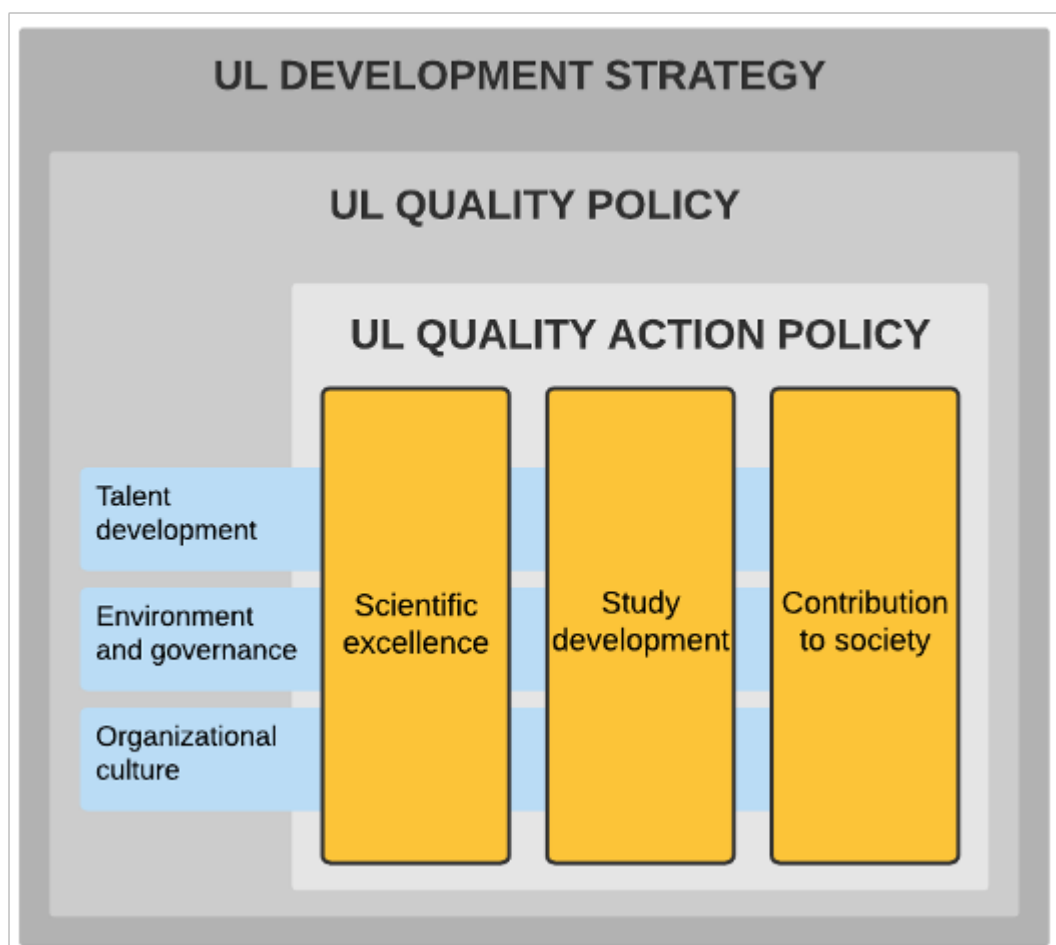


Figure 2.

Hierarchy of Quality policy and Action Policies at the University of Latvia

Quality management has been implemented at the University since 2010. The quality management system of the University is implemented in accordance with the principles of Total Quality Management (TQM), integrating the approach of excellence into the corporate culture of the University. For the implementation of Total Quality Management, the UL uses an internationally recognised and practically applicable quality management methodology - the EFQM (European Foundation of Quality Management) Excellence Model. The quality management system is enhanced in the core activities areas by developing internal quality assurance systems integrated into the quality management system and based on current sectoral standards and frameworks. The internationally recognised Results - Approach - Deployment - Assessment and Refine (RADAR) methodology is used to ensure the cyclicity and continuity of quality management at the UL, and

the Plan - Do - Check - Act (PDCA) approach is used in quality assurance systems. Figure 3 provides a diagram of a quality management system with an integrated quality assurance system for studies. For a more detailed description of the UL Quality Management System, see Section 2.1 of the UL Quality Management System Manual.

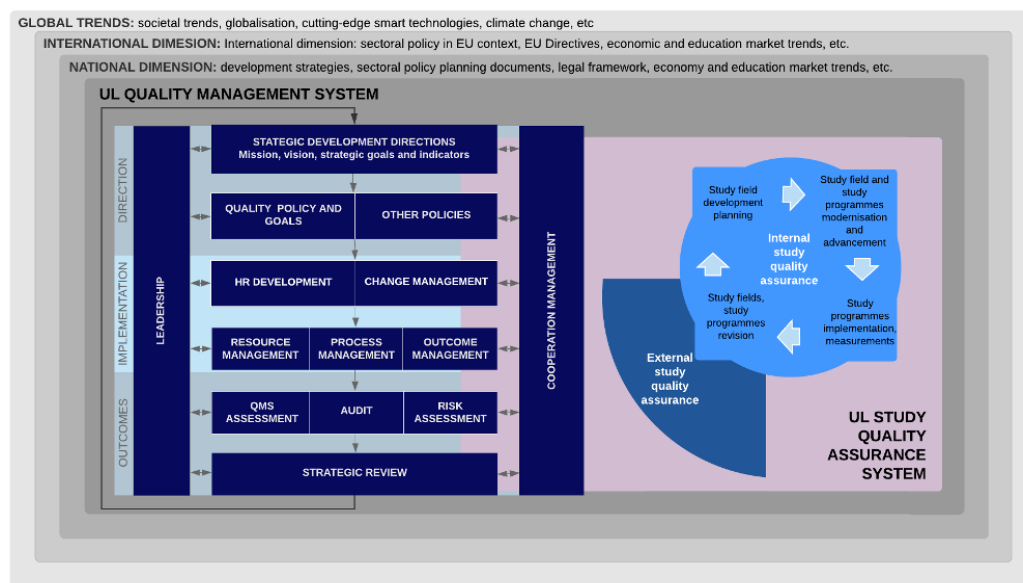


Figure 3. UL

Quality Management System and Principles of the Quality Assurance System

To ensure the quality of higher education, the University of Latvia implements the Quality Assurance System for Studies, which includes procedures for planning, ensuring, measuring and evaluating the quality of higher education in accordance with the requirements of national legislation, the European Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), as well as for internal needs. The University of Latvia provides planning for the development of the study field and improvement of the existing study programmes for a period of 6 years. The procedure for the implementation of study programmes is laid down in the internal legal acts of the University, including the development of new study programmes, admission requirements, matriculation and registration for studies, development, implementation and review of study courses and modules, planning, implementation and assessment of study internship placements, organization of examinations and final examinations, rotation, the principles of academic integrity and their observance, matriculation, issuance of diplomas and certificates, recognition of previous education or professional experience, the procedure for conducting surveys, submission of student proposals and complaints, contestation of administrative decisions, doctoral dissertation promotion process, etc. The University ensures that the measurements and data necessary for quality assessment and improvement are collected and used for both immediate corrective action and regular evaluation and planning of further improvement. The 6-year study field development plan is monitored annually, the measurements are analysed, and the SWOT is discussed, if necessary, by introducing changes to the operational study programme implementation plans, to the study field plan or, when assessing the overall development of study fields within the framework of the UL Strategic Control, to the UL Strategic Action Plan. For more information on quality assurance of studies, see Section 3.1 of the UL Quality Management System Manual. For the breakdown of responsibilities for quality management and assurance, see Section 2.5 of the UL Quality Management System Manual.

The UL quality assurance system is based on the participation of key stakeholders in the quality assessment and improvement of the University's activities. Stakeholders of the UL are natural or legal persons, domestic and international, who use the services of the UL or whose socio-economic situation is affected by the activities of the UL. The main stakeholders are defined in point 12 of the

UL Quality Policy. For the description and examples of the roles of key stakeholders in quality management, see Section 3.2, sub-section 1.2 (Table 3.6) of the UL Quality Management System Manual.

1.4. Fill in the table on the compliance of the internal quality assurance system of the higher education institution/ college with the provisions of Section 5, Paragraph 2(1) of the Law on Higher Education Institutions by providing a justification for the given statement. In addition, it is also possible to refer to the respective chapter of the Self-Assessment Report, where the provided information serves as justification.

1.	The higher education institution/ college has established a policy and procedures for assuring the quality of higher education.	<p>The University has formulated Quality Policy in line with its Strategy, which is detailed in the Quality Action Policy.</p> <p>For quality assurance of higher education, the Studies Quality Assurance System (in compliance with ESG) has been implemented and integrated into the Quality Management System (in compliance with EFQM). For more information, see Part I, Section 1.3 of this document and Section 3.1 of the UL Quality Management System Manual.</p> <p>The establishment, maintenance and improvement of the UL quality management system at the University of Latvia are performed by the management and heads of core structural units (deans of faculties) and their delegated employees. The Academic Department is responsible for the establishment, implementation and improvement of the study quality assurance system, in close cooperation with the heads of study fields and directors of study programmes. Two collegiate committees have been established for quality assessment with the participation of the UL stakeholders: The Quality Advisory Committee and the Study Programme Quality Assessment Committee. For more information, see Section 2.5 of the UL Quality Management System Manual.</p>
2.	A mechanism for the creation 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.	<p>The establishment and internal approval of study programmes are stipulated in the Regulations of the University of Latvia on Study Programmes and Continuing Education Programmes (UL Senate Decision No 102 of 24.04.2017). For more information, see Section 2.4 of this report, as well as sub-section II of Section 3.1 the UL Quality Management System Manual</p> <p>Periodic quality review of study programmes is stipulated in the "Procedure for Preparation of Annual Reports on UL Study Fields" (UL Order No.1/290 of 14.07.2020). For more information see Section 2.4 of this report, Section 3.1, sub-sections IX and X of the UL Quality Management System Manual.</p>

3.	<p>The criteria, conditions, and procedures for the evaluation of students' results, which enable reassurance of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes, have been developed and made public.</p>	<p>Information related to learning outcomes, including assessment, is contained in course descriptions, the preparation and updating of which, as well as the rules for their publication, are stipulated in the UL course development and updating procedure. The conduct and assessment of entrance and final examinations, as well as the assessment and recognition of learning outcomes achieved in previous education or professional experience, are regulated by the relevant regulations of the University.</p> <p>The desired ethical and fair conduct and justice are ensured at the University of Latvia by internally regulating issues related to academic freedom and academic integrity, electing and ensuring the Academic Arbitration Court, and ensuring the operation of the Academic Ethics Committee, as well as regulating the principles of protection of intellectual property rights. For more information see Quality Management System Manual, Section 3.2, sub-section 2.1.</p>
4.	<p>Internal procedures and mechanisms for assuring the qualifications of the academic staff and the work quality have been developed.</p>	<p>Internal procedures and mechanisms are in place to ensure the qualifications and work quality of academic staff. The principles of personnel management at the University of Latvia in the areas of personnel selection, labour relations, motivation system and personnel development are defined in the UL Personnel Management Policy. Accordingly, the development of academic staff is planned for the medium term, and training plans are drawn up for the year. The qualification requirements of the staff are defined in the internal regulatory enactments of the University of Latvia in accordance with the external regulatory enactments, and the requirements for ensuring the quality of work - within the framework of regular staff appraisal, including the analysis of students' satisfaction with the delivered study courses, as well as the results of scientific activity. For more information on attracting, engaging, developing and retaining staff: see the UL Quality Management System Manual, Section 3.2, sub-section 3.2</p>

5.	<p>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.</p>	<p>Information on students' achievements is accumulated in the information system LUIS of the University of Latvia and analysed in the framework of study course implementation (including student-centred approach) and study programme improvement. Satisfaction of students and graduates with the study programme is monitored through communication activities of staff involved in the implementation of study programmes, representation of students and graduates in decision-making and advisory bodies, as well as by conducting surveys in accordance with the Procedure for the Organisation of Regular Surveys to Evaluate the Study Process at the University of Latvia (UL Order No.1/334 of 22.08.2016). For more information on the involvement of stakeholders in quality assurance see Section 3.2, sub-section 1.2 of the UL Quality Management System Manual. Issues related to the efficiency of academic staff, available study resources and their costs are monitored in the core structural units (faculties, institutes, etc.) as well as centrally. For more information on study information management, see Section 3.1, sub-section VII of the UL Quality Management System Manual.</p> <p>The UL performance management system introduced and implemented at the University of Latvia monitors key performance indicators of the University of Latvia on the basis of which further strategic decisions are made. For more information, see Section 3.2, sub-section 7 of the UL Quality Management System Manual.</p>
6.	<p>The higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field whilst implementing their quality assurance systems.</p>	<p>The development of each study field is planned in accordance with the 6-year development strategy of the University. The monitoring of the plan and the evaluation of its effectiveness are carried out within the framework of the annual self-assessment of the study field. These processes take place at the level of the Study Field Council, the core structural unit(s) implementing the study field (a study field may be implemented by several faculties), as well as at the level of the administration and the Senate.</p> <p>The UL provides the external evaluation required by the legislation, obtaining additional external quality certificates for individual programmes. For more information, see Part II, Section 2.4 of this report.</p> <p>To promote the quality and competitiveness of the study programmes of the University of Latvia, the University of Latvia creates and finances internal grant projects (University of Latvia Study Quality Improvement Fund), as well as attracts external funds.</p>

2.1. Management of the Study Field

2.1.1. Aims of the study field and their compliance with the scope of activities of the higher education institution/ college, the strategic development fields, as well as the development needs of the society and the national economy. The assessment of the interrelation of the study field and the study programmes included in it.

The following study programmes of the 6th-8th LQF/EQF level are implemented in the study field "Religion and Theology", which correspond to the **thematic area** of the Latvian classification of education *Religion and Theology*:

1. Academic Bachelor's study programme "Theology and Religious Studies" (programme code 43221) - hereinafter - BSP;
2. Academic Master's study programme "Theology and Religious Studies" (programme code 45221) - hereinafter - MSP;
3. Academic doctoral study programme "Theology and Religious Studies" (programme code 51221) - hereinafter - DSP.

Religion as a cultural and social phenomenon has long been part of today's post-secular society.

Bible studies, anthropology and psychology of religion, world religions, the role of religion in modern society, the identification and study of religious groups, relations between different religious and non-religious (atheists, agnostics) groups, inter-religious interaction and dialogue with society belong to problems and issues which are the content of the study field *Religion and Theology*.

Students of the study programmes at all levels are offered the opportunity to acquire theoretical knowledge and practical skills necessary for independent research.

Together with the academic staff, students can participate in research projects, international and local conferences, classes of assistant professors and professors of various foreign universities, as well as in events promoting science.

The study programmes take into account the current trends in theology and religious studies, with a theoretical emphasis on the globalized nature of religious phenomena.

Upon successful completion of studies, the graduates are prepared for work in academic institutions, state and municipal institutions, enterprises, as well as in religious organizations.

It can be concluded that the objectives of the study field and the strategic and operational management of their implementation are in line with the sustainable development strategy of Latvia until 2030 (<https://www.vestnesis.lv/ta/id/191187>) - (only in Latvian) because:

- ensures the development of the abilities, knowledge and talents of the main value of Latvia - people;
- develop creativity and the ability to collaborate
- offer education to young people and adults to be able to enter the global labour market without leaving Latvia and to use their knowledge and abilities in a virtual environment;
- provides opportunity for talented people to acquire high-quality work-based knowledge and skills;
- implements all the main principles of the strategic development of Latvia: creativity, tolerance, cooperation and participation;

- is able to promote human resources productivity and participation in the labour market;
- provide the efficiency of educational services;
- provide high-quality, lifelong, creativity-oriented education;
- support the creation and commercialisation of new ideas;
- provides knowledge transfer and user-promoted research, innovation.

Study field governance

Over the last 5 years, a number of studies have been carried out to define the competences required in the near and distant future. A group of Latvian scientists led by Professor Biruta Sloka "Employers' Needs and Expectations for Qualified Employees" ([Employers Needs and Expectations](#)) within the study, has identified the main competencies Latvian employers require from young specialists: efficient planning of their time, the ability to independently conduct business, loyalty to the company and business, communicative skills and a wish to improve.

The results of this study are in line with the opinions of JSC "SWEDBANK" (<https://blog.swedbank.lv/karjera/izglitiba-94> - (only in Latvian)), Recognising the following as key competences for the future:

- Ability to analyze, to think creatively and to solve complex problems;
- Comprehensive communication skills, to be multi-lingual and different cultural environments;
- Ability to manage, delegate and work in a team;
- Ability to see and think globally;
- Ability to adapt and take risks;
- Ability to integrate and ethical, empathetic decision-making;
- Digital or technology skills.

The employment of graduates in the future is one of the main results of good governance of the study field.

The management structure of the study field and the study programmes corresponding thereto is oriented towards the development of the study field, decision-making is carried out efficiently, the support provided by the administrative and technical staff ensures all the needs of the study programmes corresponding to the study field.

The Faculty of Theology has established a system and introduced procedures for the admission of students, the study period, professional experience, recognition of the previously acquired formal and non-formal education and evaluation of student achievements and study results, they are logical and effective.

The TF, as in the University of Latvia in general, has established principles and mechanisms of academic integrity, anti-plagiarism tools are applied, which are effective and contribute to the development of the internal culture of the university and the faculty; the parties concerned have been informed thereof.

Relevance of the objectives of the study field to the strategic development directions of the University

The study direction *Religion and Theology* at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Latvia is implemented with an **aim** to ensure the possibility to obtain degrees of science in study programmes at all levels in the field of theology and religious studies, offering high-quality studies based on research and cooperation with Latvian and international partners and promoting public competence in the field of religion, the sustainability of the economy and society, and developing a student-oriented education and study environment.

The aim of the study field is coordinated with the objectives included in the development strategy of the University of Latvia for 2021-2027: internationalisation, active participation in the European and global education space, excellence-oriented scientific/academic activity, interdisciplinarity (https://www.ozolzile.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/LU_Strategija_2027_IsaVersija.pdf).

The **tasks** of the study field follow from the tasks defined in the Development Strategy of the University of Latvia for 2021-2027:

Excellence in science

- to ensure the quality of excellence-oriented scientific results in theology and religious studies, increasing the research capacity in both fundamental and applied sciences and promoting the establishment of interdisciplinary cooperation networks and knowledge exchange activities, intensifying and diversifying the participation of researchers of the University of Latvia in international cooperation networks and scientific activities;

Unique offer of studies and high competitiveness of graduates

- develop innovative and research-based study offers and student involvement in research at all levels of education, expand the supply and availability of lifelong learning, retraining and skills improving programmes in the relevant sectors of the economy, establishing international cooperation in study programmes and attracting highly qualified teaching staff; to implement the inclusion of sub-programmes and modules in study programmes, providing students with more opportunities for content selection and acquisition and supplementing face-to-face and online studies and distance learning with a form of hybrid studies;

The University of Latvia as the foundation for the development of Latvia

- to ensure the exploration and preservation of national identity, culture and succession by improving the religious competence of society; maintaining, preserving and promoting accumulated intellectual values and scientific achievements in theology and religious studies; promoting ecumenism and interreligious dialogue for the sustainability of society and respecting the principle of gender equality in education, as well as promoting equal access to education for vulnerable groups of population;
- to increase the value of academic knowledge in society, in research and studies, by addressing significant social challenges for the unity and democratisation of society by communicating the achievements of theology and religious studies in society, promoting the recognition of the scientists of the study field; to develop an open approach to science by promoting sharing of scientific infrastructure and access to scientific results in theology and religious study;

Study outcomes

Within the framework of the study field *Theology and religious studies*, study programmes of the EQF level 6-8 are implemented, which achieve the following **outcomes**:

1. At the end of bachelor's studies, students have acquired deeper knowledge and critical understanding of the theories and principles of religious studies and theological disciplines, expertly and innovatively apply methodologies of the discipline carrying out independent and correct research;
2. At the end of master's studies, students have acquired specialized knowledge in the selected field of research and critically understand the applicability of this knowledge in an interdisciplinary context, independently create new knowledge and procedures to achieve

- their research objectives, take responsibility for the results of their independent research;
3. At the end of doctoral studies students have achieved excellence in their field and interdisciplinaryity, in an independent research they have developed specific methodological skills and work techniques - such as evaluating and creating original solutions to critical problems in research and/or innovation-creating practices, demonstrating authority, autonomy, the development of new ideas or processes, and (if necessary) heading a small group of researchers;
 4. At all levels of study, students have improved such general skills as critical thinking, effective communication, problem solving, cooperation, self-knowledge;
 5. Studies at all levels are based on the principles of academic excellence, humanism, equality, openness and transparency.

A detailed development plan for the study field is attached to the Annexes (Annex 3). The plan has been developed in accordance with the strategy of the University of Latvia, coordinating the tasks with the strategic directions and objectives set by the University of Latvia in the following areas: excellence in science, study development, contribution to society, development of talents, environment and governance, culture of organization.

2.1.2. SWOT analysis of the study field with regard to the set aims by providing explanations on how the higher education institution/ college expects to eliminate/improve weaknesses, prevent threats, and avail themselves of the given opportunities, etc. The assessment of the plan for the development of the study field for the next six years and the procedure of the elaboration thereof. In case there is no development plan elaborated or the aims/ objectives are set for a shorter period of time, information on the elaboration of the plan for the development of the study field for the next assessment period shall be provided.

Every year, the Faculty of Theology (hereinafter – the FT) conducts a SWOT analysis of the study field, identifying strengths and weaknesses, analyzing threats and providing proposals for intended application.

The analysis of internal and external factors has been carried out by setting the following main indicators, which are based on the strategy of the University of Latvia and the FT and form the basis of study, research and organizational activities:

- Human resources;
- Finance;
- Competitiveness;
- Scientific activity;
- Internationalisation.

SWOT analysis (2021) is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. SWOT analysis of the study direction "Religion and Theology", 2021.

Internal factors

Strength	Weaknesses
Human resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Motivation of applicants · Good interpersonal relationships · Gender balance in the composition of academic staff · Updated composition of academic staff 	Human resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Small number of students · Large student dropout <p>Academic staff must manage a wide range of branch subjects</p>
Finanse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Funding for scientific projects has increased 	Finanse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Relatively small funding for the development of FT · Due to the low funding, the books purchased for the library are mainly intended for studies, not for detailed research.
Competitiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The study field provides study programmes for all three levels · Interfaith/ Interdenominational approach. · The prestige of the University of Latvia as the leading university in the state and centrally available resources (the library, work and recreation rooms, etc.). · FT is the responsible person for communication - 	Competitiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The direction of religious studies is underdeveloped. · Small, fragmented workloads that force the academic staff to maintain employment relationships in other organisations, posing a risk of 'burnout' · Lack of specialists in the field of religious studies and Eastern religions
Scientific activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Research in specialised fields 	Scientific activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · A small number of experts of the Latvian Council of Science. · The field's anonymously reviewed journal is not included in the <i>Scopus</i> or <i>Web of Science</i> database.
Internationalisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Successful integration of lecturers into an international network. · Many lecturers with education acquired abroad 	Internationalisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Small number of foreign students
External factors	
Opportunities	Threat

Human resources:	Human resources:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of competence of the academic staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic situation in Latvia
Finance:	Finance:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In cooperation with the UL Foundation, attract additional funds for patron scholarships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic situation of the country.
Competitiveness	Competitiveness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for internal cooperation with other faculties of the University of Latvia. • Digitization of the study process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rise of religious fundamentalism and populism. • Bureaucratization of the administration of the educational process.
Scientific activity	Scientific activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation with local and foreign universities (<i>Erasmus+</i> and various research centres). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer grants from the EU and the Latvian Council of Science.
Internationalisation	Internationalisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest in cooperation of the academic staff from the EU and CIS countries. • Attracting international students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrictions on the use of EU languages in the acquisition of study programmes at all levels.

Analysis of internal factors

Analyzing **human resources**, as the strength should be emphasised the gender balance in the composition of the academic staff - 9 women, 14 men (2021), regular updating of the composition of the academic staff, including attracting graduates and students of the doctoral programme as lecturers, as well as practitioners and visiting lecturers from abroad. The good governance of the FT has resulted in a very positive psychological environment, which is appreciated both by students and lecturers and which promotes the development of a positive study environment and increases the motivation of applicants and students to study in the study programmes offered by the FT.

As the weak side should be admitted the small number of students (108 - October 2021) and the large drop-out rate, for example, in 2020 a total of 24 students (13 - BSP, 11 - MSP). In 2019, 39 students were exmatriculated. Dropouts are basically not due to failure or students' dissatisfaction with the quality of studies. The most significant cause for quitting is the inability of students to combine studies with work or family. The number of students quitting the studies in recent years have been higher than before, despite both individual conversations with students and students' assistant work. The management of the faculty has information about students who are at risk of exmatriculation or who themselves have expressed wish to discontinue their studies, the curator, the director of the study program, or the dean has an individual conversation with these students, in all cases motivating them to continue their studies, thus implementing a student-centred approach. Student dropouts must also be taken into account in the future, also taking into account the fact that many students start their studies and are only able to clarify their choice during their studies. Undoubtedly, however, maintaining the quality of the study process provided by the UL is a

great contribution to reducing dropout rates.

One of the most important aspects of the organization of studies in the best quality is sufficient **funding**. It would be necessary for the FT to acquire more substantial financial resources, therefore, as the strength can be noted the fact that funding for science, based on the involvement of FT lecturers in the implementation of international projects, is growing every year.

However, taken as a whole, funding for the development of FT study programmes is still not proportional to the increase in needs, in the near future, it would be necessary to increase financial resources for the purchase of the literature and electronic resources for research.

By exploiting its diverse potential, the TF's field of study has managed to maintain its **competitiveness**. The key to success is that FT implements 3-level programmes, thus ensuring continuity in the acquisition of the relevant field. It is positive that an interfaith approach is applied at all levels in the study process, which form not only a set of pluralistic views of students, but also increase quantitative indicators in programmes. The popularity and visibility of the programmes is also created thanks to the activities of the communication specialist within the framework of FT. Also, a significant strength lies in the status of the University of Latvia as the leading academic university at the local level and also in its international prestige.

Despite the measures to promote competitiveness, there are also significant shortcomings: the development of religious research and the attraction of new specialists in the provision of certain essential study courses in religious research should continue to be considered as a challenge.

Scientific activity is one of the priorities of the FT. The strength of the study field is the variety of research in specialized fields, frequently developed by cooperation between lecturers and students. An important role is played by students of the doctoral study programme, who have the opportunity to work in an international environment. Despite the high professionalism of the academic staff of the FT and the high proportion of lecturers with doctoral (Dr.) degrees, the weak point in scientific activity is a relatively small number of experts of the Latvian Council of Science. Special efforts should also be made to include of the industry journal "Way" in the *Scopus* or/and *Web of Science* database, thus improving both the competitiveness of the FT study field and the level of internationalisation.

Internationalisation is not only a strength and strategic priority of the TF, but also of the entire University of Latvia. It is positive that many lecturers have education acquired abroad, which improves the content and form of studies diversity, as well as increases the chances of successfully integrating into an international network which in turn provides an incentive for scientific research, exchange of academic experience and innovation in the study process.

Analysis of external factors

Thinking about the possibilities of **human resource** improvement, the emphasis should be placed on the development of the competences of the academic staff. As an example of good practice, it can be mentioned that in 2019, using the SAM project 8.2.2 "Renewal of academic staff and improvement of competences at the University of Latvia" invited visiting professor Riho Altnurme from the University of Tartu. Since 2020, new promising colleagues have been employed in assistant positions. There is no need to increase the number of staff either due to funding or academic needs, but to support the further growth of the new staff, such as the successful completion and defence of doctoral theses. With this aim, two of the new doctoral colleagues are involved in the SAM 8.2.2 project "Renewal of academic staff and improvement of competences at the University of Latvia", which also provides a financial basis for the completion of the doctoral thesis.

The greatest threat in study field programmes is the decrease in the number of students, which is affected by the critical demographic situation. Statistics show that Latvia's population continues to decrease, but now it is mostly due to low birth rates, not migration. Prognoses show that by 2040 the working age (19-64 years) population will drop the fastest: of the current 1.14 million to 0.93 million. The number of children and young people will fall from 0.38 million to 0.33 million share of the total population will increase slightly from 19.7% to 20.6%. (<https://emergingsolutions.eu/latvijas-demografiska-prognoze-2020-12-15/> - (only in Latvian)) All this can undoubtedly have a negative impact on the number of students in the FT programmes. In order to deal with the decrease in the number of students, LU develops extensive advertising and information campaigns to attract new students (for example, Technology Day) and popularize science in the wider society. Also, satisfaction with the study process is constantly monitored at the UL, which gives an opportunity to improve the study process and reduce student dropout.

In order to improve the **financial resources** of the FT, opportunities can be seen in cooperation with the UL Foundation, attracting additional funds for patrons' scholarships. The FT has good experience in raising funds in the form of donations, for example, in 2019, the Northern Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany supported the faculty with EUR 20 000, The Pastors' Association of the Northern Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany awarded EUR 6 000 for scholarships. In 2019, a scholarship from the Mediņš-Ozoliņš Trust Fund was attracted, by agreeing on special support for doctoral students to complete their doctoral thesis, scholarships for students of all levels for participation in conferences and research, these the FT initiatives should definitely be continued.

In times of economic instability, opportunities must be found to increase **competitiveness**. The potential can be found in internal cooperation with other faculties of the University of Latvia, especially within the framework of conferences and projects, as well as by creating joint publications. Competitiveness can also be developed through targeted use of the diverse opportunities for digitalisation - digital solutions both in studies (digital study platforms, integration of technologies in study content), both in research and in making internal processes more efficient, improving both academic staff, and the skills of using researchers' digital technologies by transferring new knowledge and new technologies to citizens (in the context of lifelong learning).

The threat of competitiveness can be seen in the rise of religious fundamentalism and populism in society, hindering the successful implementation of the study content. Similarly, the bureaucratisation of the administration of the educational process at different levels remains disruptive, which consumes a lot of time and human resources, which would be more useful to use to improve the quality of study field programmes.

In improving **scientific activity**, opportunities can be seen in promoting cooperation with local and foreign universities (including Erasmus+ and various research centres), thus contributing to an increase in qualitative and quantitative indicators of scientific publications. The development of scientific activity is also threatened by the decrease in the availability of LSC and the EU grants, which, however, provides an incentive to find other sources of funding.

Internationalisation is the driving force behind many processes. As the FT has presented itself as an active member of international projects, cooperation networks, there is a strong interest of academic staff of the EU and the CIS countries in cooperation both in the organisation of the study process and in research. This gives confidence both in the good governance of the faculty and its programmes, quality content and innovative study methods, as well as provide an incentive to increase the number of foreign students. Internationalisation is threatened by restrictions on the use of the EU languages in the acquisition of study programmes at all levels, which remains an unresolved problem.

Development plan of the study field of Religion and theology

The development plan of the study field of Religion and Theology has been developed on the basis of the strategy of the University of Latvia for 2021-2027, and according to it the goals and tasks for the development of the study field have been developed. In the next accreditation period, the main development tasks are related to 1) the development of scientific performance; 2) the development of studies; 3) contribution to society; 4) the development of talents; 5) the creation of an ecological environment, and; 6) the creation of good-will culture of the organisation. The development plan of the field is considered to be consistent with the development objectives of the field and the results can be achieved. See Annex 3 for the development plan of the study field.

In the process of creating the development plan, the main responsibility lies with the head of the field of study in Religion and Theology and the development plan is carried out in cooperation with the dean, the directors of the programmes implemented in the field of study and the teaching staff of the field, involving the council of the study field, which consists of academic staff, students and professionals. The development plan of the study field of Religion and theology is approved by the Council of the Study Direction. The development plan of the field as a whole is reviewed once a year together with the development objectives of the field in the Council of the Study Field and the Council of the Faculty of Theology, which includes most lecturers and the representatives of students. The implementation of the development plan of the study field is also assessed at the meetings of the Council of the Study Field and the Council of the faculty, where corrections and additions to the development plan are formulated.

2.1.3. The structure of the management of the study field and the relevant study programmes, and the analysis and assessment of the efficiency thereof, including the assessment of the role of the head of the study field and the heads of the study programmes, their responsibilities, and the cooperation with other heads of the study programmes, as well as the assessment of the support by the administrative and technical staff of the higher education institution/ college provided within the study field.

Collegiate responsibility for the administration of the study field lies with the UL decision-making bodies - the Senate, the UL Study Programme Quality Assessment Commission (headed by Vice-Rectors), Faculty Councils and Study Programme Councils, which evaluate study quality and decide on study quality assurance measures. The governance of the University of Latvia is responsible for the quality of studies, delegating responsibility for the functioning of the study quality assurance system to the Academic Department. Responsibility for the quality of the study field and the study programmes implemented therein lies with the head of the study field and dean, study programme directors, and sub-programme directors. Each lecturer is responsible for the quality of the content and implementation of the course, research activities and professional development. The students' responsibility is defined in their rights and obligations to promote the achievement of UL goals and excellence in studies, participating in the UL collegial institutions and regularly expressing their opinion in student surveys. See the governance scheme of the study field of the University of Latvia and the study programmes included therein. Fig. 4

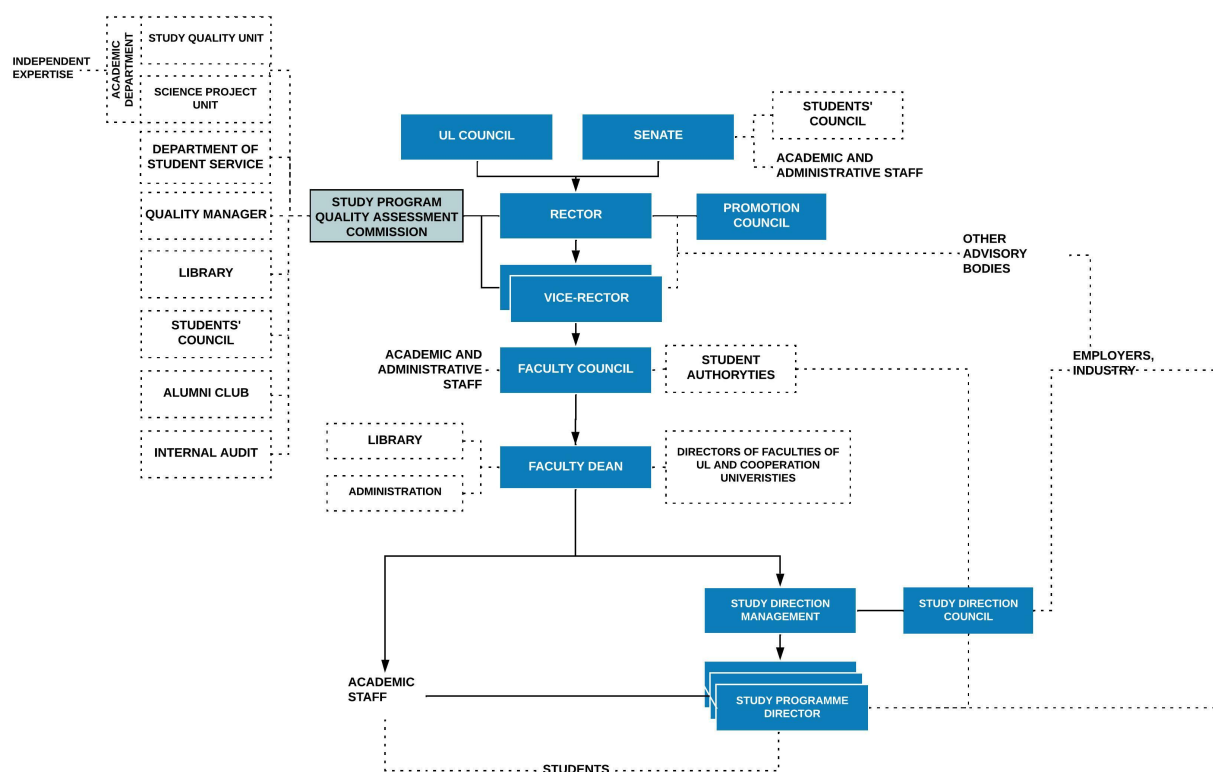


Figure 4. Management scheme of the study field of the University of Latvia and the study programmes included therein

The Regulations on the Management of Study Fields at the University of Latvia determine the procedure for the management, quality assurance and development of study fields at the UL, the functions and operating principles of the Study Field Council, qualification requirements, duties, responsibilities and rights of the head of [Regulations on the University of Latvia Study Field Management](#) programme and head of the sub-programme of the field.

The governance structure of the study field can be found in the appendix "Governance structure of the study field".

Each UL study programme has a **study programme director** who directs the development and implementation of this study programme. The director of the study programme is approved by the Senate on the proposal of the Faculty Council representing the respective branch of science. The director of the study programme is a member of the Study Field Council of the respective branch and coordinates his/ her activities with the Head of the Study Field and Study Field Council. The director of the study programme is accountable for his/ her activities to the dean of the faculty. The responsibilities of the study programme directors include ensuring a well-functioning, sustainable operation of the study programme in accordance with the procedures specified by the University of Latvia and other responsibilities. If the study programme covers several sub-programmes, the **sub-programme director** may be approved by the decision of the Faculty Council in each sub-programme. The Head of the sub-programme is approved by the Faculty Council. If several faculties are involved in the implementation of the study programme, the Head of the sub-programme shall be approved by the Faculty Council which grants the corresponding degree or qualification on the proposal of the deans of the faculties involved in the implementation of the programme. The sub-programme director is a member of the relevant Field Council. The Head of the sub-programme is accountable for their activities to the Director of the study programme. The responsibilities of the director of the study sub-programme include, in cooperation with the director of the study programme, organizing and managing the development and implementation of the sub-

programme, as well as preparing the documentation required for the approval, licensing and accreditation of the sub-programme.

The competence of **the head of the study field** is to ensure the management and development of the study field. The Head of the study field is approved by the Rector on the proposal of the Dean of the faculty. The Head of the study field is accountable to the Study Field Council and the Dean. The heads of study fields, in co-operation with the study programme directors and the director of the UL Regional Centre, in cases when the study programmes included in the study field are implemented in the UL branches, ensure the revision, development planning and implementation of study programmes included in the study field. The heads of study fields organize the work of study field councils, as well as regularly organize the development of annual study field reports and their promotion for review and approval by the Study Programme Council and the Faculty Council. The heads of study fields in co-operation with the study programme directors and the UL Academic Department ensure the accreditation and re-accreditation of the study field and perform other duties.

The Study Field Council is a collegial study field management body, which supervises academic, professional (including residency) and doctoral study programmes of all levels within one study field. The Study Field Council includes the head of the study field, all the directors of the study programmes corresponding to the study field, the representatives of the students in the respective programmes (not less than 20% of the composition of the Study Field Council, promoting the representation of all levels of study programmes, as well as the largest possible number of study programmes, nominated by the Student Council), representatives of employers and co-operation partners of the study field (candidates are nominated by the heads of structural units, heads of fields, directors of study programmes and heads of sub-programmes). The composition of the Field Council may be complemented by involving graduates of the study field programme who are not involved in the implementation of the study field, as well as by professors, associate professors and other qualified specialists (candidates are nominated by the heads of structural units, heads of fields and study programme directors). The Field Council approves the development strategy of the study programmes of the given branch, evaluates and submits the conceptualisation of new study programmes for approval to the Study Programme Quality Assessment Commission, evaluates and submits for Faculty Council's approval the annual reports of study fields, as well as changes in study programmes.

Faculty Councils, consisting of representatives of the academic and general staff, elected for three years, and student representatives, who make up at least 20 per cent of the number of councillors, decide on academic, economic, financial, and other activities of the faculty that are within the competency of the faculty or may be passed on to the Senate.

The Study Programme Quality Assessment Commission (hereinafter - SP QAC) assesses the performance of UL study fields and study programmes, as well as makes proposals to the Faculty Council and UL governance on the further development of the programmes. This commission reviews and provides opinions on study programmes, incl. evaluates applications for new study programme concepts, new study programmes and closure proposals, significant changes in accredited study fields that require a decision of the SP QAC, as well as applications for new study modules and sub-programmes. When evaluating the concepts of new study programmes, annual reports of study programmes and study fields, the SP QAC is guided by the opinion of anonymous, independent experts. The SP QAC consists of Vice-Rectors, Chairman of the Academic Commission of the Senate or his authorized representative, Director of the Academic Department, Representative of the Department of Student Services, Internal Auditor, Head of Quality, representative of the Department of Science, representative of the UL Library, a representative delegated by the Student Council and a representative delegated by the UL Alumni Club.

Starting the implementation of the UL Strategy 2027, based on the efficiency audit of the administrative structural units performed in 2021, in November 2021 the UL Administration was significantly reorganized, thus strengthening the strategic and quality management functions in the structural units of the Administration. One of the most significant changes is the integration of the Department of Studies of the University of Latvia and the Department of Science of the University of Latvia, forming the Academic Department, thus strengthening the unity of higher education and science. The UL Administration includes the following units: Academic Department, Department of Study Services, Department of Communication, Legal Department, Department of Human Resources, Department of Information Technology, Department of Finance and Accounting, Document Management Division, Infrastructure Management Division, Real Estate Revenue Division, Institutional Data Analysis Centre, Project Support Centre, Academic Centre Development programme, Study Development and Management Improvement Programme. The Chancellor of the University of Latvia, the internal auditor, the quality manager, the head of the work safety system and the information technology security manager also work in the administration. The study process is also supported by the Culture Centre, the Sports Centre and the Pre-study Training, which are under the supervision of the Head of the Administration. **The Academic Department** has the most important role in the management of the field of study. The Academic Department consists of the Academic Policy Division, the Science Projects Division, the Study Quality Assurance Division and the Lifelong Learning Division. The competence of the Academic Department is to monitor the requirements of the regulatory enactments in force in the Republic of Latvia and changes therein, national and European Union development policy documents, as well as standards and good practices in the field of academic activities and lifelong learning, development of regulations and supervision of their implementation in these fields, to ensure the development, implementation of studies, as well as scientific quality assurance systems (or processes), monitoring and continuous improvement of their implementation, ensuring regular review of academic and lifelong learning processes and risks, necessary control and identification and provision of preventive measures in accordance with the practice implemented by the University of Latvia, it ensures analytical identification of the results of academic activities and lifelong learning and the opportunities for their improvement, development of proposals for the Governance of the University of Latvia. The Department of Study Quality Assurance monitors the observance of all study levels and internal regulation of lifelong learning, coordinates the medium-term development plan of studies and lifelong learning in cooperation with faculties, manages its implementation, monitors and provides methodological support in developing new study programmes and implementing and improving existing programmes; processes in studies and lifelong learning, organizes and coordinates external quality assessment, ensures centralized administration of doctoral student admission, doctoral studies and promotion process, provides support in the process of implementation and improvement of studies and lifelong learning at all levels, evaluates study and lifelong learning programme results and competitiveness, and participates in resource evaluation. **The Department of Study Services** consists of the Academic Services Division, the Admissions Division and the Mobility Division, which are competent to organize and ensure the matriculation and exmatriculation of national and international students, the circulation of study documents and their registration, maintain the graduation documentation (qualification) register, including diplomas and graduates register, to provide students with social, cultural and other support functions, as well as to provide consultations and information to students on social security, to inform potential applicants and candidates about the study process and study organization, as well as to ensure the administration and implementation of mobility programmes. The Head of UL Quality control and Internal Auditor also participate in the development, maintenance, implementation, evaluation and improvement of the study quality management system. (Regulations of UL Administration, p.50-51, approved by Resolution No. 1-4 / 559 of the UL Senate of 15.11.2021). *By the new UL Administration Regulations, the UL Academic Competence*

Development Centre is being established within the Department of Human Resources, whose functions will include developing and improving staff development, career and succession planning systems, implementing staff growth promotion measures.

Cooperation with the **Students' Self-government of the faculty**, which represents the interests of the students in the activities of the faculty, including in solving the issues of the academic, social and cultural environment, plays an important role in the management of studies. Members of the Students' Self-government are represented in the **UL Student Council**, thus participating in the management of the University of Latvia.

The management of the study field is performed by the administration of the FT – **the Council and the Dean of the Faculty of Theology**, there is also **the Council of the study field Religion and Theology**. Study programmes are managed by the directors of study programmes.

The management of the study field is ensured in accordance with the "Regulations of study programmes and continuing education programmes of the University of Latvia" (approved by the Decision No. 102 of the Senate of the University of Latvia of 24.04.2017), which has been established in accordance with Section 3, Paragraph 1 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions and defines higher education institutions as higher education and science institutions implementing academic and professional study programmes.

The field of religious and theological studies of the University of Latvia includes academic study programmes at bachelor's, master's and doctoral study levels. Study management is determined by the University of Latvia "Regulations on the Management of Study Fields of the University of Latvia" (approved by decision No. 70 of the Senate of the University of Latvia of 27.01.2020), issued in accordance with Section 55.3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, for the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers "Regulations regarding the opening and accreditation of study fields".

The Council of the Study Field of *Religion and Theology*, as the governing body of a collegial study field, supervises all three academic study programmes included in the study field. It consists of the head of the study field, the directors of study programmes, the academic staff involved in the implementation of the study field, two representatives of students (20% of the composition of the study field council), one representative of employers. Meetings of the Council of the Study Field (hereinafter - the CSF) shall be convened as necessary, but not less than twice a month.

One of the tasks of the CSF is to prepare the study field development plan, which also states the involvement of the Study Field Council in improving the quality of the study field programmes (see. Annex 3. Development plan of the study field). The most important task of the Council during the last two years has been the development of a new concept of the doctoral study programme "Theology and Religious Studies", preparation of licensing documentation for the programme, as well as development of proposals and development and evaluation of new courses and their inclusion in study field programmes. The Council of The Study Field also discussed the annual self-assessment reports of the study field. Proposals have been submitted to the Council by the administration of the faculty, management of the study field and directors of study programmes. Council meetings have also been a platform for students to participate directly in the development of study programmes. The Council of the study field "Religion and Theology" has been approved by the *Instruction No. 1-3/11 of the Vice-Rector for Humanities and Educational Sciences of the University of Latvia I.Druviets of 08.05.2020 "On the Council of the Study Field "Religion and Theology"*.

In 2021, the Head of the CSF was changed, Professor Laima Geikina was replaced by professor Valdis Tēraudkalns, who also became the Head of the Study Field of Religion and Theology. **The Head of the Study Field** is responsible for the preparation of the annual report and the plan of

the development of the Study Field. The Head also ensures communication and coordination of activities with the departments, especially the Academic Department, of the University of Latvia. The Head of the Field also represents the it in the discussions organised by the University of Latvia. The Head of the field cooperates with the academic staff, carrying out an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the study field, planning the implementation of study programmes, reviewing the content of study programmes, etc.

The issues of the study process are also discussed in the **Council of the Faculty of Theology**, which consists of representatives of academic and general staff, as well as students. The Council discusses and approves the issues that have previously been discussed in more detail in the CSF – self-assessment reports, as well as licensing and accreditation reports, and the strategic questions of the entire faculty in the context of the study field.

Issues regarding the organisation of the study process (including study methods), quality assurance (including discussion of survey results), etc. are discussed at the council of the Faculty meetings.

The dean of the faculty is also involved in the development of the study field with proposals and supervision, coordinating the activities of the various parties, as well as representing the faculty in cooperation with the departments of the University of Latvia, in various discussions, as well as in the Senate of the University of Latvia. The dean organizes staff selection, determines workloads, coordinates the staff renewal processes, as well as oversees the study field management. The Dean also supervises the development of the field in accordance with Latvian legislation and internal regulatory documents of the University of Latvia.

The most directly involved in the organization of the study process are the **directors** of study programmes, they manage the study programmes, coordinate their implementation, and carry out the development of new programmes. A Director is also member of the CSF. Programme directors prepare annual reports about the programmes, compile and report to the council of the faculty on the results of students' surveys. Programme directors also establish cooperation with foreign partners in order to achieve excellence in studies and research.

The quality of study field management is regularly monitored. Twice during the study year, students' surveys are organized, which offer students the opportunity to assess the quality of the study environment and study process in the FT. As a rule, students are satisfied with the management of the study field, referring especially positively to the study tours organized by the FT Student Council, cooperation and communication with the the management of the FT and the study field. For the results of the student survey in spring 2020 in bachelor's (BSP) and master's (MSP) study programmes, see Table 6.

Analysis of the data presented in the table, it is seen that the activities of the academic staff, communication with the tehcnical staff and methodologists, as well as extracurricular activities assessed highly in creating the positive study environment. The offer of study courses and their content, opportunities for ensuring international experience, as well as the possibility for students to participate in providing the quality of study programmes are highly appreciated in the organisation of the study process. It should be noted that the students of the Bachelor's study programme rate field management processes higher than those studying in the Master's study programme, reasons for that may be the higher experience of master's programme students and higher quality standards.

Uniform procedures in the study organisation in the study field and study programmes, uniform samples of documents and availability of information on ongoing processes and current events also contribute to the efficiency of the management. All main activities in the FT are planned before the new academic year, preparing the study calendar, schedules for the preparation and of Bachelor

and Master's papers and the activity plan for the whole academic year.

Table 6. Study environment and study process management assessed by BSP and MSP students on a scale of 1-7, 2020.

Field to be assessed	Subject of assessment	Average rating by BSP	Average rating by MSP	Total rating BSP/MSP
Study environment	Material and technical facilities (premises, computer and Internet accessibility) for studies	5.3	4.8	6.2/ 5.7
	Knowledgeable and benevolent lecturer	7	6.3	
	Helpful technological staff	6.8	6	
	Useful resources offered by the Library of the University of Latvia	5.8	5	
	Satisfied with the extra-curricular activities offered by the University of Latvia	7	6.3	
	Support from the Student Council and the Self-Government	5.5	5.5	

Study process	Satisfied with the offer and content of the study courses	6.7	5	6.1/5.3
	Satisfied with the e-courses offered	5.5	5	
	Good organization of the study process	6.2	5.3	
	The necessary information about the study process is available	5.3	5.7	
	In general, satisfied with the opportunities offered by LUIS	5.7	5.2	
	The international experience offered by the University of Latvia in studies was sufficient	6.3	5.3	
	Opportunity to participate in the improvement of the quality of the study programme	6.3	5.7	

The administration of the study field meet the needs of the direction, it complies with the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the internal documents of the UL. The responsibilities of the institutions involved are proportionally distributed and form an internal support system of administration, ensuring high-quality administration of the field. The direct management of study programmes is the responsibility of the programme directors, the overall development of the field is supervised by the head of the field, and the council of the study field monitors the quality of development. Balance of the study field with a common strategy of the faculty is determined by the Council of the Faculty and the Dean.

The administrative and technical staff involved in the administration of the study field, within the field of their competence, perform tasks for the achievement of the objectives of the study field. The financial planning and monitoring of the study process is carried out by the Dean and the executive director, technical support for the administration of the study field is provided by two registrars. The number of administrative and technical personnel involved in administration of the study field is small and meets the needs of the management.

2.1.4. Description and assessment of the requirements and the system for the admission of students by specifying, inter alia, the regulatory framework of the admission procedures and requirements. The assessment of options for the students to have their study period, professional experience, and the previously acquired formal and non-formal education recognised within the study field by providing specific examples of the application of these procedures.

The procedures and requirements for the admission of students shall take place on the basis of the [Terms of admission at University of Latvia](#) decision No. 2-3/68 of approved by the meeting of the Senate of the University of Latvia 31.05.2021 and issued in accordance with Section 46, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions and Cabinet Regulation No. 846 of 10.10.2006 "Regulations Regarding Requirements, Criteria and Procedures for Admission to Study Programmes". Admission requirements and criteria for undergraduate studies are determined according to the specifics of each study programme. Registration in undergraduate studies takes place through the Common Enrolment in Undergraduate Programmes (CEUS, <https://latvija.lv/studijas>). Admission to Master's studies is regulated by requirements and criteria for the higher level study programmes (<https://www.lu.lv/gribustudet/normativie-dokumenti/uznemsanas-prasibas-un-kriteriji-augstaka-limena-studiju-programmas-20202021-akademiskaja-gada/>)- (only in Latvian), doctoral study programmes take place according to criteria governed by special admission procedures (<https://www.lu.lv/gribustudet/uznemsanas-kartiba/doktorantura/>)- (only in Latvian). Admission requirements for the FT Bachelor's study programme can be found at :<https://www.lu.lv/en/studies/faculties/faculty-of-theology/undergraduate-studies/translate-to-english-teologija-un-religiju-zinatne/>, Master's study programme: <https://www.lu.lv/en/studijas/fakultates/teologijas-fakultate/magistra-limena-studijas/translate-to-english-teologija/>, Doctoral study programme: <https://www.lu.lv/en/studijas/fakultates/fakultates/teologijas-fakultate/doktorantura/translate-to-english-teologija-un-religijpetnieciba/>

Possibilities of the recognition of previously acquired formal and non-formal education within the study field are regulated in Cabinet Regulation No. 505 (adopted on 14.08.2018) "Regulations regarding recognition of the competences acquired outside formal education or in professional experience and study results achieved in previous education" (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/301013-arpus-formalas-izglitibas-apguto-vai-profesionalaja-pieredze-ieguto-kompetencu-un-iepriekseja-izglitiba-sasniegumu> - (only in Latvian), upon resumption of discontinued studies, the study results achieved in previous education, external formal education and/or professional experience may be recognized. Submitting the application, documents certifying the achieved study results – certificates, employer's certifications, recommendations, project results, job descriptions, etc. – must be attached.

Legal regulations determining recognition procedures:

. [Regulations on the recognition of knowledge, skills, competence acquired outside of formal education or in professional experience, recognition of study results achieved in the previous education, and referencing of academic activity at the University of Latvia.](#)

. Regulations regarding the Recognition of Acquired Study Courses and Knowledge, Skills and Competences or Acquired in Professional Experience and Study Results Achieved in Previous Education at the University of Latvia

The admission process at the University of Latvia and, consequently, also with the study programmes in the study field "Religion and Theology" is regulated by the Admission Regulation and its subordinate orders, which determine the procedures for the given academic year:

1. admission requirements and criteria for undergraduate programmes;
2. admission requirements and criteria for higher-level study programmes;
3. admission requirements and criteria for doctoral programmes;
4. admission requirements and criteria for residency study programmes;

5. admission procedure for the academic year;
6. an estimate of the registration fee;
7. tuition fees in programmes;
8. number of study places for admission;
9. procedure for the development of entrance examination materials;
10. composition of the Admission Committee;
11. composition of entrance examination boards;
12. date and place of entrance examinations.

Admission procedures vary by study level. **Admission in undergraduate studies** is centralized through 'The Integrated Admission in Undergraduate Programmes', which integrates the enrolment in 12 universities in Latvia. The competition for study places is based on the results of the centralized examinations or the secondary education certificate grades of the persons who have acquired secondary education before 2004, who have been exempted from the centralized examinations or have completed their secondary education abroad. In the case of study programmes that do not have relevant centralized examinations, additional requirements for specific grades are set, and the programmes requiring special skills or aptitude set an additional entrance examination. As a result, applicants are ranked according to their scores. Programmes may provide benefits to National Olympiads and other contests winners (for more information on admission requirements, see the description of each study programme).

Admission in Master's degree programmes is decentralized, at each faculty, but with uniform deadlines. The enrollment is based on grades obtained during undergraduate studies. In programmes that allow for prior education in various fields, the entrance examination is used to determine the correspondence of the candidate's prior knowledge to the field of the study programme.

Admission to doctoral studies takes place centrally. The applicant must submit the topic of the promotion thesis and the name of the approved supervisor. The applicant's eligibility is assessed by the doctoral council of the branch.

The requirements and criteria in the study programmes are reviewed and updated annually, and in accordance with Article 46 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, they are published on the website of the University of Latvia by November 1.

The UL provides an opportunity to commence studies also in subsequent study stages, in accordance with the *Procedure for commencing studies in subsequent study stages at the University of Latvia* (the UL order No. 1/128). A precondition for commencing studies in subsequent study stages is the recognition of previously acquired study courses or knowledge, skills, competencies, learning outcomes acquired in previous education, which is regulated by the Regulations on the UL Procedure for Recognition of Competencies Developed outside Formal Education or Through Professional Experience and Learning Outcomes Achieved in Previous Education as well as the recognition and alignment of academic activity (the UL Senate Decision No. 2-3/ 86 of 28 June 2021) (hereinafter - the Regulations) and the UL Procedure for the recognition of study courses and knowledge, skills and competencies acquired in study courses and outside formal education or through professional experience and learning outcomes achieved in previous education (the UL Order No. 1-4 / 543 of 04.11.2021). Based on the student's application, the possibility to recognize study courses acquired at another higher education institution in Latvia or abroad or during the previous study period at the University of Latvia is considered. According to Clause 8 of the Regulations, previously acquired study courses may be recognized at the same or lower study level.

When applying to commence studies in subsequent stages, the application must be filled in and the

necessary documents must be attached. The Recognition Committee (hereinafter - the Recognition Committee) for the assessment and recognition of competencies acquired outside formal education or through professional experience and learning outcomes achieved in previous education or the director of the programme, if the student renews their studies in the same UL programme, assess and recognise previously acquired study courses, the learning outcomes in terms of correspondence to the learning outcomes of the given UL study programme. Study courses are recognized if their volume in credit points in both comparable study programmes is equal or if the number of credit points in the previously acquired study course is higher. The total volume of additional study courses may not exceed 20 credit points. Acquisition of additional study courses or taking examinations is a paid service. For students from another higher education institution or college, when commencing studies in the subsequent stages of studies at the University of Latvia, the budget funding for studies is not maintained. Final examinations passed at other universities are not recognized.

Upon the application of the applicant, the University of Latvia evaluates and recognizes the knowledge, skills, competencies acquired outside formal education or through professional experience, and the learning outcomes achieved in previous education. When submitting an application, documents confirming the achieved learning outcomes must be enclosed - certificates, employer's confirmations, recommendations, project results, job descriptions, etc. The learning outcomes achieved through professional experience may be recognised only for the part of the relevant study programme comprising the internship or for the learning outcomes to be achieved in a study course or study module of a study programme that provide evidence of the practical knowledge acquired. In some cases, to recognize the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through professional experience as appropriate outcomes of the course of the given study programme, the applicant may be required to take the examinations provided for in the relevant study course or part thereof. Recognition of study courses in the bachelor's study programme most often takes place in the following cases - when the student returns from the exchange programme (*ERASMUS* + or others), as well as persons matriculated in the bachelor's study programme, may apply for recognition of study courses taken during previous studies, provided that their scope and content are appropriate to the existing courses of the given study programme. Students have every opportunity to recognize courses if they have not succeeded in completing their studies at another university. In these cases, the Recognition Committee compares the scope and content of the previously acquired study courses and makes a decision on the possibility to recognize the study courses. In some cases, previously acquired study courses are recognized for students whose studies in the study programmes of the study field are the second or further higher education programme. For example, if a student has already taken a Civil Protection course while studying in a Bachelor's study programme in chemistry, then this course does not have to be taken a second time in Theology and Religious Studies bachelor's study programme. Likewise, when renewing studies after a break in studies, courses are recognized following the changes in the study programme plan.

In master's programmes, on the other hand, the recognition of study courses is most often performed in cases when students have returned from mobility programmes, participated in various projects, such as Summer School, or have entered the given programme from other universities in Latvia where they have not completed their studies. In these cases, the programme director or the Recognition Committee compares the scope and content of the previously acquired study courses and makes a decision on the possibility to recognize the study courses

The doctoral programme also offers the opportunity to recognise previously completed courses. In this programme, however, such applications are rarely received, and the recognition of study courses has been mostly performed on the return from *ERASMUS* + studies or changes in the study

programme plan. In addition, academic activities performed outside the doctoral study programme can be equated to the requirements of the doctoral study programme of the University of Latvia. The criteria and procedure for this alignment are also set out in the regulations.

The opportunity to recognize learning outcomes from previous education (including further education) or professional experience is less frequently used.

For the UL students who use the opportunity to study or undergo internship within the framework of various international exchange programmes, the recognition and crediting of learning outcomes acquired during mobility is carried out in accordance with the above-mentioned procedure regulating recognition at the University of Latvia, as well as the *Procedures for Organising ERASMUS+ Programme Mobility at the University of Latvia* (UL Order No.1/363 of 18.12.2014). In accordance with these regulations, the following is taken into account in the recognition of learning outcomes acquired through mobility: 1) compliance of the learning outcomes acquired during the mobility with the conditions of the international exchange programmes and 2) compliance of the learning outcomes acquired during the mobility with the requirements of the study programme at the University of Latvia. The comparison of the learning outcomes acquired during the mobility is performed by the director of the respective study programme or the Recognition Committee on the basis of transcripts from the partner university or confirmation from the place of internship. After assessment, the recognised learning outcomes are filed with the student's fulfilled academic obligations

All exchange students must agree with the programme director a preliminary mobility plan for their course or placement before going on mobility. If changes are made to this plan during the exchange programme, these will be agreed with the study programme director. The preliminary study or internship plan also stipulates the process of assimilation, the study programme director approves the study courses chosen by the student at the foreign university and notes with which study course from the student's study plan at UL these courses will be substituted or assimilated to. If the student participates in the internship mobility, before going on the mobility, the student agrees with the relevant study programme director on how the internship will be recognized. If the internship is provided for in the UL study plan, then the internship mobility is treated as an internship from the UL programme.

All procedures are published and available in the UL Regulatory System, which is available to all UL employees and students by registering with the assigned username and password.

Until 2021, for the recognition of the results obtained in previous education at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Latvia was responsible *The Recognition Commission for the assessment and recognition of learning outcomes achieved in previous education or through professional experience* headed by Dace Balode. The task of the Commission was to examine the submitted documents, assess the study results and align them with the results achieved by of the programmes of the study field. During the reporting period, there have been four cases when previously acquired educational results have been recognised in study programmes. In two cases the recognition referred to education acquired in Latvia, in two cases - education acquired abroad. The Commission assessed the submitted documents and the conformity of the study content with the content, quality and scope of the study programmes in the study field Religion and Theological of the University of Latvia. Since the Commission found the necessary compliance, the study results were recognized for the Bachelor's study programme (3 applicants) and one case - for the Master's programme.

Since 2021, the FT Council has decided to transfer the functions of the Commission to the Council of the Study Field. The decision was made because the staff involved in the work of the Commission also serve in the Council of the Study Field, moreover, the number of applications for the

recognition of study results is insignificant, therefore the Council of the Study Field is able to assume these functions.

2.1.5. Assessment of the methods and procedures for the evaluation of students' achievements, as well as the principles of their selection and the analysis of the compliance of the evaluation methods and procedures with the aims of the study programmes and the needs of the students.

In conformity with the Law on Higher Education Institutions of the Republic of Latvia, the UL internal regulation *"Procedure for Development and Updating of Study Courses at the University of Latvia"* stipulates that information on the conditions, aims, tasks, requirements for obtaining credit points, study content, organization and tasks of the students' independent work, planned learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, competence) and their assessment methods and assessment criteria are included in all study course descriptions, which are available to students in the UL Information System (LUIS) and UL e-learning environment. The recording of the assessment of students' performance takes place in the respective study course e-environment. The UL has formulated the learning outcomes for each study programme and for each study course as a set of knowledge, skills and competencies. The courses in study programmes are developed in accordance with the principles of gradation and succession. To that end, the study programmes map the expected learning outcomes.

The results of the mapping can be found in the appendices "Results of the mapping of the Bachelor's study programme", "Results of mapping of the Master's study programme", "Results of mapping of the doctoral study programme".

At the beginning of studies, students are informed of the organisation and process of studies in the relevant study programme, but when commencing the acquisition of each individual study course, the academic staff inform students specifically about the organisation, content, requirements, learning outcomes, examinations and evaluation criteria, as well as explain the integral quality of the study course for achieving the overall outcomes of the study programme. The students can familiarize themselves with the criteria and conditions for the assessment of student achievement and the binding procedures in the course descriptions and e-learning environment, as well as at the beginning of each course during the first lecture when each lecturer introduces students to the course organization, briefly describes the requirements for intermediate assessments and final examinations, describes grading criteria and examination procedures, without changing these requirements and grading criteria throughout the semester.

The organization of the study course examinations and the assessment of the students' achievements is performed in accordance with the "Law on Higher Education Institutions" and the *"Procedure for Organizing Study Course Examinations at the University of Latvia"* (University of Latvia Senate Decision No 211 of 29.06.2015.) elaborated by the UL Constitution and applicable to the assessment of the learning outcomes of full-time and part-time students enrolled in the UL study programmes at all levels.

There are two types of assessment in each course: the interim assessment or so-called semester examinations and the final examination. The overall assessment of the acquisition of a study course consists of the overall assessment of interims (not less than 50% of the total score) and the

assessment obtained in the examination (not less than 10% of the total score). The tests may be carried out in writing or orally or in a combined form (written and oral). The students' achievements are assessed through tests and the assessment mechanisms corresponding to the teaching methods used in the study process, both during contact lessons and in the organization of students' independent work.

Taking an examination is a mandatory requirement for obtaining credits for the acquisition of a study course. The procedures and criteria for the assessment of interims are determined by the responsible department in accordance with the profile of the study course. The study course acquisition rating is calculated in the UL centralised recording system according to the algorithm specified in the course description, taking into account the assessments obtained in the interims and examination, and recorded in the examination report.

Types of interim assessment include quizzes, individual work, practical work, laboratory work, reports, and other types of work according to the profile of the study course. The number and type of interim assessments are specified in the description of the study course. To be assessed on the acquisition of a course, the assessment obtained for the examination is to be positive. The acquisition of a course may be positively assessed even if the examination has been failed but this possibility has been specified in the study course description. The overall assessment of course acquisition is calculated in the UL e-studies environment according to the algorithm specified in the course description, taking into account the assessments obtained in interim tests and examinations.

In accordance with the profile of the study course, the requirements for attending classes may also be determined.

At the end of each study course there is a final examination: examination or defence (course work, final project, term paper, field course, internship). The procedure of defence and assessment of study paper, final thesis project, term paper, field course and internship is stipulated in UL normative acts.

At the FT in most study courses (at all levels), but especially in methodological courses, students should do a research paper in order to demonstrate successful acquisition of methods and appropriate ability to apply them. The main task is to introduce students into independent scientific research and discussion, as well as to promote the recording their achievements in the form of scientific articles. That is why, almost all study courses require a written scientific research paper.

According to the specifics of the FT, various, also creative and innovative assessment methods of achievements are used in the study courses. Students have self-examination opportunities in the e-learning environment (self-examination questions are available in the form of a test). Intermediate tests are organized in the form of tests, tasks and discussions - students must prepare answers to specific tasks, present them to other students, defend their opinion, answer questions from other students, critically evaluate the answers of other students and ask questions to other students.

The lecturer performs the evaluation and recording of the intermediate results of the acquisition of e-courses in the e-learning environment. For each e-course a book of evaluations is individually made, according to the programme and specifics of the course. With the book of evaluation it is possible to make assessment both manually, when the lecturer enters the relevant assessment himself/herself, as well as automatically when the assessment is calculated using the calculation algorithm specified by the lecturer. Ratings can be arranged by category, giving them "importance", enter final scores of the attended course and show them to the participants. Lecturers are able to define their assessment systems, indicating both the tasks to be evaluated and the rating scales, as well as summarising the results using formulas. Each student sees only

his/her own grades. In the section "Analysis of evaluations", the student's grades are compared with that of the other participants of the course, determining the lowest, highest and average score of the course in the particular interm examination.

The learning outcomes are evaluated on a 10-point scale. If allowed by external regulations, learning outcomes can be assessed as "passed" or "failed" with the permission of the UL Vice-Rector. The course is considered to have been successfully completed, i.e. the grade is positive if the grade on the 10-point scale is not lower than '4' (almost satisfactory) or 'passed'. In this case, the student earns credit for the course.

For the evaluation of students' knowledge, skills and competence in each study course, the 10-point scale criteria described above are used. The criteria for each study course are based on the learning outcomes and assessment descriptions (see *Table 7*) published in "*Procedures for the Development and Updating of Study Courses at the University of Latvia*".

Table 7. Assessment rubrics

Acquisition level	Grade notations	Explanation (according to Cabinet Regulations No 141, 512, 240 and the UL Senate Decision No 211 of 29.06.2015)
very high acquisition level	10 (with distinction/ outstanding)	knowledge, skills and competence exceed the requirements of the study programme, study module or the study course and testify to the ability to carry out independent research and deep understanding of problems
	9 (excellent)	knowledge, skills and competence fully comply with the requirements set for the study programme, study module or the study course, students possess the ability to use the acquired knowledge independently
high acquisition level	8 (very good)	the requirements of the study programme, study module or the study course are completely met, though in certain issues the students do not have an understanding deep enough to use the knowledge independently for solving more complex problems
	7 (good)	in general, the requirements of the study programme, study module or the study course are met but occasionally the inability to use the acquired knowledge independently is established

average acquisition level	6 (almost good)	the requirements of the study programme, study module or the study course are met, but there is a lack of deep understanding of the problem and inability to use the acquired knowledge
	5 (satisfactory)	in general, the study programme, the study module or the study course is acquired but there is insufficient knowledge of certain issues and inability to use the acquired knowledge
	4 (almost satisfactory)	in general, the study programme, the study module or the study course is acquired, however, there is insufficient understanding of some basic concepts and there are considerable difficulties in practical application of the acquired knowledge
low acquisition level	3 (weak)	the knowledge is superficial and incomplete; the student is unable to use it in specific situations
	2 (poor)	superficial knowledge of only some issues; most of the study programme, study module and the study course is not acquired
	1 (very, very poor)	no understanding of the fundamentals of the course and almost no knowledge of the study programme, study module or the study course

The needs of students and the relevance of assessment methods and procedures to the achievement of the objectives of study programmes are analysed and developed, taking into account the experience of the academic staff, by analysing the results achieved by students and the results of surveys conducted over several academic years. Students in the surveys recognise the importance of clearly formulated outcomes of the studies and defined evaluation criteria, as well as the regular feedback on students' achievements in the study process. In order to ensure this, the academic staff systematically analyse their experience, collaborate with colleagues, analyse students' achievements and develop course descriptions by investing the description of the results of studies and their evaluation criteria, thereby providing justification for the assessment.

The methods and procedures used in the study programmes for the assessment of student achievements correspond to the study programmes implemented in the study field and are sufficiently effective to assess the knowledge, skills and competence acquired during the study process.

The methods chosen exclude a simple subjective assessment and correspond to the student-centered study approach.

In evaluating the learning outcomes, the compliance with the basic principles for the assessment as set by Republic of Latvia Cabinet regulations No 141 Regulations on the State Standard for First Level Professional Higher Education of 20.03.2001, No 512 Regulations on the State Standard for Second Level Professional Higher Education of 26.08.2014 and No 240 Regulations on the state standard of the academic education of 13.05.2014 is considered:

- **the principle of openness of the evaluation and clarity of requirements**— the University has established a set of requirements for evaluating learning outcomes in line with the aim and objectives of the study programme as well as the aim and objectives of study courses;
- **the principle of the possibility of reviewing the evaluation** —the University has established the procedures for reviewing the obtained assessment;
- **the principle of mandatory evaluation** — it is necessary to obtain a positive assessment of the content of the entire study programme;

the principle of the variety of types of testing used in the evaluation — different types of testing shall be used in the evaluation of the acquisition of the study programme;

- **principle of conformity of assessment** — in the course of testing, the student is given an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge, skills and competence in relevant tasks and situations. The content to be included in the tests corresponds to the content specified in the course programmes.

The basic criteria for the evaluation of final papers are determined by the UL Decree No 1/38 of 03.02.2012 (Amendments: UL Order No 1/69 of 26.02.2015) On the development and defence of the final papers (bachelor's, master's, diplomas and qualifications) at the University of Latvia. Additional criteria may be determined for the evaluation of final papers, which shall be approved by the Faculty Council on a proposal from the relevant Study Programmes Council.

In the study field programmes, the final examinations are presented as oral or written examinations (tests, answers to exam questions), as development and/or presentation of research papers (for example, scientifically critical and contextual analysis of texts, essays), presentation of a short field study, a practical scientific research or a successful practice. Students choose the topic of master's and doctoral thesis (hence research methods) depending on their specialisation in one of the sub-branches of the study field. In order to help students, pre-representation is organized during the process of developing the work.

2.1.6. Description and assessment of the academic integrity principles, the mechanisms for compliance with these principles, and the way in which the stakeholders are informed. Specify the plagiarism detection tools used by providing examples of the use of these tools and mechanisms.

The UL respects the principles of fair and responsible conduct as stipulated in *The Academic Ethics Code of the University of Latvia*, (UL Senate decision No. 2-3/46 of 26.04.2018) and in the Regulations on Academic Integrity at the University of Latvia, (UL Senate decision No 2-3/48 of 26.04.2021) and which are publicly available to students of the UL and its staff.

To prevent violation of academic integrity, the UL has developed the Unified Computerised

Plagiarism Control System (hereinafter – System), (UL Order No 1/125 of 22.04.2014). The System verifies students' final study research paper (qualification paper, diploma paper, bachelor's thesis, master's thesis, doctoral thesis). The procedure has been established to determine further course of action (UL supplement to Order No 1/125 of 22.04.2014) in the event of plagiarism.

The UL as the developer of the System and its operator constantly updates the System and provides other higher education institutions with the opportunity to use the System on the basis of a cooperation agreement. Currently, based on the cooperation agreement, seven higher education institutions in Latvia, Daugavpils University, Liepaja University, Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies, Riga Stradins University, Rezekne Academy of Technologies, University College of Economics and Culture and Riga International School of Economics and Business Administration use the System. The System automatically compares the final theses uploaded to these university systems, incl. material available on the Internet, and in the event of a certain percentage match, the study programme directors are sent an overview of these test results, whereby the same text snippets from different authors are simultaneously viewed. The programme directors pass this information on to the appointed supervisor and reviewer for review and, in the event of a suspected breach of academic integrity, pass on the results of the analysis to the final examination panel for final consideration.

In order to submit a Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral thesis for defence, a student of the FT in the form of an electronic document uploads it in the LUIS system at the specified time and in accordance with the procedures described in the regulations of the University of Latvia.

If the paper is not uploaded to the system, the student is not allowed to defend it.

Within a few days, the System compares fragments of papers, word combinations, literature references, etc. with electronic databases, web-based materials, various earlier final and research papers, publications, conference abstracts, etc.

Faculties have chosen and approved people who automatically receive from the System reports of suspicious papers or individual fragments from them. The director of the study programme of the FT automatically receives these messages by e-mail and in the LUIS account specifically created for such purposes.

The director of the study programme has to evaluate these reports in due course. The FT has established and approved in accordance with the established procedures a plagiarism evaluation committee consisting of 3 representatives of the academic staff. If the case raises suspicions, the director of the study programme has an obligation to convene such commission within a specified time period, in which the texts corresponding to plagiarism presented by the System are analysed in detail. Without the conclusion of this commission, "suspicious" papers presented by the System cannot be defended. If necessary, the commission may also interview the author of the paper in order to avoid misunderstandings and random errors (formatting, etc.).

Plagiarism is considered a very serious violation of the study programmes in the FT as in the entire University of Latvia. If the Commission, following the indications of the System and getting acquainted with the student's paper in more detail, does detect a case of plagiarism, the student is not allowed to defend the paper, and is immediately exmatriculated.

A student who was exmatriculated for plagiarism has rights to submit again the thesis for his/her personal resources (for a fee) after a period of time specified in laws and regulations (no sooner than after a year), however, it must be written on another topic, and submitted again in a certain order, once again undergoing an examination of the plagiarism system.

The cooperation of several higher education institutions in the field of unified computerized

plagiarism control facilitates more effective control of the study process at every higher education institution and in Latvia in general and this system works well in practice, raising the importance and quality of the diploma papers.

2.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System

2.2.1. Assessment of the efficiency of the internal quality assurance system within the study field by specifying the measures undertaken to achieve the aims and outcomes of the study programmes and to ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field and the relevant study programmes.

The UL has a certain quality policy

(<https://www.lu.lv/studijukvalitate/saturs/kvalitates-nodrosinasanas-politika-un-pasakumi/> - (only in Latvian) it is publicly available

https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_EN/2/Kvalitates_politika_majas_lapai_ENG.pdf, a quality assurance system has been established and maintained, which helps to achieve the objectives and results of the study field and the corresponding study programmes. The system ensures continuous improvement, development and operational efficiency of the study field and corresponding study programmes.

Processes for the establishment and review of study programmes corresponding to the study field, as well as mechanisms for obtaining feedback (including with students, employers, graduates) are defined, logical, effective and accessible to all parties involved.

The University of Latvia regularly compiles and analyzes information (statistics) on the study programmes corresponding to the study field, and effectively uses it for the improvement of the study field.

The UL has identified the standards of ESG Part 1 (See Annex "the UL ESG standards") that require increased attention. In order to improve the performance of study programmes corresponding to the study field, goals and activities have been set, which are integrated into the overall quality assurance system.

The following activities are the most relevant for the implementation of quality improvement measures within the internal quality assurance system

The functioning of a sustainable study programme that meets the objectives of the study field and study programme is ensured by systematically defining and implementing quality assurance procedures, including continuous monitoring and analysis of the implementation of the study programme and the use of measurements for the prompt implementation of preventive and improvement measures. The provision of management levels involved in the quality assurance of the study programme allows the programmes to be implemented in a predefined form according to predefined procedures, reacting promptly to possible changes in the situation, with quality-related decisions being taken collectively or according to the division of competences. An important methodological tool for quality assurance is the Quality Management System Manual of the University of Latvia, which identifies in detail the practice of the University of Latvia in ESG implementation.

The following activities are the most relevant for the implementation of quality improvement measures within the internal quality assurance system:

- monitoring of the quality assurance system,
- internal quality audits (procedures and documentation),
- analysis of quantitative and qualitative indicators of students' academic, scientific and creative activities,
- measuring students' satisfaction (surveys) and analysis,
- measuring graduates' satisfaction (surveys) and analysis,
- collecting and analysing employers' views,
- measuring and monitoring of the quality of the activities of the teaching staff (annual job interviews, results of student surveys, analysis of quantitative and qualitative indicators of scientific and creative activities),
- annual self-assessment of the study field,
- annual self-assessment of the study programmes,
- the Dean's annual reports of on the activities of the FT.

Monitoring of the quality assurance system is a continuous process, its main task being to improve the quality of the content and the study process of the FT, providing all involved parties with timely, accurate, adequate information to help assess more effectively the quality of education in study field programmes and to make evidence-based decisions. Monitoring of the quality system is managed by the Dean of the FT, the directors of the study field and study programmes in cooperation with students, especially with representatives of the Student Council, graduates, employers, etc. partners. An essential part of monitoring is organisation and progress of the FT strategic meetings, where the principle of voluntary participation plays an important role, involving a maximum number of stakeholders who are interested in assurance of the quality. Once a month, meetings of the Council of the study field are also organised, as well as meetings of the working group of study programmes conducted by the Dean of the FT.

For quality purposes internal regulatory documents are regularly improved, the representatives of the FT administration participate in **procedures and documentation quality audits** of the University of Latvia by updating and supplementing existing internal regulatory documents as appropriate to the situation. Every year, the content of study programmes is also reviewed by the FT (respecting the views of students, graduates and employers), course descriptions are updated and supplemented, the methodology of face-to-face, remote and e-studies is improved. Thus, for example, following the recommendations of the MSP students, the use of IT and computer programs in the provision of study courses was improved, according to the recommendations of the BSP students, the expansion of the religious research component in accordance with the realities of the modern world has been ensured, the importance of practical classes for ensuring the study content increased according to the recommendations of employers.

Quantitative and qualitative indicators of students' academic, scientific and creative activities are regularly evaluated (at least once a semester), which includes performance analysis, dropout risks, achievements in research activities, and other aspects. If necessary, students are invited to individual interviews, followed by providing the necessary support.

The quality of studies is monitored by obtaining and **analyzing students' opinion** on studies in the selected programme and study results, as well as evaluating **the activities and satisfaction of the staff** in the study and research process. Annual surveys show that the quality of studies has been generally rated as good by students. In order to increase the participation of students in surveys, the University of Latvia has centrally stated that the surveys are mandatory. If problems and dissatisfaction with the quality of studies are detected in surveys or conversations with a group

of students, individual discussions with the student and the programme director, the head of the study field or the dean are usually organised. The FT also provides a student assistant, who helps to maintain close feedback with those who have started their studies and allows to find out directly their opinion of the study process, and find an opportunity to support them in their studies, thus trying to minimize the interruption of studies, which has increased in recent years. Due to the relatively small number of students, it is also possible to organize regular informal conversations with students about the study process and their satisfaction with studies.

The year 2020 was marked by a specific situation when the Covid pandemic made to transfer the study process to online studies. In general, after a short adaptation period online studies proved to be successful, as student surveys on the quality of studies confirmed. Students in the Bachelor's programme have rated the components "Knowledgeable and benevolent academic staff" and "Satisfies the extra-curricular activities offered by the University of Latvia" (both rated with a maximum rating of 7 points), "Material and technical facilities (premises, computer and internet availability) appropriate to study process" (5.3) and "Offers to acquire generally applicable skills" (5.3) are rated the lowest. In general, the students of the Bachelor's programme have assigned high evaluations: study environment is evaluated with 6.2, study process - 6.1, study results - 6.0. General satisfaction - from 5.5- for preparation for the labor market to 7 - for satisfaction with the choice of the programme.

Unfortunately, the result of the 2020 crisis is negative - a higher drop-out rate of students in the Master's study programme and a small number of graduates. However, it is positive that in both Bachelor's and Master's programmes, ratings rarely drop below 5. Students of Master's study programmes have evaluated the study environment with 6, study process - 6.1, study results - 5.8. General satisfaction varies from 5.5 for preparation for labour market to 6.4 for satisfaction with the choice of the program.

A survey of the graduates in 2021 shows that satisfaction with the content of the study programme has been assessed as very high - 3.74 out of 4, satisfaction with the quality of the study programme - with 3.48 out of 4, relevance of the knowledge provided by the programme to the labour market - with 3.9 out of 4.

Employers are also involved in the implementation of the programmes (teaching of courses, supervision and reviewing of final examinations, final examination commission) and analysis of their results. In recent years, the number of employers teaching in the programmes has increased, which has had a positive impact on the programmes - study courses are more related to the practical application of their content. Employers give regular feedback (in conversations, e-mails, etc.) that helps to achieve higher quality of study results.

The quality of the performance of the academic staff and guest lecturers is an essential part of internal quality assurance. Monitoring, analysis and evaluation of teaching staff's pedagogical skills, professional and research competences is regularly carried out. 2 times a year, students' assessment is also received. As an example may be given comments from the student surveys in 2019 and 2020: "A fantastic teacher, after these lectures a person is never the same as he/she was before", "The subject was presented in a superb way, was both very interesting and useful, as well as clear. The teacher was very active and interested in her work", "A very interesting course, the teacher is very competent in this field and was able not only to teach the course well, but also to perfectly answer students' questions", "I like that the course final evaluation is made up of many components - attendance, activities, tasks, research and creative work. In my opinion, it helps both the teacher and the student. It doesn't feel like you've been just "sitting " at lectures for a whole semester." The surveys also contain critical remarks: "No matter how much I respect the lecturer, it is very difficult to perceive the course if you take into account that the topic is discussed

~ 15% of the time allotted for the lecture. All the rest of the time is a deep ocean. I would like a more structured lecturer for such a course", "The amount of written works is inadequate. A lot of requirements, but the contribution of the teacher is negligible", "There was too much unnecessary writing work to be done! It definitely needs to be reduced'.

If deficiencies in the work of the teaching staff are detected, individual discussions with the director of the programme, the head of the study field or the dean shall take place, trying to find solutions to improve the quality of work. There have been cases when change of the the lecturer has beeb caried out.

It is positive that the FT promotes the involvement of doctoral students and graduates in the study process in order to improve quality. For example, during the reporting period the study course "Comparative Pneumatology" was taught by a graduate, lecturer assistant Nils Konstantinovs, "Systematic Theology - II"- doctoral student, lecturer assistant Dāvids Alksnis, "Eastern Churches:History and Theology" – applicant for the doctoral degree, lecturer assistant Reinis Norkārklis. The doctoral students (male and female) who work as chaplains in prison or hospital, or are in the management of a denominational educational institutions have been involved in the courses "Introduction to Pastoral Counseling", as well as "Introduction to Practical Theology".

An important indicator of the quality of the academic staff is scientific and creative activities, which are also regularly monitored and analyzed, motivating the lecturers to carry out research within the framework of projects, updating opportunities for international cooperation, increasing scientific capacity, publications in internationally recognized databases.

In order to carry out the assessment of the quality of studies and its provision, **the annual self-assessment of study programmes, the annual self-assessment of the study field** is carried out, as well as **the Dean's annual report on the activities of the FT**. These evaluations are made in collegial work, respecting the opinion provided by students, employers and lecturers.

In its activities, the FT focuses on all ESGs (*Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). (2015). Brussels, Belgium*) for compliance with and integration of the standards set out in Part 1 into the internal quality assurance system. Nowadays, with the arrival of digital solutions and the latest technologies in universities, as well as changes in young people's attitude towards studies and ways of acquiring information, it is increasingly difficult to offer content that would suit students' tinterests and ability to learn. The FT follows the changes in study methods and increasingly use innovative teaching methods such as role-playing, games, simulations, and e-solutions. Students are provided with opportunities to engage in several scientific and creative activities, such as conferences, excursions, etc.

When analyzing ESG standards and guidelines, they are respected and observed in all study programmes of the University of Latvia, as they ensure the quality of the study process. The compliance with ESG standards in ensuring the internal quality of the FT is shown in Table 8.

Table 8.The compliance with ESG standards in ensuring the internal quality of the FT

Satandarts and guidelines	Internal quality assurance system of the FT
---------------------------	---

ESG 1.1. Higher educational institutions should have a quality assurance policy.	The FT has a certain responsibility of several stakeholders in ensuring quality. Each party is aware of its responsibilities in quality assurance. Employers, branch professionals (participation in commissions for defending final papers, reviews of the papers, participation in the development and updating of the content of the study programmes and the study courses) are involved in quality assessment and ensuring.
ESG 1.2. Development of study programmes and their approval.	The implementation of the study field programmes is based on the requirements of regulatory enactments. The content of study courses is designed in such a way that the study results in each course ensure the achievement of the overall study results of the study programme. The content of programmes is regularly reviewed and updated.
ESG 1.3. Student-centred learning, teaching and evaluation.	<p>The implementation of the study content ensures a diverse approach to studies for different groups of students, respecting the previous level of education and learning style.</p> <p>Various tasks are offered to meet the requirements of the study courses.</p> <p>Students are informed about assessment criteria and methods of knowledge. The assessment of final examinations shall take place in the presence of the Commission, which also includes employers.</p>
ESG. 1.4. Admission, studies, recognition of diploma.	Organized centrally at the University of Latvia, in admission the specifics of each study programme is taken into account.
ESG. 1.5. Higher educational institutions must ensure the competence of their teachers. The procedures for recruiting the academic staff should be fair and open.	The FT ensures the improvement of the qualification of its academic staff, providing opportunities to perform scientific activities, incl. Make publications and participate in conferences. Lecturers have the opportunity to improve their professional qualifications in <i>ERASMUS</i> . Lecturers are recruited on the basis of the requirements of the internal regulatory documents of the University of Latvia.
ESG. 1.6. A Higher educational institution must provide for adequate and easily accessible teaching aids and provide student support.	It is provided centrally within the framework of the University of Latvia, as well as within the framework of the FT, organizing support activities in groups or individually.
ESG. 1.7. For the effective management of programmes, universities should collect, analyse and use information	At the University of Latvia surveys of students and employers are organized in order to obtain information about satisfaction, as well as recommendations. The information obtained and compiled is used in self-assessment of the study field and programmes.

ESG. 1.8. Higher educational institutions should regularly publish clear, accurate, objective and up-to-date information.	Every year, the FT prepares self-assessment reports on the field of study. Information on the whole study process, description of each study programme, admission requirements, employment opportunities of graduates, and other up-to-date information is available on the FT website.
ESG. 1.9. Higher educational institutions periodically evaluate programmes to make sure they achieve their objectives and that they meet the needs of students and the public.	Every year, evaluation of study programmes in the study field takes place with the participation of the academic staff and students. Descriptions of the study courses are regularly updated, taking into account current events in the field and recommendations of students, lecturers and employers.
ESG. 1.10. Higher educational institutions should carry out cyclical external quality assurance and evaluation in line with the ESG.	Cyclical external evaluation takes place every six years, in accordance with the requirements of the regulatory enactments.

2.2.2. Analysis and assessment of the system and the procedures for the development and review of the study programmes by providing specific examples of the review of the study programmes, the aims, and regularity, as well as the stakeholders and their responsibilities. If, during the reporting period, new study programmes have been developed within the study field, describe the procedures of their development (including the process of the approval of study programmes).

The quality of the field of study and its study programmes is managed through a *Plan-do-check-act* or Deming cycle, planning the development and improvement of the field of study over a six-year period, cascading its goals and objectives down to the level of each study programme and regularly monitoring the requirements of stakeholders for effective planning, needs and proponents, in accordance with the UL Development Strategy, taking into account national and international sectoral policies and trends, as well as the impact of global environmental trends on the activities of the UL up to the level of study programmes.

Within the framework of the quality assurance system (see Fig. 5), the development of the study field and the interconnection of study programmes, the establishment of new study programmes, as well as the results of each existing study programme are planned, monitored, evaluated and reviewed, ensuring the involvement of all levels of the study field management in the quality assurance of studies, as well as representatives of key stakeholders. The review of study programmes is regulated by *The procedure for preparation of the annual reports of the study fields of the University of Latvia (UL Order No. 1/290 of 14 July 2020)*.

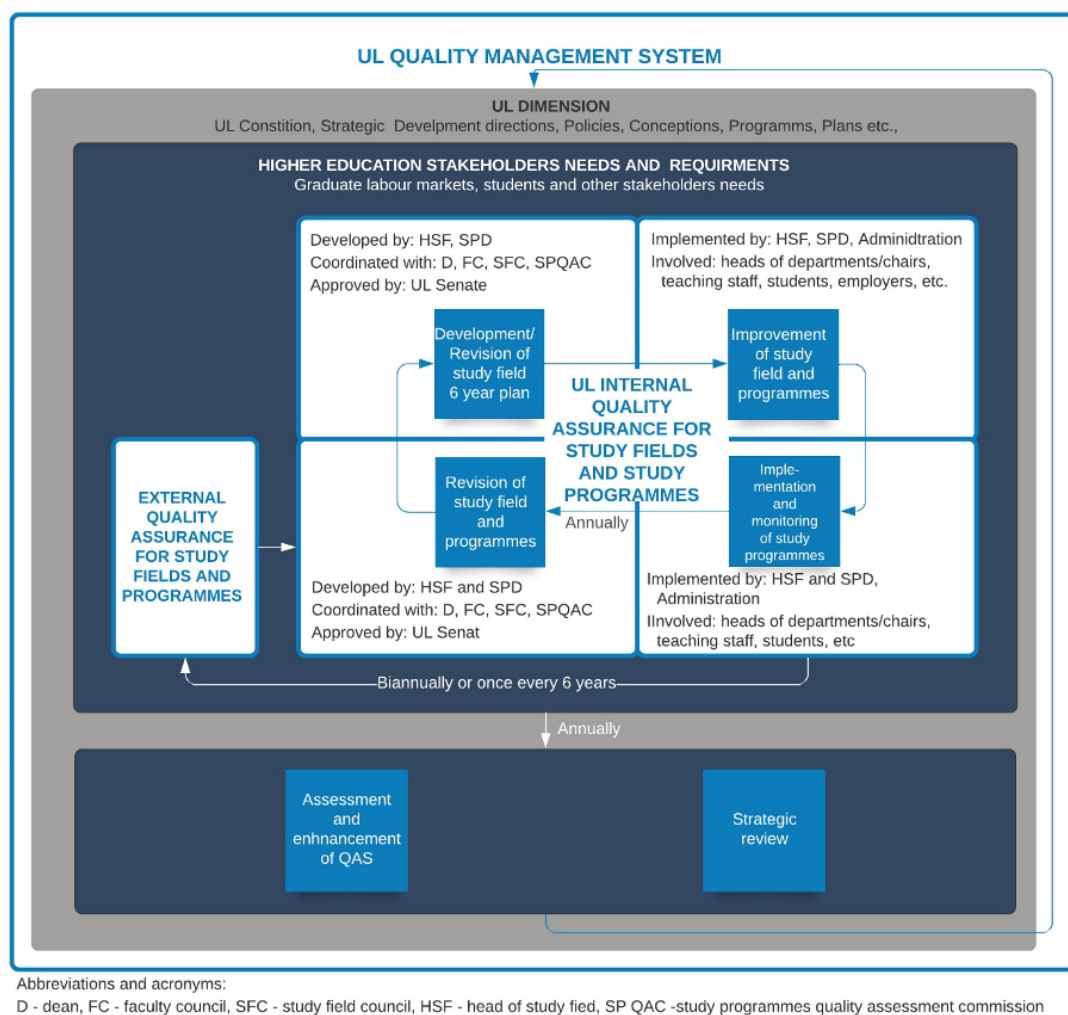


Fig. 5 Quality

assurance system for the study fields implemented by the University of Latvia and the study programmes included in it

The development of new study programmes is regulated by the Regulations of Study Programmes and Continuing Education Programmes of the University of Latvia [Regulations on University of Latvia Study and Continuing Education Programmes](#) (approved by the UL Senate Decision No. 102 of 24.04.2017), it is implemented in several stages, including coordination and evaluation at all levels of governance involved in the quality assurance of studies twice - by coordinating and approving the study programme concept, as well as coordinating and approving the study programme characteristics at the end of the process. For a detailed description of the development of the programme and the content of the concept, see the Quality Management System Manual, Chapter 3.1, Section II.

In the process of self-assessment and development of new study programmes, responsibilities are divided between the study programme directors, the head of the study field, the Study Field Council, the Faculty Council, the Academic Department and the Study Programme Quality Assessment Commission, as well as the Senate.

Cooperation of all involved parties (the FT administration, lecturers, students, graduates, employers, cooperation partners) in assurance of quality is the most evident, for example, in the development of new study programmes. As an example can be mentioned the development of a new doctoral study programme. The development of the programme was started in 2019 within the framework of the study development and management improvement programme project No.8.2.1.0/18/A/015 "Development of internationally competitive study programmes promoting the development of economy of Latvia at the University of Latvia". Initially, during the development of the programme a working group was established: Prof. V. Tēraudkalns (the coordinator), Prof. D. Balode, researcher I.

Stikāne. Representatives of the University of Tartu (hereinafter – UT) were involved in the working group: Prof. Riho Altnurme and assoc. prof. Urmas Nommiks (*Nõmmik*). In the further stages of the process, potential employers were also involved in the development of the program: experts from the Latvian Association of Professional Health Care Chaplains and the Luther Academy, who provided official letters of support for the further advancement of the programme, as well as practical recommendations for the improvement of the concept of the programme. Both organisations represent two groups of potential employers – institutions whose practical functions require highly qualified specialists in theology and religious studies, and educational establishments requiring doctoral specialists in the field. During the development of the programme, students were also introduced to its concept, they were interviewed and offered recommendations as to the selection of courses and their practical implementation.

During the development of the programme, joint workshops of the working group were held, where representatives of all participating organisations met to agree on the idea, concept, purpose, objectives and results of the programme. Partner universities expressed their opinion on the content of the programme, the planning of courses in the study programme, etc. Between meetings of the working group, electronic correspondence and work individually or in subgroups, mutual consultation were carried out. The concept of the doctoral study programme was developed, and improved according to the recommendations of experts. The programme was developed in a collegial way, all partners were involved in all stages of development on the principles of equality. The previous doctoral level programmes at the University of Latvia, Tartu and other European higher education institutions were primarily analysed, the participants were introduced to the formal requirements for the development of the doctoral level programme and regulatory documents. During the development of the programme, the international experience was analysed, all the documents binding on the establishment of the programme in Latvia and the EU were analysed.

In the process of developing the study programme, the performance indicators of the University of Latvia have been analysed and taken into account. So far, the doctoral study programme implemented by the FT of the University of Latvia has had stable indicators – the number of applicants was identical to the possibility to study by funding of the State budget (2 or more). In the 2020, the situation has improved, there has been a competition, 5 applicants have applied. The programme, which is planned as cooperation with a foreign university (the UT) and is delivered in English, will attract even more interest from students, and therefore it is planned to enroll students who will study for a fee. In addition, a survey carried out in 2020 shows that all doctoral students interviewed support the development of such programme.

The UL study field coordinators in cooperation with the directors of study programmes, prepare annual study field self-assessment reports (the procedure approved by the UL Order No 1/373 of 16.09.2016.). Self-assessment reports are approved by the Faculty Councils and submitted to the Academic Department. The Academic Department checks self-assessment reports for compliance and submits the same to the SP QAC composed of all Vice-Rectors, the Chair of the UL Senate Academic Committee, the UL Students' Representative, the UL Alumni Club Representative, the UL Library Representative, the Quality Manager, the Internal Auditor, as well as representatives of the Academic Department and the Department of Study Services. The self-assessment reports reflect the implementation of the programmes, developments, newly introduced changes and evolution of the same as well as the assessment by stakeholders, both, in terms of student survey results and the assessment expressed by employers. In the process of self-assessment of study programmes, as well as development of a new study programme, the Academic Department also provides independent expertise, the implementation of substantiated proposals of which is considered at the SP QAC meeting. Accreditation self-assessment reports are prepared using the annual self-

assessment results. The recommendations of the Accreditation and Licensing Evaluation Expert Group and the Study Quality Commission are evaluated by the Study Field Council, preparing a plan for the implementation of expert recommendations, which is agreed with the SP QAC. More information on the content of the self-assessment of study programmes and the process of ensuring external accreditation in Sections IX and X of Chapter 3.1 of the UL Quality Management Manual.

During the reporting period, preparing the FT self-assessment reports, the coherence of the objectives, tasks and results of the programmes and study direction is analysed in detail, as well as compliance with the common strategic objectives of the University of Latvia, in 2021, preparing the accreditation report, the above mentioned factors of quality assurance have been fully reviewed. The decision to establish a new programme in cooperation with the UT has been an important development following the annual evaluation of doctoral studies. The role of the main internal quality experts during the reporting period played students of the programmes, their views were analysed in detail in the process of self-assessments when planning measures and actions to address the identified shortcomings. As an example can be mentioned the section of the Bachelor's study programme self-assessment report (2020) on the implementation of the students' recommendations (see Table 9).

Table 9. Planned implementation of students' recommendations included in the self-assessment report of the Bachelor's study programme (2020)

No.	Recommendation	Activity	Result to be achieved	Term	The responsible person	Implementation of the recommendation [to be completed in the next reporting period]
1.	Results of student surveys, indicated shortcomings and proposals					

1.1	For individual study courses: the complexity of the content, chaotic presentation, deviation from the topic, lack of feedback.	The indicated problems in some study courses of individual lecturers are discussed in quality improvement working groups, as well as general discussions in the FT Council and programme board meetings. The director of the programme and the dean of the faculty have spoken to individual lecturers. It particularly concerns the involvement of assistant lecturers in separate courses (then the evaluation drops significantly). Lecturers attend various courses within the framework of the projects to improve their work.	Elimination and control of the indicated deficiencies by contacting the student representatives. Carried out already during the semester, the lecturers have been introduced to the students' evaluation.	Improvements should start in time for the next delivery of the above mentioned course at the latest.	The director of the programme	Some of the shortcomings indicated in the surveys and comments were already partially eliminated during the course, after consulting with the students and the lecturers.
-----	--	---	---	--	-------------------------------	---

1.2	For the study programme: no criticism, but recommendations, mainly on the balance of theology and religious studies in the programme, there is a growing demand for the expansion of the religious research component in line with the realities of the modern world.	The problem has been addressed in several working groups convened by the Dean of the FT, as well as in several meetings of the Study Direction Council since the spring semester of 2018. In 2019 and 2020, a number of changes have already been made to the programme, step by step within the framework of accreditation rules to develop the research section of religions, as well as to create larger, interdisciplinary blocks of courses, and to reducing the number of exams in semesters.	Modernisation of the programme, taking into account the latest research trends and trends in the demand for the content of theological education in the world, as well as the development targeted to the section of religious studies.	Each academic year successive changes must be brought about in the development and modernisation of the programme.	The director of the programme, the Council of the study field.	Each semester, there are targeted rearrangements and updates to the programme.
-----	---	---	---	--	--	--

In general, the analysis and evaluation of the study programme development and review system and processes during the reporting period has been carried out on a regular basis, through a wide range of monitoring and control mechanisms, thus ensuring a targeted improvement in quality.

2.2.3. Description of the procedures and/or systems according to which the students are expected to submit complaints and proposals (except for the surveys to be conducted among the students). Specify whether and how the students have access to the information on the possibilities to submit complaints and proposals and how the outcomes of the examination of the complaints and proposals and the improvements of the study field and the relevant study programmes are communicated by providing the respective examples.

In keeping with the principles of democracy and equality, and in line with the UL Quality Assurance Policy, all stages of the study process, from admissions to finals, ensure the participation of applicants and students in the evaluation of the UL study process. In matters relating to the admission procedure, UL applicants have the right to lodge complaints with the Chairman of the Admission Board.

The right of UL applicants to lodge complaints regarding irregularities in the admission procedure are governed by [Terms of admission at University of Latvia](#) (UL Senate Decision No.2-3/68 of 31.05.2021), specifying the procedures for the lodging, processing and appeal of the complaint.

While, to improve the quality of studies, students have the right to submit proposals and complaints concerning the study processes, including the evaluation of examinations and finals. To ensure the quality of the UL study process, the UL has developed and implemented "*Procedure for the Submission and Resolution of Students' Proposals and Complaints*" (UL Decision No 1/21 of 18.02.2002.). The procedure specifies the form for the submission of proposals and complaints, as well as the procedure for registration and resolution thereof. Proposals and complaints regarding the study process may be submitted to faculty deans (on the schedule of lectures, on the study process implementation, on the quality of studies administered by the respective faculty and on its development, on the non-fulfilment of the duties of faculty staff, etc.). The initial complaint should be acknowledged, and a full response provided within 15 days or within 30 days if additional information is required. Significantly, paragraph 17 of that order expressly provides that: "At the end of each academic year, the Dean of the Faculty must report to the UL Board on the complaints received and decisions taken in the previous academic year." This demonstrates the importance of the internal control mechanisms and the cyclical monitoring of complaints, decision making, student rights and interests, which is important for the proper functioning and possible improvement of this system.

The "*Procedure for the organisation of study course examinations at the University of Latvia*" (UL Senate Decision No 211 of 29.06.2015) has been developed and implemented for the comprehensive evaluation of UL study processes, where the right of students to file complaints regarding the procedures for interim and final assessment and the procedures for resolution of these complaints have been determined. The complaint is submitted by the student to the member of academic staff who has evaluated the examination, on condition that the student has requested a justification for the assessment from the academic staff prior to submitting the complaint. The lecturer must review the application within 5 working days. If the lecturer considers that the student's application is not substantiated, they shall submit the application to the Head of Department for consideration and decision

As regards the evaluation of graduation examinations, "*Regulation on graduation examinations at the University of Latvia*" (UL Senate Decision No 183 of 27.12.2011) has been drawn up, which stipulates that the students are entitled to appeal if the dean has not given them permission to take the final examinations or to appeal against the final examination procedure.

The University of Latvia also has an Academic Court of Arbitration, whose regulations provide for the opportunity to apply to this collegial institution for any study-related issues, including control over adherence to the principles of assessment.

The students have the right to appeal against the UL order on the ex-matriculation in conformity with "*University of Latvia state budget subsidized study place competition (rotation) procedure*" (UL Senate Decision No. 381 of 24.05.2010). In its turn, "*Procedure for Application for Tuition Fee Discounts*" (UL Order No. 1/89 of April 14, 2009) provides students with an opportunity to appeal

against decisions on granting or refusing tuition fee discounts within one month from notification issued to the student by submitting a written application addressed to the Rector of the University of Latvia, to be considered by the Rector within one month.

Whereas, the "*Procedure for Discontinuing Studies at the University of Latvia*" (Senate of the University of Latvia Decision No.178 of 01.12.2008) provides for the right to appeal against the decision of the dean refusing to grant a student a study break. The "*Procedure for the commencement of studies in the subsequent stages of studies at the University of Latvia*" (LU Order No. 1/128 of 08.06.2009) also provides for the right to appeal within a specified period against the decisions made by the Dean.

In compliance with the rights of students also outside the study process, for those students who use the University dormitories, the *Internal Regulations of the University of Latvia Dormitories* (LU Order No 1/171 of 30.06.2009) define the rights and obligations of students, including the right to submit complaints about problems in dormitories. Hostel and catering issues are addressed by the hostel superintendent.

Every student has the right not only to use the right provided by the Code of Academic Ethics of the University of Latvia (UL Senate Decision No.2-3/46 of 26.04.2021) to address the Academic Ethics Committee of the University of Latvia about possible ethical violations, but also to submit proposals for improvement of the Code and its implementation to the Academic Ethics Committee of the University of Latvia.

The proposals and complaints are registered with the departments or commissions where they are submitted, as well as outcomes of the enquiry taken and respective resolutions. The applicants of the results of the examination of complaints and proposals and of the improvements made are informed in writing.

At the normative level, the *Regulations on Visiting Students from Latvian Higher Education Institutions* (Order No 1/17, 25.01.2006) have defined the principle that visiting students also have the same rights and obligations as students of the University, which means that the system of submission and consideration of complaints and proposals is equally applicable to these students.

It follows from the above that the centralized segment of the UL Complaint and Proposal Submission and Review System covers all the components of every student's study life as it applies to enrolment at the UL as well as the full-cycle studies and final examinations.

The situation in the FT shows that its activities and the organisation of processes are democratic, decisions are taken as a result of discussions and negotiations, both students and lecturers are aware of clear rules, rights and obligations set out in internal regulatory documents. The FT has defined control mechanisms and complaints, their handling and decision-making are regularly monitored.

During the reporting period (2015-2021), no written complaints have been submitted about the FT or its academic staff. In 2015, there was an oral complaint about the discussion style and statements of one lecturer during the lecture. The Dean of the FT has discussed the case with the lecturer, the situation has been eliminated, there have been no repeated complaints. In 2016, there were oral complaints from students about too much written work, but the discussions showed that the complaints appeared to be unjustified. The amount and proportions of written papers in study courses have been explained to students, thus the problem has been exhausted. In 2019, the FT administration filed a complaint with the Academic Ethics Commission regarding one of the students for violations of academic ethics.

In general, it can be concluded that the cooperation model proposed by the FT ensures *openness* in

the submission of proposals by students, regular *monitoring of students' well-being* in the study process, a *democratic discussion culture* that *a priori* prevents the emergence of academic conflicts and complaints.

2.2.4. Provide information on the mechanism for collecting the statistical data, as developed by the higher education institution/ college. Specify the type of data to be collected, the regularity of collection, and the way the information is used to improve the study field. Describe the mechanism for obtaining and providing feedback, including with regard to the work with the students, graduates, and employers.

To control, analyse and forecast the dynamics of the number of students, the UL collects data:

- characterizing the number of applicants and matriculated students and their profile, such as secondary education institution, year of institution graduation, assessment obtained in secondary education examinations, age, gender, previous higher education and the assessment obtained in such examinations;
- number of students, broken down by faculties, study programmes, study levels, study years, forms and types of studies, source of financing for studies, status of studies - ex-matriculated on the grounds of academic non-compliance, ex-matriculated on the grounds of financial non-compliance, ex-matriculated on the grounds of completion of studies, on academic leave.

In order to control the progress of students' studies and the implementation of the programme, the UL collects data on:

- intermediate assessment and final assessment of students' study courses, broken down by type of examination, final results of final examinations, weighted average mark; data are collected once a semester;
- completion of the study programme, in accordance with the requirements set for the acquisition of the programme, broken down by study semesters, parts of the programme (obligatory part, restricted elective part, free elective part and others, according to the structure of the programme); data are collected once a semester;
- students' academic failures in credit points, by semesters, parts of the programme, study courses; data are collected once a semester;
- how the tuition fee schedule provided for in the student agreement is met, by study programmes and semesters.

In order to obtain information for planning and efficient use of study resources, the following statistical information is collected in connection with study programmes:

- financing of study places, broken down by state-funded, UL-funded and student-funded study places;
- the number of student scholarship recipients and the number of studies and student loans;

In order to prevent violations of the principles of academic integrity in the UL students' final theses and promotion papers, the UL ensures automatic examination of all submitted final theses and doctoral theses by using the Unified computerized plagiarism control system, making a mutual comparison with the final theses of the University and other higher education institutions accumulated in the System.

When students have submitted their bachelor's thesis at the scheduled time (uploading the

mandatory electronic version of the paper to LUIS), at a certain time the plagiarism control tool sends a report on suspicious coincidences in the papers to the director of the study programme. Every year, the tool shows about 2-5 cases where coincidences which require more examination are found. Mostly, these are not cases of plagiarism, but duplication of more commonly used research phrases in countless research papers, names and descriptions of methods, and similar cases.

During the accreditation period, only one case (BSP) was detected in the FT, when the automatic plagiarism control tool indicated a coincidence of entire text paragraphs in the student's work with monograph texts. In order to resolve the situation, the plagiarism control commission of the FT was convened, which indeed found a case of plagiarism. The student was also invited to the commission meeting to provide explanations, the student claimed the use of lengthier quotes that were forgotten to be put in inverted commas, and in the final version some references had disappeared. Since there were several such signs of plagiarism, which were quite voluminous and could not be seen in context as a quote (more stylistically than the author's opinion), the commission confirmed the fact of plagiarism, the student was not allowed to defend the paper, and was also exmatriculated.

In general, it can be concluded that the FT students are well informed about plagiarism tool and control mechanisms, the moral side and consequences of plagiarism are discussed in methodical courses, plagiarism is controlled in the tests in each course (correct citation, discussions with opinions, separation of opinions of other authors from their own, references, footnotes, etc.). Particular attention is paid to the control of plagiarism in final papers by a reviewer and the commission, even if the control tool has not shown it (mainly citation and discussion problems).

As the mechanism for providing feedback in work with students, graduates and employers University of Latvia and, including the Faculty of Theology uses regular surveys organized by the University of Latvia or at the directional and program level. At the UL level,

surveys of applicants, first-year students, study courses, study graduates are organized, the administration of the field and the directors of the study programmes conduct surveys among graduates and employers. The results of the study surveys are discussed at Deans' meetings, the Council of the Faculty of Theology, as well as at the council of the study field, and form further development strategies.

In order to evaluate the satisfaction of students, graduates and employers with the study quality and its results, as well as to implement the necessary improvement measures, the UL organizes and compiles data from the following surveys:

- a survey at the beginning of studies, which is conducted electronically once a year. The survey aims to obtain information for the improvement of student attraction activities. The tasks of the survey are: (1) to find out students' motivations for choosing a university and study programme, (2) to find out sources of information about studying at the University, (3) to obtain an assessment of the application and registration process, and (4) to find out the socio-demographic portrait of respondents who have started their studies. Data on each study programme are collected by LUIS, but for the University as a whole data are collected and analysed by the Academic Department. The results of the survey are presented to the UL management, departments and faculty management in LUIS and staff meetings, and the necessary improvement measures are proposed by the UL management, faculty management and programme directors in cooperation with the Academic Department;
- a freshman survey of the first-year students on the first study experience, also conducted electronically once a year. The survey aims to obtain information for the improvement of the study environment and the promotion of student adaptation. The tasks of the survey are: (1) to find out students' opinions on different aspects of studies and (2) to find out students'

opinions about what support is needed when starting studies. Data on each study programme are collected by LUIS, but for the University as a whole data are collected and analysed by the Academic Department. The results of the survey are presented to the UL management, departments and faculty management in LUIS and staff meetings, and the necessary improvement measures are proposed by the UL management, faculty management and programme directors in cooperation with the Academic Department;

- In order to find out students' opinions about the content of the study courses and to obtain the evaluation of the work of the teaching staff, every semester an electronic survey is conducted on the study courses, including study internship, term papers and final papers. Data on each study programme are collected by LUIS and are available to the teaching staff, programme directors and the dean of the faculty, the Academic Department. The data is analysed by the programme directors, the dean, and the necessary improvement measures are proposed by the programme director, the dean, and the Study Field Council. The results are used to prepare annual reviews of study fields, as well as to develop study programme development plans.
- In order to obtain students' evaluation of the study programme for its further development, improvement of the study process, improvement of the quality and study environment, a survey of the students of the last study year on the study programme as a whole is conducted. The survey is conducted electronically once for each study programme. The data collection on each study programme is performed by LUIS and is available to the programme directors and the dean of the faculty. The data is analysed by the programme directors, the dean, and the necessary improvement measures are proposed by the programme director, the dean, and the Study Field Council. The results are used in the preparation of annual study field reviews, study field self-assessment reports for the field accreditation and re-accreditation, and in the preparation of study programme development plans.
- In order to identify the main reasons for the discontinuation of studies and to facilitate the reduction of drop-out rates, a survey is conducted of students who have expressed a wish to discontinue studies or have already discontinued studies. The survey is conducted throughout the academic year electronically (in some cases in paper form). Data are collected and analyzed by the Academic Department once a semester. The results of the survey are presented to the management of the University of Latvia and the management of the faculty;
- The aim of the alumni survey is to obtain an assessment of alumni satisfaction with the quality of the programme, the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired at the University, the contribution of graduate programme they graduated to their employment, as well as plans to continue their studies. The survey is carried out by the programme directors at their own discretion, using the questionnaire prepared by the Academic Department;
- The aim of the employer survey is to determine how employers assess the relevance of the knowledge, skills and competences acquired by graduates of the University to the requirements of the labour market. The survey is carried out at the discretion of the programme directors using the questionnaire prepared by the Academic Department.

The results of the surveys of students, graduates and employers are presented in the appendix "Results of the surveys of students, graduates and employers".

Each year the head of the study field in cooperation with the study programme directors prepares a report on the operation of the study field and the programmes therein during the academic year. In the preparation of the report, statistical data is collected and analysed, and the obtained information is used for the evaluation and improvement of the study field. The report includes the following data, which are collected and analysed annually:

- number of students in programmes, showing the total number, number matriculated in the first academic year, number of graduates, drop-out rate, separately identifying different forms, types and languages of study;
- outcoming and incoming mobility of students, their participation in exchange programmes;
- composition of the teaching staff, indicating the position, number of academic staff with a doctoral degree, mobility of the teaching staff;
- the ratio of students to teaching staff;
- the number of employers in the sector involved in the implementation of the programme;
- summary and analysis of the results of a survey of students about the courses and the programme as a whole.

2.2.5. Specify the websites (e.g., the homepage) on which the information on the study field and the relevant study programmes is published (in all languages in which the study programmes are implemented) by indicating the persons responsible for the compliance of the information available on the website with the information published in the official registers (State Education Information System (VIIS), E-platform).

The target audience of the UL website <https://www.lu.lv> (hereinafter referred to as website) is the UL prospective and existing students, employees, cooperation partners, scientists and the general public.

The site is intended for access to and storage of public information, providing its visitors with an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the UL's activities as reflected in the digital environment on the internet.

The site consists of the following sections:

- ROTATING NEWS - important information of the University of Latvia through the visual identity of the University of Latvia, which has certain parameters and strengthens the image of the University and promotes its visibility in the digital environment.
- NEWS AND EVENTS - News and events at the University. Information prepared by LU departments and the Department of Communication and Innovation.
- DISCOVER UL - Information about studies, extracurricular activities, science.
- STUDIES - with subdivisions -
 - College study programmes,
 - Bachelor's study programmes,
 - Master's study programmes,
 - Doctoral study programmes,
 - Residency.

The information is prepared and posted on the website by the Communications Department in cooperation with the Academic Department and the Study Services Department.

The STUDIES section in Latvian provides information on programme goals, objectives, study outcomes, programme volume and duration, programme study language, information on job opportunities after graduation, as well as programme study plans. If you have any questions, please contact us for further information. This section also publishes study-relevant information under the heading STUDY PROCESS - Academic calendar, Lecture timetable, Tutorials, Key documents and forms, Information on mobility at higher education institutions, Recognition of experience/education, Lifelong learning opportunities as well as references to the UL e-learning environment and LUIS information system.

The section contains information about the University of Latvia Libraries' offer, Career Centre information, Student Council activities.

The two subsections STUDENTS' LIFE and EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES inform both existing and potential students about hostels, meals, car and bicycle parking, mentor support, and information for people with disabilities. There is a wide range of information on how to enrich one's extra-curricular life with sport, culture.

The ADMISSION section contains information for pupils, prospective and existing students. In this section, the pupils can get acquainted with the events and creative competitions organized by the respective faculty, the participation wherein and successful performance can give additional admission points. The prospective students on the site may get introduced to the information on all levels of programmes, admission requirements, credit and scholarship information, as well as opportunities for the recommencement of studies. The prospective students will be able to familiarize themselves with the most frequently asked questions and answers, information on Career Centre activities, preparatory courses and classes for pupils.

Other Sections - *Science, Cooperation, About Us*. They provide more information about UL activities in research, projects, conferences, cooperation partners, normative acts, strategy.

The website www.lu.lv/par-mums/dokumenti/pasnovertejuma-zinojumi/ (in Latvian) contains annual Study fields self-assessment reports.

The websites of the structural units (faculties) prepare information on the programmes offered by the respective faculty and on the scientific activities of the faculty. Content blocks are exactly the same as the ones on the UL official site, but more specific information is posted directly about the respective faculty activities.

The information about the FT can be found on the website <https://www.lu.lv/studijas/fakultates/teologijas-fakultate/> in Latvian and on <https://www.lu.lv/en/studies/faculties/faculties/faculty-of-theology/> in English.

Here you can find basic information about the study programmes in the FT, promotional videos, as well as basic contacts and a link to the FT website.

From the UL website, through the faculty's business card, you can reach the faculty's website <https://www.tf.lu.lv/> (in Latvian). This site contains the latest information about the planned conferences, as well as a calendar of upcoming events. The information on the study programmes, the University of Young Theologians and Religious Researchers, Open Day events, scholarships and credits is also available to those who are interested, as well as it is possible to get acquainted with the main internal laws and regulations.

The website also contains a *study guide*, a list of lectures, an academic calendar, instructions for the development of research papers, reception times for administration and lecturers, study procedures and organisation, etc., as well as the information related to students' everyday issues: student life, hostels, meals. There is information about the Student Council of the FT, the University

of Latvia, the list of services provided of the Career Centre, about psychological support.

A separate section deals with the issues related to research: on conferences the FT, the UL, including on students' conferences, the FT magazine "The Way " can be found here, the collection of abstracts of the conference of the Faculty of Theology, the University of Latvia, implemented projects, as well as information for prospective and current doctoral students.

Information on the Faculty of Theology of the University of Latvia, its teaching staff, traditions, devotionals and other current events of the FT are available to the public.

The heads of the structural units of the University of Latvia are responsible for the preparation of the information posted on the site within the competence of the structural units headed by them, its correctness and updating. Administrators of the content of the websites of the structural units are responsible for the maintenance of the website, posting and regular updating of the prepared information. For a particular faculty, the person responsible for posting the content is a marketing or public relations specialist or a coordinator who supervises the website, or an employee who has completed a short *TYPO 3* training course in posting the content under the direction of the Information Technology Department.

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field

2.3.1. Provide information on the system developed by the higher education institution/ college for determining and redistribution of the financial resources required for the implementation of the study field and the relevant study programmes. Provide data on the available funding for the scientific research and/or artistic creation activities, its sources and its use for the development of the study field.

The FT has established a system for determining the financial security necessary for the implementation of the study field and the relevant study programmes, the infrastructure resources and material and technical support necessary for the implementation of the study field have been identified, they are at the disposal of the University of Latvia. Resources are accessible to the students and the academic staff. The University of Latvia has established a unified system and procedures for the improvement and purchase of material, technological, methodological, informative and other facilities. The University of Latvia has established, implemented and followed procedures (for the study field and corresponding study programmes) for attracting qualified teaching staff. The needs for professional and didactic improvement of the teaching staff are purposefully determined, appropriate improvement measures are used, the result and effectiveness of the implemented measures are evaluated. The academic staff participate in both outgoing and incoming mobility, which provides added value for the implementation of the study process and the quality of studies. The University of Latvia, including the FT, has identified the necessary support for students and, based on the needs of students, a functioning support system has been established.

Financial Support system

The system of the University of Latvia for financing the study field and the corresponding study programmes is based on the "Law on Higher Education Institutions", Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 994 of 12.12. 2006 "Procedures for Financing Higher Education Institutions and Colleges from the State Budget", Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 445 of 05.07.2016

“Regulations on Remuneration of Teachers” and other external and internal regulatory enactments.

For the successful implementation of the study fields, the University of Latvia must ensure sufficient financial resources for the entire study process, including the remuneration of the teaching staff, the library and other resources related to the implementation of studies, as well as the development of the study programme. The main costs related to the implementation of the study process are the remuneration of the teaching staff and the costs related to the organization of the study process.

The remuneration of the teaching staff includes:

- Costs of contact hours (eg lectures, seminars, practical and laboratory work);
- Independent work management, consulting and exam costs;
- Costs of methodical work (preparation for lessons, preparation of new courses, etc.);
- Student work management and evaluation costs, including reviewing;
- Internship management and organization costs;
- Costs of scientific work of the teaching staff to ensure the development of new study materials;

The norms of the formation of the remuneration of the teaching staff (norms of the planning and accounting of the workload of the academic staff) are determined by the order of the Rector for the whole university. Taking into account the specifics of studies and available resources, the management of the faculties may set different regulations in coordination with the vice-rector of the respective field.

Costs related to the organization of the study process:

- General staff costs include the costs of study support staff remuneration, organization and provision of faculty activities;
- Other costs are other direct costs related to the specific study programme, such as rent of external services, premises, additional equipment, transport, etc.;
- Infrastructure costs - costs of premises, including utilities, repairs and maintenance;
- The costs of property and services include the material and methodological provision of the study programme, including technical equipment, visual materials, professional development (experience exchange trips, training), etc.;
- Indirect costs include the costs of the University's overall operational support (IT, finance, staff, marketing, etc.) and investment in development.

In order to estimate the amount of funds required for financial provision, the University of Latvia calculates the cost of each study programme according to the methodology developed by the University of Latvia, which takes into account all the costs of providing the study process described above and information on the specific study programme plan, involved teaching staff, planned number of students, etc., thus ensuring the reliability of the forecasts.

Financing of studies at the University of Latvia - sources of financing

To provide the necessary funds for the conduct of studies, the University of Latvia uses (1) the state budget subsidy (taking into account the base funding, programme level and field of study) from the Ministry of Education and Science and (2) tuition fees.

Tuition fees at the University of Latvia are determined taking into account:

- the cost of the study place, taking into account all the costs of the study process;
- tuition fees for similar programs at other universities;
- the interest of potential paid students in the study program;

- the estimated financing of the study place from the state budget;
- the opinion of the UL Students' Council;

Tuition fees are set at the end of each year for the next academic year to ensure timely availability of information. The student's fee does not change during the studies, unless the fees vary from year to year in the programmes, but even then they are all determined at the beginning of the studies.

Income from lifelong learning or other services, as well as accumulated unit funds, may also be used for curriculum development (development of new courses, improvement of existing courses, methodological support and other curricular aspects). If necessary, financial support can be obtained from the UL Study Quality Improvement Fund, where a sum is set aside annually in the UL budget to address various faculty issues, including the development of new study programmes and the development of existing study programmes.

Indirectly, research funding sources for academic staff are also channelled to the development of study programmes, e.g. for research activities, participation in international projects, publication of scientific articles, preparation of international project applications, organisation of scientific events at the University, implementation of research development projects and fulfilment of long-term commitments, etc. By participating in these activities, academic staff increase their professional and research competence, often involving also students, which has a positive impact on the quality of the study process.

For data on available funding for a specific study programme, see 3.3.2., 4.3.2., 5.3.2. subsections of this report.

Financing of studies at the University of Latvia - reallocation of funding received

All income received from the state budget and tuition fees, as well as from other sources used for financing the study process, after prior deduction of indirect expenses for centralised expenses in accordance with the current redistribution procedure, shall be allocated by the UL for use by the faculties.

Faculties manage their own funding within the current year's budget. The Dean of the Faculty and the Executive Director are responsible for the rational use of financial resources and for operational financial management.

Actual returns are recorded at the faculty level, without separating results for each programme or field of study. At the same time, the management of the faculty monitors the outcomes of the study process, the dynamics of the number of students and the factors influencing it, the balance of the cost of a particular programme with the state budget subsidy and tuition fees and, if necessary, makes the necessary adjustments in the organisation of the study process to ensure the long-term viability and development of the study field of the faculty.

2.3.2. Provide information on the infrastructure and the material and technical provisions required for the implementation of the study field and the relevant study programmes. Specify whether the required provision is available to the higher education institution/college, available to the students, and the teaching staff.

The programmes of the study field to be accredited take place in Riga, in the premises of the

University of Latvia, the FT, 19 Raina Boulevard, the doctoral programme - also in the premises of Tartu, the TU, Theology and Religion Studies School. The FT is located in the main building of the University of Latvia, 19 Raina Boulevard. The building is in a good technical condition. The faculty has 3 classrooms, adapted according to the study process. The total area of premises intended for ensuring the study process is 163.5 m².

Classroom capacity – from 35 to 60 people. All auditoriums are equipped with a board, there are stationary projectors in two auditoriums, in the third it is possible to use a portable projector. A computer is available in each classroom. Tables and chairs can be rearranged according to the requirements of study process. The internet access, e-learning environment, e-mail, as well as LUIS are provided in all premises., It is also possible to organize a video conference in the auditoriums, if necessary.

The premises of the FT are comfortably equipped for the students and the faculty – there is a sofa and a bench in the hallway, as well as sockets for charging a mobile phone. Students are provided with a separate student room (total area - 39.5 m²). The lecturers mostly organize consultations with students in their workplaces (dean's office suite, dean's office, programme director's office, lecturers' office with a total area of 83.3 m²). The total area of the FT premises is 286.3 m².

A computer and a multifunctional printer are available in all lecturers' premises. There are IT specialists in the UL building who can be asked to help if necessary. The University of Latvia also offers students and its employees possibility to use free of charge *Microsoft Office 365 ProPlus* (while the study or employment contract is in force).

The UL 19 Raina Boulevard has a library with a reading room where it is possible to work comfortably and qualitatively on current or final works, carry out research. In addition to the faculties premises and library at 19 Raina Boulevard, there is a canteen, two courtyards (one is closed, the other is accessible to visitors), as well as spacious premises for various events. For the convenience of students, faculty staff and visitors, there is an information centre. There is a 24-hour duty officer in the building.

The UT, The School of Theology and Religious Studies is located in the main building of the UT, 18 *Ülikooli Street*, Tartu (Estonia). The building is in a good technical condition. The school has 3 classrooms, which are arranged according to the study process. Audience capacity - from 14 to 44 people. All audiences are equipped with a whiteboard, a computer, a projector and it is possible to use mobile 360-degree conference webcams. Chairs and tables in each auditorium can be arranged according to the needs of the study process. Internet access, e-learning environment and e-mail are provided in all premises.

The premises of the UT, the School of Theology and Religious Studies are arranged according to the convenience of the students and the teaching staff – sofas and armchairs are located in the hallways. The lecturers are available for consultations at certain times in their workplaces. Computers and multifunctional printers are available in the offices of the teaching staff and the administrative staff. The building houses IT specialists who can help in case of technical problems. There is a 24-hour duty officer in the building.

The UT library is located at 1, V. Struves street. It has several reading rooms, as well as a computer room where students can work comfortably. There is also a café and a conference centre in the building, which hosts various events.

The facilities and their availability to students and academic staff at the University of Latvia and the University of Tartu should be assessed as completely relevant to the needs of study programmes at all levels.

2.3.3. Provide information on the system and procedures for the improvement and purchase of the methodological and informative provision. Description and assessment of the availability of the library and the databases to the students (including in digital environment) and their compliance with the needs of the study field by specifying whether the opening times of the library are appropriate for the students, as well as the number/area of the premises, their suitability for individual studies and research work, the services provided by the library, the available literature for the implementation of the study field, the databases available for the students in the respective field, the statistical data on their use, the procedures for the replenishment of the library stock, as well as the procedures and possibilities for the subscription to the databases.

General description of the UL Library

The Library of the University of Latvia is included in the Library Register of the Ministry of Culture (BLB1000) and accredited as a library of national significance until 2022.

Access to the UL Library information resources and services, opening hours

The basic principle of the library is the availability of its services to every user.

The services are provided in the 8 branch libraries of the University of Latvia Library in accordance with the regulations for the use of the University of Latvia Library (07.01.2021. *Order of the Rector of the University of Latvia No. 1-4 / 9*). According to the terms of use, the services can be used by the UL students, lecturers, staff, other libraries, students of other universities, as well as any resident. The UL Library provides free basic services and paid services.

The opening hours of branch libraries are tailored to the convenience of users. On weekdays from 9.00-20.00, in some branch libraries from 9.00 – 18.00, Saturdays from 9.00 -17.00 The Natural Sciences Library and the House of Science Library are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Three branch libraries are open to customers all year round, including the summer.

The collection of **the theology** branch is located in the library on Raina Boulevard, and it is open on weekdays from 9.00 to 20.00 and on Saturdays 9.00.-17.00. The library on Raina Boulevard is located in 7 rooms with a total area of 485.7 m². In the library on Raina Boulevard, users have access to **138** workstations, including **18** with a computer. An open-access collection is available to users.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, working hours and services of the library are provided in accordance with the legislation in force in the State of Latvia.

Free basic services

- Electronic ordering/reservation/extension of the loan term in the National Library Union Catalogue(hereinafter - the Joint Catalogue) and obtaining information resources for use on-site in the library's reading room or to take home.

The service is available to users registered with the UL Library via the Union Catalogue from any mobile device and from any location with the internet access.

- Delivery of information resources

Academic staff, researchers and doctoral students of the University of Latvia, when ordering information resources from any library, can specify the most convenient place to receive the reserved information resource - the branch library. For other users, this option is available only

when ordering information resources from the Repository

- Self-service

Self-service scanning is available in all branch libraries. 5 branch libraries have self-service facilities for checking out/returning/extension of the loan term. The House of Science Library has a self-service computer wall with 36 laptops.

- Use of open access reading rooms, computers and the Internet

In the reading rooms, it is possible to use a collection of reference literature and periodicals, stationary and portable computers (both the UL Libraries' and users' personal), the Internet connection, including *Wi-Fi*, which operates in all the UL buildings. The library on Raina Boulevard has 138 workplaces available to users 18 of them are computerized. An open access repository is available to users.

- Night subscription, booking of information resources

The purpose of the service "Night Subscription" is to provide an opportunity to use certain information resources outside the University of Latvia Library free of charge from the time of its closure until its opening. The information resource can be reserved in advance for certain hours. If the information resource is not returned on time, a contractual penalty is applied for the delay in its term in accordance with the price list of paid services of the Library of the University of Latvia.

- Delivery of information resources in summer

Once a week, users can receive the information resources reserved in the Union Catalogue from the Repository in the most convenient branch library (Library on Raina Boulevard, Library of Natural Sciences, Library of House of Science).

- Inquiries and consultancy

Information service for users - consulting, reference, training and research support is one of the main areas of work of the University of Latvia Library. The consultant of the Library of the University of Latvia and the staff of branch libraries provide bibliographic, thematic, factual, address, clarifying and other references and consultations to the students, academic, scientific and general staff of the University of Latvia.

The Chief Reference Consultant of the University of Latvia Library (Library on Aspazijas Boulevard) provides the official and general information service of the University of Latvia Library. Users are consulted electronically: info-bibl@lu.lv, by phone: 28623551, WhatsApp 28623551 via Skype - address: The Consultant of the UL Library. Advice is also provided by any member of Library staff on-site at the library or by telephone via Skype.

In case of uncertainty, users can also use the options available in the Library section of the UL portal: "Ask a Librarian", "Frequently Asked Questions", "Have Your Say".

- User training

The training is organized with the aim of developing users' skills to work independently, to find, evaluate and use information resources and e-environment tools. The library actively works with target audiences - students of all study levels, academic, scientific and general staff to promote not only information literacy, but also to provide in-depth knowledge and skills in working with electronic resources.

The library organizes and conducts presentations, classes in classrooms and in computer classes, as well as online. Practical study tours in the Library are organized so that users acquire the skills to

work with open access collection, self-service and office equipment - self-service scanners, copiers, thus improving the competence of independent learning.

Special attention is paid to foreign students. The library has prepared and conducts presentations in English "Step by step, the Library for you!", in computer classes the skills of using e-resources are acquired.

The following classes are provided for the students of the Bachelor's study programme: presentation "Step by step: Library for you", classes "Electronic Union Catalogue and *Primo* for your successful studies "(90 min.), "Get to know e-resources "(90 min.), "E-resources in the field "(90 min.), E-course "The Introduction into information literacy " "(Part C course).

Students in Master's study programmes and residency students have training in "E-resources in the field" (90 min.), providing better skills for working with the electronic resources of the respective field.

The following training opportunities are provided for students in Doctoral study programmes: "The introduction into the Scientific Publication Process" (90 min.), "Bibliography and Citation Management Tools" (90 min.), "How to use *Web of Science* and *Scopus* Databases in Studies and Research" (90 min.).

The following training opportunities are provided for the academic and research staff: "Bibliography and Citation Management Tools" (90 min.), "How to use the *Web of Science* and *Scopus* Databases in Studies and Research" (90 min.), "Entering Publications and Editing the List of Publications in LUIS" (90 min.), "Depositing Research Results in the Repository of e-Resources of the University of Latvia" (90 min.).

The staff of the UL Library also offers training for students at UL branches: in Aluksne, Bauska, Cesis, Jekabpils, Kuldiga, Madona and Tukums.

Paid services

The list of paid services and the price list of the University of Latvia Library have been approved by the Rector of the University of Latvia on August 10, 2021, by Order No. 1-4 / 387 on the prices of paid services of the University of Latvia Library.

- Compilation of a list of information resources

The specialists of the UL Library prepare a list of information resources on the topic relevant to the user, for example, in the process of study or other work development. The user can order the list by filling in an application form electronically.

- Interlibrary Loan (hereinafter - IL) and International Interlibrary Loan (IIL) services

The UL Library offers its users to order the information resources that are not available in UL libraries from other libraries in Latvia by the IL and worldwide by the IIL. It is also possible to receive electronic copies of scientific articles in the form of printouts and by e-mail.

Library collection, replenishment procedure

The collection of the University of Latvia Library is created in accordance with the study fields and scientific work of the University of Latvia, the requirements of study programmes, providing information at all levels of studies at the University of Latvia - Bachelor's, Master's, Doctoral and scientific research areas. Purchasing e-resources is a priority in building a collection.

Purchase of new information resources in the collection (purchase of books, subscription to databases and periodicals) is carried out in accordance with the funding allocated centrally by the

University of Latvia, which is approved annually by the order of the University of Latvia. The allocated funding is used to purchase the necessary books, pay for databases subscribed to in the branch and subscribe to periodicals.

The library provides acquisition of information resources on the orders of the academic staff of the Faculty, on the proposal of the students' self-government or on the proposals of the Library staff, which are entered in LUIS and approved by the Dean of the Faculty or the Executive Director.

In 2021 Library users have access to **1,8 million** items of information resources. According to the study and research infrastructure of the University, the collection of the University Library is located in 8 branch libraries and in the Repository.

Literature available in the library for the implementation of the study field

According to data as of December 1, 2021, the literature available in the Library collection of the University of Latvia for the implementation of the study direction "Religion and Theology" covers the printed information resources of 21,025 titles in 38,094 copies, mostly in English, Latvian, German and Russian (see Table 10).

Table 10. Literature available in the library collection of the UL for the implementation of the study field "Religion and Theology"

Information resources available in the Library collection of the UL (as of 01.12.2021)							
Printed editions (titles/copies)			Languages of publications (titles/copies)				
Books	Serial editions, periodicals	Other types of publications	Latvian	English	German	Russian	Other languages
20 323/30 670	449/7059	253/365	4898/12 460	6963/11 007	4842/7651	2929/4781	1393/2195

Total: 21 025 titles / 38 094 copies

Printed information resources provided for the study field "Religion and Theology" cover the majority of the collection – 79.8%. When analysed according to languages, majority of the resources – 35% are in English, 27% in Latvian, 22% in German, 12% in Russian and 5% in other languages (Chinese, Hebrew, Latin and others). The most widely represented information resources in the collection are in the fields of Christianity, Lutheranism, Judaism and the Islamic faith.

Currently, a total of 724 publications can be found in the e-resource repository according to the study direction "Religion and Theology".

Level of digitization of the collection

The UL Library in cooperation with the UL Information Technology Department provides free online access to the UL e-resource repository <http://dspace.lu.lv/dspace/?locale-attribute=en>. For users' convenience a mobile version of the repository is also available. The UL Library, the authors of publications, the UL structural units or representatives of the UL editions regularly place electronic versions of their publications, digitized information resources with cultural and historical value, doctoral dissertations of the UL teaching staff and their summaries in the UL e-resources repository to ensure free and constant online access to the UL scientific achievements.

The digital publications, which are subject to copyright, are offered for use by the Library of the University of Latvia in on-site library reading rooms.

The e-resources repository currently contains more than 724 publications in the "Religion and Theology" field of study.

Electronic resources

According to the UL strategic plan, the UL Library increases the share of e-resources and develops online access to e-resources.

Updating the availability of electronic resources, the latest technology web service *Primo Discovery* and *SFX* has been introduced in the UL Library.

In total, in 2021, 42 e-resource platforms were available at the University of Latvia (both e-book platforms - *VLeBooks*, *ProQuest Ebook Central*, and e-journal databases - *Cambridge Journals Online* (archive available until 31.12.2018), *Emerald eJournals Premier* (archive available until 22.04.2020.), *JSTOR I-XII, XIV, XV and Life Sciences Collections*, *HeinOnline*, *Oxford Journals Online*, *Sage Journals*, *ScienceDirect*, *SpringerLink Contemporary Journals*, *Taylor & Francis Social Science & Humanities Library*, *Physical Review Journals*, *Westlaw*, *Wiley Online Library E-Journals Full Collection* and separately purchased e-journals, and *Lursoft Newspaper Library NEWS.LV*, reference resources - *LETA online news*, *LETA Archive* and *Nozare.lv*, *Letonika*, tools - *SAGE Research Methods*, *Passport*, *Orbis*, *Overleaf Commons*, *MarketLine*, mixed-format databases - *ClinicalKey*, *Culturethèque*, *European Pharmacopoeia*, *LVS Latvian Standards Online Reading Room*, *OECD iLibrary*, *ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global*, *ScienceDirect*, *Scopus*, *UpToDate*, *Web of Science Core Collection*). In total, 17 477 full-text e-journals (including individual subscriptions), about 208 075 e-books, almost five million full texts and abstracts of dissertations and Master's theses worldwide are available. 174 verified open access databases with multi-format materials are available at the UL.

Every year, the UL Library offers an average of 110 new electronic resources. In total, 1555 e-books has been acquired by the UL Library as of 01.12.2021, in the subscribed *ProQuest Ebook Academic Complete* collection ~ 208 075 e-books are available.

The Library of the University of Latvia evaluates and analyzes the data of usability of subscribed databases twice a year. Statistics of the subscribed e-resources at the University of Latvia for the first half of 2021 show that the overall usability has grown by 21% compared to 2020. A marked individual increase in usability can be observed in foreign multidisciplinary databases (*JSTOR* + 41%, *ProQuest eBook Academic Complete Collection* + 62%, *EBSCO Central & Eastern European Academic Source* + 26%, *Taylor & Francis Social Science & Humanities Library* + 29%), whereas the drop - for the Latvian database *LETA*, the database of foreign research methods *Sage Research Methods*, also *Oxford Journals Online* and the citation database *Scopus*.

The Library of the University of Latvia regularly organizes trial access to various databases. On average, around 15 accesses are organised per year for the pilot resources. The information about it is available in both Latvian and English in the website section of the Library of the University of

Latvia [News](#), [E-resources available for trial period](#), [E-resources A to Z](#) in LUIS *My portal* in sections *Databases*, *Libraries* and *For students and employees*.

The collected information on the e-resources is available on the website of the Library of the University of Latvia [E-resources A to Z](#) and [E-resources by discipline](#), in sectors, as well as in *My portal* in the section *Databases*.

The UL offers an opportunity to use the subscribed electronic information resources (databases, e-book platforms) outside the UL computer network by logging in with the LUIS username and password (with some exceptions, when it is necessary to create a personal profile for a successful online access experience).

As of 01.12.2021, individually subscribed e-publications containing materials according to the study field "Religion and Theology" are not available in the Library collection of the University of Latvia.

Subscribed multidisciplinary e-resources, which include materials for the study field "Religion and Theology"

Cambridge Journals Online – multidisciplinary database of full-text of e-journals by the publishing house *Cambridge University Press*, which offers the possibility to search for information in more than 300 scientific journals, as well as the related internet resources. The database contains full texts in such fields as religion, theology, anthropology, history, philosophy, educational sciences, psychology, literary science, science, etc. *The archive of the e-resource is available at the University of Latvia until 31.12.2018.*

EBSCO Central & Eastern European Academic Source – offers more than 2,123 full texts of multidisciplinary magazines in areas such as religion, philosophy, literary science, linguistics, history and sociology, etc., which refer to the Central and Eastern European region.

Emerald eJournals Premier – a multidisciplinary full-text database of e-journals, which includes information in such sectors as religion, education, etc. *The archive of the e-resource is available at the University of Latvia until 28.02.2020.*

JSTOR – database of magazines, books and provenances, with publications from leading publishing houses: *Sage Publications*, *Springer*, *Taylor & Francis*, *Blackwell Publishing*, *Cambridge University Press*, *Oxford University Press*, *John Wiley & Sons* etc. The chronological coverage of publications extends back to the beginning of their publication. Within the framework of the UL for subscription, several extensive collections of materials are available, including the *Life Sciences* collection.

LETA – Ziņas, Arhīvs un Nozare.lv – offers an opportunity to search for promptly published news, photos, videos, press releases, articles from Latvian press, statistics and other information.

Letonika – reference and translation database, which contains encyclopaedias, dictionaries, collections of images, audio and video, a full-text library of Latvian literature.

Lursoft Laikrakstu bibliotēka NEWS.LV – The library of electronic versions of Latvian newspapers provides access to the current and archive articles of more than 100 newspapers.

Oxford Journals Online – the collection provides access to more than 350 authoritative and leading *Oxford University Press* journals published in collaboration with the world's most important scientific organizations. The database includes full-text journals with high citation index indicators in various fields of science – literary science, philosophy, religion, psychology, history, etc.

ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global – the largest database of Doctoral and Master's thesis in the world, it contains almost five million research papers in various fields: humanities and social

sciences, natural and medical sciences.

ProQuest Ebook Central Academic Complete Collection – *ProQuest's* collection of electronic books available on the platform *ProQuest Ebook Central*. It features appr. 208,075 e-books from leading publishing houses in all sectors, including many e-books by university publishing houses.

SAGE Journals – the full-text magazine database by the publishing house SAGE offers articles from more than 110 magazines. The database represents a variety of sciences, including religion, philosophy, anthropology, psychology, history, etc.

Sage Research Methods – a library of research methods in humanities and social sciences, including religious studies.

ScienceDirect – *Elsevier* database in natural and technical sciences, life sciences and medicine, as well as in humanities and social sciences. The database contains information about several thousand magazines and books published by *Elsevier*. About 2650 full texts of magazines are available at the University of Latvia, mostly from 2002 until the latest issue of the magazine, as well as more than 350 e-books.

Scopus – multidisciplinary scientific publications bibliographical and citation information database of the publishers *Elsevier*, which contains entries for more than 21,000 magazines, 86,000 e-books and 6.8 million conference materials, as well as 27 million patents. The database covers different branches of research.

SpringerLink Contemporary Journals – full-text database of journals of *Springer Nature* offers access to more than 6 million articles from more than 2,099 journals covering the fields of social sciences and sciences.

Taylor & Francis Social Science & Humanities Library – the full-text database of journals of humanities and social sciences provides access to approximately 1,100 full texts of e-journals in philosophy, cultural and artistic sciences, religion, etc.

Web of Science – the database contains the most important scientific information on more than 12,000 journals, offering bibliographical and citation information, summaries and other information. Includes social sciences, humanities and sciences.

Wiley Online Library E-Journals Full Collection – more than 8 million full-text articles are available in more than 1,600 reviewed multidisciplinary journals, including religion, theology, cultural studies, philosophy, psychology, history, etc.

E-books available in the Library of the University of Latvia, which include appropriate materials for the study field "Religion and Theology"

VLeBOOKS – e-book platform, which offers **32** e-books purchased by the Library of the University of Latvia from the world's leading publishing houses, which include materials according to the study field "Religion and Theology" (for example, *Oxford University Press*, *Cambridge Scholars Publishing*, *Haworth*, *Routledge*, *Indiana University Press*, *Princeton University Press*, *SCM*, *Ashgate*, *Bloomsbury Academic*, *Fortress Press*, *De Gruyter*, *Wiley-Blackwell* etc.)

ProQuest Ebook Central Academic Complete Collection – a collection subscribed from the e-book platform *ProQuest eBook Central*, **12,239** subscribed publications according to the study field "Religion and Theology". There are also **8** e-books purchased separately according to the study field "Religion and Theology" from the world's leading publishing houses (for example, *Taylor & Francis Group*, *Charisma House*, *Brill*, *InterVarsity Press* etc).

Open access resources, which include appropriate information for the study field

"Religion and Theology"

Artstor Digital Library Public Collections, *Baptistu Vēstnesis*, *Bible*, *Bookyards*, *Bookboon*, *Ceļš*, *Cogent OA*, *Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB)*, *Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)*, *Diva*, *EBSCO e-book Open Access Collection*, *EBSCO Open Dissertations*, *Encyclopedia Mythica*, *Erih Plus*, *F1000 Research*, *GitHub*, *Google Scholar*, *Hathitrust Digital Library*, *Internet Sacred Text Archive*, *Journals for Free*, *Journal of Jesuit Studies*, *JSTOR Open Access Books*, *Logeion*, *LU Akadēmiskā apgāda brīvpieejas resursi*, *OAPEN*, *Open Research Library*, *Periodika.lv*, *Project Gutenberg*, *Punctum Books*, *Rare Book Room*, *Reliģiju enciklopēdija*, *Reliģiski-filozofiski raksti*, *Semantic Scholar*, *Smithsonian Open Access*, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, *Wiley Open Science*, [Zenodo](#).

The library collection generally corresponds to the implementation of studies and the development of scientific research, as its stocks are supplemented every year with the most up-to-date information resources in accordance with the information needs of the academic staff and students.

2.3.4. Provide a description and assessment of information and communication technology solutions used in the study process (e.g., MOODLE). If the study programmes within the study field are implemented in distance learning, the tools specially adapted for this form of study must also be indicated.

Three different platforms are used to promote independent studies and ensure the study process online, if necessary: *Moodle* (e-studijas.lu.lv), *MS Teams* and *Zoom*.

The e-learning environment offers students opportunity to get acquainted with the description of the programme, study forms, seminar materials, the content and topics of lectures, as well as with lecturers and their academic achievements. The regulations regarding the use of the Information System of the University of Latvia (LUIS) stipulate that the courses of all study programmes are placed in e-studies (Order No. 1/348 of the University of Latvia). This environment provides lecturers with a wide range of functions to organise and improve the study process (see Figure 6).

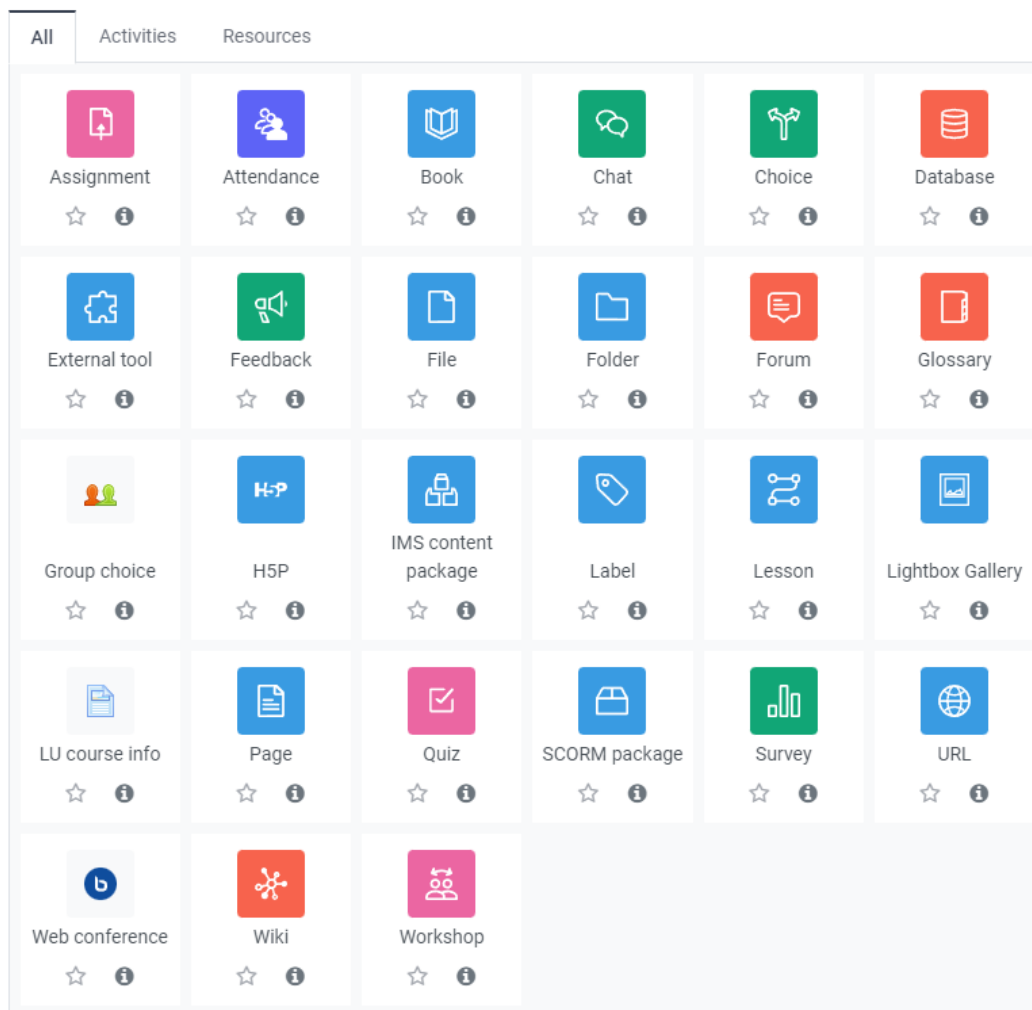


Figure 6. E-

learning environment of the UL

In the e-learning environment, lecturers can insert various files (*PDF, Word, Excel*, etc.), as well as to add links, images, videos, books, etc. All information, educational literature and materials (methodological materials, synopses of lectures, tasks of tests, tests, etc.) related to the protection of copyright and adjacent subject-matter are placed and used in e-studies in accordance with the legal norms governing the field of copyright in the Republic of Latvia, as well as the norms on intellectual property governed by international agreements binding on the Republic of Latvia. In addition to adding information, the e-learning environment is also used in the assessment of students' knowledge, as well as in communication between lecturers and students. The assessment criteria of students progress, as well as regulatory enactments are available in the information system of the University of Latvia. It is possible for lecturers to create student self-examination tests and add them to e-studies, which help students to better prepare for the final tests. The environment also provides an opportunity for lecturers to create exams and tests, which students are able to settle online. In the e-learning environment, students also submit their homework, with deadlines being followed by the calendar available in the e-learning environment. In the e-learning environment, students also submit their homework, with deadlines being followed by the calendar available in the e-learning environment. Study courses in the e-learning environment can be improved at any time by lecturers using editing functions. Besides, the entire *Moodle* environment is optimized as soon as necessary, the last time it was updated and improved was in August 2021 and for the task the IT department of the University of Latvia was responsible.

Online lectures and seminars are provided in the *MS Teams* environment. The e-learning environment is connected to the *MS Teams* environment, so lecturers can easily get to the platform from which to broadcast the lecture. Lecturers have the opportunity to use the tools offered by *MS*

Teams during online lectures – sharing the screen or files, hand-raising and function of reaction, chat room where it is also possible to send files, as well as group splitting function. The function of recording lectures is also very useful – it can provide an opportunity for students who do not participate in the lecture, later to get acquainted with the content of the lecture, as well as for lecturers to improve their lecture process. The *MS Teams* platform allows you to create individual or group communication using a call or chat function. Within the framework of the course, it is also possible to add files in a separate section of the course group, which is important for the requirements for the completion of the study course. It is also possible to add individual participants to lectures and seminars, such as guest lecturers or specialists in the field, whom lecturers have invited to participate in their courses.

It is important to note that *MS Teams* is used not only for lectures, but also for the internal needs of the faculty and the University of Latvia, organizing various meetings, as well as meetings of the faculty Council. Electronic voting provided in *MS Teams* environment is a very useful tool for such meetings. *MS Teams* has a convenient calendar that shows lecture and seminar times, and provides a function to schedule appointments. The *MS Teams* environment also provides, defence of students' final papers online format, if they cannot be organized in person.

Students have access to developed training to help them better navigate both e-studies and *MS Teams* <https://estudijas.lu.lv/mod/page/view.php?id=403092> (information is available in Latvian).

Zoom platform is used for more widely attended events online, where majority of the participants are from institutions and organizations not belonging to the University of Latvia. This environment offers tools such as recording a meeting, lecture or event, chat room, whiteboard, splitting into groups, granting managerial rights, sharing the screen, files, sound, as well as exporting unique lists of participants (e.g. reports) and others. The faculty has an employee who is responsible for the maintenance of the *Zoom* account, and who can be asked by lecturers to make a link for a specific purpose. The link is created and sent to participants. *Zoom* platform is also important in the context of promoting science, as it is easy to connect it to the *Facebook* page of the faculty, thus attracting an even wider audience for a particular event. Starting from the end of 2021, the University of Latvia ensures centralised procurement of *Zoom* licenses, providing each faculty with a specific number of licenses (Order No. 1-4/596 of 15.12.2021).

2.3.5. Provide information on the procedures for attracting and/or employing the teaching staff (including the call for vacancies, employment, election procedure, etc.), and the assessment of their transparency.

There are three teaching groups at the UL: academic staff who hold their academic positions for a limited period of tenure on the basis of elections, acting academic staff and visiting academics, as well as hourly-paid staff.

In the case of elected academic positions, as well as the acting academic staff, the recruitment and selection are regulated by the [Regulatory Enactments on Academic and Administrative Positions at the University of Latvia](#) (only in Latvian). According to the regulations, the following academic positions exist at the University of Latvia: professor, associate professor, assistant professor, senior researcher, lecturer, researcher, assistant, research assistant.

The decisions for the necessity of forming certain positions are made by faculties. Competitions for elected academic positions are announced openly. Public calls for applications for the elected

academic positions, including the function and terms of reference for the respective position, are published on the University of Latvia's website and in the newspaper *Latvijas Vēstnesis*. Any person who conforms to the requirements specified by the Law on Higher Education, as well as the requirements for the position specified in the terms of reference may apply for the position.

The applicants for academic positions must deliver an open lecture, which is evaluated by two reviewers, who issue their opinion on the quality of the lecture. The election procedure is carried out either by the decision-making body of the relevant unit (in the case of assistants, research assistants, researchers, senior researchers, lecturers and assistant professors - by the Faculty Council), or in the case of associate professors and professors by the relevant Professors' Council. Elections must take place within three months from the date of the call for applications. The personalities - docents, lecturers, assistants, senior researchers, researchers and research assistants - are voted on by secret ballot. Professors and associate professors are voted openly with ballot papers (UL Order No. 565 of 30.12.2020. "On the voting procedure in the Professors' Councils" Based on the amendments to Section 33 (2) of the Law on Higher Education adopted on 05.11.2020 (entered into force on 01.01.2021)). An applicant who has received more than half of the votes of the members present with the right to vote shall be considered elected. According to the Law on Higher Education Institutions, lecturers are elected for a term of 6 years. At the end of the term, the faculty decides on the need to announce a new competition. There are no restrictions on the term of office.

In accordance with the UL regulations, minimum requirements are set for all applicants for academic positions, i.e., knowledge of the official language in accordance with regulatory enactments, knowledge of foreign languages to the extent necessary for the performance of academic duties and continuous improvement of their academic and scientific qualifications. Other requirements differ across academic positions, for instance, to qualify for the position of Assistant Professor, the candidate has to have a doctoral degree, while the requirements for Associate Professors are more demanding, i.e. they must have considerable academic and pedagogical experience, an extensive list of publications and experience in scientific research projects.

If the Senate chooses to decline the proposal from the department and not to publish vacancies, a visiting academic may be recruited; while if the respective department considers a member of hourly-paid staff to be more relevant to the development plans and needs of the faculty, the prospective employee concludes a contract for a specified period (usually for the duration of the study course). In such cases, the decisions relating to the candidates' recruitment and selection are taken by the structural units, i.e. faculties. In these cases, only the control to ensure that the remuneration set by the entity complies with internal and external rules and regulations is centralised.

The Rector of the University of Latvia concludes an employment agreement with the person elected for the entire term of office.

During the accreditation period, the FT has held annual elections in academic and administrative positions. In 2015 and repeatedly in 2021, Alda Vāczeniece, the teacher of theological English, was recruited as a lecturer in the Department of Systematic and Practical Theology. Valdis Tēraudkalns has been elected as a professor in the subfield of Church and Religious History. There has also been a change of the Dean of the FT, on April 17, 2015, Dace Balode was elected as the dean (in office since 01.07.2015), on May 15, 2019 she was elected to this position for a second term. On December 18, 2016, Elizabete Taivāne was re-elected as an assistant professor in subfield of History of Church and Religions. In 2017, Dace Balode was elected as a professor in the subfield of Biblical theology. In 2017, the employment contract was terminated with one of the scientific assistants.

Since 2018 a project coordinator for attracting funding and projects has been working at the faculty. The workloads of the staff are closely related to the implementation of study programmes and are adjusted in relation to the pay regulations, study plan and savings of funds. Laima Geikina has obtained a postdoctoral scholarship and works full-time as a researcher, not performing her duties as a lecturer at the FT during the term of the project. Instead of the professor, young colleagues and doctoral students (Linards Rozentāls, Nils Konstantinovs, Astra Danenfelte) are attracted as hourly-paid teachers in teaching work.

In 2019 two lecturers were in a long leave, and hourly-paid teachers and doctoral students (Aļesja Lavrinoviča and Ģirts Rozners) worked in their position.

In 2019-2020, in the framework of the SAM 8.2.2 project "Renewal of Academic Staff and Improvement of Competences at the University of Latvia" the visiting professor Riho Altnurme was involved in the work of the Faculty.

In the current period, it is not necessary for the FT to expand the number of staff, the main task is to support further growth of the new staff, therefore, for example, two of the new colleagues and doctoral students are involved in the SAM 8.2.2 project "Renewal of Academic Staff and Improvement of Competences at the University of Latvia", which provides a financial basis for the completion of doctoral thesis.

2.3.6. Specify whether there are common procedures for ensuring the qualification of the academic staff members and the work quality in place and provide the respective assessment thereof. Specify the options for all teaching staff members to improve their qualifications (including the information on the involvement of the teaching staff in different activities, the incentives for their involvement, etc.). Provide the respective examples and specify the way the added value of the possibilities used for the implementation of the study process and the improvement of the study quality is evaluated.

The Development Strategy of the University of Latvia for 2021-2027 emphasizes that the goal of the development and excellence-oriented personnel policy is to ensure the development, growth and renewal of academic and general personnel, to create a performance-based personnel management system, which will also include competitive and motivating personnel remuneration, to improve academic staff career development opportunities, to create a system for attracting local and foreign academic staff, as well as new talents, and to promote international mobility.

The professional development of the UL academic staff is organised in accordance with the Republic of Latvia Cabinet regulations No 569 of 11 09 2018, *Regulations on the Necessary Academic and Professional Qualifications of Pedagogues and Professional Competence Development Procedures*, where paragraph 16 states: "Educators of higher education and colleges shall, by the end of the term of their election, undertake a vocational development programme on innovation in the higher education system, or the higher education didactics, or the management of educational work at 160 academic hours (including at least 60 contact hours). Professional development may include international mobility and participation in conferences and seminars relevant to the purpose of the professional development, as evidenced by submitted documents", as well as the Cabinet of Ministers' Regulation No 129 of 25.02.2021 "*Procedure for the Evaluation of the Scientific and Pedagogical Qualifications or Artistic Creativity of a Professor or Associate Professor Candidate and of a Professor or Associate Professor in Office*".

The qualification requirements and tasks of the academic staff of the University of Latvia are included in the [Regulations on Academic and Administrative Positions at the University of Latvia](#) (only in Latvian), while the quality/performance of the academic staff of the University of Latvia is evaluated in accordance with the [Regulations on Academic Remuneration at the University of Latvia](#) (Decision No 14 of the University Senate of 30 May 2016) and the [Regulations on Remuneration of Scientific Staff at the University of Latvia](#) (Decision No 71 of the University Senate of 27 January 2020).

The Academic Department of the University of Latvia and the Adult Education Centre of the Faculty of Education, Psychology and Art of the University of Latvia provide informative, consultative and methodological support to the UL academic staff in the field of the higher education didactics. The Adult Education Centre of the Faculty of Education, Psychology and Art of the University of Latvia offers a vocational development programme "Didactics of Higher Education: modern theories and practices", as well as continuing education programmes "Pedagogical aspects of the development of study programmes in higher education", "The professional development of the competence of the student trustee", etc.

On the completion of the continuing education programme "Methodology for the formulation and evaluation of the learning outcomes", programme directors and academic staff target the updating of their study courses and the mapping of the learning outcomes of the respective study programmes and study courses. The dean of the FT D. Balode has attended these courses (2015-2016)

The UL academic staff has the opportunity to improve their English-language skills by completing the continuing training programme "Professional English Language Enhancement Course for Academic Staff" at the Centre for Applied Linguistics of the UL Faculty of Humanities. Since the majority of the academic staff of the FT involved in the field of study have acquired their education abroad, their knowledge of foreign languages is at a very good level, therefore no additional training is required.

Young academics and doctoral students from various UL doctoral programmes, each spring semester, are increasingly using the possibility to attend the continuing education programme "Introduction to teaching in higher education".

To promote collegial learning and identify good practices in teaching, the continuing education programme "Promoting the colleague experience exchange of academic staff" where academic staff perform peer observation, thereby directly promoting the exchange of teaching experience among academic staff and contributing to the UL organisational development has been developed. This continuing education programme has been acquired by FT Prof. Titans (2018), a lecturer of the "Civil Protection" course I. Nakurte (2018).

In particular, academic staff in continuing education programmes welcome the opportunity for study process modelling, testing new teaching methods, share experience.

The UL academic staff working with freshman students are a special target group for continuing training and as such are offered a continuing education programme "Professional development advising first-year students". L.Geikina, the head of study field of the FT (until 2021), has completed the course "Professional Development of Student Assistent's Competence" (2016).

With the funding of the European Union in the period from 2018 to 2022, several study programmes for lecturers are being implemented:

1. Development of online learning and digitization of learning content (target group - academic staff);

2. Innovations to improve the quality of the learning process (target group - academic staff);
3. Academic integrity (target group - directors of study fields and study programs).

Professional qualification in these programmes improved the following members of the FT:

- D. Balode "Improvement of the Quality of Studies in the E-Environment" (2019); "Improving the Quality of Studies" (2018)
- R. Kokins "Improvement of the Quality of Studies in the E-Environment" (2019)
- researcher N. Andrejevs "Improvement of the Quality of Studies" (2018)
- L. Geikins "Practical Aspects of Quality Assessment of Study Field" (2018)
- Prof. J. Rudzītis-Neimanis "Improvement of the Quality of Studies in the E-Environment" (2019).

All programmes have been developed by analysing the professional development needs of academic staff in the context of higher education trends. As part of the deployment of the academic staff training system, the UL Academic Department conducted an electronic survey of the UL academic staff, which allowed to pool information on their ongoing professional development needs, as well as encouraged several Faculty members to express their readiness to participate in the development and offering of continuing education content to their peers in line with professional and didactic development needs.

On the implementation of each programme, a survey and an evaluation of the outcomes is conducted among the attendees of the programme. Participation in continuing education programmes is voluntary or else might be a recommendation issued by the leadership of the faculty. By and large, the UL faculties organise thematic seminars on topics relevant to the academic staff of the respective faculty.

The professional development activities of the academic staff of the University of Latvia were included in the plan of measures for the development of the academic staff of the University of Latvia for 2018–2020 and are included in the plan of measures for the development of the academic staff of the University of Latvia for 2021–2023.

In order to determine the professional development needs of the academic staff of the University of Latvia in the field of the pedagogical activity, the Department of Studies of the University (since 15.11.2021 - Academic Department) at the end of 2017 and the Programme for Development and Management Development of the University in the 1st quarter of 2020 and in the spring of 2021 conducted a survey of academic staff, including heads of study fields and study programme directors, the results of which were taken into account when developing a training plan for the development of academic staff competencies, including the project of the Operational Programme "Growth and Employment" 8. 2.2. within the framework of the 1st round "Renewal and Competence Development of Academic Staff at the University of Latvia", 2nd round - "Motivated, Modern and Competitive Academic Staff of the Study Field "Education, Pedagogy and Sport" at the University of Latvia" and 3rd round "Strengthening the Capacity of the Doctoral Studies of the University of Latvia within the Framework of the New Doctoral Studies Model" in order to effectively plan and ensure the enhancement of the competences of academic staff. The following outcomes are to be achieved by December 2023:

- the system of attracting and selecting the academic staff of the University of Latvia has been improved;
- the average age of teaching staff has been reduced and the age structure is approaching the EU average^[1], with at least 1/3 of academic staff aged between 35 and 49;
- improved scientific performance;
- a model for the renewal and succession system of academic and scientific staff has been

developed and implemented;

- a professional development system for the academic staff of the University of Latvia has been developed and implemented

When planning the growth and development of the academic staff, the University of Latvia pays equal attention to the identification of the most capable students in the study programmes of the University of Latvia and to motivating them to get involved in academic work already during their studies (related to both teaching and research). In this context, the University of Latvia has developed requirements and selection criteria for attracting new doctoral students to the project operational programme "Growth and Employment" 8.2.2. 1st round "Renewal of Academic Staff and Improvement of Competences at the University of Latvia", 2nd round "Motivated, Modern and Competitive Academic Staff of the University of Latvia", "Education, Pedagogy and Sports "and 3rd Round" Strengthening the Doctoral Capacity of the University of Latvia within the New Doctoral Model "(objective of specific support" To strengthen the academic staff of higher education institutions in the fields of strategic specialization"):

1. a doctoral student studying in the last year of an accredited doctoral study programme, as well as a doctoral student who is a Latvian citizen studying in an accredited doctoral study programme outside Latvia, and a scientific degree candidate;
2. successfully acquired number of credit points required in the first two/three years of study/ or, for a doctoral degree candidate, successfully completed studies in DSP;
3. participation in an international scientific conference with a presentation/report;
4. publication of at least one scientific article in an international edition;
5. English language skills at least at C1 level;
6. successful passing of the doctoral exam in English;
7. positive feedback from the supervisor of the doctoral thesis about the doctoral student as a potential lecturer;
8. leadership traits and interest in the UL research and course delivery.

Since 2018, a project coordinator has been working for the FT, and doctoral students have been involved in assistant positions. It is not necessary to further expand the number of staff due to funding or academic needs, but rather to support the further growth of new staff, for example, to facilitate the successful completion and defence of doctoral thesis. Therefore, two of the new colleagues and doctoral students are involved in the SAM 8.2.2 project "Renewal of Academic Staff and Improvement of Competences at the University of Latvia", which provides a financial basis for the completion of the doctoral thesis.

Aiming at the growth and development of foreign academic staff, the University of Latvia has developed requirements and selection criteria for attracting foreign academic staff:

1. persons who have been employed in an academic position in one of the accredited foreign universities during the previous five years;
2. a doctoral degree in the relevant field of science or a doctoral degree equivalent thereto;
3. relevant scientific and academic work experience;
4. ability to work in the e-learning environment;
5. participation in at least three international conferences with a presentation/report;
6. published monographs and scientific articles, including in indexed international editions; (at least 3)
7. participation in or participation in research projects;
8. excellent knowledge of foreign languages, especially English, skills to use them in studies and methodological work.

For successful and unified implementation of study programmes at the University of Latvia, a

special study programme for heads of study fields and programmes directors was developed, its implementation took place on October 12, 2021 – October 28, 2021 the training was run by an international accreditation expert from Poland and representatives of the Latvian Higher Education Quality Agency.

Professors V. Tēraudkalns and R. Kokins participated in the training as representatives from the FT.

In the course of elaboration of the self-assessment report of the study field, the information on the opportunities for promotion and qualification improvement used by the participating lecturers during the reporting period was collected, the results of which are summarised in Table 11.

Table 11. Promoting the growth of teaching staff (assessment of didactic skills improvement and qualification)

No	Criteria/academic year	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020	2020/ 2021
1.	<i>Higher education didactics (training)</i>	1	1	2	3	5	4
2.	<i>Teaching lectures and study courses within the framework of Erasmus and Erasmus + programmes</i>	2	2	2	0	0	0
3.	Attendance at international scientific conferences (attendee)	24	29	20	19	13	17
4.	Attendance at national scientific conferences (attendee)	11	20	14	8	7	3
5.	Participation in various seminars	17	23	19	24	28	19
6.	Membership in professional organizations	7	8	9	9	7	8
7.	Participation in the organization and provision of continuing education						
8.	Participation in various international scientific editorial boards	2	2	3	3	3	4

9.	Participation in various national scientific editorial boards	4	4	5	4	5	5
10.	Participation in various international organizing committees	2	2	3	3	3	3
11.	Participation in various national organizing committees	3	3	3	3	4	4

The election of Valdis Tēraudkalns as a correspondent member of the Latvian Academy of Sciences is particularly noteworthy. He is the first representative of theology and religious studies field to be elected in this capacity. This is an achievement not only for one person, but also for the whole branch.

[1] Eurydice report Modernisation of Higher Education in Europe: Academic Staff - 2017

2.3.7. Provide information on the number of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the relevant study programmes of the study field, as well as the analysis and assessment of the academic, administrative (if applicable) and research workload.

A sufficient number of lecturers with appropriate education, academic qualifications, professional and international experience are involved in the implementation of the FT study field programmes. The proportion of the lecturers involved in the programmes is shown in Figure 7.

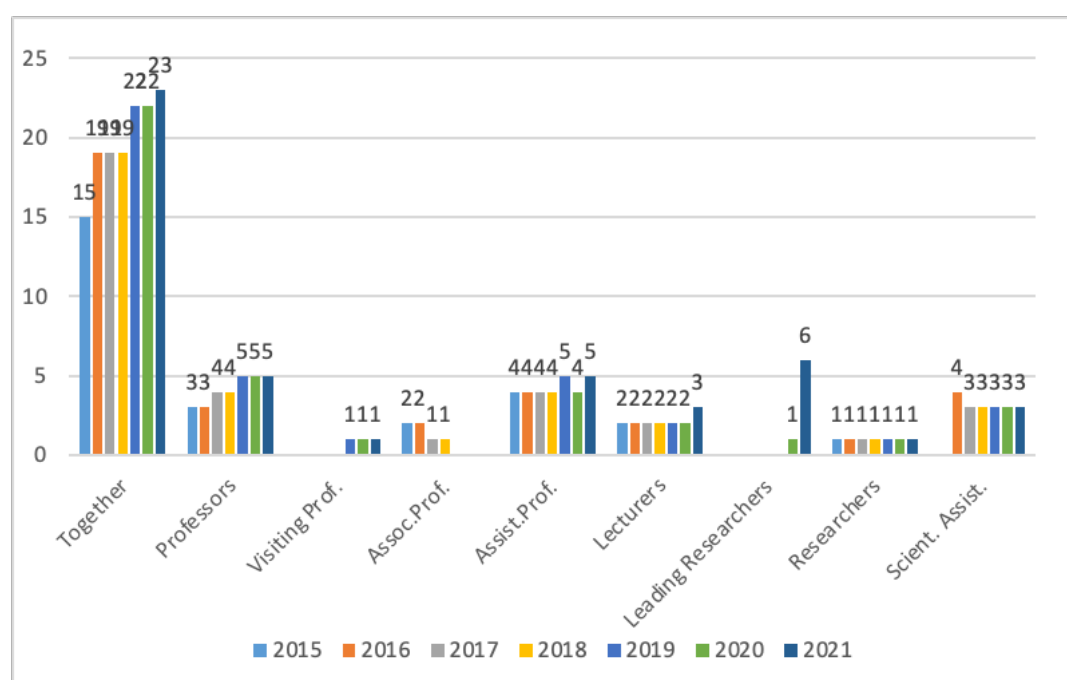


Figure 7: The teaching staff involved in the field of study, 2015-2020.

In 2015, the FT had 15 employees: 3 professors, 2 associate professors, 4 assistant professors, 2 lecturers, 1 researcher, 3 employees (an executive director and two clerks). 11 representatives of the academic staff (13 in total), have a Doctorate, 2 have a Master's degree.

In 2016, the FT had 19 employees: 3 professors, 2 associate professors, 4 assistant professors, 2 lecturers, 1 researcher, 4 scientific assistants, 3 employees (an executive director and two clerks). 11 representatives of the academic staff (13 in total), have a Doctorate, 2 have a Master's degree.

In 2017 and 2018, the FT had 19 employees: 4 professors, 1 associate professor, 4 assistant professors, 2 lecturers, 1 researcher, 3 scientific assistants, 3 employees (an executive director, a clerk and since 2018 – a project coordinator). 11 representatives of the academic staff (13 in total), have a Doctorate, 2 have a Master's degree.

In 2019, the FT had 22 employees: 5 professors, 1 visiting professor, 5 assistant professors, 2 lecturers, 1 researcher, 3 scientific assistants, 3 employees (an executive director, a clerk and a project coordinator). Of the academic staff, 11 have a Doctorate, 2 have a Master's degree.

In 2020, the FT had 22 employees: 5 professors, 1 visiting professor, 4 assistant professors, 2 assistant professors, 2 lecturers, 1 senior researcher, 1 researcher, 3 scientific assistants, 3 employees (an executive director, a clerk and a project coordinator). Of the elected academic staff, 13 have a Doctorate, 5 with a Master's degree.

In 2021, the FT employs 23 employees: 5 professors, 1 visiting professor, 5 assistant professors, 3 lecturers, 1 researcher, 4 senior researchers, 3 scientific assistants, 1 assistant, 3 employees (an executive director, a clerk and a project coordinator). Of the elected academic staff, 13 have a Doctorate, 7 – a Master's degree.

Additional staff - 4 employees work only in different types of projects, but do not perform pedagogical work.

The lecturers involved in the field of study work in high quality, looking for innovative ideas for the provision of the content and forms of the programmes. Highly qualified academic staff (see annex "Lecturers' CVs") teach in the study programmes at all levels, who not only carry out diverse cross-sectoral research, but also serve in Latvian churches, creating added value of the study process. All lecturers of the programme (except the visiting lecturers) are fluent in the state language, their knowledge of foreign languages is also at a very high level (English and German prevail, many of the lecturers know 3 and more foreign languages necessary for the high-quality study process and international cooperation), as many of them have acquired academic education abroad.

For the purpose of improving international experience and further education, the lecturers regularly report at international conferences, participate in *Erasmus+* activities, act as guest lecturers in foreign universities and as experts on issues related to the specifics of the programmes.

The lecturers also actively participate in various research projects, for example, Prof. D. Balode - as a leading researcher in the project "Transformation of Religion and Theology in the Global Context of Contemporary Latvia I" (2019-2020), as a leading expert in the ESF project "Development of Internationally Competitive Study Programmes Promoting the Development of the Latvian Economy at the University of Latvia" (2019); Prof. L. Geikina - a leading researcher in the project "Religion and Gender Equality: Baltic and Nordic developments" (2021), a project manager "Feminist Discourse and Intersectionality in Theological Studies: Academic Theology in Latvia -100" (2020), a leading researcher in the ERDF project "Interactions of Theology and Practice in Sustainable Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue" (2017-2020); prof. R. Kokins - a leading researcher in the project "Transformation of Religion and Theology in Contemporary Latvia in the Global Context I"

(2016-2021), I. Stikāne – a researcher in the project "Strengthening the Doctoral Capacity of the University of Latvia within the Framework of the New Doctoral Model" (2021), a leading expert in the development of a new doctoral study programme in theology and religious studies in the project "Development of Internationally Competitive Study Programmes Promoting the Development of the Latvian Economy at the University of Latvia" (2019-2020); Prof. V. Tēraudkalns – an ESF project coordinator "Development of Internationally Competitive and Latvian Economic Development Study Programmes", University of Latvia (2019-2020), etc.

The academic staff of the FT are members of international organisations and networks, for example, D. Balode is a member of *ESWTR* and International Society of Evangelical Theology (*Gesellschaft für Evangelische Theologie*), prof. L. Geikina – a member of the Board of the Independent Education Society, a representative of the partner institution *Network for Ecumenical Learning in Central and Eastern Europe*, a member of *The European Forum for Teachers of Religious Education*, a national coordinator of *International Commission on Church and School*, a member of Latvian Christian Teachers Association, prof. V. Tēraudkalns – The Secretary General of the Latvian Bible Society, etc.

The teaching staff of the FT have also received high awards for their professional and social activities, for example, in 2015 ass.prof. J. Cālītis received the honorary title "European Person of the Year in Latvia".

The lecturers are focused on cooperation with the students, open to discussions, as the high assessment of mutual communication in student surveys evidences (see appendix "Results of Surveys of Students, Graduates and Employers"). The increase in the number of visiting lecturers, which is mainly related to the specifics of the doctoral study programme, is also positively noted. Thus, for example, in 2019, the visiting professor Riho Altnurme was attracted through the SAM 8.2.2. project "Renewal of Academic Staff and Improvement of Competences at the University of Latvia".

The decision to attract doctoral students to assistant positions has also been strategically correct, supporting their professional development and promoting staff renewal.

In the current period, the academic composition of the FT has stabilised with a sufficient number of doctors of science and professors of the field for successful provision of 3-level study programmes.

The proportionality of the academic, administrative and research workload of the teaching staff is evaluated as positive. The Dean of the Faculty has the largest administrative workload (0.68 load). The administrative workload of the programme directors reaches 0.1 and is compatible with the tasks of a lecturer and researcher. Most of the teaching staff are mainly employed in teaching work, the workload mainly consists of classes, students' tests, consultations, improvement of study courses and participation in the supervision of final study papers. Six of the faculty members who work part-time as lecturers are additionally elected to a scientific position as leading researchers. The intended tasks of teaching and research work shall be balanced and form a positive link between teaching and research in the work of lecturers.

2.3.8. Assessment of the support available for the students, including the support provided during the study process, as well as career and psychological support by specifying the support to be provided to specific student groups (for instance, students from abroad, part-time students, distance-learning students, students with special needs, etc.).

The students of the UL have access to academic support, career development support and psychological support.

The aim of academic support is to provide students with information and advice on study issues for the entire period of studies. Academic support includes the implementation of the first year of studies support programme, advice on the study process (content of study programme, choice of study courses, legal documents regulating the UL study process), information on tutorials, counselling and workshops on study skills (notetaking, reading for academic purposes, active listening, exam anxiety, time management, libraries and the Internet resources).

Academic support in academic matters is managed centrally by the UL Department of Study Services and the responsible persons with the respective faculties: director of the study programme, study advisor, trustee, mentor, coordinator, academic staff, and the UL Students' Council and Faculty Students' Councils. Advice on the use of library and Internet resources is provided by the UL Library. The University of Latvia Library provides consultations on the use of the library and Internet resources. Table 12 displays examples of key tasks to be performed by student support units/ staff.

Table 12. Examples of the key tasks to be performed by student support units/staff

Structural unit/staff	Key responsibilities
Faculty Student Council	The main goal is to improve the of students' academic and study daily life in the faculty and the UL, as well as always represent the interests of students. The activities of the self-government are mainly aimed at the development of the academic sphere in new, exciting ways with the aim of developing interest in the learning process among students and promoting the integration of students into the academic sphere they are interested in.
Trustee	Informs students of the developments in the study process, provides individual support to those students who face difficulties entering academic environment of the UL and initiates adaptation and team-building measures
Coordinator, study advisor	Provides study advice, assists in day-to-day issues related to the study process, files study records, advises on the Information System of the University of Latvia (LUIS).
Mentor	A senior student who helps freshman students adapt to the study environment and share their experience..

Student Council (SC)	The purpose of the SC is to represent UL students and to defend their rights and interests. The SC represents the students' interests in academic issues by electing student representatives to the decision-making bodies of the University of Latvia, considering issues related to the study process and its improvement
Director of the study programme	Organises and manages the development of a study programme in accordance with the requirements of the specific scientific or economic sector, cooperates with employers and internship sites in matters of study content, evaluates and approves individual study modules and individual study plans, etc.
Study service department	Organises the admissions process, advises the staff and students on mobility programmes, study, social and cultural issues, advises and organises career coaching and consultancy. Organises adaptation measures for students, provides training for trustees, mentors, organises cooperation with employers, etc.

The aim of career development support is to provide students with comprehensive support and develop their lifelong skills to identify their interests, abilities, skills, experience, thus enabling them to make informed decisions as regards education and/or occupation, and ensuring that they can condition their future career, study and life paths. Career development support is provided by the Career Centre of the UL Study Services Department in collaboration with the respective faculties.

The Career Centre provides the following services to students:

- individual counselling for future studies and careers, setting up an individual career plan, providing support for the transition between different levels of education and from education to the labour market;
- workshops for career planning skills ("Career planning and development skills", "My first job interview", "Stress management", etc.);
- Internet resource - Career Centre home page (information available in both Latvian and English)) <https://www.karjera.lu.lv/> and <https://www.karjera.lu.lv/en/> provides up-to-date information on career planning issues, occupational information and the labour market;
- the "E-career" electronic resource" <https://ekarjera.lu.lv/lv/login> (in Latvian) which enables students to quickly find their internship opportunities and jobs by adding their CVs to a database and employers to recruit employees by listing information on job vacancies in the database.

Psychological support is provided by the Study Service Department. A psychologist-consultant provides psychological support to students in solving personal and study issues arising from studies (relationship issues, conflict resolution, emotional difficulties). A psychologist provides individual counselling and telephone counselling.

Special events aimed at integrating domestic and international students are organised in cooperation with the ESN (Erasmus student network), thus introducing international students to Latvian culture and traditions and promoting international and domestic student interactions.

The assessment of infrastructure accessibility for persons with disabilities has been conducted in

cooperation with *Apeirons*. The results obtained are considered both in the construction of the new infrastructure and in the provision of study programmes.

The students of the FT are involved in all activities related to the study process, as well as, if necessary, they are provided with sufficient support. In matters concerning the content of studies, students receive both individual and group consultations in person or online. The FT regularly monitors the progress of students, in case of risks, discussions with the lecturers, the programme directors or the dean are held to prevent drop-out and motivate students to continue their studies. Students have also highly appreciated the chat (discussion) group in e-studies, which several FT lecturers have used by as a study tool.

One of the cornerstones of successful support process is timely and accurate communication. To ensure this, the FT has created a special e-mail for each study course, information exchange also takes place in special *WhatsApp* groups, which only the students of the FT have access and which serve not only for the exchange of information, but also as an empathetic tool for solving problems. The FT *Facebook* group has also been set up for student support.

An invaluable contribution to student support is provided by the FT Student Council, the Self-Government team consists of active students of all study levels who are interested in academic growth of students and improvement of the daily life of students. The members of self-government is elected annually in open elections by FT students of the University of Latvia (<https://www.tf.lu.lv/studijas/lu-tf-studentu-padome/> (in Latvian)). Every year the Student Council of the Faculty of Theology of the UL organizes an autumn or spring study tour for the students and the academic staff. The aim of the excursions is to get acquainted with the cultural and religious heritage of Latvia. Study tours are also carried out within the framework of various courses - organizations related to different denominations and religions are visited.

The self-government supported the conference "The Marathon of Awkward Reports" which was held every year, where students of the University of Latvia had the opportunity to present their research on issues and topics that society considers awkward. Its aim is to develop students' ability to perform in front of an audience, to educate the public and to encourage young people to discuss topics that should be raised in public discourse.

The representatives of the self-government are members of the FT Council, they participate in open planning meetings, as well as in other working groups, where the issues of organisation and improvement of the quality of the study process are decided.

2.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation

2.4.1. Description and assessment of the fields of scientific research and/or artistic creation in the study field, their compliance with the aims of the higher education institution/ college and the study field, and the development level of scientific research and artistic creation (provide a separate description of the role of the doctoral study programmes, if applicable).

The scientific research directions of the study field correspond to the development objectives of the University of Latvia and are appropriate for the study field and the study branch. The link of the

scientific research of the study field with the study process is defined, ensured and effective. The scientific research and its results are integrated into the study process in study programmes at all levels., The international cooperation in scientific research is ensured within the framework of the study field and the corresponding study programmes, and it is purposefully developed. The FT of the University of Latvia has developed mechanisms to promote the involvement of the teaching staff and the students of study programmes at all levels in scientific research, these mechanisms function and are effective. Innovative solutions are offered to improve the study process, content and forms.

The scientific and applied research directions of the FT are fully in line with the objectives of the University of Latvia and the study field, as they result from the strategy of the University of Latvia, which has been developed in accordance with the "Guidelines for The Development of Science, Technology and Innovation for 2021-2027" (<https://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/media/3679/download> - (only in Latvian)), and correspond to the specifics of the content of the study field programmes. A significant place for the development of scientific activity is allocated in the development plan of the study field (Annex 3).

The compliance with the level of researchers' previous training (choice of topic, research methods, scientific communication, etc.) is also observed and maintained in research. The important focus is on the internationalization of the research, it is especially related to the scientific activities of the academic staff and the doctoral students.

The international cooperation established within the framework of the doctoral study programme is aimed at the development of scientific excellence in theology and religious studies in the Baltics. An environment is provided for the development of innovative research.

The international cooperation established within the framework of the doctoral study programme

The scientific and applied research directions of the FT are fully in line with the objectives of the University of Latvia and the study field, as they result from the strategy of the University of Latvia, which has been developed in accordance with the "Guidelines for The Development of Science, Technology and Innovation for 2021-2027" (<https://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/media/3679/download> - (only in Latvian)), and correspond to the specifics of the content of the study field programmes. A significant place for the development of scientific activity is allocated in the development plan of the study field (Annex 3). Research areas in the field of study are proffered in the process of selection of the teaching staff and researchers and determined according to the sub-sectors included in the field of study. Thus, scientific research and its results can be organically integrated into the study process in the study programmes at all levels, since the research of the teaching staff relates to the field in which it teaches. In order to promote the involvement of the teaching staff and the students of the study programmes at all levels in scientific research, it is already planned to conduct research in the study process, acquiring skills in the selection and application of methodology in the Bachelor's programme, developing a Bachelor's thesis in cooperation with a supervisor, and studying in depth further at the level of the Master's programme. During the reporting period significant studies have been conducted in the history of various denominations in Latvia, which have created new knowledge in the history of religions. The doctoral study programme is basically oriented towards ensuring the development of original research in the study process. Conferences and seminars have positive impact and strengthen cooperation in research between the lecturers and the students. For example, the FT teaching staff and students participate in the annual international conference of the University of Latvia, where current research is presented, thus offering an opportunity to discuss research issues directly. The results of the teaching staff's research are also reflected in the study offer (for example, prof. R. Kokin's research

on the non-canonical Gospels in the Master's study programme, L. Geikina has carried out her research on the development of the field of practical theology in cooperation with the students of the Bachelor's and the Master's programmes who participated in the study, and the results of this study are also reflected in the content of the Bachelor's and the Master's programmes. G. Rosner and D. Balode have conducted research on the Biblical hermeneutics, this is also a direct contribution to the course "Hermeneutics of the Scripture").

It is particularly worth noting that the Doctoral study programme, which includes the international cooperation with the Doctoral study programme in Theology and Religious Research of the University of Tartu, and which is aimed at the development of scientific excellence in theology and religious studies in the Baltics. An environment is provided for the development of innovative research.

The following essential aspects of research and development are observed in the programmes of the study field:

- to develop excellence in research and international cooperation;
- to increase the capacity of innovation and the social and economic value of knowledge and research;
- to improve the efficiency of the management of the research system;
- to promote the development of an intelligent, technologically advanced and innovative society in Latvia.

The Strategy of the University of Latvia for 2021-2027 mentions several criteria used to assess the growth of science. One of the main criteria is citability in the SCOPUS database, which in 2020 at the UL reached an average citability of one publication of 6.3. The publications of the teaching staff of the Faculty of Theology have not yet reached the average citability of UL publications, which is generally lower in the humanities. However, the number of FT publications in the database is growing. The funding attracted for research in international projects is also increasing, it has been 1700/ PLE in the last two years (i.e. approximately 600 000 EUR in projects), which is also lagging behind the average indicator of the University of Latvia (9,000/PLE), however, attracting projects with external financing at the Faculty of Theology has a positive dynamic.

The fact that renewal of the staff is also taking place can be mentioned as a positive indicator - the academic staff at the University of Latvia is on average 15% of the total number of employees, at the Faculty of Theology this indicator is currently 17%. In 2019, the University of Latvia participated in an international assessment in which the humanities and arts cluster, within the framework of which the Faculty of Theology also participated in the assessment, received a rating of "good" (3).

2.4.2. The relation between scientific research and/or artistic creation and the study process, including the description and assessment of the use of the outcomes in the study process.

The results of scientific research play a important role if they are linked to the study process and their results become an integral part of this process, stimulating the development of new ideas for research. The FT places a special emphases on this. Most part of research in BSP, MSP and DSP is carried out in relation to the content of the study programmes, as well as respecting the individual scientific interests of the lecturers and the students. A significant contribution to linking the scientific research with study process is made by the doctoral school "The Topical Problems of

Theology and Religious Studies", its activities include both local and international readings, discussions, thus creating basis for the development of new innovative doctoral theses. Cooperation which links research and studies also results in the students' annual scientific conference, the collection of articles "The Way", seminars of foreign guest lecturers, etc., they in more detail are described in chapters 2.4.4 and 2.4.5. The link between scientific research and the study process has also been expressed in the creation of new study courses or in the transformation of existing ones (e.g., Christian-pagan dialogue in the I - III century), the involvement of the doctoral students in teaching study courses, and in participation the section Religious studies and theology of the annual Conference of the University of Latvia, where they report on topical research topics.

According to the scientific activity of the lecturers, participation in projects, research work is carried out in those sub-branches of theology and religious studies for which they are responsible for in the FT (Valdis Tēraudkalns, Elizabete Taivāne, Olga Petrova, Laima Geikina – religious studies, Laima Geikina – practical theology, Andris Priede, Valdis Tēraudkalns – History of churches and religions, Ralfs Kokins, Dace Balode, Jānis Rudzītis-Neimanis – Biblical theology, Normunds Titāns – philosophy of religion). This is an evidence that research papers reveal close interaction of studies and scientific activity, as well as shared research interests of the students and the lecturers.

2.4.3. Description and assessment of the international cooperation in the field of scientific research and/or artistic creation by specifying any joint projects, researches, etc. Specify those study programmes, which benefit from this cooperation. Specify the future plans for the development of international cooperation in the field of scientific research and/or artistic creation.

The FT of the University of Latvia pays tribute to any confessional and religious beliefs, as well as emphasizes the importance of critical thinking in the study and research process, following the latest trends in the Western academic world and ensuring academic freedom in research in the study programmes of all levels.

The cooperation within the framework of the study field is aimed at internationalization of studies. The development and strengthening of cooperation with the University of Tartu has played an important role in the reporting period, focusing on the development of a new doctoral study programme. The cooperation is also designed to promote the exchange of lecturers and students, for example, the exchange of the lecturers with Vanderbilt University offered an opportunity to invite lecturers from the Vanderbilt Faculty of Theology to Latvia, they participated in the Conference of the University of Latvia and conducted seminars for students at the University of Latvia as well as joint seminars for Latvian and Estonian students at the University of Tartu. In January 2020, the guest lecturer Dr. Rūdolfs Larenzs visited the FT with a lecture *"What is the Main Reason that Physics and Theology Do Not Really Match? What Can be Done to Amend the Situation?"*, in February, supported by of the Baltic-American Freedom Foundation (BABF), a specialist of practical theology from Vanderbilt University Stephanie Badway visited Riga and conducted seminars, professor Bonnie Miller-McLemore's seminar was held in March 2020 again supported by BABF, *"Women, Psychology and Religion: Violence & Gender"* and the seminar by the researcher Mark Miller-McLemore *"Leadership and Ministry: Adolescent and Leadership"*, in 2018 as the most important can be mentioned the guest lecture *"Cultural Heritage and History of Mevlevi"*, by the Doctor of History, the specialist in ancient manuscripts Ensar Caragez and a historian and a musicologist Haruna Korkmaz, a lecture delivered by aguest Alexei Maslow *"Body, sacrality, and sexuality in Chinese religious tradition"*, lectures delivered by Heinrih Holce *"To approach a difficult*

past – *Observations on the historiography of the Protestant churches in the time of National Socialism*” un “*The Holy Spirit and the spirit of the time – Church buildings in the 1930s*”, Andrés Ylang Berg’s lecture “*Unruly theology: indecent bodies as ecclesiology*” delivered in the framework of the doctoral school “Topical Problems of Theology and Religious Studies”, in 2017, Martyn Percy attracted great interest with his lecture “*Anglican Political Theology: State-Church relations. Examples of British Experiences which Could Teach a Lesson*”. It is important to note that the lectures of the foreign scholars during the reporting period have always been an integral part of the study process, which promotes the formation and exchange of scientific thought not only among the academic staff, but also among the students. The guest lectures organized within the framework of the doctoral school are primarily intended for students of the master's and doctoral study programs, however, also students of the bachelor's program also have the opportunity to participate in these lectures.

Over the time, the Faculty of Theology has also concluded a number of *Erasmus+* contracts for the exchange of students and lecturers. Unfortunately, the students in the programmes these exchange opportunities are not willing to use, as a reason mentioning the need to combine studies with work, and Covid-19 has also had its negative impact on *Erasmus+* activities in the last 2 years.

Cooperation with a team of scientists from Oslo Faculty of Theology, Vytautas Magnus University of Lithuania and Tartu School of Theology and Religion have been established with the aim to promote the internationalisation of research and attract funding for science. Within the framework of the jointly implemented project Religion and Family: Development in the Baltics and Nordic Countries, joint publications are being created, for example, on biblical hermeneutics among Latvian church members (D. Balode, TF and M. Kartzow, Oslo), on Muslim converts in the Baltics (D. Balode, TF, E. Račius, Vilnius) on the interaction of religion and gender in school books in the Baltics (L. Geikina, TF and O. Schilajev, Tartu, R. Dikšaitė, Vilnius), on the attitude of Catholic and Lutheran women towards women's ordination in the Baltics (G. Rozners, TF, M. Vidūnaitė, E. Aleknaitė, Vilnius, A. Kull, Tartu). Joint publications have also been created as a result of other cooperation activities (researcher exchange) (for example, I. Jansone, TF, and C. Lombaard in 2017, V. Tēraudkalns, Ņ. Andrejevs, TF, A. Fjörmark, Sweden, G. Janauskas, Lithuania, in 2020). Representatives of foreign partner institutions regularly participate with reports in international conferences organized by the FT, their research is published in the scientific journal “The Way” of the FT.

The FT lecturers involved in the field of study also contribute to the promotion of international cooperation by sharing the results of their research at international conferences, delivering lectures in foreign universities and religious organizations (for example, D. Balode - at the University of Augsburg in Germany, L. Geikina - in Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, St. Augustine's College in Johannesburg, South Africa), participating in editorial boards of scientific journals (for example, V. Tēraudkalns - “*Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*” (<https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree/>)).

When planning activities for the development of international scientific research, emphasis is placed on the following elements:

- Strengthening cooperation with the University of Tartu by developing joint research projects and promoting joint scientific publications in internationally quoted journals .
- Promotion of the involvement of the students and the lecturers in *Erasmus+*
- Increasing the number of international publications in the FT scientific journal.

2.4.4. Specify the way how the higher education institution/ college promotes the involvement of the teaching staff in scientific research and/or artistic creation. Provide the description and assessment of the activities carried out by the academic staff in the field of scientific research and/or artistic creation relevant to the study field by providing examples.

The involvement of the teaching staff in scientific research is promoted by organizing **research work in projects** related to the priority directions of the University of Latvia. Most lecturers work at the Faculty of Theology also as researchers. The administration of the Faculty of Theology has made it one of the priorities to attract funding for research and improvement of the quality of studies, using the financial resources available in the projects. The lecturers also have the opportunity to take academic leave to do research.

As examples of the good practice can be noted Professor Laima Geikina's postdoctoral scholarship project "Interaction between Theology and Practice in Sustainable Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue", in 2020 Assistant Professor Linards Rozentāls' postdoctoral project "Success for Sustainable and Integral Development of Society in the Context of the Movement "Revival and Renewal" " and etc.

Financial recourses are obtained in cooperation with the partners from Vilnius, Tartu and Oslo (total funding of the project EUR 752 375, funding for the University of Latvia as a partner – EUR 174 250) in the Norwegian Financial Mechanism tender in Lithuania (Religion and Gender Equality: Development in the Baltic and Nordic Countries, the beginning of the project 01.2021.).

In cooperation with the colleagues from the Faculty of Physics and Mathematics of the University of Latvia Florian Garbauer and Vyacheslav Kashcheev has been raised *Templton* funding for the project "*Bridging Worlds: Communicating the Compatibility of Science and Religion in the post-Soviet Context*" USD 15 000 in total.

Within the framework of the State Research Programme (SRP) the project "Interaction of an Individual, Society and State in the Process of Latvian History: Conflicts of Values and Formation of Common Values at Historical Fracture Points", the Faculty of Theology is developing a research "Transformation of Identities of Latvian Lutheran congregations in the 1960s and 1970s in the Latvian diaspora" (Valdis Tēraudkalns).

During the reporting period, Professor Valdis Teraudkalns has been the senior researcher in the project "Gender Sociality in Cultural and Power Interactions: the diversions of Latvia and Norway" (UL FH, co-financed by the European Economic Area (EEA) and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism), as well as the senior researcher in the project "Development of Institutional Capacity of the University of Latvia", co-financed by the ERDF, and a participant in the international project "Theological Thought and Practice of Modern British Unitarians" (funded by *The Hibbert Trust*, the United Kingdom).

A significant event during the reporting period was the project "Reformation – 500" (2017), which included several activities (an international conference in cooperation with the UL FHP, FPPA, FH, study "Women on the Reformation Road" (in Latvian) and various events promoting science).

The project "95 Theses in 95 Days" (2017) – a contemporary interpretations of Martin Luther's theses, which have been published on *Facebook* and can be assessed as a successful project for knowledge transfer and promotion of science – has been supported by the academic development resources of the University of Latvia.

The FT was also involved in the development of an international research project for submission *Horizon 2020*, the project attracted a wide range of cooperation partners (Estonia, the Ukraine, Germany, Greece, Hungary), but this project did not receive funding.

In cooperation with the Latvian Bible Society and the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church outside Latvia, the Faculty of Theology successfully carry out the project "Translation of Non-Canonical Texts". Professor Valdis Tēraudkalns and Professor Dace Balode also participate in the Branch Editorial Board of the National Encyclopedia of the National Library of Latvia.

The implementation of the project (No.8.2.1.0/18/A/015 "Development of Internationally Competitive and Promoting the Development of the Latvian Economy Study Programmes at the University of Latvia") for the development of the doctoral study programme is very important.

In 2020 the conclusion of two projects for the publication of theological heritage were financed by the scientific development funds of the University of Latvia. The following are published: "Roberts Akmentiņš' Doctoral thesis "Relevance of The Problems Revealed in Augusts Saulītis', the Writer, Worldview" (in Latvian) and Nikolai Plate's "Compendium in Dogmatics" (in Latvian).

International conferences are regularly organized to demonstrate the results of scientific and applied research of the academic staff, e.g.:

- 2021 - UL 79th International Scientific Conference. Section of Theology and Religious Studies "Crises and Religion" (<https://www.apgads.lu.lv/en/izdevumi/brivpieejas-izdevumi/konferencu-zinojumu-krajumi/lu-teologijas-fakultates-zinatniskas-konferences/> - only in Latvian)
- 2020 - UL 79th International Scientific Conference. Theology and Religious Research Section "Where are we going? Theology, Religious Studies and Spirituality in the 21st century";
- 2019- the section of the 77th International Scientific Conference of the University of Latvia "Religion: the Real and the Imagined";
- 2019 - the International conference "Lutheran Spirituality" (in cooperation with the Latvian Association of Lutheran Women Theologians)
- 2018- the section of the 76th International Scientific Conference of the University of Latvia "Modern Trends in Theology and Religious Studies" and the section "The Dialogue between Science and Religions";
- 2017 - the section of the 75th International Scientific Conference of the University of Latvia "500 years of the Reformation" and the section "The Dialogue between Science and Religion";
- 2017 - international conference "Reformation in Today's World" (in cooperation with the FHP and the FPPA);
- 2017 - conference "Gregory of Narek" (in cooperation with the Armenian Embassy in Latvia);
- 2016 - the section of the 74th International Scientific Conference of the University of Latvia "Reformation – History and Contemporary Challenges in the World and in Latvia" and the section "The Dialogue between Science and Religion";
- 2016 - conference - discussion "The Role of the Lutheran Church in Latvian Society" (in cooperation with the Lutheran church in Riga)
- 2016 - international conference in practical theology "Spirituality and Theology" (with the participation of theologians from Switzerland, Greece, South Africa and Latvia);
- 2016 - ESWTR (European Society of Woman in Theological Research) conference "Interaction of Tradition and Innovation";
- 2015 - the section of the 73rd International Scientific Conference of the University of Latvia "The Way of the Faculty of Theology", dedicated to the history of the FT;
- 2015 - international conference "The Interplay between Theology and other Disciplines in

Research and in Theological Education";

- 2015 – international conference "Theological Education in Higher Education Institutions in the Baltics in post-Soviet and post-Soviet Situation";

The scientific publications of the FT academic staff, the number of which is consistently stable, should be seen as an important contribution to the development of research. For example, in 2015, 14 articles were published, in 2016 - 15 articles of the FT academic staff, in 2017 - also 15, in 2019 - 14, in 2020 - 15 articles of the FT academic staff, in 2021 - 15. The list of publications of the lecturers involved in the implementation of the study field can be found in the appendix "List of Scientific Publications of the Lecturers".

For the purpose of publishing the research results achieved by the academic staff, the student, as well as for the promotion of international scientific cooperation, every year is published **the journal of the Faculty of Theology "The Way"**, which collects articles written by the FT lecturers, students and cooperation partners. In 2017, as many as two issues of the journal "The Way" have been prepared, one of them was dedicated to the five hundredth anniversary of the Reformation.

The journal is included in the *EBSCO* database. The editorial board of the journal is working to achieve inclusion of the "The Way" in the *SCOPUS* database. It is being planned to expand the number of publications by worldwide recognized scientists and researchers in the journal in order to increase the citation coefficient and achieve its inclusion in other databases seen as important for the academic environment of Latvia.

Every year, the opening of an exhibition dedicated to the journal "The Way" and the opening ceremony of the latest issue of "The Way" is organized.

Participation of the FT lecturers in **interactive discussions** in the discussion festival "Lampa", for example, on 3-5 September 2020, is essential for the promotion of theology and religious studies:

- "Buddhism: Meditation"
- "Is a Woman in Church a Person?"
- "Post-Covid Christianity"
- "Reconciliation as a Path from Exclusion to Inclusion"
- "Religion and Education"

As examples of the good practice should be noted **the public demonstrations of research results** by the FT lecturers, for example, Laima Geikina's presentation "The Model of Religious Education According to the Principles of School 2030" in February 2020 in "The Agora of Knowledge" etc.

The FT has also organized **think tanks** within the framework of the University of Young Theologians and Religious Researchers, where the faculty deliver public lectures that are broadcasted on *Facebook*, such as:

- Juris Cālītis' **think tank** and a class "How not to Lose Hope?" (2020)
- Dace Balode's class "The Bible says..." (2020)
- Linards Rozentāls' class "Do we Put an End to it? How are Religious Congregations Going through the COVID Crisis?" (2020)

Similar lectures have been given within the framework of **the Doctoral School**:

- Eric Woods, „*Historiography of the English Reformation*” and „*Anglican Ethical Tradition: Theory and Application*” (2016)
- Muhammeds Mustafa Akdags, Muhammad Mustafa Akdag, “Islam” (2016)
- Janīna Kursīte-Pakule un Ingus Barovskis, “Taboos in the language of gestures”

- Andrés Ylang Berg “*Unruly Theology: Indecent Bodies as Ecclesiology*” (2018).

The scientific and applied research activities corresponding to the study field during the reporting period are shown in Table 13.

Table 13. Scientific and applied research activities corresponding to the study, 2015.-2021.

I.No		2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
11.	III.Publications						
1.1.	International scientific publications indexed in international scientific databases <i>Scopus, Web of Science</i>	6	1	6	1	3	4
1.2.	International scientific publications not indexed in international scientific databases	15	12	14	19	10	16
1.3.	Popular scientific publications	12	18	34	24	38	33
2.	Participation in scientific conferences						
2.1.	Participation in international scientific conferences with a report	24	29	20	19	13	17
2.2.	Participation in national scientific conferences with a report	11	20	14	8	7	3
3.	Participation in projects						
3.1.	Participation in international scientific projects (number of projects)	2	6	4	6	6	7

3.2.	Participation in national scientific projects (number of projects)	2	4	4	3	5	6
4.	Artistically creative activities (translations of books and other literary works, creation of educational excursions for commercial enterprises, theatre, opera art, design)	6	6	7	7	5	6
5.	Projects prepared for international and local tenders for funding	1	4	2	2	4	1

2.4.5. Specify how the involvement of the students in scientific research and/ or applied research and/or artistic creation activities is promoted. Provide the assessment and description of the involvement of the students of all-level study programmes in the relevant study field in scientific research and/ or applied research and/or artistic creation activities by giving examples of the opportunities offered to and used by the students.

The involvement of students in research processes is an integral part of the activities of the FT. It is important to underline that students at all study levels are involved in research.

Students of study levels have the opportunity to participate in conferences with reports on topics related to the specifics of the FT programme, the course to be studied and corresponding to the individual interests of a student.

For example, every year the conference of students " The Marathon of Awkward Topics " was organized, in October 2020 - also the conference of students "*Mundus et*" in which students of bachelor's, master's and doctoral study programs participate.

In the field of study, a doctoral programme is represented, where the focus of attention is on independent research of students, therefore, many activities promoting students' scientific activity are carried out in the FT, for example, the International Doctoral Conference in Theology and Religious Studies organised by the Faculties of Theology of Tartu and the University of Latvia (2020), the Conference of the doctoral students of the University of Latvia FT and Tartu FT

"Estonian-Latvian doctoral conference in theology and religious studies 2019" (2019).

In the spring of 2019, a joint seminar was organized in Estonia for doctoral students of the University of Latvia and School of Religion and Theology, the University of Tartu, where research topics of doctoral students and degree holders were presented and discussed.

Students have an excellent opportunity to publish the results of their research in the FT journal "Ceļš" ("The Way" - publications in Latvian, English, German). Authors of outstanding study final theses at the level of both bachelor's and master's programs are invited to publish their research. For example, in 2020 here you can find publications by Kristina Ēce, Ilze Ūdre, Ģirts Rozners, Nikita Andrejevs etc. (<https://www.apgads.lu.lv/izdevumi/brivpieejas-izdevumi/zurnali-un-periodiskie-izdevumi/cels/>).

Students are involved in teaching and also in projects, for example, a doctoral student Nikita Andrejevs - in *Erasmus+* project "Multiperspectivity in Adult Education: an Example of the Baltic history", a doctoral student Ģirts Rozners - in SAM 8.2.2. project for giving lectures, conducting scientific research, a student of the Master's programme Anete Jenča has prepared an introduction to Nikolai Plate's compendium, Roberts Akmentiņš' dissertation publication, Bella Briška has been involved in a project on women in the Lutheran Church, which is developed in cooperation with the Society of the Faculty of Theology supported by funding from *Gustaw Adolf Werk*. Students are also involved in the projects "Religion and gender: development in the Baltic States and Northern Europe as research assistants, as well as in the project "Neoconservatism and experiencing family in everyday life and in faith: the case of women's (non)ordination in the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church". Students participate in these projects, gaining experience in interviewing, in creating publications.

In the last two years, the faculty has organized the "Science Exchange", an event for students of all levels, in which the faculty's management and lecturers report on opportunities to get involved in current research, as well as create their own projects.

The lecturers and the doctoral students have also participated in events promoting science, for example, they have organized discussions in cooperation with the portal *delfi.lv*. The FT students have also participated with their research in development of the website *www.sieviesuordinacija.lv*. Participation in various church events has provided an opportunity to promote the FT of the University of Latvia, as well as to form the opinion of the public on religious issues.

2.4.6. Provide a brief description and assessment of the forms of innovation (for instance, product, process, marketing, and organisational innovation) generally used in the higher education institution, especially in study field subject to the assessment, by giving the respective examples and assessing their impact on the study process.

The European Commission defines the term "innovation" as follows: "Innovation is the production, inclusion and use of successful novelty in the economic or social sphere" (<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/dd46213f-89e1-4c20-ad21-f3adca0b0f7f>).

Although the term innovation is relatively new, innovation has always existed as a driving force for development. In order to develop the programmes of the study field, the FT mainly uses marketing and organizational innovations aimed at improving the content and form of studies, improving the quality of the study and research process and developing internationalisation. It is also possible to talk relatively about product innovations, because a new doctoral study programme has been

created in the field of study, which is based on international cooperation in the field of research, new content, methods and forms.

The marketing innovations applied by the FT are based on the general marketing strategy of the University of Latvia and they serve the aim to improve the image of the University and the faculty, to attract new students, to increase the publicity and competitiveness of the programme. As the examples of the good practice can be notes *the Agora of Knowledge*, where researchers present their research, the events organized by the FT within the framework of " The Month of Theology ", "Spirituality Tent" in the festival "Lamp", opinion articles on social media, The University of Young Theologians and Religious Researchers (<https://www.lu.lv/gribustudet/skoleniem/nodarbibas-skoleniem/jauno-teologu-un-religijpetnieku-uni-versitate/>- (only in Latvian)) etc.

Organisational innovations are an essential force for development of the FT. Since 2021, the process and procedures of planning for the FT activities have been significantly changed, with an emphasis on inclusive governance and the principles of cooperation.

The FT has stated the following priorities:

- 1) detailed planning and implementation of the activities of the FT;
- 2) attraction of students;
- 3) development of study programmes;
- 4) development of the quality of research;
- 5) fund raising;
- 6) internal communication.

Planning of activities is based on the voluntary involvement of participants, including the FT teaching staff, staff and students. The meetings are democratically open and aim the widest possible range of participants in the governance processes, through discussions achieve diversity of views and thus find the best solutions. This type of governance allows to direct proposals previously discussed and prepared in advance to the FT council for approval. Innovative changes during the reporting period have also affected the organisation of the study process, an important part of changes have been made under the influence of COVID-19. As the most important should be mentioned the use of *MS Teams*, *Zoom* platforms in online studies, including preparation of new study materials, the use of a recording platform, transition to hybrid studies, new approaches to online testing organisation, consulting, video lectures (e.g., in courses "World Religions I and II"), etc. Innovative solutions for the study courses - development of digital teaching aids, study tours, research projects within the framework of study courses, analysis of film on religious topics, meetings with creative people and experts.

Increasing the innovation capacity of the FT is one of the main pillars for improving the competitiveness of the study field programmes to be accredited, parallelly increasing the knowledge capacity of the academic staff and students and creating a new innovation offer.

2.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation

2.5.1. Provide the assessment as to how the cooperation with different institutions from Latvia (higher education institutions/ colleges, employers, employers' organisations,

municipalities, non-governmental organisations, scientific institutes, etc.) within the study field contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field. Specify the criteria by which the cooperation partners for the study field and the relevant study programmes are selected and how the cooperation is organised by describing the cooperation with employers. In addition, specify the mechanism for the attraction of the cooperation partners.

Within the framework of the study field, the FT seeks cooperation with Latvian and foreign institutions (higher education institutions, employers' organisations, non-governmental organisations, scientific institutes, etc.), thus contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the field and the corresponding study programmes and study results. Partners for cooperation are selected according to the specifics of the study field and its study programmes, and the criteria specified by the FT.

Cooperation with Latvian institutions within the study field

Various Latvian institutions make a significant contribution to the development of the programmes of the study field at all levels. The FT selects potential cooperation partners according to the following criteria:

1. Similar field of activity (in relation to the specifics of study programmes, etc.);
2. Reputation;
3. Quality of operation;
4. Potential employment for graduates.

During the reporting period, the FT has established cooperation with the public and Latvian institutions at various levels:

1. **Cooperation with ministries.** The FT specialists regularly provide expertise to the Ministry of Justice on various religious communities. Expertise related to the profession standard has also been provided to the Ministry of Education and Sciences.
2. **Cooperation with the media.** The teaching staff and students of the FT, the LU actively participate in the promotion of science by commenting on theological issues and problems in the media (television, radio, newspapers, magazines and news portals), by organising public discussions on issues related to theology and religious science topical to society (for example, participation in discussion festival "Lampa", think tanks in *Facebook*;) the students and the academic staff publish popular science articles in the media as well (internet portals *delfi.lv*, and *tuvuma.lv*, *tvnet.lv*) give interviews and publish articles in printed newspapers and magazines.

More frequently, the FT specialists have been asked by various media to comment on issues related to refugees and Islam (especially O. Petrova, V. Tēraudkalns, A. Priede and R. Kokins), also church policy on gender issues and other issues related to religion.

3. **The FT events for general public.** The month of Theology has already become a tradition – February is the month when the Faculty of Theology celebrates the anniversary of its foundation. During it, the teaching staff and the students of the FT organize events focused on the transfer of science. For example, in 2020 during the Month of Theology, a devotional dedicated to 100 years since the Faculty was founded, a photo exhibition by Professor Ralphs Kokins, exhibition dedicated to the journal "The Way", seminars of guest lecturers were organized, and in 2016 dominated the slogan "Changes", dedicating the events to the

Anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, as well as social changes in Europe. There have also been a debate in cooperation with the Association of Women Theologians on document by the World Lutheran Federation "Position on Gender Justice" (2016), as well as a discussion "A Different Perspective: a Conversation on the Refugee Issue" (conducted by L. Geikina, attended by guests from Germany, Latvia, the refugees living in Latvia).

4. **Cooperation with religious organisations.** During the reporting period, cooperation with churches has been implemented within the framework of the study process (study tours), as well as by organizing seminars, e.g., the Baltic and German Lutheran pastors' seminar (2019), discussion evenings and lectures, for example, at the Kaņepe Culture Centre (2019), a conference together with the Riga Lutheran Church – a discussion "The Role of the Lutheran Church in the Society of Latvia" (2016), the representatives of the FT participated and organized a discussion in St. Redeemer's Anglican Church "Diversity on the Border: Islam and the West" (2016), D. Balode has participated in public lectures at the request of the Methodist Church. Public lectures have also been delivered in cooperation with the Muslim community of Latvia, for example, Dr. Naji Ibrahim's lecture / discussion "The Hidden Beauty of Islam in the Context of the Anxiety of Change" (2016) etc.

During the reporting period, there has been an active promotion of cooperation with **the leaders of various churches**, for example, with the Superintendent of the Methodist Church Gita Medne, the bishop of the Adventist Church Vilnis Latgalis, the archbishop of the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Jānis Vanags, the Archbishop of the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church outside Latvia Lauma Zušēvica, the pastor of Riga Anglican parish, the bishop emeritus Jana Jēruma Grīnberga. Representatives of denominations have participated in the study courses, as well as in the study programmes in practical study courses, when practice activities have been implemented in Lutheran, Anglican and Methodist congregations.

Cooperation with Latvian institutions is organized with an aim to educate public in the context of theology and religious studies, to popularize study field programmes, as well as to establish relationships with cooperation partners as potential employers (for chaplaincy, for work in religious organisations, public administration, etc.).

2.5.2. Provide the assessment as to how the cooperation with different institutions from abroad (higher education institutions/ colleges, employers, employers' organisations, municipalities, non-governmental organisations, scientific institutes, etc.) within the study field contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field. Specify the criteria by which the cooperation partners suitable for the study field and the relevant study programmes are selected and how the cooperation is organised by describing the cooperation with employers. In addition, specify the mechanism for the attraction of the cooperation partners.

Cooperation with foreign institutions is an integral part of the organization of the study process at all study levels. The FT in selection of potential cooperation partners uses the following main criteria:

1. Similar field of activity (in relation to the specifics of study programmes, etc.);
2. Reputation;
3. Opportunities for exchange of students and academic staff, including access to financial resources for this purpose, such as *Erasmus+*;

4. Quality of activity (the limited number of theological programmes in Latvia promotes the necessity to cooperate with high-quality higher education institutions abroad);
5. Regional aspect (e.g., cooperation with School of Theology and Religion of Tartu, joint study module DSP, joint project with Lithuania's Vytautas Magnus University), opportunity for close, high-quality cooperation in studies and research;
6. Potential employment for graduates.

The strategic partner of the FT in the process of internationalization of studies and research is the University of Tartu, the doctoral study level programme of the FT is implemented in cooperation with it. There are regular seminars with the doctoral students of the School of Theology and Religion of the University of Tartu both in person (if possible) and online.

The FT of the UL also cooperates with other foreign universities. **18 cooperation agreements have been concluded with universities in different European countries**, providing students with the opportunity to apply for studies in the *ERASMUS* exchange programme (<https://www.tf.lu.lv/studijas/studijas-arzemes/> - (only in Latvian).

During the reporting period, cooperation with the **leaders of various churches** has been active, for example, Marcus Schoh, the pastor of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church, Gotthard Magaard, the Bishop of the Northern Church of Germany, William Collins, the deacon of the European diocese of the Church of England. The administration of the FT has also participated with presentations in the synod of the Church of England in Latvia, the synod of the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church outside Latvia (LELBĀL) and the Synod of the Nordic and Baltic District of the Anglican Diocese of Europe in Latvia have taken place at the premises of the FT. In cooperation with LELBAL, a student internship in Sandby (Sweden) has been organized.

During the reporting period, the Faculty has cooperated with **representatives of foreign embassies** in discussions about cooperation opportunities, for example, with a representative of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China (2020). Excellent cooperation has been established with the embassies of Germany, Sweden, Israel and Taiwan (2015-2021), both by receiving funding for students and by visiting these countries and participating in seminars organized by them.

The cooperation strengthens the quality of the study programme provided for in the objective of the field by establishing links with representatives of the field and obtaining feedback on the content and quality of study programmes. Opportunities for cooperation with religious organisations and academic partners provide an opportunity to apply and test in practice the knowledge and skills acquired in the lectures in religious studies and theology. By participating in seminars and conferences, students develop transversal skills such as critical thinking, effective communication, problem solving, cooperation, self-knowledge and, when confronted with different cultures, compliance with the principles of openness and humanism in study programmes is strengthened, as provided for in the results to be achieved of the programmes.

2.5.3. Specify the system or mechanisms, which are used to attract the students and the teaching staff from abroad. Provide the assessment of the incoming and outgoing mobility of the teaching staff in the reporting period, the mobility dynamics, and the issues which the higher education institution/ college faces with regard to the mobility of the teaching staff.

To attract foreign students and academic staff to the programmes of the study field to be

accredited mainly are used the *ERASMUS+* exchange programme and cooperation with the strategic partner - the University of Tartu - at the doctoral level. For the purpose of study export the FT also uses the results of the marketing activities of the University of Latvia.

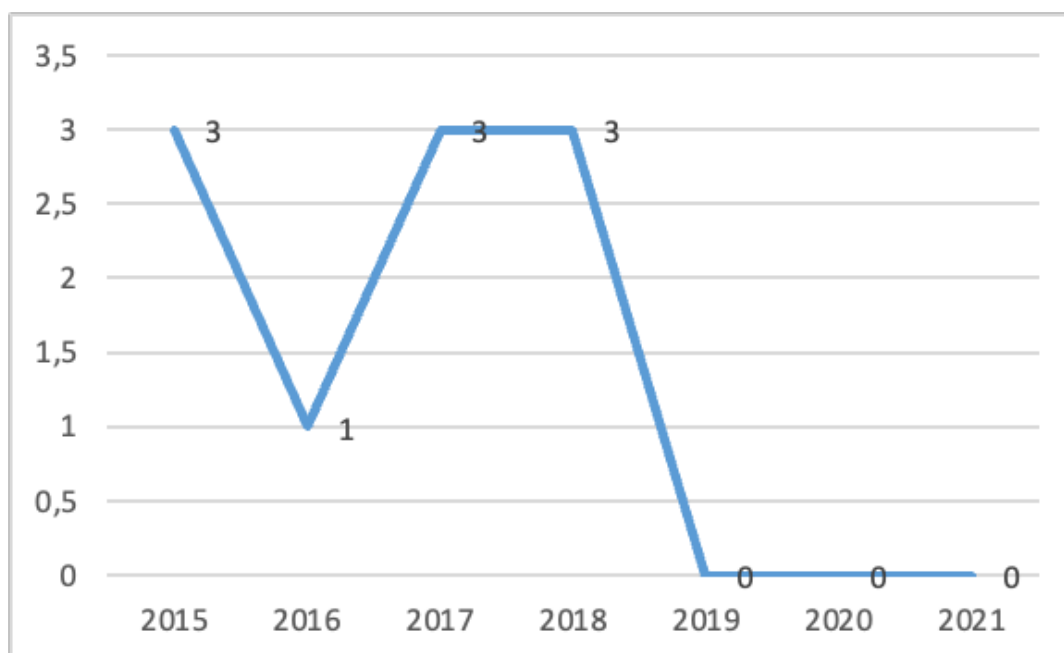


Figure 8. The number of foreign students in the programmes of the field, 2015.-2021.

Studies at the FT in the framework of *Erasmus+* programme have chosen students from Germany, the Czech Republic and Turkey. Mostly students chose the Bachelor Study Programme, only one student studied in the Master Study Programme during the reporting period (from the Czech Republic, 2016).

During the reporting period, students also studied at the FT outside the *Erasmus+* programme, for example, in 2016/2017 there was a student from Lithuania in the Bachelor Study Programme. Besides, some courses in the FT have chosen foreign students studying at *Erasmus+* programme at other faculties of the University of Latvia.

During the reporting period, there has been a very small number of foreign lecturers in the FT programmes in the framework of *Erasmus+* (see Figure 9).

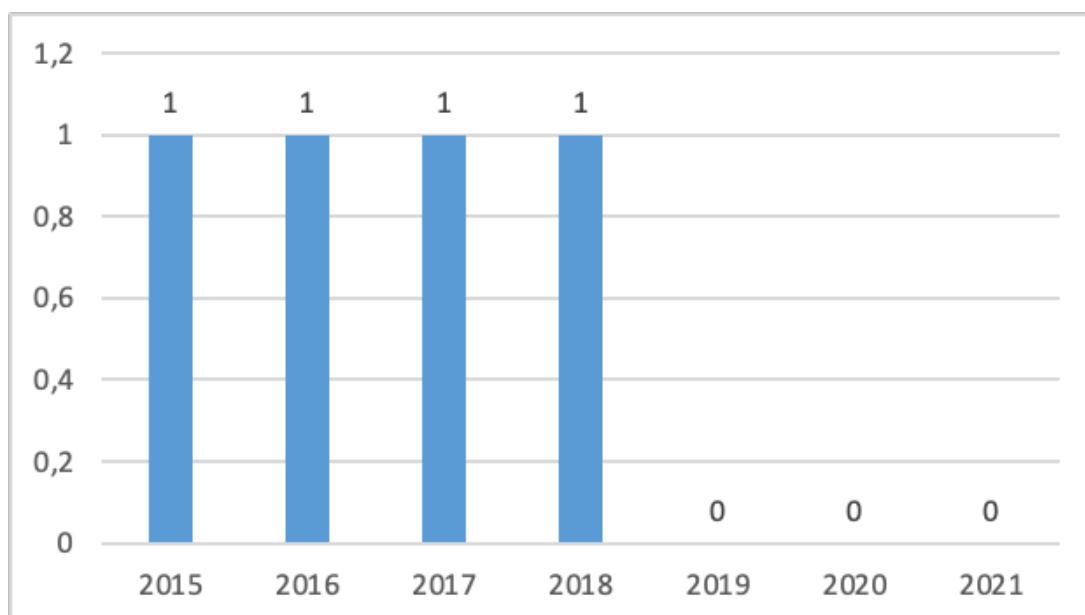


Figure 9. A number of foreign lecturers (Erasmus+) in the FT programmes 2015.-2021.

Within *Erasmus+* programmes guest lecturers from the Netherlands and Germany have delivered lectures to the FT students. In addition to those who participate in *Erasmus+*, the FT students are regularly offered lectures and seminars by other foreign guest lecturers, every year 3-5 foreign lecturers.

In 2019-2021, the mobility of foreign students and guest lecturers has been significantly affected by the situation with COVID-19, however, the FT is still working to improve the mobility and increase the number of guest students and guest lecturers. The study courses acquired in foreign higher education institutions shall be recognised for the FT students in accordance with the procedures laid down by the University of Latvia. The recognition of study courses is carried out by the director of the study programme.

In order to increase the number of foreign students and lecturers, a doctoral study programme has been established; its strategy as an essential part includes the exchange of both students and teaching staff. Attracting foreign students and academic staff to study field programmes remains a priority for the FT, so it is devoted special attention. The specific actions to attract foreign students – closer cooperation with the University of Tartu, coordination of planning, offer of research topics that could potentially be interesting for students (interaction of Western-Eastern cultural (incl. religious) spaces, interaction of religion and politics in the post-Soviet countries etc), improvement of access to information for international students on various issues of interest as well as practical issues, promotion of attraction of foreign teachers. This is also provided for in the Study Field Development Plan (Annex 3).

Students of the Faculty of Theology have also used the opportunity to go on exchange studies with Erasmus+ funding, both at the bachelor's and master's program levels. The largest number of students in exchange studies was in 2016/2017. in the academic year when 5 TF students studied at partner universities (Czech Republic – 2, Belgium – 1, Netherlands – 2). 2015/2016 In 2017, there were three exchange students (Germany - 1, Czech Republic - 2), but in 2017/2018 – 2 (Finland-1, Germany-1). In the years affected by the pandemic, 2019-2021, there was one exchange student each year from the master's study program (1 Czech Republic, 1 Belgium), but in 2018/2019 there was no exchange student in the year. Although students evaluate the exchange opportunities positively, many of them are hindered by their work and family life. Sometimes the exchange of students is hindered by the different schedules of study semesters in the universities chosen for guest studies.

The number of lecturers who have taught abroad within Erasmus+ since 2015/2016. until the beginning of the pandemic in 2019 have been very constant, that is, two lecturers have gone abroad every year. Guest lectures have been taught in Great Britain, Germany, Austria, Estonia, Czech Republic. The teachers who participated in the exchange highly appreciate this opportunity to exchange experience.

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

2.6.1. Assessment of the fulfilment of the plan regarding the implementation of the recommendations provided by the experts during the previous accreditation of the study field, as well as the assessment of the impact of the given recommendations on the study quality or the improvement of the study process within the study field and the relevant study programmes.

The experts' assessment in the previous accreditation of the study field, of the implementation of the plan for the implementation of the recommendations and the impact of the recommendations provided on the quality of studies or improvement of processes in the study field and the corresponding study programmes is provided in the Table 14. The time of implementation for the long-term recommendations – 01.04.2022., for the short-term – the deadline set by the AIC when the recommendations have been carried out (the answer to the AIC was given on 14.05.2021.)

In the previous accreditation of the study field, the assessment of the implementation of the plan for the implementation of the recommendations provided by experts and the impact of the recommendations provided on the quality of studies or improvement of processes in the study field and the corresponding study programmes is provided in the Table 14.

Table 14. Implementation of study field experts' recommendations

No	Recommendations of experts	Implementation
1	Developing scientific and engineering research methods	During the reporting period, regular work has been done on updating study courses in the e-environment, the lecturers have developed e-courses in accordance with the common requirements of the University of Latvia. E-courses of the FT lecturers can be found in the https://estudijas.lu.lv/course/index.php?categoryid=14 . In the context of COVID, the use of the e-environment has become one of the determining factors for the successful conduct of studies. In the study process also use Zoom and MS Teams platforms are used, by organizing lectures, conducting defence of final papers, presentations, etc.
2	Scientific research should acquire more international character	The following projects: https://www.tf.lu.lv/iv/petnieciba/projekti/ - (only in Latvian) have been implemented during the reporting period: The main international projects are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religion and Gender Equality: Baltic and Nordic Developments • Compatibility of science and religion in the post-Soviet context - (only in Latvian) • Bridging Spirituality Studies: Sources, Expressions, Unfolding Trends The number of internationally quoted publications in the FT increases every year. The internationalisation of research has also been achieved by establishing cooperation with the UT in the doctoral study programme.
3	Develop a systematic financial strategy and promote the attraction of resources.	TA working group on strategic issues has been set up by the FT, with a particular emphasis on participation in projects as well as the involvement of sponsors.

4	The equipment at the disposal of the FT and the condition of the premises should be improved	During the reporting period: 4 projectors, 2 screens, portable computers (for each of the academic staff, purchased with the support of the Society of the Faculty of Theology), 2 stationary computers, 2 multifunctional printers, an office chair.
5	Participation of students in scientific activities should be promoted	<p>During the period of the report students are more actively involved in the creation of scientific publications for the industry's scientific peer-reviewed magazine "Ceļš" ("The Way") (8 student articles out of 10 authors in the 2021 issue, 4 student articles out of 11 authors in the 2020 issue, 6 out of 9 in the 2019 issue). Issue No 71 (2020) can be viewed here: https://www.apgads.lv/izdevumi/brivpieejas-izdevumi/zurnali-un-periodiskie-izdevumi/cels/cels-nr-71/ - (only in Latvian)</p> <p>Issue No 70 (2019) can be viewed here: https://www.apgads.lv/izdevumi/brivpieejas-izdevumi/zurnali-un-periodiskie-izdevumi/cels/cels-nr-70/ - (only in Latvian)</p> <p>The students (the MSP and especially the DSP) are also invited to participate in the annual the FT Theology and religious studies section of the University of Latvia conference, as well as in any other conference that we organize and where we announce the application.</p> <p>The students have had the opportunity to participate in the annual event "Awkward Topic Marathon."</p> <p>In 2021, a meeting with the representatives of students was held specifically on the issue of opportunities to engage in research.</p>
6	Communication and advertising activities should be improved, including awareness of opportunities for other students in Latvia to acquire TF study programme courses and other offers of the University of Latvia.	<p>More attention is focused on communication - The FT of the UL has an employee who is responsible for communication. The FT has its own <i>Facebook</i> account where information is regularly posted. https://www.facebook.com/LUTEologijasfakultate/ - (only in Latvian)</p> <p>The faculty publishes information about current events on other social media platforms - <i>Twitter</i>, <i>Instagram</i>, <i>Youtube</i>, as well as on its website: www.tf.lv - (only in Latvian).</p> <p>The teaching staff of the FT of the UL are also addressed by the media and invited to express their opinion in such media, as the <i>LSM</i> on various topics related to religion and theology. The teaching staff of the UL also participate in radio broadcasts, for example, currently every two weeks <i>Radio Marija</i> is hosting a programme dedicated specifically to the audit of the new translation of the Bible, in which several members of the TF teaching staff participate.</p> <p>A donation campaign has now been established in order to raise the necessary funds for the FT to record a part of Bachelor and Master study lectures, thus improving the quality of the study process for the students of the Faculty and would be available for a fee also to any people interested in the topics.</p> <p>https://ziedot.lv/kampana/ziedojumi-latvijas-universitates-teologijas-fakultatei/ - (Only in Latvian)</p> <p>4 lectures on various topics, as well as recordings of various discussions and conferences are already available on the TF <i>Youtube</i> channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpqnCDBMWt3ZAgzKudfuW3A - (partly in Latvian, partly in English)</p> <p>In 2021, the faculty was also actively promoted within the framework of the spirituality tent at the discussion festival LAMPA.</p>
7	Financial support for teachers and students should be increased	<p>Remuneration of the teaching staff have been increased (along with changes made in the State budget in the period from 2012 in the remuneration of academic staff for the rate); the income of the academic staff from projects has also increased by 49%.. For more information on projects with the FT staff, see: https://www.tf.lv/en/petnieciba/projects/</p> <p>https://www.tf.lv/en/translate-to-english-petnieciba/translate-to-english-pecdoktorantura/ - (only in Latvian)</p> <p>Students have access to patron scholarships - U.S.-founded by Kārlis Ozoliņš - Emīls Mednis Trust Foundation in cooperation with "<i>Friends of the University of Latvia</i>" in 2019, he created a scholarship to support students of theology and religious studies of the University of Latvia: https://www.fonds.lv/lv/studentiem/pamatstudijas-no-2-kursa/sadalijums-pec-fakultatem/teologijas-fakultate/karla-ozolina-emila-medna-trasta-fonda-stipendija/ - (only in Latvian)</p>

8	To reconsider the entry requirements for those MSP students whose previous education is not in theology and religious studies.	For the applicants who do not have a previous education in theology and religious studies, an entrance interview is a requirement. During interviews it is ascertained whether the applicants' knowledge and experience meet the requirements of the study program. Criteria: work or experience related to the field of religious studies and theology, in-depth interest in the field of theology and religious studies in previous education (e.g. bachelor thesis related to this field), basic knowledge of humanities and social sciences research methodologies. The students whose education upon entry has not been connected with theology and religious studies are supported in the study process by adding extra study materials in e-studies (for example, in the course "Political Theology"). If necessary, these students are additionally consulted.
---	--	--

The implementation of expert recommendations has helped to improve the e-resources used in the study field programmes, thus making the study environment more modern and improving the IT competences of the lecturers and the students. Internationalisation of research has been promoted by increasing the international scientific recognition of the lecturers and developing cooperation with the students in the research process. The publicity of the FT has been improved by participating in various public awareness activities, discussions on issues concerning theology and religious studies. The changes have also affected the admission rules: the requirements have been made more precise.

2.6.2. Implementation of the recommendations given by the experts during the evaluation of the changes to the study programmes in the respective study field or licensed study programmes over the reporting period or recommendations received during the procedure for the inclusion of the study programme on the accreditation form of the study field (if applicable).

The doctoral study programme "Theology and Religious Studies" was licensed during the reporting period (19.05.2021). The experts had one short-term recommendation: "[...] to develop criteria for testing the prior knowledge of the potential students when applicants with Masters' Degree of other sciences without prior theological education are admitted to the study programme". The admission criteria were specified already before the meeting of the licensing commission and the approval of the license and supplemented when submitting the study program for accreditation. Requirements for admission to the doctoral program are a master's degree in the humanities, education or social sciences (sociology and anthropology) or equivalent higher education and an entrance examination: <https://www.lu.lv/en/studijas/fakultates/fakultates/teologijas-fakultate/doktorantura/transtate-to-english-teologija-un-religijpetnieciba/>

The recommendations of the experts have also been followed.

The short-term recommendations to be implemented before the study programme is implemented:

- Review the procedure for supplementing the resources of the UL databases and library so that they correspond to the current academic base within the scope of the field, identifying the needs of academic staff and students at least once every six months or once a quarter.

For the implementation of the recommendations, more frequent possibilities upon a proposal of the teaching staff to supplement the library's resources have been discussed with the Library of the University of Latvia. The process of processing / ordering takes place faster.

- To review the workload of the academic staff, ensuring that, as far as possible, the academic staff attached to the implementation of the study programme are employed full-time.

To improve the situation, the FT has established a working group for improving the model of

workloads of the academic staff.

Long-term recommendations (until accreditation of the study field)

- Based on the previous experience, strengthen and develop cooperation with the UT and other European universities in order to promote integration of the study programme into international research networks.

The DSP uses the opportunities provided by international research projects, for example, participation in the project "Religion and Gender Equality: Developments in the Baltics and Nordic Countries", which includes the Baltic and Northern European universities <https://www.tf.lu.lv/petnieciba/projekti/religion-and-gender-equality-baltic-and-nordic-developments/> (only in Latvian), <https://www.religionandgender.eu/>.

- Overview the possibilities to offer more scholarships to the doctoral students, motivating them to engage in research and write a doctoral thesis.

The current situation is favourable for students, as doctoral students have access to the scholarships from the EU funds.

- To carry out extended research of the labour market and demand for the specialists in this field.

The FT is aware of the importance of the labour market research in improving the content and forms of studies, therefore in 2021 a survey of the graduates and employers was carried out, which asked for recommendations how to improve academic and research work.

- To make more effort to find out and, as far as possible, remove the obstacles hindering the completion and defence of doctoral theses.

The director of the DSP and the administration of the FT regularly have discussions with students. The discussions have shown that the main obstacles to the effective conclusion of doctoral theses are the lack of funding and motivation. The available scholarships provided by sponsors and the EU funds, as well as the increase of individualized opportunities for working with students (for example, within the framework of individual seminars) significantly improve the situation. At the beginning of 2022, one doctoral thesis has already been defended, another one has been submitted for defence.

Annexes

I - Information on the Higher Education Institution/ College		
Information on the implementation of the study field in the branches of the higher education institution/ college (if applicable)		
List of the governing regulatory enactments and regulations of the higher education institution/ college	Annex_1_List of the main internal normative acts and regulations of the University of Latvia.docx	1.pielikums_Saraksts ar galvenajiem augstskolas iekšējiem normatīvajiem aktiem un regulējumiem.docx
The management structure of the higher education institution/ college	Annex_2_Structure_UL.docx	2.pielikums_LU pārvaldības struktūra.docx
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.1. Management of the Study Field		
Plan for the development of the study field (if applicable)	Annex_3_Plan_study_field_development.docx	3.pielikums_Studiju_virziena_attīstības_plans.docx
The management structure of the study field	Annex_4_Management scheme of the study field.docx	4.pielikums_Studiju_virziena_pārvaldības_struktūra.docx
A document certifying that the higher education institution or college will provide students with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution/ college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.	Annex_5_Declaration_continue_studies.zip	5.pielikums_Aplicinajums_studiju_turpinasana.zip
A document certifying that the higher education institution or college guarantees compensation for losses to students if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme license is revoked due to actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.	Annex_6_Declaration_refund.docx	6.pielikums_Aplicinajums_kompensacija.edoc
Standard sample of study agreement	Annex_7_standart_samples_study_contract.zip	7.pielikums_studiju_ligumi_paraugformas.zip
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System		
Analysis of the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers	Annex_8_Analysis of the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers.docx	8.pielikums_Studejoso_absolventu_darba_dev_aptaujasRezultati_analize.docx
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field		
Basic information on the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study field	Basic_information_teaching_staff.xlsx	Pamatinformacija_SV_macibspeki.xlsx
Biographies of the teaching staff members (Curriculum Vitae in Europass format)	UL_FT_Teaching staff CV.pdf	LV_LU_FT_Macibspeku_CV.pdf
A statement signed by the rector, director, head of the study programme or field that the knowledge of the state language of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programmes within the study field complies with the regulations on the state language knowledge and state language proficiency test for professional and official duties.	Annex_23_3_Certificate_knowledge_official_language.pdf	23_3.pielikums_Aplicinajums par valsts valodas zināšanu apjomu.pdf
A statement of the higher education institution/ college on the respective foreign language skills of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programme at least at B2 level according to the European Language Proficiency Assessment levels (level distribution is available on the website www.europass.lv, if the study programme or part thereof is implemented)	Annex_23_4_Certificate of foreign language proficiency.pdf	23_4.pielikums_Aplicinajums par svešvalodu prasmi.pdf
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation		
Summary of quantitative data on scientific and/ or applied research and / or artistic creation activities corresponding to the study field in the reporting period.	Scientific and applied research activities.docx	Studiju virziena zinātniskās un lietiskās pētniecības aktivitātes .docx
List of the publications, patents, and artistic creations of the teaching staff over the reporting period.	Annex_24_List_scientific publications_teaching staff.docx	24.pielikums_Macibspeku publikaciju saraksts.docx
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation		
List of cooperation agreements, including the agreements for providing internship	Annex_9_list_cooperation agreements with other institutions, including internship agreements.docx	9.pielikums_Sadarbības līgumu saraksts ar citām institūcijām.docx
Statistical data on the teaching staff and the students from abroad	Foreign students and lecturers within the study field.docx	Arvalstu_studejositie_macibspeki.docx
Statistical data on the incoming and outgoing mobility of students (by specifying the study programmes)	Annex_10_Statistics_outgoing_incoming_mobility_students.docx	10.pielikums_Statistikas dati par studējošo izejošo un ienākošo mobilitāti.docx
Statistical data on the incoming and outgoing mobility of the teaching staff	Statistics_outgoing_incoming_mobility_teaching_staff.docx	Statistikas dati par mācībspēku ienākošo un izejošo mobilitāti.docx
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.6. Implementation of the Recommendations Received During the Previous Assessment Procedures		
Report on the implementation of the recommendations received both in the previous accreditation and in the licensing and/ or change assessment procedures and/ or the procedures for the inclusion of the study programme on the accreditation form of the study field.	Annex_11_Review_implementation_recommendations.docx	11.pielikums_Izpildes pārskats par saņemtajām rekomendācijām iepriekšējā akreditācijā(2).docx
An application for the evaluation of the study field signed with a secure electronic signature	Application for the Assessment of the Study Direction "Religion and Theology".docx	Iesniegums AIC studiju virziena "Reliģija un teoloģija" novērtēšanai (D.Balode).edoc
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme		12.pielikums_Bakalaura_diploms.docx
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	Annex_14_DSP_Statistics_students_reporting_period.docx	14.pielikums_statistika_studejositie_BSP.docx
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard		
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme		
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)		
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules		
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)		
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		

Other annexes

Name of document	Document
LU Kvalitates vadības rokasgrāmata	LU_kvalitates_rokasgramata_14_10_2022.zip
Quality Management Handbook	Quality Management Handbook_14_10_2022.zip
2022.11.10_Additional_information_Religion_Theology (Before visit).docx	2022.11.10_Additional_information_Religion_Theology (Before visit).docx
Annex_18_DSP_mapping (Before visit).docx	Annex_18_DSP_mapping (Before visit).docx
Bachelor theses_themes.7z	Bachelor theses_themes.7z
Master theses_themes.7z	Master theses_themes.7z
TF_promocijas_darbi_2013_2022_garais (PhD theses themes).docx	TF_promocijas_darbi_2013_2022_garais (PhD theses themes).docx
Additional_information_FT_29.11.2022.docx	Additional_information_FT_29.11.2022.docx
Attachment No 1_ QUESTIONNAIRE_samples.pdf	Attachment No 1_ QUESTIONNAIRE_samples.pdf
Attachment No 2_2022.11.14_Infrastructure.pptx	Attachment No 2_2022.11.14_Infrastructure.pptx
Attachment No.3 _2020_SE_Report.docx	Attachment No.3 _2020_SE_Report.docx

Theology and Religious Studies (43221)

Study field	<i>Religion and Theology</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Theology and Religious Studies</i>
Education classification code	<i>43221</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>Academic bachelor study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Ralfs</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Kokins</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>ralfs.kokins@lu.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Dr. theol.</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>+371 28305158</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>To ensure the development of students' wider knowledge, methodological skills and competence in theology and religious studies.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<i>1.To create a study environment so that the student improves his or her learning skills by independently and systematically acquiring and demonstrating deep knowledge and critical understanding in theology and religious studies;</i> <i>2.To ensure the acquisition of good and competitive humanitarian education, receive Bachelor's degree in theology and religious studies;</i> <i>3.To create a supportive learning environment so that the student develops competence of theological and religion research for further studies and deep scientific research work.</i> <i>4.To provide an opportunity for independent scientific research for not less than 10 CP, summarising the results in Bachelor paper - applying the acquired methodological skills, demonstrating the ability to scientifically critically process a wider range of academic literature, as well as sequentially, clearly and comprehensibly presenting and defending the results of their scientific work.</i>

Results of the study programme	<p>Knowledge:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Critically understand the fields of theology and religious research and the theories and methodological principles of some of its disciplines. 2. Understands the context and interdisciplinary nature of his/her research problem. 3. Understands the principles of independent academic work. <p>Skills:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Systematically and correctly selects and uses scientific research methods in accordance with the methodologies approved in the field. 2. Selects and critically analyzes sources of information for the development of academic research. 3. Independently performs research tasks in separate disciplines and study courses - in accordance with the instructions of the lecturer and guidelines justified in the academic discussion. 4. Is able to communicate the results of his or her research in a logical and clear manner. <p>Competences:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Addresses issues and challenges in the field of theology and religious research in the profession related to the study field, as well as in other humanitarian and social fields. 2. Participates in the development of the field and evaluates the impact of his professional activities on the environment and society. 3. Evaluate academic and social processes using sectors general knowledge and skills acquired in the field.
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	Bachelor thesis

Study programme forms

Full time studies - 3 years - latvian

Study type and form	Full time studies
Duration in full years	3
Duration in month	0
Language	latvian
Amount (CP)	120
Admission requirements (in English)	Previous education: Secondary school education
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	Bachelor's degree of Humanities in Religion and Theology
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	-

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
University of Latvia	RĪGA	RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050

3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

3.1.1. Description and analysis of changes in the parameters of the study programme made since the issuance of the previous accreditation form of the study field or issuance of the study programme license, if the study programme is not included on the accreditation form of the study field, including changes planned within the evaluation procedure of the study field evaluation procedure.

Since the last accreditation, following the laws and the regulations, the degree to be obtained has been changed from "the Bachelor's degree of Humanities in Theology and Religious Science"; to "Bachelor's degree in Humanities in Religion and Theology". The changes were made in accordance with the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers, which regulate the degree awarded in the study program, that is, regulations no. 240 On the state standard of academic education and regulations no. 322 On the classification of education in Latvia.

During the accreditation period, in order to improve the quality of the study programme several changes have been made, they are based on the current trends in the field, the recommendations of employers, students and graduates:

- The change of the name of the study programme from "Theology and Religious Science" to "Theology and Religious Studies" has been submitted, so highlighting the role of research in the content and methodology of the programmes.
- The study objective has been improved, the tasks as well as the expected results have been updated.
- The content of the study programme has been improved.

26.04.2019. - the minutes of the FT Council

TF-V12.1.-2019/5, decision Nr. TF-V12.2.-2019/5-2):

Starting with the spring term in 2019 in part A daļā:

- to close the study course "Introduction into Philosophy for Theologians II" SDK2068, 2 credit points (hereafter – CP),
- to include the study courses "Civil Protection" Chemi1059, 1 CP and "Environmental Protection" instead of the above-mentioned course
- VidZ1032, 1 CP.

The change of courses has the aim to improve the competence of students in civil and environmental protection issues, in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 716 "Minimum requirements for the content of the mandatory civil protection course and the content of civil protection training of employees", which were adopted on 15.12.2017.

04.10.2019. -the minutes of the FT Council TF-V12.1.-2019/10, decision TF-V12.2.-2019/10-1: the study courses recognised as out-of-date in the study plan (as of the spring semester of 2020):

- "Biblical Archaeology: Customs and Traditions" (V. Apinis), B2, 2 CP;
- "Introduction to Islam II" (O. Petrova), B2, 2 CP;
- "The New Testament Greek (Koine) I" (J. Plaudis), B2, 2 CP;
- "The New Testament Greek (Koine) II" (J. Plaudis), B2, 2 CP;
- "Theological English III" (A. Vāczemniece), B2, 2 CP;

- "Theological English V" (A. Vāczemniece), B2, 2 CP;
- "Theological German III" (J. Kuzmina), B2, 2 CP;
- "The Old Testament Hebrew – I" (O. Petrova), B2, 2 KP;
- "The Old Testament Hebrew – II" (O. Petrova), B2, 2 CP.

January of 2020– the minutes of the FT Council Nr. 27-1-2020/1, decision Nr. 27-2-2020/1-1:

- Remove the study course from the program SDSK1070 "Introduction to Philosophy for Theologians I" (N. Titāns), part A, 2 CP;
- Remove the study course from the program Teol2056 "Introduction to theological ethics" (N. Titāns), part A, 2 CP;
- Replace the above mentioned study courses with a new study course Teol4010 "Theological ethics" (N. Titāns), part A, term 4, 4 CP;
- Transfer (starting from autumn semester 2020) to the part B2 the study course Teol1034 "Religious pedagogy I" (L. Geikina), part A, 2 CP.; (In the spring semester of 2020, the course is still taught as a Part A course – it closes in the spring semester of 2021);
- The study course Teol1031 "World religions II" (E. Taivāne), part A, 2 CP replace with the course Teol1055 "World religions II" (E. Taivāne), part A, term 2, 4 CP;
- Include a new study course in the programme: Teol1054 "Reformation in Livonia" (R. Altnurme), B2, English val., as of the term 4, 2 CP;
- Recognise as out-of-date the study courses Teol2015 "Theological German IV" and Teol2023 "Theological German V" (J. Kuzmina) part B1 2+2 CP;
- Transfer from the 2nd to the 3rd semester the study course Teol1011 "The age and cultural environment of the Old Testament" (J. Rudzītis-Neimanis), B1, 2 CP.

The final changes in the programme were made in autumn 2021.

29.10.2021. - the minutes of the FT Council Nr. 27-2-2021/10-1:

On changes in the Bachelor's study programme "Theology and Religious Science" (20113) – see Table 15.

Table 15. Changes in the Bachelor's study programme "Theology and Religious Science" (20113) – see Table 15. 2021.

No	The code of the course	The title	Credit points
A-Compulsory part			
Replace the study course:			
1.	Teol2104	The New Testament: Introduction and Theology I	4
With a new study course:			
2.	Teol1079	The New Testament: Introduction and Theology I	4
B-Restricted elective courses			
Recognise as out-of-dated the study courses			

3.	Valo3409	Theological English IV (daļa B/lzD1/SvT1)	2
4.	Filz1119	Introduction to Islam II' (part B/lzD2)	2
5.	Teol1034	Religious Pedagogy I: Interactive Methodology of Learning Religion (part B/lzD2)	2
6.	Teol3009	Religious Pedagogy II: Christian Perspective and Values in Curricula (part B/lzD2)	2
7.	Teol4001	Religious Pedagogy III: Research on Society, Family and Religion (part B/lzD2)	2
8.	Valo2675	The New Testament Greek I (Koine) (seminar), Daļa B/lzD1/Klzd	4
Include new study courses:			
9.	Valo1B67	Theological English (part B/lzD1/SvT1)	2
10.	Teol1077	Introduction to Islam(partB/lzD2)	2
11.	Teol1080	Worldview, religion and education (part B/lzD2)	4
12.	Valo1B73	The New Testament Greek I (Koine) (seminar), Part B/lzD1/Klzd	4

3.1.2. Analysis and assessment of the study programme compliance with the study field. Analysis of the interrelation between the code of the study programme, the degree, professional qualification/professional qualification requirements or the degree and professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements. Description of the duration and scope of the implementation of the study programme (including different options of the study programme implementation) and evaluation of its usefulness.

The title of the Bachelor's study programme "Theology and Religious Studies"; corresponds to the study field "Religion and Theology", as well as to the two areas of its content - theology and religious studies. They also correspond to the degree to be obtained and the study results. They are also matched by the degree to be obtained and the study results. The admission rules define unified admission criteria, thus ensuring that all students are able to participate in the study programme equally. All lecturers hold the essential scientific degrees in the field in theology, philosophy, pedagogy. The amount of the study programme allows to acquire the courses related to all sub-branches of the field. The code of the study programme 43221 complies with Cabinet Regulation No. 322 (Riga, 13 June 2017 (Prov. No. 30, §18)): Regulations Regarding the Classification of Education in Latvia, issued in accordance with Section 21, Clause 1 of the Statistical Law, Section

14, Clause 1.1 of the Education Law and Section 3, Paragraph six of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (in the edition of Cabinet Regulation No. 616 of 02.10.2018). The duration, amount and efficacy of the implementation of the study programme are justified in Cabinet Regulation No. 793 (Riga, 11 December 2018 (Prov. No. 59, §57) "Regulations regarding the Opening and Accreditation of Study Directions";, issued in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions Section 55.3, Paragraphs five, seven and twelfth: As well as with Sections 55-59 of Chapter VI of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (Studies at a Higher Education Institution) "Study Programmes";, "Study Regulation: Study Course, Study Module, Duration of Studies, Final Examinations of Studies and State examinations, awarded degrees in studies, professional qualification and issued diplomas:

<https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/37967>

The efficacy of the study programme is based on the need for critical evaluation of religious and theological ideas, processes and development trends in society. No other educational institution or institution in Latvia offers the possibility of scientific critical analysis according to research trends of western world universities.

Objective of the study programme

The aim of the BSP "Theology and Religious Studies" is to ensure the development of students' wider knowledge, methodological skills and competence in theology and religious studies.

Tasks of the study programme

1. To create a study environment so that the student improves his or her learning skills by independently and systematically acquiring and demonstrating deep knowledge and critical understanding in theology and religious studies;
2. To ensure the acquisition of good and competitive humanitarian education, receive Bachelor's degree in theology and religious studies;
3. To create a supportive learning environment so that the student develops competence of theological and religion research for further studies and deep scientific research work.
4. To provide an opportunity for independent scientific research for not less than 10 CP, summarising the results in Bachelor paper - applying the acquired methodological skills, demonstrating the ability to scientifically critically process a wider range of academic literature, as well as sequentially, clearly and comprehensibly presenting and defending the results of their scientific work.

Study outcomes

Knowledge:

1. Critically understand the fields of theology and religious research and the theories and methodological principles of some of its disciplines.
2. Understands the context and interdisciplinary nature of his/her research problem.
3. Understands the principles of independent academic work

Skills:

1. Systematically and correctly selects and uses scientific research methods in accordance with the methodologies approved in the field.
2. Selects and critically analyzes sources of information for the development of academic research.
3. Independently performs research tasks in separate disciplines and study courses - in

accordance with the instructions of the lecturer and guidelines justified in the academic discussion.

4. Is able to communicate the results of his or her research in a logical and clear manner.

Competence:

1. Addresses issues and challenges in the field of theology and religious research in the profession related to the study field, as well as in other humanitarian and social fields.
2. Participates in the development of the field and evaluates the impact of his professional activities on the environment and society.
3. Evaluate academic and social processes using sectors general knowledge and skills acquired in the field.

Interrelationship and achievement of the objective, tasks and study outcomes

The objective of the Bachelor's study programme is aimed at the training of new specialists in theology and religious research with a focus on continuing studies and lifelong education. The main component of the programme is the development of independent research, the tasks are oriented to create an environment that would facilitate the creation of independent research. The objective of preparing specialists is also matched with the task set in the study programme – to support the development of competence of a researcher. The results of the programme shall be consistent with the objective and the tasks. The mutual connection of the study results has been assessed by mapping the study results (see annex "Results of the Bachelor's Study Programme Mapping"). The graduates of the programme are able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the theories and concepts in theology and religion research, they are familiar with modern research methods, are able to independently plan, organize and manage their research and professional activities. The aim of the study programme is specific – the training of specialists. It is possible to measure by the number of graduates, it is provided through surveys of students, graduates and employers, and international mobility, as well as constant internal quality monitoring.

Admission requirements

Theology and religious science – Bachelor's study programme for full-time studies:

- Option 1 of the formula for calculating the rating:

centralised examination (hereinafter - CE) in Latvian (average assessment of parts in percentages) ($2,5 \times 100 = 250$) + CE in English or CE in French, or CE German (the average assessment of parts in percentage) ($3 \times 100 = 300$) + CE in mathematics (the average assessment of parts in percentages) ($1 \times 100 = 100$) + annual mark of the secondary education document in history ($35 \times 10 = 350$);

- Option 2 of the formula for calculating the rating:

the annual mark of the secondary education document in Latvian and literature ($20 \times 10 = 200$) + the annual mark of the secondary education document in English, French, or German ($35 \times 10 = 350$) + the annual mark of the secondary education document in history ($25 \times 10 = 250$) + the annual mark of the secondary education document in certain school subjects ($20 \times 10 = 200$);

- additional points:

in 2021 and 2022, the graduates of the University of Young Theologians and Religious Researchers of the UL, who have received a certificate, obtain an additional 20 points.

Opportunities for continuing studies

After graduation the BSP, the graduates have the opportunity to continue studies in Master's programme and higher level academic and professional studies, thus continuing to acquire more knowledge and develop their professional competencies.

The opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions can be found in the annex "Assessment of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions".

3.1.3. Economic and/ or social substantiation of the study programme, analysis of graduates' employment.

The Bachelor's study programme "Theology and Religious Studies" offers a high level humanitarian education related to the study of religions in modern times and history.

Theology and religious studies are based on ideas, texts, beliefs and activities. Studying them provides insights into human history and present, as well as develops key skills such as critical thinking and analytical writing. One of the most important skills that is developed in the study process and that is important in everyone's career is learning skills (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/324332-par-izglitiba-attistibas-pamatnostadnem-2021-2027-gadam> - only in Latvian). It is an important skill for the comprehensive development of the individual and for active participation in the life of society. Bachelor's studies initiates a culture of lifelong education, which is the basis for the safety of society and the individual, as it protects against risks related to poverty, discrimination and inequality in society as a whole. The programme also focuses on the acquisition of other balanced and future-proof skills that cover both general or transversal skills (including self-guided learning, civic participation, digital skills, etc.), and specific knowledge and skills relevant to the labour market, which are ensured by effective cooperation between the sectors of education and economics.

The graduates can find employment in the fields related to religious research and analysis of current events or processes (universities, institutes, the media), administration (public administration, religious organizations) and practice (churches and other religious organisations), as well as religious education and non-governmental organisations (e.g., spheres related to human rights and social work). The knowledge acquired in the studies allows the graduates to become teachers, civil servants, business analysts, politicians, social workers, charity workers, journalists, etc.

Between 2015 and 2020, the graduates of the BSP work as representatives of the spiritual staff (Kristaps Cēburs, Aleksejs Gaļperns, Oļegs Jermolājevs, Ingmārs Ļakas, Estere Tumoviča, Pāvels Ņizins, Anna Dobeļe, Kristīne Ēce), work in state and local government institutions and the public sector (Anete Jenča, Baiba Jēgere, Katrīna Sudakova, Ineta Lansdovne, Sarmīte Cīrule, Estere Koļesina) in organizations of cultural and creative industries (Rihards Guzovs, Dārta Kalēja), as entrepreneurs (Vladimirs Slavs, Madara Uburģe, Bella Briška, Seimurs Guseinovs, Dāvis Sargūns), as well as, after graduating the higher level studies, work as academic staff, researchers (Ģirts Rozners, Ņikita Andrejevs, Arta Urzula Goldmane).

3.1.4. Statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of

the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down into different study forms, types, and languages.

The dynamics of the number of students in the BSP are shown in Figure 10.

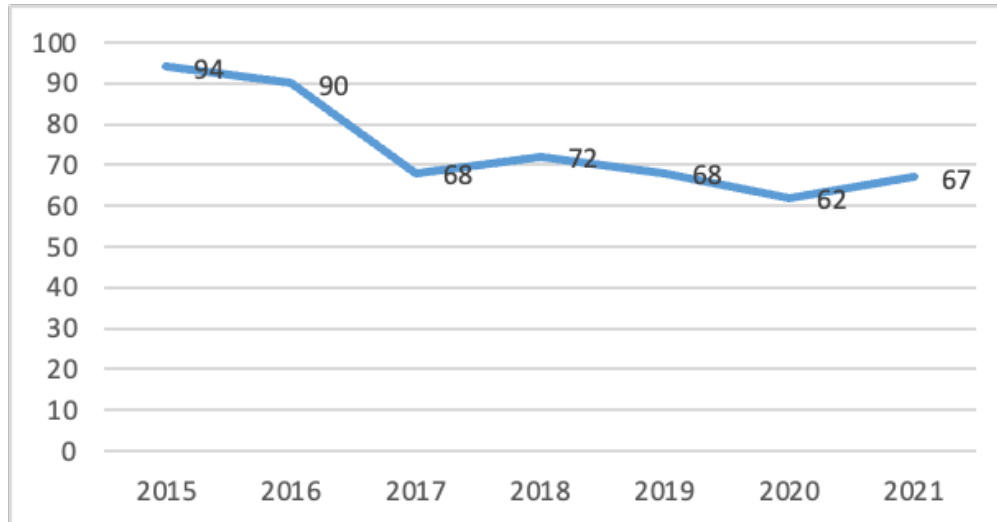


Figure 10. The

dynamics of the number of students, 2015-2021.

The figure demonstrates that the largest drop in the number of students has been in the academic year 2017/2018, the number of students in the programme has not decreased significantly in the last 3 years, showing stability. It is explained by the quality of the content, which creates a positive image of the study programme in society, positively should be evaluated also the activities of the FT communication specialist in social networks for the purpose of advertising the programme, the increase in international recognition, positive communication of the teaching staff and the students, as well as other aspects.

Better results could be expected in terms of the number of graduates, and the student dropout remains high. While study discontinuation tends to decrease, rates remain high (see Figure 11).

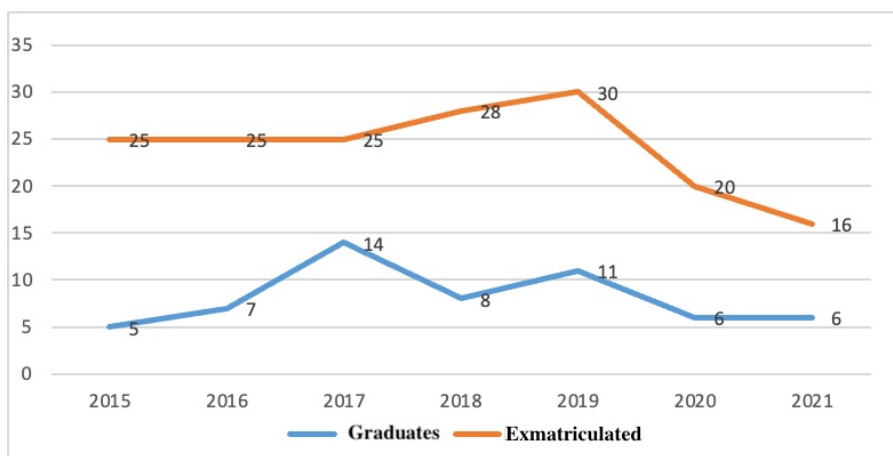


Figure 11. Number of the graduates and the students withdrawn from the programme, 2015-2021

Student dropout rates are high throughout the faculty. Despite the efforts, individual discussions, motivation of the FT administration and the program director, a large number of students discontinue their studies. Analysis of the surveys shows that, in general, students highly appreciate the organisation and quality of the study process in the Bachelor's programme. The study

environment was evaluated on a scale of 1-7 in 2020 has been evaluated with 6.2, the study process with 6.1. It is emphasized that the courses are taught by knowledgeable and benevolent teaching staff, providing high-quality theoretical and practical knowledge (the content of courses), developing critical thinking and ability to make complex decisions. In comparison to the previous 2 years, the share of positive ratings (on the defined scale 6 and 7) by position overall has increased. The proportion of strongly negative (1-3 on a scale) rating has also decreased (there are practically none). The main cause of dropout is the inability of students to combine work with studies. The small number of graduates, on the other hand, is explained by drop-out rates and comparatively high requirements in the study process.

The small number of students and the relatively high dropout rate in the Bachelor study program is one of the negative risk factors. Dropout is not due to student failure or dissatisfaction with the quality of studies. Dropout occurs due to the following reasons - (1) students' inability to combine studies with full-time or shift work; (2) personal and family circumstances; (3) health problems, inability to focus on systematic and critically analytical study work for a long time, etc. The student dropout rate is relatively high, despite the support mechanisms of the LU and the Faculty of Theology (curators' work, direct involvement of the program director, individual and student-centered approach, conversations with students, etc.). The high student dropout rate (especially in the first year of study) is one of the current peculiarities of the Latvian higher education system.

More dynamism would also be desirable in the context of the international *Erasmus+* programme (see Figures 12 and 13).

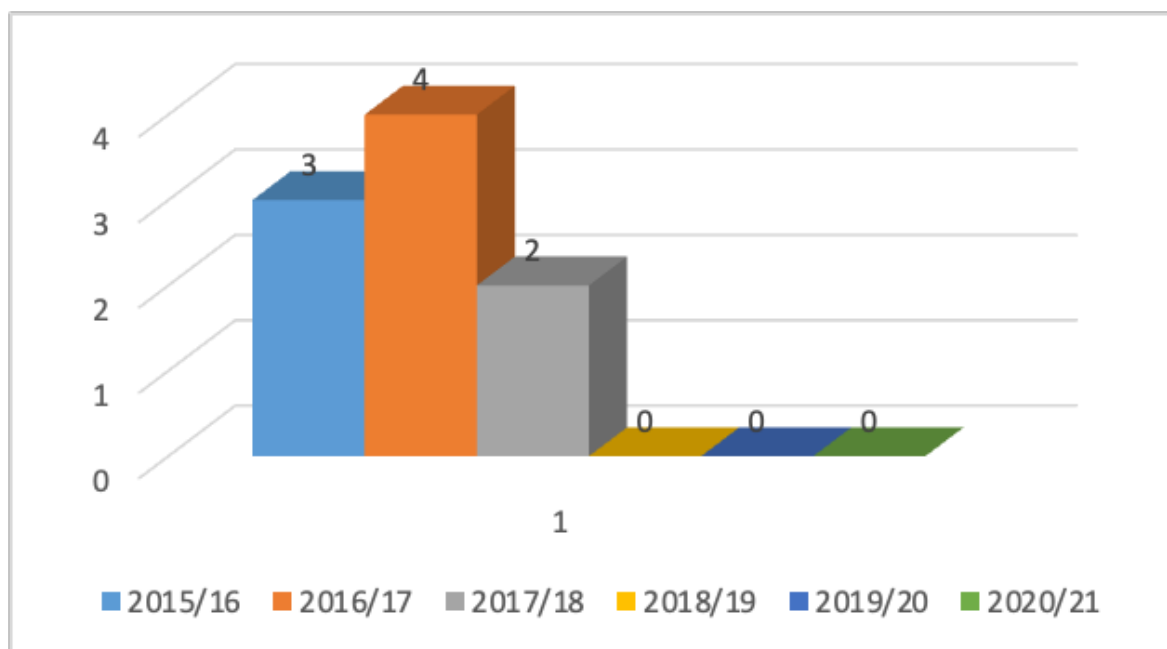


Figure 12. Involvement of programme students in Erasmus+ activities, 2015.-2021.

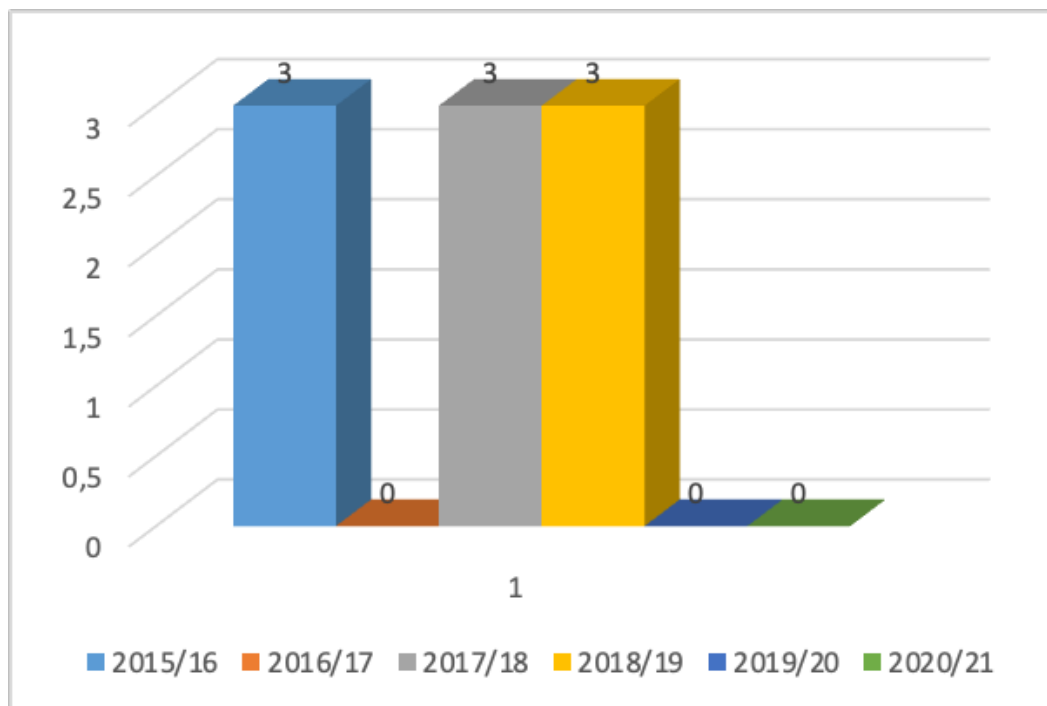


Figure 13. Figure

13. Number of foreign students in the programme, 2015.-2021.

The BSP students have chosen Germany, the Czech Republic and the Netherlands for *Erasmus+* activities.

Studies mainly are offered in English and German. The most popular choice for the FT students is the University of Mainz in Germany and Charles University in Prague in the Czech Republic. The relatively low activity of students applying for studies abroad is explained by several factors, one of them being the specifics of the 3-year Bachelor's programme (in fact, it is possible to study abroad only in the 3rd, 4th or 5th semesters of studies), likewise, students often are not willing to leave a stable job in Latvia. In recent years, the number of students with German language skills has still been very low, which would open up more opportunities for studying abroad.

The statistics have been significantly affected by Covid-19 restrictions and the crisis, which completely halted the planned student exchanges (especially with Germany, which was of the greatest interest). The number of international students in the Bachelor's study programme is also relatively low, during the reporting period 1-3 international students per year (from the Czech Republic, Germany and Turkey) studied here. The internationalisation of studies has been made one of the main priorities of the FT, the planned measures allow to think about an increase in the number of international students in the near future, if it is not affected by Covid-19 restrictions.

3.1.5. Substantiation of the development of the joint study programme and description and evaluation of the choice of partner universities, including information on the development and implementation of the joint study programme (if applicable).

3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

3.2.1. Analysis of the content of the study programme. Assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators with the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study courses/ modules and compliance with the needs of the relevant industry, labour market and with the trends in science on how and whether the content of the study courses/ modules is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science.

The content of the Bachelor's study programme "Theology and Religious Studies" has been developed in accordance with the requirements laid down in the Law on Higher Education Institutions of the Republic of Latvia, as well as in the regulations of study programmes and further education programmes of the University of Latvia (Decision No. 102 of the Senate of 24.04.2017), and on the basis of the requirements for Bachelor's study programmes in the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 240, Riga, 13 May 2014 ([Ministru kabineta noteikumiem Nr. 240 \(13.05.2014\)](#)- only in Latvian).

The BSP students will acquire knowledge, skills and competences corresponding to level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

Descriptions of study courses and final papers have been developed qualitatively and in accordance with the requirements of regulatory enactments, the content is up-to-date, complementary, conforms to the objectives of the programme and ensures achievement of study results, as well as conforms to the needs of the sector and scientific trends.

The methods of study implementation, including evaluation, contribute to the achievement of the objectives and results of the study courses and the programme, and the principles of student-centred teaching and learning are taken into account.

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

Students use inbound and outbound mobility opportunities, what they learn during mobility is recognized.

Analysis of the content of the study programme

During the reporting period aim, tasks, results to be achieved, content of the BSP have been deliberately changed, respecting current trends in the labour market, recommendations of experts, and adapting them to scientific innovations in the context of changes in the cultural paradigm. The content of the courses incorporates current trends of the field. The link between changes in the BSP and changes in the objective, tasks, expected results is monitored by the administration of the FT, the content of the course is also monitored centrally at the University of Latvia, following the updating of the content, literature and other resources, observing the latest research trends. In ensuring the content of the BSP, a cross-sectoral vision has been updated, creating interwoven competences of students.

The BSP consists of compulsory, restricted elective and free choice study courses totalling to 120 CP (see Table 16).

Table 16. The content and structure of the Bachelor's study programme "Theology and Religious Studies"

<i>Thematic groups of courses</i>	<i>CP</i>	<i>ECTS</i>
Biblical theology	16	24
History of the Church	10	15
Systematic and practical theology	16	24
Religious studies	16	24
The UL undergraduate courses	10	15
The Bachelor's thesis	10	15
Total in the compulsory part	78	117
Total in the restricted elective part	40	60
In optional part (Part C)	2	3
Total	120	180

The BSP traditionally consists of: compulsory (A) part, which includes the most relevant compulsory courses of the branch, combining them into relatively thematic groups: biblical theology, history of the church, systematic and practical theology, religious research, the UL undergraduate courses (civil and environmental protection, psychology, ethics); restricted elective courses (B1 and B2) parts consisting of a wide range of the courses of the branch and free choice (C) courses that can be acquired both at the University of Latvia and at another higher education institution. Bachelor's thesis is an essential part of studies. The study programme includes acquisition of wide knowledge and methodology in theology and religious research in study branch courses (see Table 17).

Table 17. The list of courses of the Bachelor's study programme "Theology and Religious Studies"

<i>Nr.</i>	<i>Course title</i>	<i>CP</i>	<i>ECTS</i>
	Biblical theology	16	24
1.	Teol1079 The New Testament: Introduction and Theology	4	6
2.	Teol2105 The New Testament: Introduction and Theology	4	6
3.	Teol1196 The Old Testament: Introduction and Theology - I	4	6
4.	Teol1149 The Old Testament: Introduction and Theology- II	4	6
	History of the Church	10	15

5.	Teol2038 History of Christianity I	4	6
6.	Teol2042 History of Christianity II	4	6
7.	Teol4008 History of the Church of Latvia	2	4
	Systematic and practical theology	16	24
8.	Teol1004 Systematic theology I	4	6
9.	Teol1010 Systematic theology II	4	6
10.	Teol1003 Theological traditions and theologians	2	3
11.	Teol2018 Introduction to practical theology	2	3
12.	Teol1029 Introduction to studies and methodology of scientific work	2	3
13.	Teol4152 Students' scientific seminar	2	3
	Religious studies	16	24
14.	Teol1028 Introduction to Religious Studies	2	3
15.	Teol1000 World religions I	4	6
16.	Teol1055 World religions II	4	6
17.	Teol2030 Sociology of religion: the new religious movements	2	3
18.	Teol2014 Introduction to in the psychology of religion	2	3
19.	Teol1024 Fundamental principles of Judaism, Christianity and the Liturgy of Islam	2	3
	The UL undergraduate courses	10	15
20.	Ķīmi1059 Civil protection	1	1,5

21.	VidZ1032 Protection of the environment	1	1,5
22.	SDSK1071 Introduction to psychology for theologians	4	6
23.	Teol4010 Theological ethics	4	6
24.	Teol4102 The Bachelor's thesis	10	15
	The restrictive elective part(B1, B2 part)	40	60
25.	Valo1B73 The New Testament Greek (Koine) I (seminar)	4	6
26.	Valo2678 The New Testament Greek (Koine) II (seminar)	4	6
27.	Valo1B67 Theological English	2	3
28.	Teol1026 Analytical reading the texts of the 20th century theologians	2	3
29.	Teol2122 The Age and Cultural Environment of the New Testament	2	3
30.	Teol2123 Methodology of the Exegesis of the New Testament	2	3
31.	Valo1920 The Old Testament Hebrew – I (seminar)	4	6
32.	Valo1823 The Old Testament Hebrew – II (seminar)	4	6
33.	Teol2184 Methodology of the Exegesis of the Old Testament	2	3
34.	Teol1011 The Age and Cultural Environment of the Old Testament	2	3
35.	Teol3006 Modern theology	2	3
36.	Teol3026 Comparative pneumatology	2	3
37.	Teol3074 Introduction to Protestant theology	2	3
38.	Teol1054 Reformation in Livonia	2	3
39.	Teol1080 Worldview, religion and education	4	6
40.	Teol3018 Feminist theology	2	3

41.	Teol2194 The Age of Enlightenment and Theology	2	3
42.	Teol2049 The religion of the ancient Baltics and its modern reception	2	3
43.	Teol1077 Introduction to Islam	2	3
44.	Teol1167 Introduction to Judaism	2	3
45.	Teol2066 Introduction to in Christian mysticism	2	3
46.	Teol2071 Introduction to in pastoral care and counselling	2	3
47.	Teol3071 Introduction to theological anthropology	2	3
48.	Teol1023 Biblical drama	2	3
49.	Teol1030 Theological motifs in cinema	2	3
50.	Teol1047 Aesthetic theology	2	3
51.	Teol1022 Violence in the Bible, church, and society	2	3
52.	Teol2078 Ancient Middle Eastern religions	2	3
53.	Optional part (Part C)	2	3

The content of studies is designed to adhere to the principle of gradualness. In the first year of studies, the emphasis is laid on the acquisition of introductory courses (*the New Testament: Introduction and Theology I, II, Systematic Theology I, II, Introduction to Studies and Methodology of Scientific Work, Introduction to Religious Research, etc.*), which are the basis for successful studies of subsequent courses. Almost every study course includes writing research papers, in order to develop scientific writing skills, skills of argumentation, public speaking competences, the ability to analytically criticize and perceive criticism, thus gradually directing students towards the development of Bachelor's thesis, which is the main final component of the compulsory part of the programme (10 CP). A *Student Scientific Seminar* (2 CP) is one more course planned for the successful development and defence of the Bachelor's thesis.

The programme focuses on working with original texts, highlighting the role of a language (Koine, Hebrew, English of Theology, etc.) in research of the ancient texts and providing knowledge of the context.

The courses are mostly taught in the form of seminars, where the main focus is laid on a reasoned discussion, which is based on systematic acquisition of the literature on the topical issues of the relevant field and implementing a student-centered approach. In order to increase the international dimension, foreign guest lecturers are regularly invited to read individual lectures, and the study programme also includes the course "Reformation in Livonia", which is delivered in English by *Dr. theol. Riho Altnurme* (Estonia), who is considered to be one of the leading European specialist in this field.

Students also have the opportunity to use outbound and inbound mobility opportunities so increasing their international research capacity; the content acquired during the mobility is recognised and aligned with the corresponding programme.

The study courses are harmonised and correspond to the tasks of the study programme: to create a study environment for the improvement of students' independent learning skills, critical understanding of theology and religious research. The study plan and content have been compared with the other leading European universities which offer similar programmes, and the plan and the content are considered to be competitive. In addition, the content is being regularly updated (the process is based on the results of surveys of employers and students) in line with the development trends of society, which further increases the competitiveness of the students in the labour market.

3.2.2. In the case of master's and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation. In the case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels (if applicable).

3.2.3. Assessment of the study programme including the study course/ module implementation methods by indicating what the methods are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. In the case of a joint study programme, or in case the study programme is implemented in a foreign language or in the form of distance learning, describe in detail the methods used to deliver such a study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.

During the study courses and examinations, oral, written and combined study and assessment methods are used.

Studies are organized in the form of lectures and seminars, as well as students must carry out an independent research – the Bachelor's thesis. Mostly the lectures are interactive, their task is to introduce the students into the problem, methodology, summarize results, as well as discuss a certain problem. Such study methods as work in pairs and groups, discussions (planned and spontaneous), reports, presentations, and films are widely used in classes. In some study courses as a teaching method, a study tour (to a church, discussions with parishioners) is used regularly (1-2 times a year). Students in practical theology subjects also carry out field studies.

In the last semester, a Bachelor's thesis is being developed under the guidance of a specialist of the relevant sub-branch. The student demonstrates the results of his or her research and the methodology acquired during the study process.

Depending on the specifics of each study course, the methods used in examinations are accurately described in the description of each individual study course, which is available to each student. Upon commencing the study course, the lecturer is obliged to present in detail the requirements of

the course, as well as the evaluation methods.

Each study course has an intermediate test and a final exam. The interim examination accounts for at least 50% of the total evaluation of the study course. Interim examinations in the Bachelor's study programme: .

- allows to note the knowledge the student has acquired in a particular part of the semester and, if necessary, to correct the deficiencies, adapting to the needs of students;
- distribute the workload of students more evenly throughout the semester, which contributes to a more successful acquisition of the content and methodology;
- are organised as uniform tests or by dividing into parts (smaller tests) both the amount of content and the types of methods;
- are organized as a prepared topic and presentation in the audience with subsequent analysis and discussion;
- are organised in written form; written and oral tests, such as discussion, etc.
- are organized as creative or practical tasks with the following analyses according to the acquired content; practical testing of the methodology and identification of issues, etc.

In the final exam, students demonstrate their knowledge, skills and competence according to the specifics and requirements of each study course. The student with an adequate understanding is able to discuss the issues discussed in the course, their context, meaning and practical applicability; carries out analysis and demonstrates the application of proficient methods; presents the results of an independent research, demonstrates critical thinking, effective communication, the ability to solve complex problems; is able to apply the acquired knowledge and methods in independent research.

According to the specifics of the study course in the Bachelor's study programme, the final examination of the course might have various forms: in writing (tests, answers to exam questions), orally, in the form of a scientific study (essay) and discussion, in the form of a practical scientific study or successfully implemented practice.

In most study courses, but especially in methodological courses, research should be carried out that demonstrates successful acquisition of methods and ability to apply them.

The main task of the entire study process is to introduce students into independent scientific research and discussion, as well as to promote the recording of their achievements in the form of scientific articles, therefore a written study should be developed in almost all study courses.

The acquisition of study courses is evaluated on the basis of criteria defined in regulatory enactments: the amount and quality of the acquired knowledge; acquired skills; acquired competence according to the planned study results.

In the final examination, the student must demonstrate:

Knowledge:

- knows research methods, literature and other sources used in their field;
- know the structure of academic papers and the methods of argumentative strategies and rhetoric used in their writing;
- know the formal requirements set by the University of Latvia for writing, submitting and presenting the final works.

Skills:

- identify the topic and the problem of their research, clearly define the objectives and tasks of the it, substantiate the thesis and conclusions of their research in a reasoned manner;

- meaningfully discuss the findings and results of their research with other students, lecturers and the supervisors of the paper;
- present their research to the audience in a concise and effective manner.

Competence:

- conduct independent research in their field;
- present in writing the results of the research in a field-specific academic style and form (including correct citation, appropriate references, footnotes, etc.);
- critically and/or constructively evaluate the research papers (or parts thereof) and presentations of other researchers (students).

The e-learning environment is used in the study process to promote independent studies. Each study course has an e-learning environment (*Moodle*) where students have access to lesson materials, task descriptions, course-related materials, as well as study tasks (tests, seminars, conferences, etc.)

The student-centred approach is followed in updating the study programmes and the respective study courses, paying special attention to meaningful formulation of learning outcomes, thus promoting dialogue between lecturers and students on the content of studies, forms and methods of organization. Well-formulated learning outcomes, on the other hand, promote students' understanding and co-responsibility for their own learning, self-assessment, and understanding of the assessment they receive. During the study process, lecturers use methods, examination forms and assessment criteria that are appropriate to the study goal and planned learning outcomes.

Students receive support and feedback from the lecturers during the study process. Grading criteria for marking are made public in advance. The assessment gives students an opportunity to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the expected learning outcomes.

Following the principles of student-centred studies, student mobility (recognition of learning outcomes) is promoted, students engage in academic research and social activities initiated by the academic staff, thereby gaining significant experience through testing gained knowledge and skills in practice. By implementing internal quality assurance policies, study programmes are implemented to encourage students to actively participate in the improvement of the study process. There are procedures and regulations for submitting student proposals and complaints and reviewing student appeals. The results of student surveys are evaluated and taken into account for the improvement of the study process. Students are eager to express their proposals for the improvement of study programmes and processes in discussions with teaching staff and programme directors.

3.2.4. If the study programme envisages an internship, describe the internship opportunities offered to students, provision and work organization, including whether the higher education institution/ college helps students to find an internship place. If the study programme is implemented in a foreign language, provide information on how internship opportunities are provided in a foreign language, including for foreign students. To provide analysis and evaluation of the connection of the tasks set for students during the internship included in the study programme with the learning outcomes of the study programme (if applicable).

3.2.5. Evaluation and description of the promotion opportunities and the promotion process provided to the students of the doctoral study programme (if applicable).

3.2.6. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the marks of the final theses.

The work on the topic of the student's Bachelor's thesis is purposeful and gradual. The choice of the topic is determined by its relevance in the field, including - in the labour market, as well as the individual interests of the student. The work is carried out in close cooperation with the supervisor, attracting other FT teaching staff as consultants if necessary. Since the study plan determines that the Bachelor's research papers can be written in almost any of the courses of the programme, students are able to choose among a large variety of topics, moreover, by choosing a topic, the student can gradually develop it by creating a cross-sectoral study. During the reporting period, at the end of the Bachelor's study programme, students have defended research papers on a wide range of topics, for example, by analyzing the global experience of the world: "The Role of Religion in the Process of Legitimising Violent Islamic Radicalisation in Western European Countries", "The Story and the Symbol: the Symbolic Role of a Serpent in the Story of Falling in Sin in the Context of Psychoanalysis", "The Culture Books in Tibetan Buddhism", "The Call of Military Service - in the Context of Anthropology and Psychology of Theology", etc., solving local, but not less important issues of theology and religious science, for example, "The Mission of the Church for Deaf People in Latvia", "Non-confessional Congregations in Latvia", "Influence of the Church in the Political Sphere of Latvia in the Context of Recognition of Same-Sex Relationships", etc.

The Bachelor's thesis are defended in the presence of a commission, which evaluates in detail the scientific and methodological contribution of the work. Each member of the commission individually evaluates the quality of the work, assessing it with a mark. In particular, the reviewer's assessment of the paper is respected. The final evaluation is formed as a result of the discussions of the commission, taking into account the individual assessment of each member of the commission.

The evaluations of the final papers during the reporting period can be found in Figure 14.

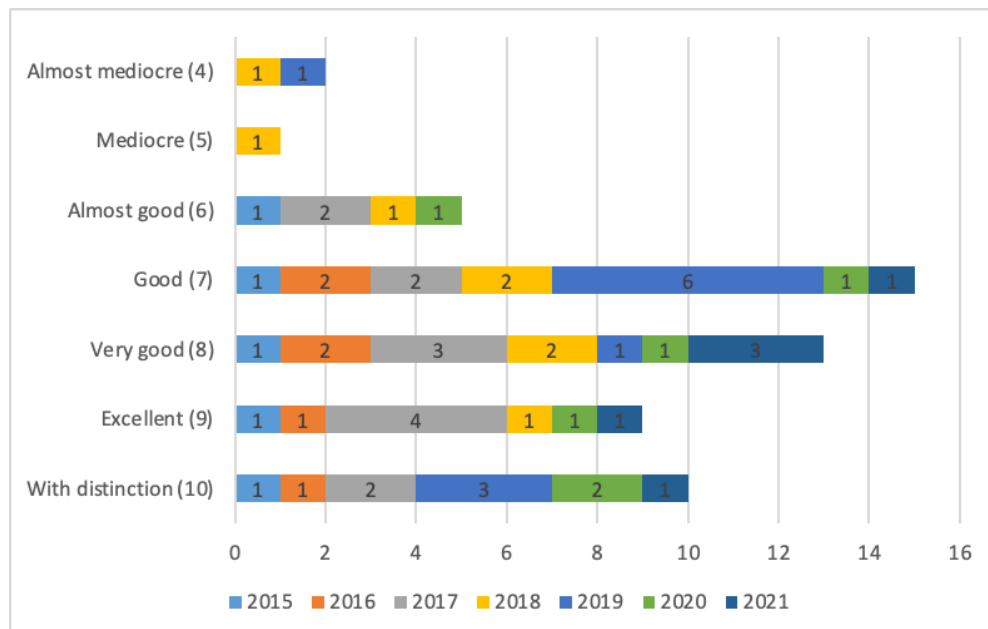


Figure 14. Bachelor's

thesis evaluation, 2015-2021.

Figure 14 shows that students' works are evaluated with very different marks, which indicates the application of objective assessment criteria and the high requirements for the final work. Average evaluation of final papers during the reporting period: 8,33 (2021); 8,33 (2020); 7,63 (2019); 6,75 (2018); 8,15 (2017); 7,85 (2016); 8 (2015).

Rating scale: 10 (with distinction), 9 (excellent), 8 (very good), 7 (good), 6 (almost good), 5 (satisfactory), 4 (almost satisfactory). Fail ratings: 3 (unsatisfactory), 2 (satisfactory), 1 (satisfactory).

It is a very positive phenomenon that almost every year there are studies that the Commission evaluates as "outstanding", for example, "The Concept of Searching and Finding the Kingdom of Heaven in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount" (2021), "The Motive of the Flood in the Second Temple Judaism Texts about the Fallen Angels" (2020), "Influence of the Perception of God's Image on the Acceptance of Child's Terminal Condition in the Context of Palliative Care of Children's Oncology" (2020), "Theology of The Logos of Alexandria Clement in the Context of Platonic Tradition" (2019), "Christian Atheism: Theology of "The Death of God" and its Interpretation in the Netherlands"(2017), "C. G. Jung's "Quaternary Theology"" (2016), etc.

Each year, the papers that have received the highest excellence rating -10 points receive an honourable award from the Rector of the University of Latvia.

3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

3.3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples.

The study base, informative base, material and technical base and financial base correspond to the specifics of the study programme, the conditions for implementation, create environment for achieving study results and testify to the possibility to ensure a high-quality study process in the future.

Since the last accreditation, we have worked on further improvement of the study, science, material and information base.

The students of the BSP have access to regularly updated library resources (incl. e-resources, databases, etc.) according to each of traditional sub-fields of theology and religious studies, as well as the latest research. The academic staff cooperates with the Library of the University of Latvia to make purchases of the most important and up-to-date literature, as well as to choose the best databases to subscribe to. Both the students and the lecturers have access to monographs, publications and periodicals from the most important fields. The most important literature required in the study courses can be found in the library of the UL in several copies, or it can be ordered in a short notice. In some study courses, e.g. "Methodology of the New Testament Exegesis", the scientifically critical source editions of ancient texts "Novum Testamentum Graece, ed. XXVII and ed. XXVIII" (>30 copies), as well as synopses, concordances and dictionaries are available in the library for all the participants of the study course for use throughout the term (including examination periods). This is also possible in other study courses, where independent use of sources or compendiums is required. The library offers computers for work, and free WiFi is available to students in all premises of the faculty and the UL, which ensures the use of electronic resources during classes. The pandemic has contributed to the fact that, if necessary, all the BSP study courses can also be implemented remotely, online, the *MS Teams* integrated in the UL system.

We have purposefully worked on equipping the premises with appropriate technical solutions. Useful boards, equipment have been purchased, 2 stationary projectors installed in 2 classrooms. During the study process, 3 well-equipped classrooms are constantly available, as well as rooms located in the building belonging to other faculties or the UL.

The students have the opportunity to participate in the international student (ERASMUS) exchange programme, as well as with the attracting financial resources of the UL and projects, it is possible to participate in various research and educational activities. Among examples can be mentioned "the Student Plein Air 2022", which was organized in Cēsis, the annual research expeditions through the sacred sites and objects of Latvia, the Student "Awkward Reports" marathon, which also rises interest in other faculties and sectors of the UL (students from other fields participate in it with their research). The students have the opportunity to publish the best research reports in the scientific publication "Ceļš/The Way".

A detailed assessment is provided in 2.3.1.- 2.3.3 sub-paragraph of 3. paragraph of part II.

3.3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific base support, including the resources provided within the framework of cooperation with other science institutes and higher education institutions (applicable to doctoral study programmes) (if applicable).

3.3.3. Indicate data on the available funding for the corresponding study programme, its

funding sources and their use for the development of the study programme. Provide information on the costs per one student within this study programme, indicating the items included in the cost calculation and the percentage distribution of funding between the specified items. The minimum number of students in the study programme in order to ensure the profitability of the study programme (indicating separately the information on each language, type and form of the study programme implementation).

Revenues of the programme

To ensure the necessary funds for the implementation of the study programme “Theology and religion studies”, the University of Latvia uses:

1.a state budget grant from the Ministry of Education and Science, which in the academic year 2021./2022 is set at 1633.53 EUR for full-time studies.

2. tuition fee, taking into account all the factors referred to in the section “Financial support”, which in the academic year 2021/2022 is set as follows:

- EUR 2200 per year for full-time studies;

Taking into account the above mentioned, the total budget of the study programme is expected to be 97 767 EUR per year, the data are shown in Table 18.

Table 18. Estimated annual income of the programme, EUR

Type of study	Number of students	Tuition fee/ state grant	Total income
FTS (budget)	50	1 634	81 667
FTS (fee)	7	2 200	15 400
Total	57		97 076.5

Programme costs

In order to estimate the amount of funds required for financial provision, the cost of study programmes at the University of Latvia is calculated according to the methodology developed by the University of Latvia, which takes into account the costs of providing the study process and information on the study programme plan, reliability of forecasts

The full-time study programme costs

For calculations, the implementers of the study programme “Theology and Religious Studies” use students data of the academic year 2020/2021 - 67 students study in the programme at the FTS, (the state subsidy - 50 students, the subsidy of the University of Latvia -10 students, tuition fee - 7 students), the existing/planned study programme plan after accreditation and the existing/planned structure of the involved academic staff. Taking into account the above, the estimated full-time cost per full-time student of the program is EUR 2 258 per year, and the total cost of the program is EUR 151 286 per year. In addition, after calculation of infrastructure costs, goods, services and indirect costs in proportion to revenue, the costs are EUR 131 125 per year, EUR 1 957.09 per student. A more detailed percentage cost breakdown is shown in Table 19.

Table 19. Percentage breakdown of costs in the study programme.

Expenditure item	% of total
Teacher costs	46,53
General staff	16,34
Other payments	0,00
Infrastructure expenditure	11,10
Property and services	0,03
Indirect costs	26,00
TOTAL COSTS	100%

Figure 15 shows the cost of the study programme depending on the number of students and a comparison with the offered tuition fee and the state budget grant.

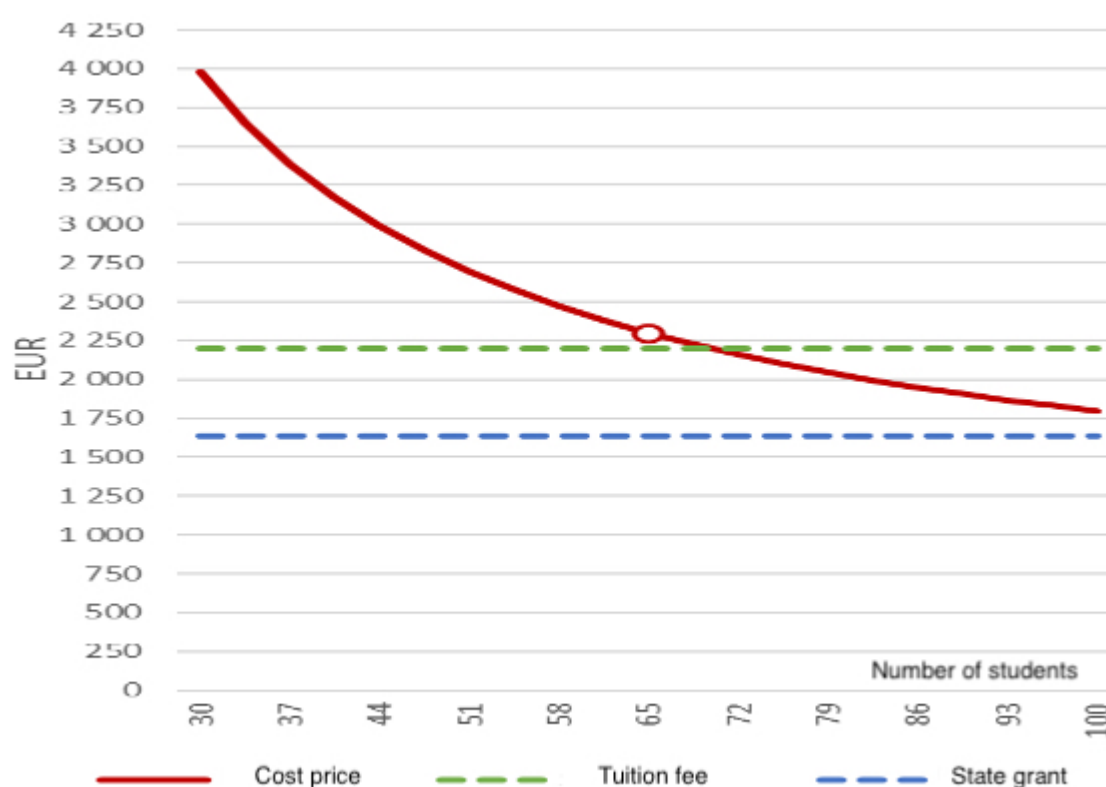


Figure 15. Cost per student enrolled for the programme "Theology and Religious studies"

Based on the calculation, it can be seen that for the programme to be profitable and provide students with a quality study process, the number of tuition students in the programme (all courses combined) must be at least 65 (intersection of red (cost) and green (tuition) lines projected on the x-axis), i.e. the stated tuition fee is close to cost price.

Summary of the revenue and expenditure of the programme.

Table 20 summarizes the programme revenue based on the number of students, state grants and tuition fees, and the programme expenses for such number of students.

Table 20. The result of the programme.

Type of study	Number of students	Tuition fee/state subsidy	Total income	Total cost
FTS (budget)	50	1 633,53	81 667	117 425
FTS (fee)	7	2 200	15 400	13 700
Total	57		97 077	131 125

The data presented in the table clearly show that in order to ensure the profitability of the study programme it is necessary to increase the number of students. TF plans to increase the number of fee-paying students by 8 in the next 5 years. Until a positive result is achieved, the programme additionally can be financed from the revenues received from lifelong education and other services, as well as from the financial resources accumulated by the structural unit. The faculty also receives financial support for the development of programs from the common funds of the LU. These sources of additional funding are stable and can be counted on in the long term.

The FT receives an internal grant from the University of Latvia for the implementation of study programmes. In 2021, it amounts to EUR 30 509. Annual financial support of EUR 12 000 for the implementation of the FT study programmes is also provided by the 'Zentrum für Mission und Ökumene — Nordkirche Weltweit' (Mission and Ecumenical Centre of the Northern Church of Germany). In 2021, this support was increased to EUR 17 000.

3.4. Teaching Staff

3.4.1. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members (academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

21 lecturers (13 with doctoral degree, 8 with Master's degree; 6 are professors and 4 are assistant professors) are involved in the implementation of the Bachelor's study programme "Theology and Religious Studies", and their qualification fully complies with the requirements of regulatory enactments, including the requirements of [Section 55 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions](#): "Not less than five professors and associate professors together who have been elected to the academic positions in the relevant higher education institution shall participate in the implementation of the compulsory and restricted elective part of academic study programmes,

except for the cases provided for in Paragraph two of this Section".

Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programme with the requirements set for the study programme implementation and the regulatory enactments

Table 21. The lecturers involved in the BSP, 2021.

No	Name, surname	Degree	Position
1.	Ralfs Kokins	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Professor
2	Valdis Tēraudkalns	<i>Dr. phil</i>	Professor
3.	Dace Balode	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Professor
4.	Laima Geikina	<i>Dr. paed., Dr. theol.</i>	Professor
5.	Normunds Titāns	<i>Dr. phil.</i>	Professor
6.	Riho Altnurme	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Guest professor
7.	Elizabete Taivāne	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Ass. professor
8.	Janis Rudzītis-Neimanis	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Ass. professor
9.	Andris Priede	<i>Dr. hist.</i>	Ass. professor
10.	Juris Cālītis	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Ass. professor
11.	Olga Petrova	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Researcher
12.	Ilze Jansone	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Teacher
13.	Astra Dannenfelte	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Teacher
14.	Ģirts Rozners	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Lecturer
15.	Ilze Stikāne	<i>M. theol.</i>	/ Researcher
16.	Vilis Kolms	<i>M. theol.</i>	Teacher
17.	Laura Liberte	<i>M. psych.</i>	Teacher
18.	Jānis Plaudis	<i>M. philol.</i>	Lecturer
19.	Alda Vāczemniece	<i>M. philol.</i>	Lecturer
20.	Rota Stone	<i>M. theol.</i>	Assistant
21.	Nils Konstantinovs	<i>M. theol.</i>	Scientific assistant

Out of 21 lecturers **14** have the academic position, 3 have scientific position as permanent job (in addition, 4 lecturers are invited to teach individual study courses). 10 or 71% of the 14 academic staff additionally have a scientific position. High-level academic staff and guest lecturers are involved in the implementation of the BSP, of which 62% have a Doctorate, all lecturers have considerable practical work experience in the fields of theology, religious studies and related fields (ancient languages, psychology, ethics, etc.).

Several lecturers serve as pastors in Latvian congregations (Prof. R. Kokins, Prof. D. Balode, Ass. prof. J. Cālītis, Ass. Prof. A. Priede, lecturer Ģ. Rozners). A large number of lecturers have acquired academic education abroad, thus creating opportunities to expand the use of international experience in the study process. The teaching staff actively participate in a variety of scientific conferences, research projects, local and international organizations. This experience allows for the achieve of the results of the studies - to create a study environment that is student-centred, focused on the development of individual research skills in students, oriented towards the motivation of students to learn throughout their lives.

The lecturers of the programme use the opportunity to gain international experience also in the *Erasmus+* programme (see Figure 16).

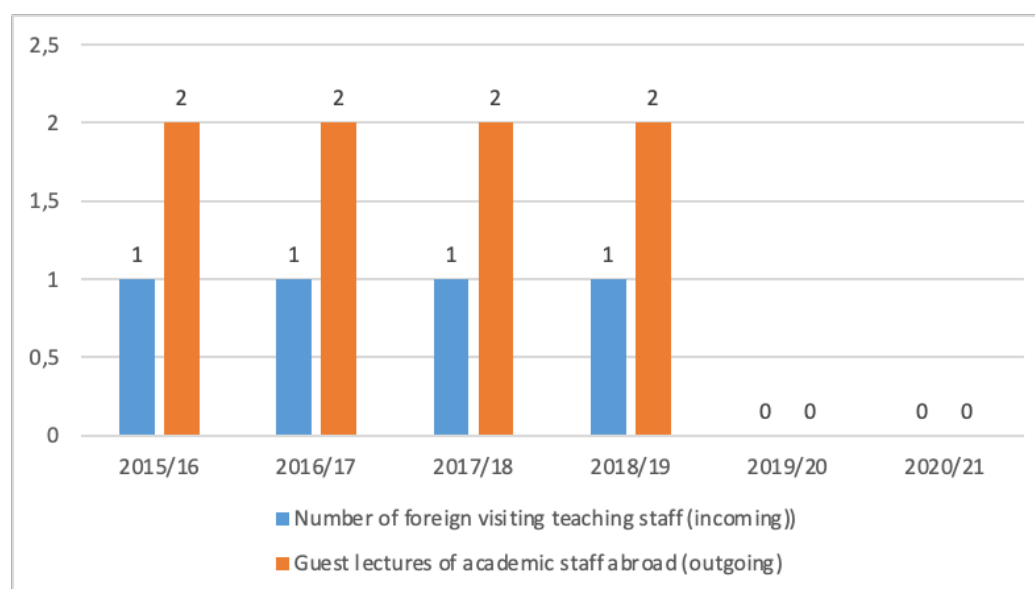


Figure 16. Mobility of the lecturers involved in the BSP, 2017-2021.

Figure 16 shows that an average of 2 FT lecturers gain international experience per year, and the students have the opportunity to listen to lectures by individual guest lecturers from abroad. 2020./2021. Mobility in 2020/2021 has been affected by COVID-19. Within the framework of the cooperation project, 3 professors from the USA - prof. *Miller-McLemore Wayne Jean*, prof. *Miller-McLemore Wayne Mark*, prof. *Budwey Stephanie* – have conducted seminars and delivered guest lectures.

As a positive trend has to be noted the long-term attraction of foreign lecturers in the Bachelor's programme. For example, Prof. Altnurme is one of the leading church historians in Europe, therefore his contribution to the development of the programme is very important.

In general the quality of the performance of the teaching staff has been assessed by the students as very good during the reporting period. This is evidenced by the surveys carried out during the reporting period, and individual examples can be found in Table 22.

Table 22. Assessment of the lecturers involved in BSP, spring semester, data from 2020 survey (in scale 1-10)

Course code	Number of students who completed the survey	Average estimate	Content rating	Assessment of the lecturer's performance
Teol1054	14	6.17	6.43	5.97
Teol1010	8	6.30	6.34	6.22
Teol1034	7	6.71	6.8	6.63
Teol2105	17	5.63	5.54	5.7
Teol2122	9	6.45	6.48	6.42
Valo1823	8	5.98	6.39	5.64
Valo2678	17	6.84	6.86	6.82
Teol2042	7	6.50	6.57	6.43
Teol2018	9	6.47	6.38	6.54
Teol1149	9	6.36	6.58	6.19
Teol1028	14	5.92	5.82	6
Teol1055	16	6.46	6.44	6.48
Teol2030	10	6.51	6.63	6.4
Teol1028	16	4.82	4.77	4.83
Teo4008	7	6.62	6.74	6.53
Teol4010	9	6.07	6.47	5.73
Teol1026	15	5.68	5.69	5.7

The results show that the assessment of the teaching staff in most cases is above 5.00. In their comments, students have been most appreciative of the erudition and charisma of the teaching staff, the ability to present the content in an exciting, understandable and systematic way, a methodical approach that facilitates the acquisition of the study content. Ratings below 5.00 are rare, they have been found in individual study courses of some lecturers. The criticism relates to the methodology of the presentation, its compliance with the content to be studied, chaotic presentation, as well as communication problems. It is important to note that Covid-19 restrictions and online studies have not reduced the assessment of lecturers.

Compared to other academic years, the situation has not changed significantly.

3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.

During the reporting period, no significant changes in the composition of the lecturers have taken place, however, the tendency to attract new colleagues, including doctoral students of the FT, who have presented themselves as excellent researchers and professionals of their field, should be evaluated very positively. An example of good practice is activity of G. Rozners (study course "Theological Traditions and Theologians"), I. Stikāne (study course "Introduction to Studies and Methodology of Scientific Work"), N. Konstantinovs (study course "Aesthetic Theology"). It is also important to attract professionals from the fields related to the theology and study of religions. It should be mentioned here, for example, the lectures delivered by L. Liberte in the study course "Introduction to Psychology for Theologians", which have obtained a very high evaluation of the students in surveys. Attracting foreign lecturers plays an important role in the purposes of internationalisation, and lectures taught by the internationally recognized religious historian Prof. R. Altnurme (Estonia) should be mentioned as good practice here.

The renewal of the teaching staff has led to improvements in the following respects:

- the content of the study programme improved, aligning it with the development needs of the field;
- development, improvement and implementation of e-solutions in the study process has been improved;
- innovative teaching methods have been introduced.

This has led to significant improvements in the quality of studies.

The teaching staff of the BSP cooperate in preparing descriptions of study courses, creating courses in the e-environment, working in research fields and projects. The teaching staff work together in research branches, where, under the guidance of a coordinator of the research branch, on the study of the identified issues and the compilation of their results, the preparation of publications and reports. In order to promote cooperation of the teaching staff in the organised for quality improvement events, international events and also at informal events, common tasks shall be organised. The proportion of the students and the academic staff in the study programme is (67/21) 3.19.

3.4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members, involved in the implementation of doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals or peer-reviewed monographs may be additionally specified. Information on the teaching staff included in the database of experts of the Latvian Council of Science in the relevant field of science (total number, name of the lecturer, field of science in which the teaching staff has the status of an expert and expiration date of the Latvian Council of Science expert) (if applicable).

3.4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).

3.4.5. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study programme and study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).

Compared to the previous accreditation period, targeted measures were taken to promote cooperation between the teaching staff, as a result we have created a cohesive, collegial and creative environment for the achievement of the programme's tasks and objectives, and excellent mutual cooperation has developed among the teaching staff. The Bachelor's study programme "Theology and Religious Studies" employs a total of 14 members of academic staff (elected to academic positions), all professionals in their field. Collegial relationships, daily academic work and involvement in joint scientific research projects have significantly contributed to the progress of student-oriented processes and improvement of the quality of studies, the exchange of the latest knowledge, the improvement of the courses and the consecutive interrelation of the course content. In the shared process of study and research, the exchange of the most current theoretical knowledge takes place, as well as the transfer of valuable experience and methodological skills. For example, we have observed positive results of cooperation both in scientific work of the teaching staff and students as better quality, as well as in communication with other branches of science and society about the results of research. The cooperation of teaching staff is purposefully promoted by the programme director, the council of the study field, as well as the administration of the faculty-regular feedback from teaching staff and students is received, information is analyzed and discussed by purposefully coordinating the study and scientific work process. The issues of the study process are discussed in individual conversations with the director of the programme, as well as are regularly examined by the Council of the Study Field.

The cooperation of the teaching staff is also developed in the form of special meetings of the lecturers, where the content of the study programme, academic and pedagogical issues, the reflection of the latest research in study courses, as well as the involvement of students in research processes are discussed.

Meetings of the teaching staff on strategic development plans of the programme and study courses, updating and improvement of the content of the courses, as well as on the more efficient sequence of study courses in the programme (so as not to duplicate the content, methods are acquired in the best succession, etc.) are held regularly. Following the changes in regulatory enactments, discussions of the lecturers are organized also in smaller groups, reviewing the parts of the content

of study courses. Often meetings are held under the guidance of the programme directors, the head of the field or the dean in order to discuss the current issues.

Within the framework of the study programme, the lecturers also cooperate within the framework of the implementation of the content of study courses, improvement of the study content and process, as well as actively participate in the self-assessment process of the study programme. Feedback analysis is essential, based on the annual surveys of the students for each individual study course, lecturer, as well as study programme as a whole. Certain corrections have been made to the study programme, the content of the study courses has been updated, as well as the methodology of academic and pedagogical work has been analysed with individual lecturers. The lecturers also regularly attend further education and professional development courses according to recommendations and current needs.

The ratio of the number of students and lecturers in the Bachelor study programme is 4.78 (67:14); according to the full-time equivalent, the ratio of students and lecturers in the Bachelor's study programme is 18.6 (67:3.6 as of 01.10.2021)*.

*3.6 = PLE (Teachers Full Time Equivalent); 67 = number of students in the program.

Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	Annex_12_1_Bachelor_diploma.docx	12_1_pielikums_Bakalaura_diploms.docx
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)	Annex_13_Decision_Council of Higher Education.docx	13_pielikums_AIP_atzinums_BSP_MSP.docx
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	Annex_14_BSP_Statistics_students_reporting_period.docx	14_pielikums_statistika_studejosie_BSP.docx
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard	Annex_15_BSP_Compliance of the study programmes with the State education standard.docx	15_pielikums_BSP_atbilstiba_izglitiba_standarts.docx
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	Annex_16_Mapping_study courses_BSP.docx	16_pielikums_BSP_kursu_kartejums.docx
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	Annex_19_BSP_study_plan.docx	19_pielikums_BSP_plans.docx
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	Courses_BSP.docx	studiju_kursi_apraksti_BSP.docx
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)		
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)	Annex_23_2_HEAD_OF_STUDY_FIELD_DECLARATION_LHEI_sect_55.docx	23_2_pielikums_Apliecinajums_atbilstiba_Augstskolu_lhk_55_pants_1_3_d.docx

Theology and Religious Studies (45221)

Study field	<i>Religion and Theology</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Theology and Religious Studies</i>
Education classification code	<i>45221</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>Academic master study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Valdis</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Tēraudkalns</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>valdis.teraudkalns@lu.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Dr.phil.</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>+371 29552398</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>The objective of the Master's study programme "Theology and Religious Studies" is to prepare students for independent scientific research in the selected sub-branch of theology or religious studies.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<i>1. To create an inclusive study environment in which students have the opportunity to develop scientific thinking;</i> <i>2. To help students develop skills for applying of theories and methodologies of theology and religious studies in an interdisciplinary context;</i> <i>3. To provide support for the development of students' communication and learning skills.</i>
Results of the study programme	<p><i>Knowledge:</i></p> <i>1. Critically understands theories and methodological principles of the fields of theology and religious studies and the theories and methodological principles of individual disciplines;</i> <i>2. Critically understands applicability of acquired and newly created knowledge in an interdisciplinary context;</i> <i>3. Knows methodologies and methods of theology and religious studies and other disciplines according to the objectives of his/her research.</i>

Skills:

- 1. Independently selects and correctly uses methodologies and methods of the study according to his/her research objectives.*
- 2. Independently able to determine research topics that complement knowledge and debates in fields of theology and religious studies;*
- 3. Reasoned and fact-based discussions on the issues of theology and religious studies;*

Competence:

- 1. Critically analyses religious phenomena in a broader cultural and socio-political context;*
- 2. Demonstrates a critical and innovative approach to theology and religious studies;*
- 3. Assumes responsibility for the results of independently implemented research, independently carries out research in theology and religion studies.*

Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	<i>Master's thesis</i>
--	------------------------

Study programme forms

Full time studies - 2 years - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	<i>2</i>
Duration in month	<i>0</i>
Language	<i>latvian</i>
Amount (CP)	<i>80</i>
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Previous education: the Bachelor's degree Entrance examination for the applicants who have not acquired the previous education in humanities</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Master's degree of Humanities in Religion and Theology</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	<i>-</i>

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
University of Latvia	RĪGA	RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050

3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

3.1.1. Description and analysis of changes in the parameters of the study programme made since the issuance of the previous accreditation form of the study field or issuance of the study programme license, if the study programme is not included on the accreditation form of the study field, including changes planned within the evaluation procedure of the study field evaluation procedure.

The Master's study programme includes courses that cover the development of 19th - 21st century theology and its sub-branches, as well as the development of different denominations (e.g., Orthodoxy) and religions (e.g., Buddhism and Islam). Master's studies at the Faculty of Theology offer such courses: interreligious dialogue, New Testament hermeneutics, classical and contemporary philosophy of religion, Latin, and others.

Special attention is devoted to the development of individual research interests and acquisition of skills, which results in the development of Master's thesis.

The programme also focuses on improving effective communication and leadership skills, taking advantage of technological progress to support the design of new knowledge for students and to promote the development of digital literacy in society.

Indicators characterizing the study programme

The Academic Master's study programme "Theology and Religious Studies".

The code of the study programme according to the Latvian education classification: 45221

Scientific Degree: The Master's degree of Humanities in Theology and Religious Studies

The duration and extent of implementation of the study programme (CP): 2 years; 80 creditpoints/120 ECTS.

The type and form of implementation of the study programme: full-time.

The language of implementation of the study programme: Latvian.

Changes in the parameters of the study programme

The title of the degree to be obtained has been changed during the reporting period. Previously the title was Master's degree in theology and religious science of humanities, now the title is Master's degree in religion and theology of humanities. The degree is adapted to the title of the study field (religion and theology). The changes were made in accordance with the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers, which regulate the degree awarded in the study program, that is, regulations no. 240 On the state standard of academic education and regulations no. 322 On the classification of education in Latvia.

Admission to the studies is possible after obtaining a bachelor's degree in any field, admission requirements are supplemented with an entrance exam for applicants who have not obtained their previous education in the humanities.

The aim of the programme has been clarified (see below), including religious studies, because in addition to theology the students also have courses related to religious research and during the reporting period more attention has been paid to acquisition of than before.

In 2021, a decision was made to apply for changes in the accreditation process to change the name of the study programme, replacing "Theology" with "Theology and Religious Studies". The change of name is justified by the extension of the content of the study programme and the increase in the importance of research activities within the framework of the study programme. In line with the change of the title and improvement of the study content, the purpose, tasks, as well as certain details of the admission rules of the MSP have also been changed.

During the reporting period, the following changes were made to the study programme: in Part A, the course "Hermeneutics of the New Testament" was replaced with the course "Hermeneutics of the Scriptures", which is broader in content than the previous one. It gives the opportunity to get acquainted with the scriptures of different religions. Thus, it is related to the goal of the Master's study programme - to expand the range of religious study courses.

The course "Eastern Churches: History and Theology", which until now has been offered as an optional course, is included in Part A, replacing the course "Relevant Topics in St. Augustine's Theology", which is now included in Part B. Thus, the courses with a wider range of topics are consistently included in Part A, specialized courses – in Part B.

Since the previous accreditation, the study plan includes new courses in Part B: "Greek, Roman Mythology and Religion", "Eastern Religious Art and Architecture", "History of Christian Churches in the 20th century", "Koran", etc. Due to changes in legislation, the courses "Civil Protection" and "Environmental Protection" (for those students who have not acquired it at Bachelor's level) have been introduced.

A number of courses have been closed (e.g., "Lutheran Theology", "Theology of Death", "Theological German I, II, III", "Anthropology of Religion"), because they were courses taught by particular visiting lecturers, they overlapped with courses of other study programmes or did not meet the objectives of the study programme.

3.1.2. Analysis and assessment of the study programme compliance with the study field. Analysis of the interrelation between the code of the study programme, the degree, professional qualification/professional qualification requirements or the degree and professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements. Description of the duration and scope of the implementation of the study programme (including different options of the study programme implementation) and evaluation of its usefulness.

The title of the MSP corresponds to the two areas in which students can specialise – theology and religious studies. This also corresponds to the degree to be obtained and the study results related to both theology and religious studies. The admission requirements state that the entrance negotiations will confirm whether the applicants from another field have sufficient knowledge in the field "Religion and Theology". Thus, it will be ensured that all students are able to participate in the study programme to the same extent. All the lecturers have degrees obtained in the relevant field (L. Geikina has two doctoral degrees – in pedagogy and theology), except J. Plaudis, who has a degree in philology, but it corresponds to the tasks of the programme, because he specializes in the ancient languages essential to Christianity (Latin and Ancient Greek). The scope of the study programme allows to acquire courses related to all sub-branches of the field within the framework of the programme.

Studiju programmas kods atbilst complies with Regulations Regarding the Classification of Education in Latvia (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju> - (only in Latvian)) See section "Humanities and the arts."

The duration of the programme is sufficient, as it has been proven over a number of years that it is possible to acquire the necessary courses of Part A in theology and religious studies within two years, as well as offer a sufficient number of optional courses. Majority of students work, so the duration of study is the most acceptable for them.

Objective of the study programme

The objective of the Master's study programme "Theology and Religious Studies" is to prepare students for independent scientific research in the selected sub-branch of theology or religious studies.

Tasks of the study programme

1. To create an inclusive study environment in which students have the opportunity to develop scientific thinking;
2. To help students develop skills for applying of theories and methodologies of theology and religious studies in an interdisciplinary context;
3. To provide support for the development of students' communication and learning skills.

Study outcomes

Knowledge:

1. Critically understands theories and methodological principles of the fields of theology and religious studies and the theories and methodological principles of individual disciplines;
2. Critically understands applicability of acquired and newly created knowledge in an interdisciplinary context;
3. Knows methodologies and methods of theology and religious studies and other disciplines according to the objectives of his/her research.

Skills:

1. Independently selects and correctly uses methodologies and methods of the study according to his/her research objectives.
2. Independently able to determine research topics that complement knowledge and debates in fields of theology and religious studies;
3. Reasoned and fact-based discussions on the issues of theology and religious studies;

Competence:

1. Critically analyses religious phenomena in a broader cultural and socio-political context;
2. Demonstrates a critical and innovative approach to theology and religious studies;
3. Assumes responsibility for the results of independently implemented research, independently carries out research in theology and religion studies.

Interrelationship and achievement of the objective, tasks and study outcomes

The Master's study programme is aimed at the training of specialists in fields related to religious studies and analysis of current events or processes (in higher education institutions, institutes, the media), administration (in state and local government institutions, in religious and non-governmental organisations) and practice (in churches and other religious organisations - in the areas of mental care, support and growth), as well as religious education and the provision of universal services (e.g., medical support persons in health care, providers of mental care and support in the field of social services, etc.). The programme focuses on the transformable skills

acquired previously by students to develop Master's level knowledge and skills in the field of theology and religious studies, thus increasing the applicability of their previously acquired education and offering better prospects the future career.

Most of the study courses are intended to promote an understanding of creative thinking based on a holistic approach and to ensure practical work, evaluating the development and applicability of creative ideas in professional activities.

The objective of preparing specialists is also matched by the task set in the study programme, which supports the development of researcher's competences. The outcomes of the programme shall be consistent with the objective and tasks pursued. The mutual linking of the study results has been assessed by mapping study results (see annex "Results of Master's study programme mapping"). The graduates of the programme are able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of theories and concepts of theology and religious research, they are familiar with modern research methods, are able to independently plan, organize, perform and conduct research in theology and religious studies, to contribute to the creation of new knowledge and solve professional tasks of practical character.

The aim of the programme is measurable, it is provided by the feedback from the students and the graduates, as well as recommendations of employers. The programme also provides for an internal quality assessment system, special attention devoting to the analysis of students' opinion. The participation of students in the evaluation of the quality of the study process is determined not only by the guidelines of education policy in the creation of a single European higher education and research area (ENQA, 2009), but mainly by the necessary changes in the pedagogical culture of the university, which is characterized by the transition from a subject-oriented study process to a student-centred approach to it. In the student-centred study process, students are not only participants in the study process at the university, but also interested and active its creators and evaluators.

Admission requirements

The programme admits people who meet the following criteria:

Previous education: the Bachelor's degree or the second level professional higher education, or equivalent higher education;

The formula for calculating the evaluation of the competition: weighted average mark ($60 \times 10 = 600$) + total (or average) mark of the final examinations ($40 \times 10 = 400$);

The applicants who have not acquired the previous education in humanities, shall participate in the entrance discussions, in which the conformity of knowledge for the studies in religion and theology at the Master's level are found out.

The graduates of the Bachelor's study programme of the University of Latvia have the right to apply for out-of-competition registration (<https://www.lu.lv/gribustudet/normative-dokumenti/uznemsanas-prasibas-un-kriteriji-augstaka-limena-studiju-programmas-20202021-akademiskaja-gada/> - (only in Latvian)).

Opportunities for continuing studies

After graduation, the graduates have the opportunity to participate in doctoral studies, acquiring new knowledge, developing scientific research skills, as well as international experience

3.1.3. Economic and/ or social substantiation of the study programme, analysis of

graduates' employment.

As global competition in higher education and science increases and at the same time the potential number of students in Latvia decreases, arises the need to create a flexible higher education system that is internationally open, widely accessible, of high quality, i.e., one that is able to meet the demand for specialists of the appropriate qualification in accordance with the development needs of the Latvian economy and the tendencies of the global education market, and at the same time promotes the personal growth of the individual and the development of society.

The content of the MSP, its methodological provision and sustainability derive from the general trends of the development of society. The most important changes in the structure of employment should be mentioned here. The Ministry of Economics informative report on medium and long-term labour market forecasts of the Republic of Latvia (<https://www.em.gov.lv/en/informative-report-medium-and-long-term-labour-market-forecasts-0>) states that labour demand is expected to diminish in low-skilled occupations and in such professions where uniform activities can be done by apparatus.

CEDEFOP prognoses: although the fastest growing profession in demand in Latvia will be various technical specialists, the need for many highly qualified professions, such as office administrators, training and ICT specialists, will also increase significantly. More than half of all job vacancies will require a high level of qualification by 2030 (<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/countries/latvia>)

Future professions are primarily based on so-called digital factors and the human factor, i.e., skills in working with data, artificial intelligence, new technologies, as well as skills that ensure successful process management and human interaction (in the areas of care, marketing, sales, etc.) will be in demand. General skills such as creativity, problem solving, negotiation management, critical thinking, teamwork skills, socio-emotional competence, intercultural communication skills, adaptability and control of changes will be relevant (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/324332-par-izglitiba-attistibas-pamatnostadnem-2021-2027-gadam>) - only in Latvian.

This suggests that the cross-sectoral knowledge and professional competences acquired at the Master's programme are an essential added value for ability to compete in the labour market and to hold middle or senior management positions, e.g., in theology, education, social care, welfare, and other sectors.

The graduates of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Latvia are employed in various fields of national economy. Since 1993, most of them have been employed as spiritual staff in various Christian churches/denominations in Latvia and abroad. A significant number of the graduates are employed in the public sector both in state and local government administrative institutions (State Education Development Agency, Ministry of Education and Science a member of the local self-government), in the field of health care (a chaplain service in various institutions in health care, military service and penitentiary system, mental health specialists), and education (educators, heads of educational institutions, academic staff of higher education institutions). During the reporting period, the graduates who are employees in the private sector mostly hold middle-level management positions as project, office, department managers. Part of graduates choose to become self-employed and/or entrepreneurs, which indicates the successful development of horizontal (*soft skills*) competences in the MSP.

Individual graduates choose to become housewives, which may indicate the self-exploring and self-development needs of the applicants in the areas of specific knowledge offered by the FT.

One of the most successful graduate stories is the career of Estere Tumoviča, who since 2021 has achieved the position of chief chaplain of the National Armed Forces. A socially significant contribution is the "Adolescent and Youth Psychotherapy Centre" Ltd., established by the graduate Nils Konstantinovs, which contributes to mitigating the consequences of COVID-19 for mental health of adolescents and young people. It is important to note the graduates employed by the FT in the academic and research field (Ģirts Rozners, Nils Konstantinovs, Ilze Stikāne, Nikita Andrejevs). This approach promotes academic approaches and content continuity. The graduates are also involved in the activities of other universities (Liene Sandalāne, *The Stockholm School of Economics in Riga*), as well as in institutions responsible for education policy (Katrīna Sudakova (State Quality Service of Education), Ivo Rode, Head of the Education, Culture and Sports Committee of Cesis Municipality Council). The FT continues its tradition by promoting a high-quality and competent generation of the spiritual staff of different Christian traditions.

3.1.4. Statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down into different study forms, types, and languages.

The dynamics of the number of students in MSP are shown in Figure 17.

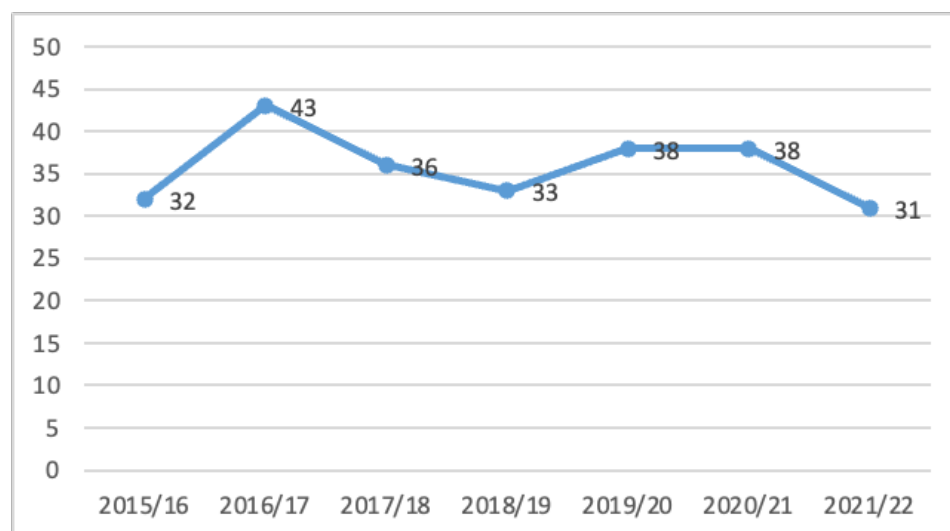


Figure 17. The dynamics of the number of students, 2015-2021.

Figure 17 demonstrates that the largest decrease in the number of students was in the academic year 2017/2018. Over the last 3 years, the number of students in the programme has not decreased significantly, and stability has been observed in terms of the number of students, despite the overall decrease in the number of students in Latvia. The stable number of students is explained by the quality of the content, which creates a positive image of the study programme in society, as well as the activities of the FT communication specialist in social networks advertising the programme, the increase in international recognition, positive communication of the teaching staff and the students, as well as other aspects should be positively evaluated.

Problems can be observed in terms of the number of graduates, which is influenced by the high drop-out rate of students (see Figure 18).

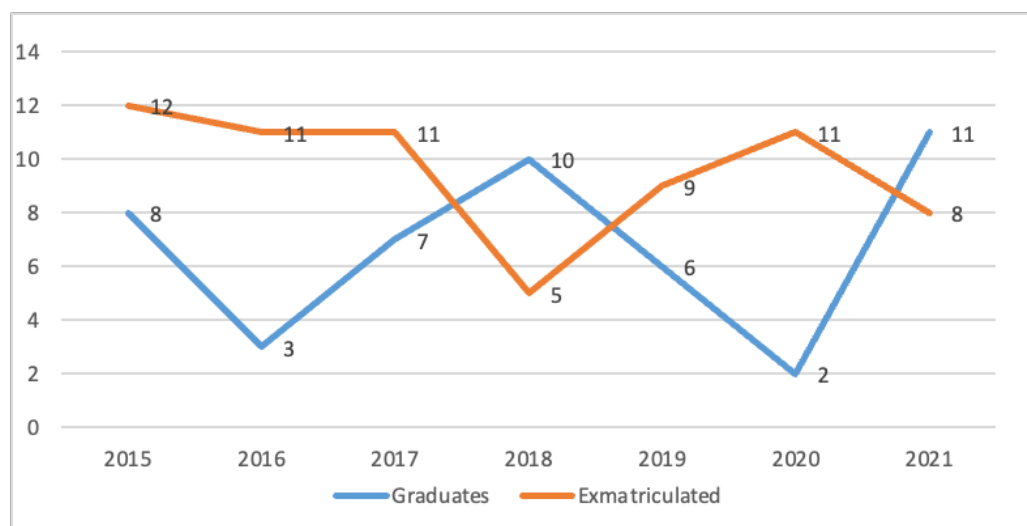


Figure 18. The number of the graduates and drop-outs of the programme, 2015-2021.

The main reason for the discontinuation of the studies during the reporting period was that almost all students work and they lack the motivation to combine studies with work duties. To improve the motivation, the FT has created an opportunity for the students to perform the requirements of study courses online by sending reports and answers to the seminar questions electronically. In the future, however, these opportunities would be balanced with the need to preserve studies as an interaction experience in the study group.

The small number of graduates, on the other hand, is explained by the drop-out rates and the sufficiently high requirements set in the study process.

The number of foreign students is small, as in previous years, there is a tendency for foreign students to choose separate study courses in the FT in addition to studies in other faculties.

3.1.5. Substantiation of the development of the joint study programme and description and evaluation of the choice of partner universities, including information on the development and implementation of the joint study programme (if applicable).

3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

3.2.1. Analysis of the content of the study programme. Assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators with the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study courses/ modules and compliance with the needs of the relevant industry, labour market and with the trends in science on how and whether the content of the study courses/ modules is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science.

Continuing the direction of the Bachelor's programme towards research, the Master's study programme will prepare students who are able to:

- carry out detailed research in the fields of theology and religious studies;
- present the results of their research;
- represent theology and religious studies in interdisciplinary academic dialogues and research;
- promote tolerance and openness to confessional, religious and cultural diversity by engaging in state, church and other bodies.

The study process is basically implemented in the form of lectures and seminars. During the seminars, students mostly analyse previously read scientific papers (mostly in English), comparing them with those of other scholars. A special focus in the programme is laid on the students' own presentations and research. Within the framework of separate courses, students have the opportunity to participate in study tours (in Kurzeme, border area in Latgale, Selonia, etc.). What was seen and heard during the visit is later analyzed together in classes. The programme is based on the principle of interdisciplinarity, looking at religion in a broader cultural and social context, therefore the programme is also open to students whose previous education is not in theology and religious studies.

In the Master's study programme "Theology and Religious Studies" the students will acquire knowledge, skills and competences corresponding to level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

Analysis of the content of the study programme

The objective, tasks, results of the MSP shall be subordinated to the objective, tasks, results of the study field. The content is regularly monitored both at the level of the FT and the entire University of Latvia, following the updating of literature and other study resources, the inclusion of the latest scientific knowledge in the content, the development and improvement of transversal competences. The improvement of the content of the MSP during the reporting period has taken into account the recommendations of students, graduates and employers, as well as the international research experience of lecturers.

MSP consists of compulsory, restricted elective and optional courses totalling 80 CP (see Table 23).

Table 23. The content and structure of the Master's study programme "Theology and Religious Studies"

Structure	CP	ECTS
In total compulsory part	46	69
In total restricted elective part	32	48
In total optional part	2	3
Additional courses (not included in the programme's CP) Kīmi1059 (Civic Protection) un VidZ1032 (Environment Protection)	2	3

Total**80 120**

Master's study programme courses are divided into compulsory and optional courses. The courses are designed in such a way that students study both theology and religious studies in the compulsory part, these courses are comprehensive and serve as the basis for deeper acquisition of special (optional) courses, for example, "Sociology of Religion", "Current Problems of the Old Testament Theology", "Interreligious Dialogue", etc. The courses are designed according to the trends in contemporary theology and religious studies - interdisciplinarity (for example, the course "Theology and Practice"), analysis of religious ideas in a social and political context (for example, the course "Political Theology"), globalization and contextualization of religions (for example, the course "Sociology of Religion"). Master's thesis students write about the topic of their choice. The study programme includes the acquisition of deep knowledge and methodology in theology and religious studies in the field of study courses (see Table 24).

Table 24. The list of courses of the Master's study programme "Theology and Religious Studies "

No	Course title	CP	ECTS
Compulsory (A) part		46	69
1.	Teol5126 Eastern Churches: History and Theology	2	3
2.	Teol5167 Hermeneutics of Scriptures	4	6
3.	Teol5102 Interreligious dialogue (seminar)	4	6
4.	Teol5114 Theology and Praxis	4	6
5.	Teol5086 Sociology of Religion	2	3
6.	Teol5103 Current Issues in the Old Testament	4	6
7.	Teol5050 Methodology of Scientific Research	2	3
8.	Teol5099 Problems in Theology	4	6
9.	Teol6005 Master's thesis	20	30
Restricted electives (B) part		34	51
10.	Teol5129 Topical Themes of St. Augustine Theology	2	3
11.	Teol5126 Hagiography in the Church Tradition	2	3
12.	Teol5021 Worship in Corinth	2	3
13.	Teol5097 Development of Posthumous Life Perceptions in the Middle East	2	3
14.	Teol5088 Theodicy - God, Evil and Suffering	2	3

15.	Teol5112 Introductions in Phenomenology of Religion	2	3
16.	Teol5136 Eastern Religious Art and Architecture	2	3
17.	Teol5128 Religions in China	2	3
18.	Teol5107 Buddhism	2	3
19.	Teol5087 Theological Pluralism	2	3
20.	Teol5027 Rudolf Bultmann and Interpretation of the Bible in 20 c.	2	3
21.	Teol5076 Anthropology of Theology of P.Tillich	4	6
22.	Teol5127 Greek and Roman Mythology and Religion	2	3
23.	Valo5400 Seminar in Theological Latin I	4	6
24.	Valo6179 Seminar in Theological Latin II	4	6
25.	Teol5151 Theology of Covenant and Electability in the Old Testament	2	3
26.	Teol5104 Exegesis of the Book of Psalms	2	3
27.	Teol5098 Theology of Creation in the Old Testament	2	3
28.	Teol5079 Plato and Theology	2	3
29.	Teol5118 Postmodernism and Religion	2	3
30.	Teol5113 Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche's Religion	2	3
31.	Teol5000 Philosophy of Classical and Modern Religion	4	6
32.	Teol5035 Patristic - Anthropology of Ascetic Tradition	2	3
33.	Teol5089 The Dialogue of Christians and Pagans I - III c	2	3
34.	Teol5066 The Teaching and Religious Practice of the Islamic Faith	2	3

35.	Teol5124 Koran	2	3
36.	Teol5139 The History of Christian Churches in the 20th c	2	3
37.	The Apocrypha of the New Testament: Esoteric Gospels	2	3
38.	Teol5123 Exegesis of the New Testament: Gospel of John	2	3
39.	Teol5120 Exegesis of the New Testament: Epistle to Philippians	2	3
40.	Teol5101 Gender and Religion	4	6
41.	Teol6003 Political Theology	4	6
Additional courses (for those who have not taken them at the previous level of study)			
42.	Ḳīmi1059 Civil protection	1	1,5
43.	VidZ1032 Environment Protection	1	1,5
44.	Optional (C) part	2	3

Within the framework of the programme, 2 credit points are provided for students for optional (C) part study courses, which can be selected from courses offered by other faculties of the University of Latvia or other higher education institutions. The FT of the UL offers to choose part C courses for the students of other faculties. The provided part C courses can be completed without prior knowledge and are free of charge for the UL students. It is possible to apply for the courses during the registration week and the 1st week of semester at LUIS. If after attending the first classes of the course the student does not want to attend it, it is possible to change the optional course during this period. The offer of study courses changes every year.

The content of studies is designed to adhere to the principle of gradualness. Almost every study course requires research papers, developing scientific literacy, analytical skills, reasoning skills, public speaking competences, gradually directing students to the development of the Master's thesis, which is the main final component of the compulsory part (20 CP).

The courses are mostly delivered in the form of seminars and analytical discussions, based on systematic acquisition of literature on topical issues of the relevant field and implementing a student-centered approach. In order to increase the international dimension, foreign guest lecturers are regularly invited to read individual guest lectures.

The students are also able to use outbound and inbound mobility opportunities thus increasing their international research capacity; the content acquired during the mobility is recognised and aligned with the corresponding programme.

The study courses are harmonised and correspond to the tasks of the study programme to create a study environment for the improvement of students' independent learning skills, critical

understanding of theology and religious research. The study plan and content have been compared with other leading European universities offering similar programmes, and it is considered competitive. In addition, regular updating of the content is being done (based on the results of surveys of employers and students) in line with the development trends of society, which further increases the competitiveness of the students in the labour market.

3.2.2. In the case of master's and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation. In the case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels (if applicable).

Latvian and European society as a whole are currently facing many challenges, including changes in technology, globalisation, climate change, migration, economic and social exclusion and other aspects important for modern society. The rapid change in the global situation requires comprehensively informed, fast, creative and adaptable managers and employees of organisations from all sectors who are optimally able to find solutions to many of the above challenges. The global crisis has proved that, by taking decisions based solely on economic efficiency, the crisis is getting worse and therefore all situations need to be dealt with in a complex way, giving equal importance to both economic and social aspects.

It is strategically important that these specialists are able to fully implement the sustainable activities of the State, local government institutions, various types of organizations, as well as to ensure the development of society and organizations in accordance with the international interests of the State and society of Latvia.

The programme provides for the possibility to acquire deep knowledge, acquire practical skills and competences in the field of theology and religious research. The content and methods of the courses are related to modern trends, based on the experience gained in international cooperation with partners and practical activities of Germany, the Czech Republic, Finland and other countries (involvement of the lecturers and the students in practical classes in a real professional environment). A great emphasis in the programme is placed on independent studies and discussions about the acquired material, which promotes the formation of critical and creative thinking in students, as well as the improvement of research competences.

The lecturers who have obtained a doctoral or the Master's degree in theology or related fields of science are involved in the implementation of the MSP programme.

The lecturers involved in the programme are also experts of the Latvian Council of Science in the field of humanities and art sciences, Philosophy, ethics and religion:

- Prof.D. Balode (ORCID 0000-0001-8303-8466) - līdz 23.04.2023.
- Prof. L. Geikina – līdz 16.10.2022.
- Prof. V. Tēraudkalns (ORCID 0000-0003-2367-2398) - līdz 03.09.2023.

The MSP lecturers are also researchers in projects related to the study of the latest insights in the field, for example, Prof. D. Balode is the leading researcher in the project "Transformation of Religion and Theology in Modern Latvia in the Global Context I" (2016 - present); she was a leading expert in the ESF project "Development of Internationally Competitive and Promoting Latvian Economic Development Study Programmes at the University of Latvia" (01/05/2019 – 29/02/2020);

Prof. L. Geikina has experience as a leading researcher in the project "Religion and Gender Equality: Baltic and Nordic developments" (28/09/2020–26/10/2020), as the manager of the project "Feminist Discourse and Intersectionality in Theological studies: Academic Theology in Latvia -100"; as a leading researcher in the ERDF project "Interaction Between Theology and Practice in a Sustainable Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue". Project No. 1.1.1.2/VIAA/1/16/076/ (01/05/2016–31/10/2017); as a leading researcher "Activity No. 1.1.1.2. Postdoctoral research support, research project "Interactions between Theology and Practice in Sustainable Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue", project No. 1.1.1.2/VIAA/1/16/076/ (2017–2020); as a leading researcher in the project "Transformation of Religion and Theology in The Global Context of Modern Latvia I" (01/11/2016–31/12/2016); Prof. V. Tēraudkalns - as the leading researcher in the project "Transformation of Religion and Theology in Contemporary Latvia in the Global Context I" (03/12/2018 – present), which shows that the content of MSP is based on approbation of the latest insights and achievements of the branch.

3.2.3. Assessment of the study programme including the study course/ module implementation methods by indicating what the methods are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. In the case of a joint study programme, or in case the study programme is implemented in a foreign language or in the form of distance learning, describe in detail the methods used to deliver such a study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.

The acquisition of knowledge in the study programme includes lectures, practical examples, group tasks, interactive discussions, development of individual works and lectures of guest lecturers representing the field of theology and religious studies. Studies within the framework of the programme take place in working groups and self-study, which is an essential part of all courses of the programme. From students it requires intensive literature acquisition and development of practical work, active and analytical participation in discussions.

Computer work and other simulations, as well as role-playing and film studies are an integral part of the study process, for example, the participation of students in scientific conferences and seminars is stimulated. Although the programme is academic, the study process also includes elements of practical studies.

The study process is dominated by methods which require activities of the students. In the study process, methods are used that promote student communication in the performance of study tasks, solving real problems of the field, modeling study situations. The lecturers mostly use methods that encourage active participation, critical thinking and reflection of the students. The study process and the promotion of independent studies use the e-learning environment (*Moodle*).

Employers are involved in the implementation and improvement of study courses (they are invited to conduct individual seminar classes, often classes are organized as experience exchange visits to workplaces, etc.)

In order to promote the development of students' research competence, the students have the opportunity in sequential courses to analyse and study in detail the problems in the field they are interested in.

The study process respects the diversity of students' learning needs and styles by choosing pedagogical methods, promoting students' learning motivation, self-reflection and participation in study activities.

The knowledge, skills and competences determined in each study course are evaluated with different tests, observing the following *principles of student-centred education*:

- The teaching staff are familiar with the examination and testing methods that are most appropriate for the relevant course;
- Upon commencing the relevant study course, the students are informed about the assessment criteria and methods;
- The evaluation is consistent, fair and suitable for all students;
- The assessment provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate to what extent they have achieved the expected learning outcomes;
- The students receive feedback and advice in the learning process.

Various methods of evaluation of achievements, including creative and innovative, are used in study courses. The students have opportunities for self-examination - in the e-learning environment (self-examination questions are available in the form of a test). Interim examinations are organized in the form of tests, tasks and discussions - students must prepare answers to specific tasks, present them to other students, defend their opinion, answer other students' questions, critically evaluate the answers of other students and ask questions to other students.

The final examinations are designed as written or oral exams, as the development and presentation of research papers (including scientifically critical and contextual analysis of texts), as a presentation of a short field study. The students choose the theme of the Master's thesis (hence the research methods) depending on their specialisation in one of the sub-branches of the study field. In order to help the students, pre-representation is organized during the process of developing the thesis.

The Master's thesis are evaluated in accordance with the procedures for the development and defence of *"The final papers (Bachelor's, Master's thesis, diploma papers and qualification papers) of the University of Latvia"*. The evaluation of the final papers shall take place at a closed meeting of the final examination commission after hearing all the reports provided for in the meeting. The assessment is communicated to the students after the end of the meeting. In the evaluation of the final paper, the following are taken into account: the quality of work; the report of the author of the work (ability to present the performed research scientifically, concisely and reasoned, formulate conclusions, indicate further possible directions of the study); answers to the commission's questions and ability to discuss.

The quality of work is evaluated according to the following criteria approved by the FT Council:

- presentation of the theme (problems, the purpose and tasks);
- thesis of the paper and its expansion;
- compliance of the selected methodology with the presented study;
- development of the concept and the structure of the paper (content analysis and presentation logic);
- research and characterisation of the academic literature;
- technical accuracy of bibliography (indications, bibliography, footnotes, explanations, etc.);
- interpretation and expansion of the theme;
- conclusions and proof of the thesis formulated in the paper;
- novelty of the theme;
- defence and explanation of the paper.

In order to improve methods, regularly students' surveys are organized, which include questions about the methodological provision of study courses. The recommendations are respected and taken into account to improve the quality of the study process.

3.2.4. If the study programme envisages an internship, describe the internship opportunities offered to students, provision and work organization, including whether the higher education institution/ college helps students to find an internship place. If the study programme is implemented in a foreign language, provide information on how internship opportunities are provided in a foreign language, including for foreign students. To provide analysis and evaluation of the connection of the tasks set for students during the internship included in the study programme with the learning outcomes of the study programme (if applicable).

3.2.5. Evaluation and description of the promotion opportunities and the promotion process provided to the students of the doctoral study programme (if applicable).

3.2.6. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the marks of the final theses.

The aim of the Master's thesis is to carry out deeper research in one of the sub-branches of theology or religious research. The choice of the topic of the Master's thesis is determined by the relevance of the topic in the field, including in labour market, academic and/or professional interests of the student. The research is developed in close cooperation with the supervisor, inviting any of the FT teaching staff as consultants, if necessary. During the reporting period, at the end of the Master's study programme, the students have defended their research on a wide variety of topics, for example, analyzing the global experience: "Plants of God: The Use of Hashish and Hemp in Sufi Rituals", "Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Anthropodicy", "New Trends in *Dievturu* Worship in the 21st Century", "Martin Luther's Pedagogical Beliefs in the Context of 16th Century Education", "The Concept of "Messiah, the son of Joseph" in Paul 1 Corinthians 11:23-26," "The COVID-19 Crisis as a Catalyst to Spiritual Growth," "Hope and its Role in the Care of Seriously Ill Patients," etc. Many topics have been discussed in the context of Latvia, for example, "The Trends of the Salvation Army in Latvia in the Last Decade", "Lutheran Funeral Speeches in the Territory of Latvia in the 19th Century", "Women and Prophecy in Modern Pentecostal Congregations in Latvia", "Spiritual Care - a Solution to the Problem of Loneliness in Riga Social Care Institutions".

The Master's thesis is defended in the presence of a commission, which evaluates in detail the scientific and methodological contribution of the work. Each member of the commission individually evaluates the quality of the paper, assessing it with a mark. In particular, the reviewer's assessment is respected. The final evaluation is formed as a result of the discussions of

the commission, taking into account the individual assessment of each member.

Evaluations of the Master's thesis in the reporting period are shown in Figure 19.

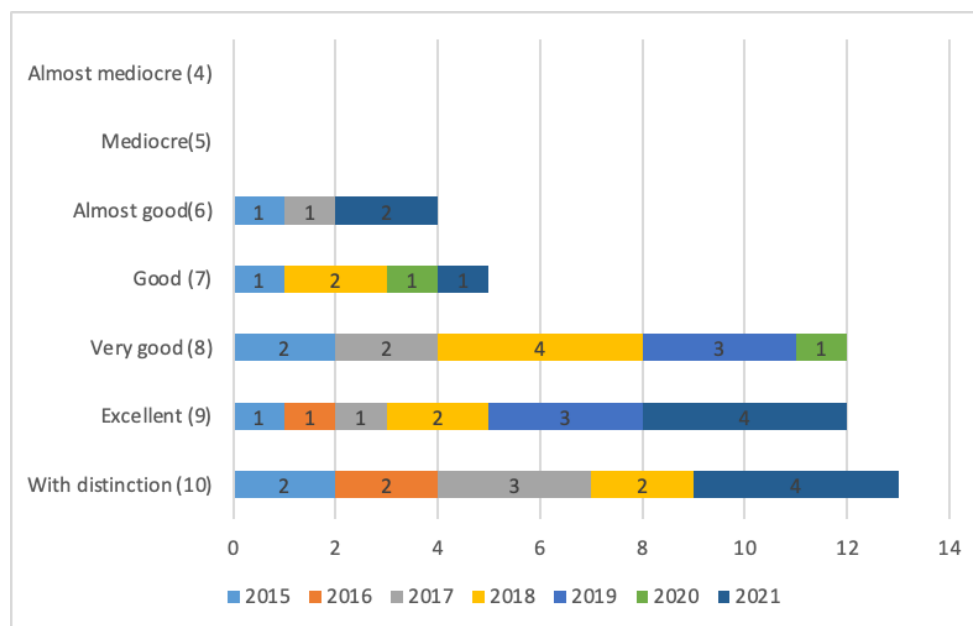


Figure 19. Evaluations

of the Master's thesis 2015-2021.

According to the Regulation on final theses in University of Latvia, final theses are assessed with one overall mark on a 10-point scale. The lowest positive rating in each part of the final exam is 4 (almost mediocre). Therefore, the amplitude of the ratings of the master's theses summarized in Figure 19 is from 6 (almost good) to 10 (with distinction). The Figure 19 shows that students' papers have been evaluated in very different ways, which indicates objective assessment criteria and high requirements for the final paper. Quite frequently the Master's thesis are assessed as *with distinction* and *excellent*, this, in its turn indicates the high level of research competences and motivation of the Master's students. The average assessment of the final papers during the reporting period: 8,63 (2021); 7,5 (2020); 8,5 (2019); 8,4 (2018); 8,71 (2017); 9,66 (2016), 8,28 (2015).

The research evaluated by the Commission as *with distinction*, for example, - "Initiatives by the Roman Catholic Church on Healing the Trauma of the Holocaust in Society: Examples of Lithuania and Latvia", "Interethnic Reconciliation Practices in Latvia in the beginning of the 21st Century: Theological Reflection", "The Concept of Entropy as the Basis for Understanding Structural Sin in J.L.Segundo's Evolutionary Theology", "Interpretations of the Bible in the Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia "(2021); "Analysis and Evaluation of D.A.Crosby's Natural Religion," "The Transformation of the Goddess Kali in "Kali's Meditation" - General Western Context" (2018); "The Word of God on Self - Control and Resurrection: the Importance of Sexual Asceticism in the Works of Paul and Tekla" (2017); "The Concept of Darkness in the East and West Christian Mysticism" (2015), etc., is a high-quality study that makes a significant contribution to the development of the branch and the education of society.

Every year, the works that have received the highest excellence rating - 10 points receive a certificate of award from the Rector of the University of Latvia.

3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

3.3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples.

The information presented in this chapter demonstrates that the study base, informative base, material and technical base and financial base conform to the specifics of the study programme, the conditions for implementation, create preconditions for achieving study results and testify to the possibility to ensure a high-quality study process in the long term.

The students have access to regularly updated library resources (incl. e-resources), the opportunity to participate in the international student exchange programme (Erasmus+), the library has computers for work, by applying the financial resources of the University of Latvia, students have the opportunity to participate in educational activities (for example, student plein air 2022).

Compatibility of resources with the requirements set for the programme implementation and achievement of learning outcomes

A detailed analysis of the provision of resources can be found in Parts II, Chapter 3, subsections 2.3.1 to 2.3.3.

3.3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific base support, including the resources provided within the framework of cooperation with other science institutes and higher education institutions (applicable to doctoral study programmes) (if applicable).

3.3.3. Indicate data on the available funding for the corresponding study programme, its funding sources and their use for the development of the study programme. Provide information on the costs per one student within this study programme, indicating the items included in the cost calculation and the percentage distribution of funding between the specified items. The minimum number of students in the study programme in order to ensure the profitability of the study programme (indicating separately the information on each language, type and form of the study programme implementation).

Revenues of the programme

To ensure the necessary funds for the implementation of the study programme “Theology and Religion Studies”, the University of Latvia uses:

1. a state budget grant from the Ministry of Education and Science, which in the academic year 2021/2022 is set at EUR 1 633.53 with a study level coefficient of 1.5 for full-time studies;
2. tuition fee, taking into account all the factors referred to in the section “Financial support”, which in the academic year 2021/2022 is set as follows:

- EUR 2200 per year for full-time studies;

Taking into account the above, the total budget of the study programme is expected to be EUR 61 956 per year, the data are shown in Table 25.

Table 25. Estimated annual income of the programme, EUR

Type of study	Number of students	Tuition fee/ state grant	Total income
FTS (budget)	19	1 634 *1.5	46 556
FTS (fees)	7	2 200	15 400
Total	26		61 956

Programme costs

In order to estimate the amount of funds required for financial provision, the cost of study programmes at the University of Latvia is calculated according to the methodology developed by the University of Latvia, which takes into account in Part II subsection 2.3.1. described costs of providing the study process and information on the study programme plan, the involved teaching staff, the planned number of students, etc., thus ensuring the reliability of the forecasts.

The full-time study programme costs

For calculations, the implementers of the study programme “Theology and Religious Studies” use students data of the academic year 2020/2021 -31 students study in the programme at the FTS (state grant for 19 students, the UL grant for 5, and 7 students pay tuition fee) the existing/planned study programme plan after accreditation and the existing/planned structure of the involved academic staff. Taking into account the above, the estimated full-time cost per full-time student of the programme is EUR 2572 per year, and the total cost of the program is EUR 79,732 per year. On the other hand, if infrastructure costs, goods, services and indirect costs are calculated in proportion to revenues, the costs amount to EUR 73,115 per year, EUR 2,359 per student per year. A more detailed percentage cost breakdown is shown in Table 26.

Table 26. Percentage breakdown of costs in the study programme

Expenditure item	% of total
Teacher costs	46,53
General staff.	16,34
Other payments	0,00
Infrastructure expenditure	11,10
Property and services	0,03
Indirect costs	26,00

TOTAL COST

100,00

Figure 20 shows the cost of the study programme depending on the number of students and a comparison with the offered tuition fee and the state budget grant.

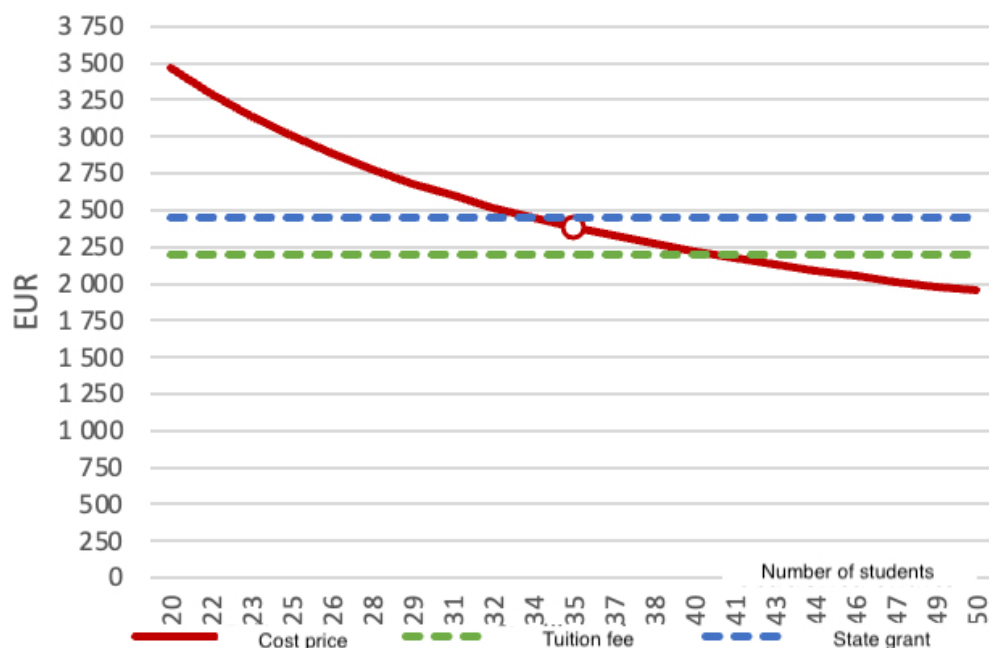


Figure 20. Cost per student enrolled for the “Theology and Religious Studies” programme

Based on the calculation, it can be seen that for the programme to be profitable and provide students with a quality study process, the number of tuition students in the programme (all courses combined) must be at least 40 (intersection of red (cost) and green (tuition) lines projected on the x-axis). On the other hand, if there were only budget students in the programme, then their number should reach 31 students.

Summary of the revenue and expenditure of the programme

Table 27 summarizes the programme revenue based on the number of students, state grants and tuition fees, and the programme expenses for such number of students.

Table 27. The result of the programme

Type of study	Number of students	Tuition fee/ state grant	Total income	Total costs
FTS (budget)	19	2 450	46 556	56 602
FTS (fees)	7	2 200	15 400	16 513
Total	26		61 956	73 115

The data presented in the table clearly show that in order to ensure the profitability of the study programme it is necessary to increase the number of students. In recent years, number of students who have previously studied other disciplines and who see studies at the FT as an opportunity for a second career or as further education to develop their personality and broaden their horizons is increasing. This opens up opportunities to increase the number of paying students in about 5 years

with help of thoughtful advertising on FB and other social networks. Until a positive result is achieved, the programme additionally can be financed from the revenues received from lifelong education and other services, as well as from the financial resources accumulated by the structural unit. Faculties also receive financial support for the development of programmes from the UL Study Quality Improvement Fund. These sources of additional funding are stable and can be counted on in the long term.

3.4. Teaching Staff

3.4.1. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members (academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

14 lecturers (5 professors, 5 assistant professors, 2 assistants, 1 lecturer, 1 researcher) are involved in the implementation of the Master's study programme "Theology and Religious Studies" and their qualification fully complies with the requirements of regulatory enactments, including [Law on Higher Education Institutions](#).

Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programme with the requirements set for the study programme implementation and the regulatory enactments

High-level academic staff are involved in the implementation of the Master's study programme (See the list in Table 28).

Table 28. The lecturers involved in the MSP, 2021.

No	Name, surname	Degree	Position
1.	Ralfs Kokins	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Professor
2	Valdis Tēraudkalns	<i>Dr. phil</i>	Professor
3.	Dace Balode	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Professor
4.	Laima Geikina	<i>Dr. paed., Dr. theol.</i>	Professor

5.	Normunds Titāns	<i>Dr. phil.</i>	Professor
6.	Elizabete Taivāne	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Ass. Prof.
7.	Janis Rudzītis-Neimanis	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Ass. Prof.
8.	Andris Priede	<i>Dr. hist.</i>	Ass. Prof.
9.	Juris Cālītis	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Ass. Prof.
10.	Olga Petrova	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Researcher
11.	Ģirts Rozners	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Ass. Prof.
12.	Jānis Plaudis	<i>M. philol.</i>	Lecturer
13.	Ņikita Andrejevs	<i>M. theol.</i>	Assistant
14.	Reinis Norkārklis	<i>M. theol.</i>	Assistant

11 of the 14 teaching staff are in academic positions in permanent job, 3 – in scientific positions. 9 or 82% of the 11 academic staff, take additionally a scientific position. The high level of quality in the programme and the confirmation that the qualification of the teaching staff facilitates to achieve the study results is determined by the fact that 11 lecturers have Doctoral degree (78% of the total number of the lecturers) and 3 have Master's degree. All the lecturers have extensive practical experience in the fields of theology, religious research and the related fields (philosophy, anthropology, etc.).

Many lecturers serve as pastors in Latvian congregations (Prof. R. Kokins, Prof. D. Balode, Ass.prof. J. Cālītis, etc.). A large number of lecturers have acquired the academic education abroad, thus expanding the possibilities of internationalisation in the study process and research. The teaching staff actively participate in variety of scientific conferences, research projects, local and international organizations. This experience allows to create a student-centered study environment, which is focused on the development of individual research skills in students, which is aimed at developing motivation to study throughout life.

The lecturers of the programme use the opportunity to gain international experience also in the *Erasmus+* programme (see Figure 21).

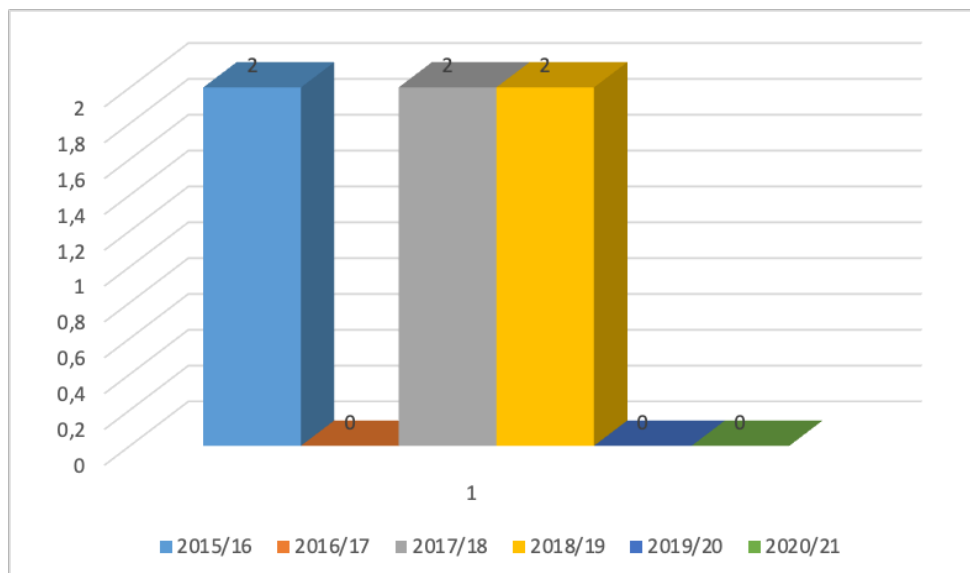


Figure 21. Mobility of the lecturers involved in the Master's programme, 2015-2021.

The figure shows that several lecturers of the study programme gained international experience during the reporting period, for example, in 2015/2016. Valdis Tēraudkalns, Laima Geikina have visited *Erasmus* studies in Great Britain, in 2017/2018 - Valdis Tēraudkalns was in Austria, Dace Balode - in Estonia, in 2018/2019 - Dace Balode and Valdis Tēraudkalns were in Germany. Mobility for 2019-2021 has been affected by COVID-19.

Every year, guest lectures and seminars are also conducted by foreign guest lecturers in the Master's study programme, both within the framework of *Erasmus* mobility and the Doctoral School.

In general the quality of the teaching staff's performance has been assessed by students as very good during the reporting period. This is evidenced by the surveys carried out during the reporting period, and individual examples can be found in Table 29.

Table 29. Evaluation of the lecturers of the MSP, data from the spring semester survey of the year 2020

Course code	Number of students who completed the survey	Average assessment	Assessment of the content	Assessment of the lecturer's performance
Teol5088	9	6.16	6.12	6.19
Teol5076	9	5.99	6.13	5.87
Teol5114	7	3.96	4.68	3.36
Ķīmi1059	342	5.53	5.86	5.26
Teol5122	12	6.26	6.24	6.27
Valo5400	9	6.47	6.55	6.40
Teol5122	14	5.80	5.89	5.72

Teol5114	16	5.58	5.74	5.44
Teol5088	10	6.00	6.03	5.98
Teol5076	16	6.00	6.00	6.00
Teol5107	7	6.33	6.39	6.29
Teol5118	9	6.60	6.95	6.31
Teol5086	15	6.35	6.43	6.28

The number of students who evaluated Kõimi1059 is stated to be so high because students in other study programs also attend this course and it is a total. The results show that the rating of the teaching staff in most cases is above 5.00. In the comments, students have been most appreciative of the enthusiasm and inspiration of the lecturers, their orientation towards dialogue and exchange of views, which facilitates the acquisition of the study content. The rating below 5.00 is found only once, it is found for one study course of one lecturer, receiving 3.36. The criticism relates to the kind of the tests, the evaluation criteria and compliance with the time limits.

3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.

During the reporting period, no significant changes in the composition of the lecturers have taken place, however, the tendency to attract new colleagues, including doctoral students of the FT, who have presented themselves as excellent researchers and professionals of their field, should be evaluated very positively. An example of good practice is activity of G. Rozners (participation in the implementation of the study course "Hermeneutics of the New testament"), N. Andrejevs (study course "Political Theology"), R. Norkārks (The course "Hagiography" and "The Eastern Churches: History and Theology") activities. It is also important to attract professionals from the fields related to the theology and study of religions, for example, Riho Altnurme (the University of Tartu) has worked in the programme as a guest lecturer, and also has participated in development of a new study course "XX Century History of Christian Churches."

The renewal of the teaching staff has led to improvements in the following respects:

- the idea of the results-based studies has been developed,
- in results more respected the development needs of the branch,
- improvement of participation style in lectures and practical classes,
- innovative teaching methods such as simulations have been introduced,
- improved development, improvement and implementation of e-solutions in the study process have been improved.

3.4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members, involved in the implementation of doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and

the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals or peer-reviewed monographs may be additionally specified. Information on the teaching staff included in the database of experts of the Latvian Council of Science in the relevant field of science (total number, name of the lecturer, field of science in which the teaching staff has the status of an expert and expiration date of the Latvian Council of Science expert) (if applicable).

3.4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).

3.4.5. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study programme and study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).

The cooperation of the teaching staff is formed in meetings of the teaching staff, where the content of the programme, the sequence of courses, the objectives and the results are discussed. Exchange of information regularly takes place in the council meetings. In individual cases, the teaching staff meet individually to discuss a particular topic. The teaching staff of the programme shall cooperate in the implementation of the content of study courses, in improving mutual interlinking, by engaging in the work of the strategic meeting or individually. The teaching staff representing the religious environment organize students' practical classes in a real environment, as well as offer topics for the Master's thesis research.

The FT PHP and the Programme Director coordinate the harmonisation of the types of tests planned by the teaching staff so that they are as diverse as possible (e.g. so that there are not only written tests), as well as ensure that the content of the courses does not duplicate and that the implementation of the courses is carried out in accordance with the set objectives of the field and the programme. This is done in cooperation with the student council and by examining the surveys of the students.

Good mutual cooperation has been established between the teaching staff, there is a collegial relationship in order to promote the course of the study process, the improvement of the courses and their interlinking. The issues of the study process are examined in the Council of the Study Field. The administration of the programme meets regularly and/or communicates electronically with the lecturers, discussing the study process.

When analysing the total number of the students in the programme compared to the number of the

teaching staff in the programme in full-time studies (31/14), the ratio of the teaching staff to the students is 2.21, according to the full-time equivalent - 17.22 (31/1.8 as of 01.10.2021).

Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	Annex_12_2_Master_diploma.docx	12_2_pielikums_Magistrs_diploms.docx
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)	Annex_13_Decision_Council of Higher Education.docx	13_pielikums_AIP_atzinums_BSP_MSP.docx
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (Table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	Annex_14_MSP_statistics_students_reporting_period.docx	14_pielikums_statistika_studejosie_MSP.docx
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard	Annex_15_MSP_Compliance of the study programmes with the State education standard(1).docx	15_pielikums_MSP_atbilstiba_izglitiba_standartam(1).docx
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	Annex_17_MSP_Mapping.docx	17_pielikums_MSP_kartejums.docx
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	Annex_20_MSP_study_plan.docx	20_pielikums_MSP_plans.docx
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	Courses_MSP(1).docx	studiju_kursi_apraksti_MSP.docx
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)		
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)	Annex_23_2_HEAD_OF_STUDY_FIELD_DECLARATION_H_ED_Regul_55.3_p_acad_progr.docx	23_2_pielikums_Apniecinajums_atbilstiba_Augstskolu_luk_55_pants_1_3_d.docx

Theology and Religious Studies (51221)

Study field	<i>Religion and Theology</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Theology and Religious Studies</i>
Education classification code	<i>51221</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>Doctoral study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Valdis</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Tēraudkalns</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>valdis.teraudkalns@lu.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Dr.phil.</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>+371 29552398</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>The objective of the doctoral study programme is to prepare high-level specialists in religion and theology, providing an opportunity to obtain internationally recognized science-based education in theology and religious research, independently developing and publicly defending the doctoral thesis, which contains the results of original scientific research, provides new knowledge in theology and religious research and is open to other fields.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<p><i>1. To create a study environment where, using an original research project, the doctoral students have the opportunity to develop a researcher's mindset, nurture the flexibility of thinking, creativity and intellectual autonomy (Zalcburgas II rekomendācijas);</i></p> <p><i>2. To create an opportunity for the doctoral students to study deeper scientific theories and methodologies in the theological and religious research and also interdisciplinary context;</i></p> <p><i>3. To promote international exchanges of the doctoral students and the lecturers through guest studies, joint projects and courses;</i></p> <p><i>4. To provide an environment to support a researcher's career - development of communication, management, entrepreneurship, learning and teaching skills.</i></p> <p><i>The study programme is created following Salzburg II recommendations for doctoral studies, offering an appropriate environment to support the researcher by conducting a specific, original research in religion and theology, and to enable the development of flexible thinking, creativity and intellectual autonomy. The programme also focuses on internationalisation and support for the development of a researcher's career.</i></p>

Results of the study programme	<p>Knowledge:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understands the theory and practice of theology and religious research (linking these fields with other humanities and social sciences) and their sub-sectors, their history, development trends in relation to current research in Latvia, Europe and the world; 2. Understand the research process, which includes diverse research methods, interpretation and spreading of research data; 3. Understands and evaluates the relationship between research theories of the field and practice. <p>Skills:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Systemically, systematically and critically analyzes religious phenomena in a global society, defending one's opinion; 2. Argumentatively explain and discuss the aspects of the sector, the results of international and local research with specialists of their field, other fields and the general public, present the results obtained in research to different audiences; 3. Independently applies theories, methods and problem-solving skills to carry out research in theology and religion. <p>Competence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independently formulates and critically analyzes complex scientific and professional problems in the field, give arguments for decisions, if necessary, performs additional analysis of problems, using the acquired knowledge and skills in new or unpredictable situations; 2. Integrates knowledge and skills of different fields into an autonomous decision-making process, contributes to the creation of new knowledge, development of research and professional methods, taking into account ethical responsibility for the potential impact of scientific results or professional activities on society in the context of sustainable development; 3. Reflects on the process of his/her research and the achieved results, demonstrating effective communication, problem solving, cooperation, self-knowledge, academic excellence and transparency in obtaining results.
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	Development and defense of the doctoral (Ph.D) thesis

Study programme forms

Full time studies - 3 years - latvian

Study type and form	Full time studies
Duration in full years	3
Duration in month	0
Language	latvian
Amount (CP)	144
Admission requirements (in English)	Master's degree in humanities and social sciences (in sociology and anthropology) or equivalent higher education and entrance examination.

Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Doctoral Degree of Science Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Humanities and the Arts</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	-

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
University of Latvia	RĪGA	RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050

Full time studies - 3 years - english

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	<i>3</i>
Duration in month	<i>0</i>
Language	<i>english</i>
Amount (CP)	<i>144</i>
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Master's degree in humanities and social sciences (in sociology and anthropology) or equivalent higher education and entrance examination. Studies in English require English language skills in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations (for foreigners - English language skills at least at B2 level).</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Doctoral Degree of Science Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Humanities and the Arts</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	-

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
University of Latvia	RĪGA	RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050

3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

3.1.1. Description and analysis of changes in the parameters of the study programme made since the issuance of the previous accreditation form of the study field or issuance of the study programme license, if the study programme is not included on the accreditation form of the study field, including changes planned within the evaluation procedure of the study field evaluation procedure.

The Doctoral study programme in *Theology and Religious Studies* offers students the necessary theoretical knowledge and practical skills for independent research. Together with the academic staff, the students can participate in research projects and lecture delivering. The study programme provides an opportunity to participate in various events related to research and its communication to the general public – international and local conferences, classes of assistant professors and professors of various foreign universities, presentation seminars of the Doctoral thesis topics, as well as events for science promotion. The study programme takes into account the current trends in theology and religious research, placing theoretical emphasis on the globalized nature of religious phenomena. Special attention is devoted to the methodology of research and skills in the development and submission of publications. Upon successful completion of the doctoral study programme in Theology and Religious Studies, the applicants for the scientific degree will be prepared to work in academic institutions and other research institutes, as well as they will be able to work as the highest level professionals outside the academic field. Within the framework of the study programme, a common module is implemented with the Doctoral study programme of the University of Tartu School of Theology and Religion Studies.

Indicators characterizing the study programme

Doctoral study programme "Theology and Religious Studies".

The code of the study programme according to the Latvian education classification: 51221.

The degree to be obtained: Degree of the Doctor of Science - Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Philosophy, Ethics and Religion.

The duration and amount of implementation of the study programme (CP): 3 years, 144 CP/216 ECTS.

The type and form of implementation of the study programme :full-time studies.

The language of implementation of the study programme: Latvian, English.

The Doctoral study programme is the only doctoral study programme in religious studies and theology in Latvia.

An important role in the programme is provided for international cooperation with theologians and religious researchers of the Baltic cultural space, including a module with study courses that are shared with the Doctoral study programme of the Theological and Religious Research School of the University of Tartu (hereinafter – the UT). The programme is implemented in English and Latvian (the UT module only in English), ensuring greater recognition in the education market and better integration into international scientific networks.

International cooperation with the UT also ensures compliance with other criteria mentioned in the

development strategy of the University of Latvia, for example, the number of scientific articles published in internationally recognized databases increases. The UT and the UL are the only universities in all three Baltic states with ecumenical, research-oriented doctoral study programmes in theology and religious research, so it was the reason why the UT was chosen as a cooperation partner. The previous study programmes of both universities in theology and religious studies have similar traditions – the opportunity to write a doctoral thesis in both sub-branches: in theology and religious studies, an extensive network of cooperation with universities and research institutes in Western Europe. The development of the programme promotes an increase in the share of foreign lecturers, diversification of the study offer, cooperation by engaging in international research networks.

Changes in the study programme parameters

Until 2021, the FT carried out the DSP "Theology and Religious Science", which exists in parallel with the new DSP "Theology and Religious Studies", licensed in 2021 and is being promoted for accreditation for the first time, so there are no changes to the study parameters of the licensed DSP. The DSP "Theology and Religious Science" is planned to be terminated as soon as the new DSP is accredited.

The degree change takes place in accordance with the amendments to the Law on Scientific Activities, which entered into force on 29.07.2022, the degree of Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in humanities and arts is awarded, in accordance with Cabinet of Ministers regulations No. 27.09.2022. 595 "Rules on groups of Latvian scientific scientific branches and sub-branches".

This degree is awarded for the defense of doctoral theses in the field of philosophy, ethics and religion and its subfields of theology and religious studies. At the time of this report, the amendments had not yet entered into force, so the text indicates the previous degree Doctor of Science Doctor of Science (Ph.D) in Philosophy, Ethics and Religion.

3.1.2. Analysis and assessment of the study programme compliance with the study field. Analysis of the interrelation between the code of the study programme, the degree, professional qualification/professional qualification requirements or the degree and professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements. Description of the duration and scope of the implementation of the study programme (including different options of the study programme implementation) and evaluation of its usefulness.

The title of the programme corresponds to two areas in which the students are able to specialise – theology and religious studies. This is also related to the degree and the study results connected to both theology and religious research. The admission requirements state that the entrance interviews will show whether applicants from another field have sufficient knowledge in the field "Religion and Theology", in order to be able to study for a doctoral degree. Thus, it will be ensured that all students are able to participate in the study programme to the same extent. The admission process is coherent with goals and objectives of the program – during interviews the commission will determine whether applicants have skills to carry out research work and have a clear, logical idea of what and how they want to study. All the lecturers have degrees obtained in the field (L. Geikina has two doctoral degrees – in pedagogy and theology) – either Dr. theol. or Dr. phil. The scope of the study programme allows to acquire courses related to all sub-branches of the field within the framework of the programme, as well as to deepen the acquisition of knowledge and

methodology in theology and religious research, to acquire theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the pedagogy of higher education institutions, as well as in areas essential for the growth of a researcher (skills for publishing research results, scientific management). The individual seminar will help students to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for their chosen field of research.

The code of the study programme complies with the Regulations regarding the classification of education in Latvia (Regulations issued by the Cabinet of Ministers, No. 322, 13.06.2017., <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju> - (only in Latvian). The degree awarded corresponds to the group of educational programs mentioned in the regulations (Religion and Theology). The duration of the implementation of the programme is sufficient, because within three years of studies it is possible to acquire both the necessary study courses and develop a doctoral thesis. The level of the English language skills of the doctoral students is good (tested in entrance interviews), therefore the language of studies does not affect the duration of the programme.

Objective of the study programme

The objective of the doctoral study programme is to prepare high-level specialists in religion and theology, providing an opportunity to obtain internationally recognized science-based education in theology and religious research, independently developing and publicly defending the doctoral thesis, which contains the results of original scientific research, provides new knowledge in theology and religious research and is open to other fields.

Tasks of the study programme

1. To create a study environment where, using an original research project, the doctoral students have the opportunity to develop a researcher's mindset, nurture the flexibility of thinking, creativity and intellectual autonomy ([Salzburg II Recommendations](#))
2. To create an opportunity for the doctoral students to study deeper scientific theories and methodologies in the theological and religious research and also interdisciplinary context;
3. To promote international exchanges of the doctoral students and the lecturers through guest studies, joint projects and courses;
4. To provide an environment to support a researcher's career - development of communication, management, entrepreneurship, learning and teaching skills.

The study programme is created following Salzburg II recommendations for doctoral studies, offering an appropriate environment to support the researcher by conducting a specific, original research in religion and theology, and to enable the development of flexible thinking, creativity and intellectual autonomy. The programme also focuses on internationalisation and support for the development of a researcher's career.

Study outcomes

Knowledge:

1. Understands the theory and practice of theology and religious research (linking these fields with other humanities and social sciences) and their sub-sectors, their history, development trends in relation to current research in Latvia, Europe and the world;
2. Understand the research process, which includes diverse research methods, interpretation and spreading of research data;
3. Understands and evaluates the relationship between research theories of the field and practice.

Skills:

1. Systemically, systematically and critically analyzes religious phenomena in a global society, defending one's opinion;
2. Argumentatively explain and discuss the aspects of the sector, the results of international and local research with specialists of their field, other fields and the general public, present the results obtained in research to different audiences;
3. Independently applies theories, methods and problem-solving skills to carry out research in theology and religion.

Competence:

1.Independently formulates and critically analyzes complex scientific and professional problems in the field, give arguments for decisions, if necessary, performs additional analysis of problems, using the acquired knowledge and skills in new or unpredictable situations;

2.Integrates knowledge and skills of different fields into an autonomous decision-making process, contributes to the creation of new knowledge, development of research and professional methods, taking into account ethical responsibility for the potential impact of scientific results or professional activities on society in the context of sustainable development;

3.Reflects on the process of his/her research and the achieved results, demonstrating effective communication, problem solving, cooperation, self-knowledge, academic excellence and transparency in obtaining results.

Interrelationship and achievement of the objective, tasks and study outcomes

The objective of the Doctoral study programme is aimed at the training of young high-level specialists in theology and religious research. The main component of the programme is the development of independent research, the tasks are directed to create an environment that would promote the creation of an independent study – by putting a research paper in the centre of study, linking the study courses with the research to be developed, as well as by internationalising the study environment. The objective to prepare specialists is also related to the task set in the study programme – to support the development of a researcher's career. The results of the programme shall be consistent with the objective and task pursued. The interconnection of study outcomes has been assessed by mapping the study results (see annex "Results of mapping of doctoral study programme"). The graduates of the programme are able to demonstrate the knowledge and understanding of theories and concepts of theology and religion, as well as modern research methods, are able to independently plan, organize, carry out and conduct research in theology and religious research, contribute to the creation of a new bulk of knowledge and solve professional tasks of practical nature.

As a result of the programme, **an independent theology and religious research school is formed not only in Latvia, but also in the Baltics**, which can represent the perspective of the branch in interdisciplinary discourse and participate in international academic discourse. The objective of the study programme is specific – the training of specialists. The result is measurable, provided through surveys and interviews, maintaining feedback with graduates, employers and within the framework of internships. The programme also provides for an internal quality assessment system, students' surveys, problem-oriented discussions that ensure monitoring of the progress towards the aim.

The research of the labour market has been carried out by interviewing representatives and graduates of the professional associations (Latvian Association of Professional Health Care Chaplains, Latvian Association of Prison Chaplains, etc.).

Admission rules

Previous education: the Master's degree in any field of science. Students' enrollment in the programme is based on interviews and centralized admission criteria (<https://www.lu.lv/gribustudet/uznemsanas-kartiba/doktorantura/> - only in Latvian), and in accordance with the following priorities:

1. Applicants who have the Master's degree corresponding to the study field "Religion and Theology".
2. Applicants who have the Master's degree in humanities and related fields of social sciences (sociology and anthropology).

After the entrance interviews, the applicants are ranked (sorted) according to the total amount of the points obtained. During the interviews, it is determined whether the applicants who do not have a Master's degree corresponding to the field of study have the knowledge and experience necessary for the doctoral studies in theology and religious research. The results of ranking are used to determine which applicants will receive the budget grant.

Opportunities for continuing studies

After graduating the doctoral study programme, the graduates have opportunity to engage in postdoctoral research, acquiring further knowledge and continuing to develop their skills.

3.1.3. Economic and/ or social substantiation of the study programme, analysis of graduates' employment.

The creation and implementation of the doctoral study programme is based on the development trends of modern society. In the future, there will be a shift from a mass education and standardised approach typical of the industrial era to education services based on individual needs. The economy of knowledge is based on the development of human resources capital and its productivity, thus the improvement of the potential, talents and abilities of each individual is relevant, which best is ensured by an individual approach to the acquisition of the necessary competencies. Individualised learning requires changes in educational organisation, including a differentiation in the study process and opportunities to follow the performance of each individual and its progress. In this respect, data storage and analysis play an important role in order to be able to identify the strengths and development of each individual, identify the main factors influencing growth and offer the most effective solutions for further development (<http://www.oecd.org/education/trends-shaping-education-22187049.htm>).

During the study process, the students are invited to view each situation from broader perspective and deeper, without excluding any of the aspects that affect the development of society and humans. Human results consist of experience, talents, values and pace of life of each individual, culture of business, social, economic and political situation in the country, as well as the natural environment. It is fully in line with the long-term goals and priorities of the country as defined in *the Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030* (https://www.pkc.gov.lv/sites/default/files/inline-files/Latvija_2030_6.pdf - only in Latvian): cultural space, human resources capital, education, economy, nature, spatial development, governance and public participation, anticipating that in 2030 Latvia is a thriving country of active and responsible citizens, the strength of which is rooted in inherited, familiar and created cultural and spiritual values, richness of the Latvian language and knowledge of other languages.

At the time when religious pluralism is expanding and fundamentalism is becoming stronger,

research and analysis of religious processes play an important role in promoting social inclusion. The Doctoral study programme in theology and religious studies prepares specialists who can participate in the discourse of the relevant field at the international level.

The Doctoral study programme in theology and religious research prepares academic and scientific staff for the needs of higher education institutions and research institutes, which cover theology and religious research in various higher education institutions. Religion as a cultural and social phenomenon is a part of modern post-secular society, therefore, in response to current events, many universities incorporate the issues of religion into their programmes and study courses. There is still a shortage of qualified staff in theology and religious studies with a doctorate from the Luther Academy, the Christian Academy of Latvia, as well as in other educational institutions in Latvia, where theology and religious research are taught. The research of the labour market has been carried out by interviewing representatives and of professional associations (Latvian Association of Professional Health Care Chaplains, Latvian Association of Prison Chaplains, etc.) and graduates.

Currently, the FT of the UL in Latvia is the only higher education institution offering a Doctoral study programme in the relevant field.

3.1.4. Statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down into different study forms, types, and languages.

As mentioned above, until 2021 the FT implemented the DSP "Theology and Religious Science", where 10 doctoral students studied in 2020. In 2021, a new study programme was licensed. The dynamics of the number of students include both the DSP "Theology and Religious Science" and the DSP "Theology and Religious Studies" student flow.

Currently, only students living in Latvia study in the program, but it is planned to attract students from other countries as well. In 2022, 3 international students have expressed their interest in studies. Studies in English will be offered as soon as there are foreign students.

The dynamics of the number of students in the Doctoral study programme during the reporting period is stable, it is shown in Figure 22.

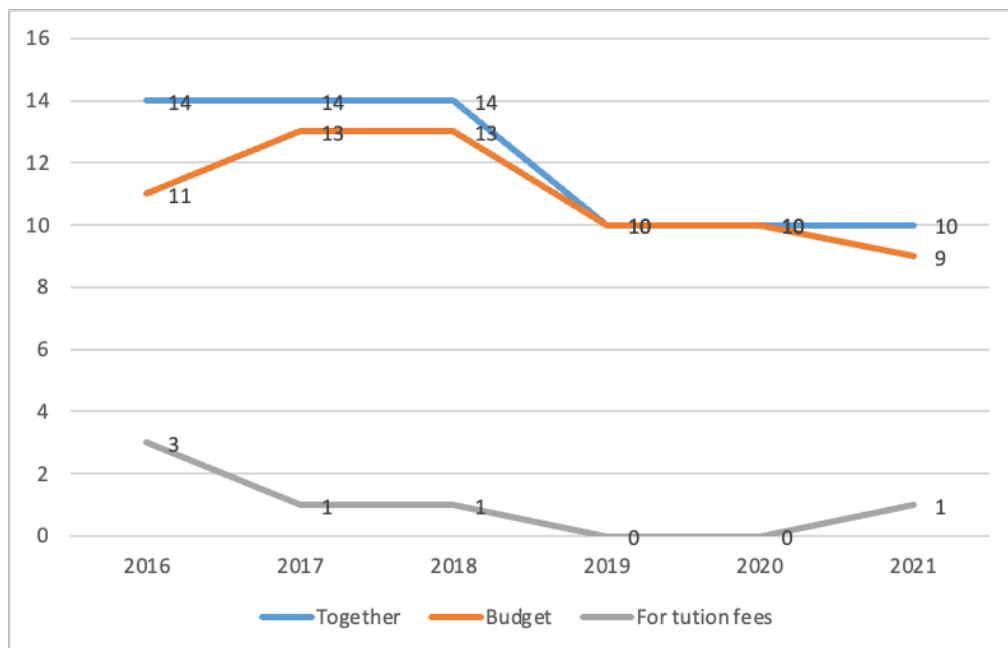


Figure 22 . The dynamics of the number of students 2016-2021.

The figure shows that the decrease in the number of doctoral students occurred in 2018, during the last 3 years the number of students in the programme has remained stable, the students mostly study for the budget grant. A minimum number of the students pay tuition fees. The decrease in the number of doctoral students is related to the shortage of financial resources and motivation of young scientists, the phenomenon is observed in all higher education institutions in Latvia. Following the new doctoral model and the opportunities it offers, it is hoped that the number of students and defended doctoral theses will increase in the near future.

Since 2015, 2 Doctoral theses have been defended by the students of the DSP "Theology and Religious Science", in January of 2015 and 2022, and two more drafts of the Doctoral theses have been submitted to the Doctoral Council for consideration. One applicants for a scientific degree is currently developing a Doctoral thesis within the framework of the project SAM 8.2.3, the thesis will be submitted in October 2022.

Problems in the study programme are caused by the relatively large number of exmatriculated students. The causes of exmatriculation and the exmatriculated rates during the reporting period are shown in Figure 23.

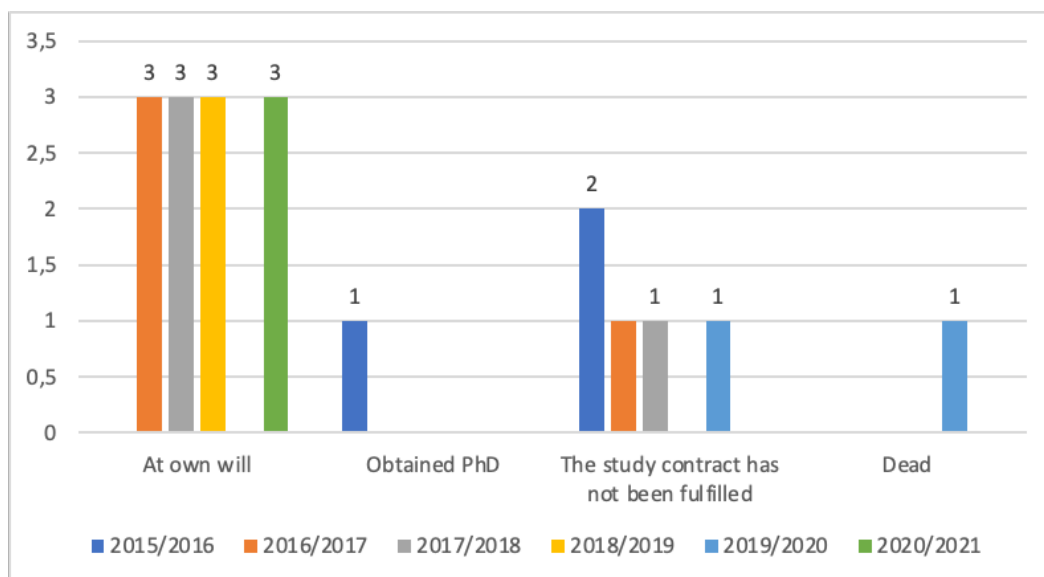


Figure 23. The number of the exmatriculated students of the programme, 2015-2021.

A large proportion of the students exmatriculate on their own volition, which is often associated with the inability to join the fulfilment of the requirements of doctoral study programmes with work and family life. An influencing factor is also the students' lack of understanding of specifics of the Doctoral thesis, over-evaluation of their scientific potential and capacity.

The lecturers and the administration of the programme regularly work to reduce the number of exmatriculated students, for example, changes have been made to the study programme, courses have been introduced within the framework of which regular monitoring and control of the creation of the Doctoral thesis is being taken, all this facilitates the feedback in the study process. In addition, it is planned to organize informative campaigns before the admission of students, which will provide a detailed explanation of the structure and requirements of the programme, as well as on the amount of work and its specifics.

3.1.5. Substantiation of the development of the joint study programme and description and evaluation of the choice of partner universities, including information on the development and implementation of the joint study programme (if applicable).

3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

3.2.1. Analysis of the content of the study programme. Assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators with the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study courses/ modules and compliance with the needs of the relevant industry, labour market and with the trends in science on how and whether the content of the study courses/ modules is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science.

The content of the Doctoral study programme "Theology and Religious Studies" is in accordance with the operational programme "Growth and Employment" the objectives defined by the specific support aim project 8.2.1 "Development of Internationally Competitive Study Programmes promoting the Development of the Latvian Economy at the University of Latvia" of and based on [Law on Higher Education Institutions](#) of the Republic of Latvia as well as on [Law on Scientific Activity](#) the requirements for doctoral study programmes laid down in the Regulations of study programmes and continuing education programmes of the University of Latvia (Decision No. 102 of the Senate of 24.04.2017).

In the Doctoral study programme "Theology and Religious Studies", the students will acquire knowledge, skills and competences corresponding to level 8 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

Analysis of the content of the study programme

The DSP consists of compulsory, restrictive elective and elective study courses totalling up to 144 CP (see Table 30).

Table 30. The content and structure of the Doctoral study programme "Theology and Religious Studies"

Models of courses	CP	ECTS
The module of original research	94	141
The module of development a researcher's career	16	24
The module of international cooperation	24	36
The module of innovation of theological and religious research ideas and methodology	8	12
In total in compulsory part	94	141
In total in restrictive elective part	48	72
In total in optional part	2	3
Additional courses (not included in the programme's CP) Kimi1059 (Civic Protection) un VidZ1032 (Environment Protection)	2	3
Total	144	216

Modules, their objectives and results:

The module of original research

Objective: to support doctoral students in the development of the independent research

Result: developed and defended the Doctoral thesis.

The module of development a researcher's career

Objective: to promote career development of a researcher and a lecturer in theology and religious research.

The result: research skills have been acquired according to the specialization of the sub-field and academic interests chosen by doctoral students.

The module of international cooperation

Objective: to promote the internationalisation of doctoral studies and research.

Result: doctoral students have joined an international network

The module of innovation of theological and religious research ideas and methodology

Objective: to raise awareness of the latest developments in the theological and religious research sub-branches and the possibility to integrate them into research.

The result: research skills have been acquired according to the specialization of the sub-field and academic interests chosen by doctoral students.

The main component of the DSP is independent research under the guidance of highly qualified academic staff. The study programme includes the acquisition of deep knowledge and methodology in theology and religious research in the field of study courses, as well as theory and practical skills in university pedagogy, publishing research results, issues of scientific management and development of the researcher's career. The study modules provide for compulsory and optional courses. The module of international cooperation includes joint study courses with the UT School of Theology and Religious Studies (see Table 31).

Table 31. The list of courses of the doctoral study programme "Theology and Religious Studies"

No	Course title	CP	ECTS
Compulsory part			
	The module of original research	94	141
1.	Teol7054 Introduction in the Doctoral studies	1	1,5
2.	Teol7036 Development of the Plan of the Doctoral thesis and the review of literature	15	22
3.	Teol7032 Preparation of a draft of the Doctoral thesis I	15	22
4.	Teol7033 Preparation of a draft of the Doctoral thesis II	15	22
5.	Teol7034 Preparation of a draft of the Doctoral thesis III	15	22
6.	Teol7035 Preparation of a draft of the Doctoral thesis IV	15	22
7.	Teol7037 The final version of the Doctoral thesis	15	22
8.	TTeol7050 Individual seminar	3	4
Restrictive elective courses			

	The module of development a researcher's career	16	24
9.	Teol7011 Religion and education	4	6
10.	Teol7012 Conference participation with a report	4	6
11.	Teol7016 Delivery pf study courses in BSP and MSP	4	6
12.	Teol7013 Scientific publication in theology and religious studies	4	6
13.	Teol7048 The management of science	4	6
14.	Teol7053 Internship in the corresponding branch	4	6
	The module of international cooperation	24	36
15.	Teol7052 Seminar in religious studies (together with the TU) Concludes with the doctoral exam in religious studies	8	12
16.	Teol7051 Seminar in theology (together with the TU) Concludes with the doctoral exam in theology	8	12
17.	Teol7049 Seminar in doctoral studies (together with the TU)	8	12
18.	Teol7038 Doctoral school in theology and religious studies	8	12
	The module of innovation of theological and religious research ideas and methodology	8	12
19.	Teol1056 Current events and research at the intersections of theology and practice	4	6
20.	Teol7047 Topical issues of research in religious studies and church history	4	6
21.	Teol7060 Topical Issues of Scripture Research	4	6
	Optional courses from the offer of the doctoral level of the ULatvia or the UT or another university	2	3

	Additional courses (for those who have not taken them at previous levels of studies)	2	3
22.	Kīmi1059 Civil protection	1	1,5
23.	VidZ1032 Protection of environment	1	1,5
24.	Valo5315 Latvian basic course (for foreign students)	2	3

The study content is designed in such a way that it is possible to include the current trends in the field, as well as to devote most of the studies to independent research. The main component of the compulsory part is the development of the Doctoral thesis, the process is divided into stages of the programme, thus creating an opportunity for the doctoral student to report on the work done at the end of each semester, as well as to obtain a feedback from the advisor, as well as from other lecturers and study colleagues (together on the development of the Doctoral thesis 94 CP). The student shall establish a plan for the development of the thesis together with the advisor. The content of the compulsory study courses is designed to support the student in the development of independent research. The course "Individual Seminar" (3 CP) in cooperation with the UT is also aimed at ensuring that the student will gain international support in the development of the study. The compulsory part includes a short introductory course for to give an insight into the research process in the humanities (1 CP). According to the needs of the study, the doctoral student may choose from the range of study courses offered by the University of Latvia or another university, which would allow to perform the study more successfully (2 CP in total).

The foreign students studying permanently in the programme who do not have proof of proficiency in the official language at the A1 level specified by the State Centre for Education of the Ministry of Education must take the course "Latvian Basic Course" in accordance with requirements of the paragraph 56. [Augstskolu likuma](#).

The module of development a researcher's career is intended to give the students the opportunity to expand their knowledge and skills, which support the career development of a researcher and a lecturer in theology and religious research. The students have the opportunity to develop experience in university pedagogy and get acquainted with current insights in the field of religious education. The students studying in the framework of this module develop skills in publishing and promoting research results, creating projects, as well as forming links with potential employers outside the university (the amount of 16 CP should be collected). The module of innovation of theological and religious research ideas and methodology provides an opportunity to expand knowledge and develop understanding of the current events of the sub-branches of theology and religious studies by developing research skills according to their chosen sub-branch s and academic interests. The doctoral student must obtain 8 CP.

The courses are mostly delivered in the form of seminars, where the main focus is laid ob a reasoned discussion based on systematic acquisition of the literature on topical issues of the relevant sub-branch. Both compulsory and optional study courses can be held in Latvian and English.

The module of international cooperation whih is done in the format of joint seminars together with the doctoral studies program of the School of Theology and Religious studies at University of Tartu promotes the internationalisation of studies and supports the integration of the doctoral student into an international network. In cooperation with the UT it is planned to implement joint study courses that support the Doctoral thesis in the process of development and give reflection of the

essential topical research issues in theology ("Seminar in theology") or religious studies "Seminar in religious studies" (8 CP). Cooperation with the UT and other universities also is carried out in the doctoral school, inviting guest lecturers, supporting the exchange of students. Within the framework of an individual seminar, the plan and content of which is developed together with the advisor, if necessary, an international consultation on the relevant topic shall be organised. "Seminar in doctoral study" (8 CP) is implemented together with the UT, helping students to integrate into the international circulation.

The content of the study courses is updated according to the trends in the field, labour market and scientific development. For example, the DSP includes a course on science management, given the growing role of management in project administration. But internships in the creative industry will provide an opportunity for students to link with their industry.

The study modules are harmonised and correspond to the tasks of the study programme to create a study environment for the performance of original research, development of communication, management, learning and teaching skills, to study the theories and methodologies of theology and religion studies in detail and to promote international exchange.

With the help of scholarships (*Erasmus+* exchange, Ozoliņa – Mednis Trust Foundation scholarship), the study programme supports students' studies at foreign universities, where it offers an opportunity to use the best European university libraries for research and attending study courses corresponding to doctoral studies. The study courses graduated from other higher education institutions or study programmes may be recognised in the study programme of the University of Latvia.

3.2.2. In the case of master's and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation. In the case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels (if applicable).

The Doctoral study programme has been conceptually developed on the basis of the conceptual report adopted in Latvia ["About the introduction of a new doctoral model in Latvia"](#) (only in Latvian) which sets the criteria for competitive and innovation-oriented doctoral studies, with the main being:

- excellence in research, taking into account Salzburg principles and recommendations, such as administrative quality of doctoral studies, the academic staff involved, original and high-quality scientific research or artistic creation, appropriate review procedures;
- an attractive institutional environment that includes working conditions and career development opportunities;
- the possibility of cross-branch scientific research, ensuring that doctoral studies are based on an open environment and culture of scientific activity and artistic creation;
- the impact of research on economy and other employment-related sectors;
- international cooperation, including joint scientific research and artistic creation, study and research mobility;
- study courses for skills with multiple application;
- provision of quality in admission to doctoral studies and the supervision of Doctoral theses, as well as theoretical research and artistic creation works of the Doctorate.

The doctoral courses as a cross-cutting task is set the *improvement of widely used skills, knowledge and competences*, which provides the graduate with the opportunity to pursue both academic career and careers outside academia (e.g. digital skills, research methodology, pedagogy, management, academic language and scientific communication, crisis situation, conflict, stress management and time planning, as well as other skills essential for careers in a wide range of sectors.)

The content of the courses follows the recommended *proportion* - the time allotted for scientific research (~70%) and study courses (~30%). The study courses of the programme must correspond to the topics and specifics of the field of theology and religious studies and the doctoral thesis implemented, and special attention is devoted to the study of professional ethics.

The study courses are designed in such a way that all the main branches of theology and religious studies are represented (systematic, practical, biblical theology, church history, comparative religious studies, sociology of religion, etc.). This makes it possible to renew the teaching staff of BSP and MSP level in the future, as well as to promote research in fields mentioned above.

The organisation of the programme also follows The Recommendations of the World Bank ([World Bank recommendations for modernization of higher education](#) - (only in Latvian)) to universities - to implement *internationalisation* in order to ensure the quality of doctoral studies: exchange of doctoral students and teaching staff, establishment of international joint programmes. It has been successfully achieved in cooperation with the UT, creating a joint study module, ensuring an internationally open environment for the FT - attracting foreign doctoral students and teaching staff, implementing international research activities, providing jointly supervised Doctoral theses or doctoral theoretical research, supporting individual study and research mobility.

100% of the academic staff involved in the implementation of the DSP hold doctoral degrees and have considerable practical experience in the relevant field of theology, philosophy, as well as pedagogy. All lecturers carry out research according to the scientific branch, have international experience in both teaching and research, which allows to include in the programme insights of the latest research and achievements of the branch.

The awarding of the degree is based on the achievements and findings of the relevant field of science, as one of the conditions for obtaining the degree is research novelty, including usage of modern research methods.

Main research areas - Old and New Testament research, church history, analysis of modern religious processes in a socio-cultural context (for example, in connection with gender studies). Doctoral students are involved in projects and teaching study courses at BSP and MSP.

3.2.3. Assessment of the study programme including the study course/ module implementation methods by indicating what the methods are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. In the case of a joint study programme, or in case the study programme is implemented in a foreign language or in the form of distance learning, describe in detail the methods used to deliver such a study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.

During the study courses and examinations oral, written and combined study and assessment

methods are used.

Studies employ a variety of knowledge acquisition and consolidation methods, such as introductory lectures, interactive lectures, consolidating lectures, and problem-oriented lectures. Practitioners and professionals from different institutions are invited to teach individual lectures in study courses to promote the unity of theory and practice. Practical assignments, seminars, individual, pair and group work, discussions and project development, study tours to industry organizations are widely used. Employers are involved in the implementation and improvement of study courses (they are invited to conduct separate seminars, often the classes are organized as work experience visits, etc.).

In order to promote the development of students' research competence, students in successive courses have an opportunity to analyse and deepen their research on the issues of interest in the given field. Senior year students are involved in peer teaching-learning.

Study courses seminars promote students' presentation and discussion skills.

To aid students in achieving learning outcomes - in acquiring and consolidating knowledge, skills and competence - the study process is dominated by methods, where the important role plays students' activity. The study process is supported by methods that facilitate students' communication in the implementation of study tasks, solving real problems of the branch, modelling situations.

The physical environment of studies is also gradually changing: classrooms are easily transformable for group work, individual work, students can use digital technologies. Lecturers mainly use methods that encourage students' active participation, critical thinking and reflection. The e-learning environment is used in the study process and to promote independent studies. Each study course has an e-learning environment (*Moodle*) where students have access to lesson materials, task descriptions in addition to course-related learning materials, as well as study tasks (tests, forums, seminars, conferences, etc.). All interim and final assessment grades of the study courses are recorded, justified and made available to students in the e-learning environment.

The student-centred approach is followed by updating the study programmes and the respective study courses, paying special attention to meaningful formulation of learning outcomes, thus promoting dialogue between lecturers and students on the content of studies, forms and methods of organization. Well-formulated learning outcomes, on the other hand, promote students' understanding and co-responsibility for their own learning, self-assessment, and understanding of the assessment they receive. During the study process, lecturers use methods, examination forms and assessment criteria that are appropriate to the study goal and planned learning outcomes.

Students receive support and feedback from the lecturers during the study process. Grading criteria for marking are made public in advance. The assessment gives students an opportunity to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the expected learning outcomes.

Following the principles of student-centred studies, student mobility (recognition of learning outcomes) is promoted, students engage in academic research and social activities initiated by the academic staff, thereby gaining significant experience through testing gained knowledge and skills in practice. By implementing internal quality assurance policies, study programmes are implemented to encourage students to actively participate in the improvement of the study process. There are procedures and regulations for submitting student proposals and complaints and reviewing student appeals. The results of student surveys are evaluated and taken into account for the improvement of the study process. Students are eager to express their proposals for the improvement of study programmes and processes in discussions with teaching staff and programme directors.

The study process respects the diversity of students' learning needs by choosing pedagogical methods, promoting students' learning motivation, self-reflection and participation in the study process.

Employers are involved in the implementation and improvement of study courses (they are invited to conduct individual seminar classes, often classes are organized as experience exchange visits to workplaces, etc.). Within the framework of the study course "Internship in the corresponding branch" students have the opportunity to cooperate with such organizations as the Latvian Bible Society, the Mental Care and Social Work Service of Pauls Stradiņš Clinical University, the Anglican Congregation of the Holy Redeemer in Riga and the Riga Lutheran Parish Centre for Human Growth "Torņakalns".

In order to promote the development of students' research competence, in successive courses there is an opportunity to analyse and study in detail the problems of students' interest in the field. For example, in seminars in theology and religious studies, the contemporary issues of these fields are discussed in relation to the fields of students' research.

The study process takes into account students' prior knowledge, previous experience and different ways of learning of students.

An individual approach to each student is essential for the development and implementation of the study programme, it is manifested in several aspects, for example, the opportunity to have an individual consultation period with each of the teaching staff at certain consultation times; the students' cooperation and with the teachers is also ensured by the possibilities to use electronic communications (e-studies), which allows sending the necessary study materials, evaluations and recommendations to students; students are provided with free access to the general staff of the faculty, study methodologists and the administration.

The same methods are used in courses taught in Latvian and English languages.

3.2.4. If the study programme envisages an internship, describe the internship opportunities offered to students, provision and work organization, including whether the higher education institution/ college helps students to find an internship place. If the study programme is implemented in a foreign language, provide information on how internship opportunities are provided in a foreign language, including for foreign students. To provide analysis and evaluation of the connection of the tasks set for students during the internship included in the study programme with the learning outcomes of the study programme (if applicable).

The purpose of the internship is to provide students with the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the specifics of workplaces related to the field of religion and opportunities to apply the knowledge gained during studies in practice. Students look for internship opportunities independently and/or in cooperation with the thesis supervisor and the program director. In the second option, internships are selected from the cooperation partners of the Faculty of Theology of University of Latvia (congregations of various denominations and other organizations (The Latvian Bible Society, Latvian Lutheran Women's Theological Association, diaconal institutions, chaplain service, etc.). Internship takes place within the study course "Internship in relevant industry". See regulations in the appendix. Internship tasks are in accordance with the joint results of DSP - students understand and evaluate connection between research theories of the field and practice.

3.2.5. Evaluation and description of the promotion opportunities and the promotion process provided to the students of the doctoral study programme (if applicable).

The study process at the doctoral program is organized in a way that supports researchers during the research-in-progress, as well as provides the opportunities for the researchers to participate in conferences and seminars, to receive feedback on the results of their work obtained during the internship, as well supports the creation of publications by doctoral students. In the process of development of the doctoral thesis, *the role of the scientific supervisor is essential, then comes the supervision of the doctoral council of the science field, mobility opportunities, the allocation of the support funding.*

The scientific supervisor is a support person in the creation of the work structure and development plan, as well as is monitoring the work-in-progress and consults the doctoral student when necessary. At the end of each semester the doctoral student delivers a report on the progress of the development of the doctoral thesis and fulfillment of the program requirements to the *doctoral council*. On-site evaluation provides the possibility to receive feedback on the doctoral work-in-progress.

Within the framework of *doctoral mobility* of doctoral students of the Humanities Cluster in DSP (which also includes the doctoral study programme of the FT), long-term cooperation on the basis of a bilateral cooperation agreement is implemented with such well-known European universities in the field of humanities, as the University of Munich, the University of Potsdam, the University of Regensburg, the University of Tübingen, the University of Heidelberg, the University of Freiburg, the Catholic University of Leuven, the University of Sirnaca, the University of Prague, etc. This cooperation gives the doctoral students and the academic staff access to both a wide range of study courses and access to research infrastructure - libraries, archives, etc.

Within the framework of the international module doctoral students of the doctoral study program "Theology and Religious Studies" participate in joint seminars where they report on the results of their work obtaining international feedback on the completed research.

The doctoral students also have the opportunity to participate in *activities organized by international cooperation networks* of different fields of science, which provides the doctoral students with the opportunity to participate in conferences, summer schools and seminars, as well as to network and acquire international cooperation partners for the implementation of various joint projects.

In order to support the prospective and existing doctoral students, *the Doctoral School* "Relevant Problems of Theology and Religious Studies" has been established, which provides for the provision of new opportunities for scientific cooperation to students and the improvement of the scientific and pedagogical qualification of the involved teaching staff by creating a new interdisciplinary scientific cooperation network in the research of religious phenomena. The aim of the school is to expand and deepen research on various topical fields of theology and religious studies, attracting not only the representatives from the structural units of the University of Latvia and other Latvian higher education institutions, but also foreign experts. Initially, scientists from Tartu and Oxford have been invited, but gradually the network of contacts is being expanded, extending the cooperation with universities in Scandinavian countries and Germany. This provides The Doctoral school students with opportunities to exploit the scientific potential of other universities.

The University of Latvia has developed the *Procedure for the development of scientific activity of*

the University of Latvia (approved by the Order no. 1/148 of the University of Latvia of 20.04.2018), within its framework the doctoral students are able to receive *support for participation in international events* or organisation of an international event at the University of Latvia, preparation of applications for international project, etc. cooperation activities. Doctoral students have access to support funding, which is granted to doctoral students and applicants for a scientific degree. In 2020, 36 initiatives received support in the framework of this programme.

In accordance with UL Doctoral study program development plan ([LU doktora studiju programmu attīstības plāns](#) - (only in Latvian)) as the main tasks are defined: increasing scientific excellence, internationalisation of research, broadening the knowledge base and technology transfer.

In order to promote the involvement of doctoral students and young scientists in scientific activities, thus reducing the drop-out level, the doctoral students at the University of Latvia are involved in various *research projects*, as well as the University of Latvia uses a student-centred approach to promote doctoral studies. For example, in December 2020, in the second and third year of studies, 308 doctoral students studied at the University of Latvia, of whom 83 were already involved in scientific activities in 118 projects on the basis of an employment contract as researchers, scientific assistants, leading experts and laboratory assistants. On average, 15% of the doctoral students are involved in research projects of the international dimension. 6 doctoral students from UL FT participated in the research and doctoral support projects.

The project "Renewal of academic staff and development of competences at the University of Latvia" implemented by the University of Latvia in the section "Support for doctoral students for work at the University of Latvia" (Project No. 8.2.2.0/18/A/010), which is implemented in the operational program "Growth and employment" 8.2.2. within the framework of the second round of projects of the specific support goal "Strengthening higher education institutions in the areas of strategic specialization of academic staff", two doctoral students of TF received support, who concluded and submitted theses within the framework of the project in 2022, one of which has been defended, the other is currently in the doctoral process and has received positive assessment from the expert of the Latvian Council of Sciences.

During the reporting period, the University of Latvia has also organised a grant competition, which is one of the activities of the project "Strengthening the Doctoral Capacity of the University of Latvia within the framework of the new doctoral model" supported by the European Social Fund, which is implemented within the framework of the third round of the specific objective 8.2.2 "Strengthen academic staff of higher education institutions in the fields of strategic specialisation" of the operational programme "Growth and Employment" (project No. 8.2.2.0/20/I/006). It is intended that a doctoral student or applicant for a scientific degree as a grant recipient is in employment legal relationship with the University of Latvia or a cooperation partner during the project and will apply for financial support within a 12-month period in the amount of 50 per cent of the full-time workload. The amount of the grant is EUR 1 000 gross for a 50 percent workload. The recipient of the grant is expected to be employed in another project of the University of Latvia in the amount of at least 30 per cent of the full-time work. Two applicants for the Religion and Theology degree are participating in the project and will submit theses for defense in 2023. ESF support has been very important because even though doctoral students receive small state scholarships the work to earn a living competes with the development of a doctoral thesis.

The UL provides financial support for printing doctoral theses and abstracts. After defending, the best works are published in a series of monographs *Opera Theologica Universitatis Latviensis* published by the FT.

The Doctoral thesis process is coordinated by the Doctoral Council of the Faculty of Theology in Philosophy, Ethics and Religion.

The Doctoral Council Council is responsible for the provision of experts (including from abroad). The Doctoral Council has long been composed of high-level scientists - experts in the field of theology and religious studies who perform the functions of council members qualitatively.

The awarding of the Doctoral degree takes place in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 1001 "[Zinātniskā doktora grāda piešķiršanas \(promocijas\) kārtība un kritēriji](#)" - (only in Latvian) and the regulations of the University of Latvia adopted in accordance with them (<https://www.lu.lv/gribustudet/studiju-programmas/doktorantura/promocija/> - (only in Latvian)). The rights to defend the doctoral thesis in the field "Philosophy, Ethics and Religion" is delegated to the UL. The doctoral thesis can be a thesis, a thematically collection of scientific publications, a monograph. Methodological guidelines have been developed in the faculties of the University of Latvia on the drawing up of the doctoral thesis in accordance with the generally accepted requirements for the arrangement of scientific reports, journals, collections of articles and monographs. When the Council of the doctoral branch has decided to advance the developed doctoral thesis for defence, it is submitted to the Academic Department. After that the thesis is examined by the Field Promotion Council, which, in case of a positive decision, determines the approximate date of defence and reviewers, and the work is transferred to the State Commission for Scientific Qualification (SCSQ). In case of a positive decision of the Commission, a further defence process is organized (the paper is sent to reviewers, then defence follows).

The UL also offers postdoctoral options

<https://www.tf.lu.lv/petnieciba/pecdoktorantura/> (only in Latvian)

During the reporting period, postdoctoral projects are implemented by 2 FT lecturers:

- L. Geikina's (2018-2020) project "Interrelationship of Theology and practice in Sustainable Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue".
- Project of Assistant Professor L. Rozentāls (2020-2022) "Success for Sustainable and Integrated Development of Society in the Context of the Case of the Movement "Revival and Renewal"."

3.2.6. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the marks of the final theses.

During the reporting period, the following **research directions** are offered in the DSP "Theology and Religious Studies"

- History of religions in the Baltic countries in the context of Western-Eastern cultural spaces;
- History of the Church in the sources of Latvian history;
- The changing nature of religious identities: regional, national and global aspects
- Religious pedagogy in European context;
- A dialogue of religion and the contemporary culture;
- Religions' response to the modernity: ecumenism, interreligious dialogue, fundamentalism;
- Religion and secularization: political religions, changes in state-church relations, transformation processes in religions;
- The latest methodology in research of sacred texts;
- The dynamics of the development of the new religious movements

The Doctoral thesis is a confirmation that the applicant for a scientific degree under the guidance of an experienced scientist has independently performed an original scientific research that provides new insights in the relevant field or sub-field of science, knows how to independently plan the research, has acquired the methodology for conducting research and the methods necessary for work in the speciality, is able to independently analyse the obtained results and draw appropriate conclusions; (<https://www.lu.lv/gribustudet/studiju-programmas/doktorantura/promocija/>- (only in Latvian)).

The choice of the topic of the Doctoral thesis is determined by the academic and/or professional interests and previous experience of the student, the paper is developed in close cooperation with the advisor, attracting other the FT teaching staff as consultants, if necessary.

During the reporting period, a wide variety of topics of the Doctoral theses have been approved, such as:

- Unity of Divine Essence and Diversity of God's Word in Ibn Araby Theology (2021);
- Identification of the presence of the mekhilt of the Halahic Midrish genre of *Tanaim's* Judaism in Paul's authentic letter (2021);
- Dichotomy of the spirit and matter as a potential "hotbed of psychic infection" in Western thinking: the example of Rajnishpuram (2020);
- Transformative features of the contemplative tradition of Benedictine monasticism in the 1920s and 1920s. (2019);
- Study of the Bible texts by text linguistics (2019);
- Understanding the concept of eternity in the canon of the beat generation (2018);
- Understanding of God in Latvian folklore and its interpretation from the perspective of religious philosophy (2018)
- Martin Luther's "*De Servo Arbitrio*" - a clash of concepts in the polemics of Erasmus and Luther on the issues of human freedom (2017);
- Lonergan and phenomenology: theoretical and practical evaluation of the phenomenological method in the context of B. Lonergan's opinins (2017);
- A woman, Christian community and abortion issue in Latvia (2016);
- The role of the Russian Orthodox Church in international politics and relations with neighbouring countries from 1991 to 2012 (2016);
- Valentinians' antropology(2015);
- Trinity as the basis of ecclesiology: comparative theological analysis (2015).

During the reporting period, two doctoral theses were defended:

- "Synod Principle of Administration in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia in 1948-1984" (2015). Scientific advisor Prof. V. Tēraudkalns. The aim of the Doctoral thesis is to study the history of limiting the principle of synod in church administration and attempts to expand it in the system of church administration from 1948 to 1984. The results of the Doctoral thesis reflect the changes caused by the restriction of the principle of synod administration in the synod episcopal system of the church during the Soviet regime and attempts to preserve and strengthen the synodality and autonomy of the church.
- "Verbal Inspiration as a Response to a Theological crisis - Implications in Theological Discourse of Latvia" (2022). Scientific supervisor Prof. D. Balode. In his Doctoral thesis, the author analyzes the history of the verbal inspirational thought of the Bible and defends the thesis that the doctrine of verbal inspiration in Christianity has been formed in connection with various theological crises. Christian fundamentalism and its historical impact on the Christian faith in Latvia are also considered as one of the results of the theological crisis and faith in verbal inspiration of the Bible. In the second part of the theses, a qualitative study

was carried out: 29 pastors of Protestant churches of Latvia were interviewed in semi-structured interviews in order to find out the position of a modern clergy as opinion leaders of the Christian community on the issue of verbal inspiration of the Bible. The study concludes that in the theological discourse of Latvia there are very pronounced beliefs in verbal inspiration, which is confirmed by the methodology of reasoning of clergy and the methodology of interpretation of the Bible, in solving issues topical for the church and society.

3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

3.3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples.

The study base, informative base, material and technical base and financial base of the DSP conform to the specifics of the study programme, the conditions for implementation, create preconditions for achieving the study results and testify to the possibility to ensure a high-quality study process.

The financial base of the program is sufficient to attract the best specialists of theology and religious studies in Latvia and to ensure the implementation of the program. There are enough working spaces provided, as well as places for individual consultations at FT, Raina blvd. 19.

Doctoral students use resources of the library including opportunities to order publications and copies from other libraries, as well as use databases and information resources subscribed by UL. These opportunities are very important for the development of doctoral thesis, as they expand the opportunities to obtain the necessary academic literature on specific issues. The library of UL provides working spaces, as well as computers for work in the library, if necessary.

By moving to the House of Letters which is planned for 2023, the material and technical base will be significantly improved in terms of facilities and equipment (projectors, screens). The resources of the libraries of several humanities and social fields at the UL will be merged thus facilitating further access to them.

Provision of technical resources for the implementation of remote studies proved essential during the last two years. It is planned to continue with and improve these resources further on especially taking into consideration the further cooperation with the School of Theology and Religion of Tartu University.

A detailed analysis of the provision of resources can be found in Parts II, Chapter 3, subsections 2.3.1 to 2.3.3.

3.3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific base support, including the resources provided within the framework of cooperation with other science institutes and higher education institutions (applicable to doctoral study programmes) (if applicable).

Information on the funding of the science at the University of Latvia is available at the University of Latvia <https://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/2021-gada-zinatnes-bazes-finansejums> - (only in Latvian). In general, in 2021, UL has received 6354158 EUR as base funding, which is an increase of 3.9%. Base funding is calculated based on the information submitted by scientific institutions about the results of scientific activity achieved in the previous reporting period. The FT pays the salaries of the staff elected to scientific positions and part of the business trips from the base funding allocated to it. The scientific journal "Ceļš" (The Way), proceedings of conference theses, business trips, etc. are financed from the centralized funding of science. For more details on funding available to the FT see the next sub-chapter.

In addition to this, in cooperation with the students of the Doctoral study programme of the UT, there is an opportunity to use the resources of the UT library and other, *Erasmus+* programme resources, resources allocated by the Norwegian Instrument. For more information about the TU library and the resources available in it, see <https://utlib.ut.ee/en/about-us>

3.3.3. Indicate data on the available funding for the corresponding study programme, its funding sources and their use for the development of the study programme. Provide information on the costs per one student within this study programme, indicating the items included in the cost calculation and the percentage distribution of funding between the specified items. The minimum number of students in the study programme in order to ensure the profitability of the study programme (indicating separately the information on each language, type and form of the study programme implementation).

Revenues of the programme

To ensure the necessary funds for the implementation of the study programme "Theology and Religious Studies", the University of Latvia uses:

1. a state budget grant from the Ministry of Education and Science, which in the academic year 2021/2022 is set at EUR 1,633.53 with a study level ratio of 3 for full-time studies;
2. tuition fee, taking into account all the factors referred to in the section "Financial support", which in the academic year 2021/2022 is set as follows:

Full time studies EUR 2 500 per year;

Taking into account the above, the total budget of the study programme is expected to be EUR 41 705, per year, the data are shown in Table 32.

Table 32. Estimated annual income of the programme, EUR

Type of study	Number of students	Tuition fee / state grant	Total income
---------------	--------------------	---------------------------	--------------

FTS (budget)	8	1 633,53*3	39 205
FTS (fees)	1	2 500	2 500
International students	0	0	0
Total	9		41 705

Programme costs

In order to estimate the amount of funds required for financial provision, the cost of study programmes at the University of Latvia is calculated according to the methodology developed by the University of Latvia, which takes into account the costs of providing the study process and information on the study programme plan, reliability of forecasts.

The full-time study programme costs

For calculations, the implementers of the study programme “Theology and Religious Studies” use students data of the academic year 2020/2021 - 10 students (8 – students on the state grant; 1 – donated by the UL; 1 – pays the fee) study in the programme at the FTS, the existing/planned study programme plan after accreditation and the existing/planned structure of the involved academic staff. Taking into account the above, the estimated full-time cost per full-time student of the program is EUR 4156 per year, and the total cost of the program is EUR 41 560 per year. A more detailed percentage cost breakdown is shown in Table 33.

Table 33. Percentage breakdown of costs in the study programme

Expenditure item	% of total
Teacher costs	34,41
General staff	12,05
Other payments	16,36
Infrastructure expenditure	11,14
Property and services	0,04
Indirect costs	26,00
TOTAL COSTS	100,00

Figure 24 shows the cost of the study programme depending on the number of students and a comparison with the offered tuition fee and the state budget grant.

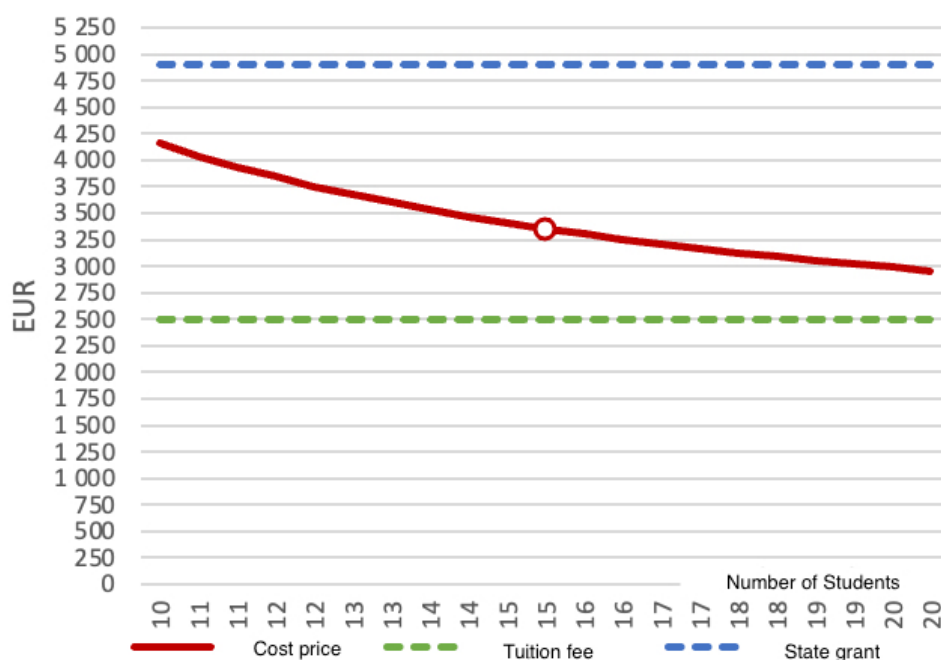


Figure 24. Cost per

student enrolled for the "Theology and Religious Studies programme

Based on the calculation, it can be seen that for the programme to be profitable and provide students with a quality study process, the tuition fee should be at least EUR 3 375 and the number of paid students in the programme (all courses combined) must be at least 15 (intersection of red (cost) and green (tuition) lines projected on the x-axis).

If students who study only in English are admitted to the program, then two study groups are formed, where one group learns the program in English, and the other in Latvian and English (in the Cooperation module, the lectures are in English in the amount of 24 CP + one more course of another module 4 CP can be taught in English). Since the majority of the doctoral study program is based on individual work, during the study process separate groups are formed in courses with a maximum of 22 CP. Calculating the cost with the number of 10 students, supplementing it with the number of credits to be taught in two groups, the cost for the study place increases to EUR 4,171 per student per year. This means that only one fee-paying student would be needed to cover the full cost of a study place to achieve the program's profitability. For now, however, a lower tuition fee of 2,500 EUR has been set, taking into account the potential student's ability to pay. Study fees are planned to be reviewed in the future.

Summary of the revenue and expenditure of the programme

Table 34 summarizes the programme revenue based on the number of students, state grants and tuition fees, and the programme expenses for such number of students.

Table 34. The result of the programme

Type of studies	Number of students	Tuition fee/ state subsidy	Total income	Total cost
FTS (budget)	8	4 901	39 205	39 404
FTS (fees)	1	2 500	2 500	14 156
Total	9		41 705	41 560

The data presented in the table clearly show that the University of Latvia has sufficient resources to

implement the study programme and ensure its further development. In addition, the development of the programme is financed from the revenues received from the UL Study Quality Improvement Fund as well as from the financial resources accumulated by the structural unit. In the coming years, it is planned to start life-long education courses, which will be a source of additional income.

3.4. Teaching Staff

3.4.1. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members (academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

12 lecturers (7 professors, 1 associate professor, 1 assistant professor, including 3 leading researchers) are involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme "Theology and Religious Studies", and their qualification fully complies with the requirements of regulatory enactments. [Law on Higher Education Institutions](#) paragraph 55.1 indicates that not less than five professors and associate professors who have been elected to the academic positions at the relevant higher education institution shall participate in the implementation of the compulsory and optional part of study programmes. A total of 8 professors and associate professors, who have been elected to the University of Latvia and the University of Tartu, participate in the implementation of the compulsory and the restrictive elective part of the programme.

Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programme with the requirements set for the study programme implementation and the regulatory enactments

The academic staff involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme all have Doctoral degrees and considerable practical experience in the relevant field. The knowledge of foreign languages of the teaching staff of the study field allow to teach study courses in English. The teaching staff involved in the programme are competent to prepare researchers and teaching staff in theology and religious studies, as well as highly educated professionals in the field as a result of the implementation of the study programme. The teaching staff helps the students to acquire the skills to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the theories and concepts of theology and religion studies, that they are familiar with the modern methods of research, are able to independently plan, organize, perform and manage practical tasks. Experts of the Latvian Council of Science - D. Balode, L. Geikina, V. Tēraudkalns. Academic staff from UT is involved in teaching courses in the international module.

High-level academic staff are involved in the implementation of the Doctoral study programme (see the list in the Table 35).

Table 35. The lecturers involved in the Doctoral study programme, 2021.

No	Name, surname	Scientific degree	Position
1.	Valdis Tēraudkalns	<i>Dr. phil</i>	Professor, lead. researcher
2	Dace Balode	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Professor, lead. researcher
3.	Laima Geikina	<i>Dr. paed., Dr. theol.</i>	Professor, lead. researcher
4.	Riho Altnurme	<i>Dr. phil.</i>	Guestprofessor
5.	Urmas Nõmmik	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Asoc. professor
6.	Anne Kull	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Professor
7.	Lea Altnurme	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Leading researcher
8.	Inta Līsmāne	<i>Dr. philol</i>	Ass. professor
9.	Velga Vēvere	<i>Dr. phil.</i>	Leading researcher
10.	Normunds Titāns	<i>Dr. phil.</i>	Professor, lead. researcher
11.	Ralfs Kokins	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Professor, lead. researcher
12.	Elizabete Taivāne	<i>Dr. theol.</i>	Ass. professor, lead. researcher

The high level of quality in the programme is determined by the fact that 12 doctors of science (100% of the total number of the lecturers) are involved in the programme. All the lecturers have extensive practical experience in the fields of theology, religious studies and the related fields (philosophy, anthropology, etc.), which undoubtedly helps to achieve the planned results of DSP studies.

A large number of the lecturers have acquired academic education abroad, thus expanding the

possibilities of internationalisation in the study process and research. The programme includes 4 lecturers from the UT, thus increasing the international capacity of the DSP. The teaching staff actively participate in various scientific conferences, research projects, local and international organizations. Thus acquired experience allows to create a student-centered international study environment that is focused on the formation and development of individual research skills in the students and is focused on the achievements of scientific excellence.

In general the quality of the teaching staff's performance has been assessed by the students as very good during the reporting period. This is evidenced by the surveys (scale of evaluation 1-10) carried out during the reporting period, which the competence of the teaching staff evaluate with 6.5; the attitude towards the students and communication - 6.7, the interest of the Doctoral thesis advisors in the results of the student's work - 6.0 (2019).

3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.

There has been no change in the composition of the teaching staff during the reporting period, as this is a new program licensed in 2021.

3.4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members, involved in the implementation of doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals or peer-reviewed monographs may be additionally specified. Information on the teaching staff included in the database of experts of the Latvian Council of Science in the relevant field of science (total number, name of the lecturer, field of science in which the teaching staff has the status of an expert and expiration date of the Latvian Council of Science expert) (if applicable).

Each year, the teaching staff involved in the DSP produce several scientific publications published on various sites, for example, R. Altnurme has published 21 scientific articles during the reporting period, D. Balode - 12, L. Geikina - 15, V. Tēraudkalns - 36. A detailed list of the publications can be found in the annex "The list of scientific publications of the academic staff".

The lecturers involved in the programme are also experts of **the Latvian Council of Science in the field of Humanities and art sciences - Philosophy, Ethics and Religion**

- D. Balode (ORCID 0000-0001-8303-8466) - līdz 23.04.2023.
- L. Geikina - līdz 16.10.2022.
- V. Tēraudkalns (ORCID 0000-0003-2367-2398) - līdz 03.09.2023.
- V. Vēvere - līdz 03.09.2023.

3.4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the

implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).

The lecturers of the University of Latvia involved in the DSP are actively involved in and use the opportunities offered in the SAM 8.2.2 project "Renewal of Academic Staff and Improvement of Competences at the University of Latvia", for example, in leadership and commercialization courses.

The lecturers involved in the DSP are actively involved in various research projects, for example, Prof. D. Balode has experience as a:

- A leading researcher in the project "Transformation of Religion and Theology in The Global Context of Modern Latvia" (2016 – present);
- A leading expert in the ESF project "Establishment of Internationally Competitive and Promoting the Development of the Latvian Economy Study Programmes at the University of Latvia" (01/05/2019 – 29/02/2020);

Prof. L. Geikina has experience as:

- A leading researcher in the project "Religion and gender equality: Baltic and Nordic developments (ReliGen)" (01/01/2021 – present, to 31/12/2023), funding from the financial instrument of the European Economic Area and the the Norwegian Financial Instrument in the amount of 90% and the funds of the Lithuanian Council of Science in the amount of 10%, total project amount EUR 734 377, for the University of Latvia - EUR 174 250;
- A head of the project "Feminist discourse and intersectionality in theological studies: academic theology in Latvia -100" (february - march 2020), funding from Baltic-American Freedom Foundation (BAFF), EUR 7222.17;
- A leading researcher in the ERDF project "Activity Nr. 1.1.1.2. Postdoctoral research support, research project " "Interrelationship between Theology and Practice in a Sustainable Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue." Project Nr. 1.1.1.2/VIAA/1/16/076/ ((01/11/2017-31/10/2020), funding from the funds of the European Regional Development Fund in the amount of 85%, from the state budget funds in the amount of 10% and the funds of the University of Latvia in the amount of 5%, total funding EUR 133,805.88;
- A leading researcher in the project "Transformation of Religion and Theology in the Global Context of Modern Latvia" (2016 – present);

Prof. V. Tēraudkalns - as:

- A leading researcher in the National Research Programme "Latvian Heritage and Future Challenges for National Sustainability" the project "Interaction of an Individual, Society and State in the General Process of Latvian History: Conflicts of Values and Formation of Common Values at Historical Breaking Points" (VPP-IZM-2018/1-0018; total funding - EUR 600 000) (december 2018 - 2021);
- A leading researcher in the project "Transformation of Religion and Theology in The Global Context of Modern Latvia" (2016 – present);
- A coordinator of the ESF project "The Establishment of Internationally Competitive Study Programmes Promoting the Development of the Latvian Economy at the University of Latvia" (13/11/2019 – 22/11/2019);
- A leading researcher The bilateral financial instrument project of Norwegian Government

"Gender Sociality in Cultural and Power Interrelationships: the Diversity of Latvia and Norway." (01/04/2017 – 30/04/2017).

The participation of the lecturers in research projects helps to improve the quality of research and eliminate deficiencies not only within the framework of the programme, but also within the entire study field, ensures achievement of the strategic goals of the University of Latvia, qualitative study process, excellent research, sustainable innovation activities.

3.4.5. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study programme and study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).

Within the framework of the DSP, the lecturers cooperate in the development and implementation of the content of study courses, improve methodological provision of studies, participate in the self-assessment process of the study programme. Several of the teaching staff are involved in the development and implementation of study courses. Their mutual cooperation contributes to the quality of study courses both during the development and implementation stages. Cooperation is implemented in regular faculty meetings organized by FT leadership and DSP director, where content of courses is discussed.

The teaching staff of the programme also cooperate in research, writing and publishing joint scientific papers and teaching material, as well as by creating, improving and teaching joint courses within the framework of the study programme. The published scientific articles are used in the study process. The students of the programme are well informed about the publishing activity of their advisor and other teaching staff involved in the programme, as all students of the programme perform active scientific cooperation with the teaching staff involved in the programme. The proportion of the students and the teachers in the study programme is (10/12) 0.83.

Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	Annex_12_3_Doctor_diploma.docx	12_3_pielikums_Doktors_diploms.docx
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)	Annex_13_DSP_Decision_Council_Higher Education.docx	13_pielikums_AIP_atzinums_DSP.docx
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	Annex_14_DSP_Statistics_students_reporting_period.docx	14_pielikums_statistika_studejosie_DSP(1).docx
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard		
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	Annex18_DSP.docx	18_pielikums_DSP_kartejums(1).docx
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	Annex_21_DSP_study_plan.docx	21_pielikums_DSP_plans(1).docx
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	Courses_DSP.docx	studiju_kursi_apraksti_DSP(1).docx
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)	DSP Religija un teologija-PRAKSES NOLIKUMS-EN.docx	DSP Religija un teologija-PRAKSES NOLIKUMS-LV.docx
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)	Annex_23.1_staff_DSP.pdf	Pielikums_23.1_personals_DSP.pdf
Confirmation that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)	Annex_23.2_sect55_DSP.pdf	Pielikums_23_2_Virziena vadītāja apliecinājums_AL55.pdf