

JOINT REPORT OF THE EXPERTS GROUP FOR STUDY DIRECTIONS

Internal Security and Civil Protection

Rīga Stradiņš University

The experts group recommends to accredit the Study Direction for a period of 2 years.

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K1. The relevance, aims and objectives of the study direction and its relevant study programmes as a whole and their clarity, attainability, and compliance with the general strategic development of the HEI

Analysis

The Study Direction 'Internal Security and Civil Protection' was developed in 2017. The RSU does not offer higher level programmes in this segment. The Study Direction was developed in response to an urgent need to cover a gap in education of personnel in the security and civil protection area that appeared after the closure and reorganisation of the Police Academy in 2009. In 2015 the Cabinet of Ministers approved a new professional standard of 'Senior Officer of the State Police' and in so doing, creating a new requirement. In response, the RSU has successfully developed this new Study Direction and Study Programme and secured a bid for its implementation and execution. In the self-assessment report (SAR) and during the expert onsite visit, the RSU provided sufficient justification for creation of the Study Direction and the Study Programme included in it. The uniqueness and competitiveness of the Study Programme with other HEIs is ensured by the fact of close cooperation between RSU and employers during development of the programme and effective coordination with the specialists from involved law enforcement agencies during the implementation phase.

The Study Direction 'Internal Security and Civil Protection' consists of one Study Programme, namely 'Police Work'. The Study Direction and its programme are professionally relevant and cover the current requirements of the State Police and other related entities in the education of law enforcement officers. Study courses of the Study Programme 'Police Work' have been created in compliance with the specification of the police work and requirements set out in laws and regulations. The development of the new Study Programme has occurred in accordance with the latest political planning documents and conceptual guidelines of the sector and also correspond with the State development priorities.

The aims and objectives of the Study Programme are defined to satisfy the requirements of the professional standard for 'Senior Officer of the State Police'. These aims and objectives are inter-linked and address the specific requirements stated for the police officer and are defined in accordance with national regulations. Both aims and objectives are attainable and they are in-line with the RSU's development strategy. However, it is difficult to compare them with other international standards, since they are not written using recognised systems such as Bloom's Taxonomy (a hierarchical ordering of cognitive skills that is designed to help teachers to teach and students to learn). The RSU, together with other Latvian HEIs, should consider discussing moving towards a more internationally recognised system.

The Study Direction complies with the existing needs and development trends and local market necessities.

The Study Direction and Study Programme are designed principally for Latvian policing need and, in foreseeable future, it will be challenging to offer this programme in any language other than Latvian, as it was stated in application for accreditation that

programme will also be implemented in English. There are a number of reasons for this: the programme is designed for the specific needs of Latvian Police officers and is not generic enough for international studies, parts of the course require Latvian security clearances that is going to be extremely challenging to obtain for international students, and English language knowledge among members of Faculty and students of the final year of studies are at low levels. That was clearly seen from experts' team visit to the RSU.

A SWOT analysis is a powerful tool to support development of the strategy. The comprehensive involvement of all stakeholders is a prerequisite for the development of an effective SWOT analysis. Although the SWOT analysis has been conducted it is incomplete and considers mainly external factors and therefore needs to be reviewed. All the identified 'Weaknesses' and 'Threats' are concerned with external bodies, namely the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Education and Science and the State Police. No internal (e.g. RSU) 'Weaknesses' and 'Threats' have been identified, which is very unusual especially for a newly established Study Direction. The identified 'Opportunities' are also oriented mainly towards gradual and marginable developments, rather than addressing the possibilities for major improvements to the Study Direction and Study Programme.

The development plan for the Study Direction appears realistic and reflects the more immediate needs required for progress of the Study Direction and could be implemented within the time-frame specified.

The RSU identified the 'development of the content of the studies and environment of the studies, as well as research, involvement of the students and strengthening the quality of professional practice' as one of its priorities. Whilst these are laudable objectives, the involvement of the students into the research process most likely will be challenging. From our team on-site visit, it was obvious that currently and in foreseeable future this Study Programme will be filled with part-time students, who are busy performing their daily police duties. Their daily job and future promotion doesn't require the conducting of any specific research, so it will be challenging to motivate them to perform additional research activity, which isn't part of their job description.

External contributions to the Study Programme are from two main groups: academics from the Police College and practitioners from law enforcement agencies. Although improvements in research activities and output are possible with members of the RSU Faculty of Law, it will be difficult to achieve the same results with external academics/instructors. Practitioners from the external agencies have little time, nor are formally required to advance their scholarship or research. It would be extremely challenging to raise both groups to the same standard as RSU's Faculty of Law.

The improvement of the competences of the programme academic staff through mobility activities seems to be interpreted differently at different levels. From our discussions with panels during the visit, it would appear that only Faculty members are able to undertake mobility activities. Other categories of staff (e.g. Management of Study Direction and Employers) are less able and willing to do so for a variety of reasons., including that the RSU has no formal authority over the 'mobility' of visiting faculty members who work full-time in other institutions (i.e. Faculty of the Police College and Police experts) and Police officers who study on part-time programmes.

The academic and professional development of the Study Direction (for example, effectively ensuring three levels of study) is justified. However, whilst maintaining this direction the RSU Faculty of Law should keep in mind the interests of potential employers and the needs of the employees in terms of subsequent Master's degrees. Currently, the holding of a Master's degree is not a requirement for promotion in any of law enforcement agencies. In order to design a new Master's programme for 'Police Work' graduates, the RSU should work closely together with potential employers.

Conclusions, specifying strengths and weaknesses

In conclusion, the relevance, aims and objectives of the Study Direction are consistent with professional and academic needs.

The strengths of the Study Direction are:

- The overall aim and objectives of the Study Programme are relevant and comply with the general strategic development of the HEI.
- The Study Direction and Study Programme are relevant and reflect current and future requirements for well-trained and educated law enforcement officers.
- The Aim and Objectives of the Study Programme satisfy the requirements of the professional standard for 'Senior Officer of the State Police'.
- The Study Direction and Study Programme comply with existing needs, the professional development requirements and local market trends.
- The development plan for the Study Direction is realistic and achievable, reflecting existing needs of the Direction and able to be implemented within the specified time-frame.

The weaknesses of the Study Direction are:

- The objectives of the Study Programme are defined in accordance with Latvian national standards, but do not correspond with the internationally recognised systems such as Bloom's Taxonomy.
- The Study Programme cannot presently be offered as an 'international competitive study programme', due to the following: programme is designed for specific Latvian requirements, elective part of the programme requires Latvian security clearances, current proficiency of programme's faculty and students in foreign languages is not sufficient enough and there are only limited possibilities to develop course materials in languages other than Latvian.
- The SAR SWOT analysis does not provide comprehensive look at the internal weaknesses and threats to the Study Programme and the identified strengths do not sufficiently counteract the identified external threats to the

aims of the Study Programme.

Evaluation of criteria

Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
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K2. The management of the study direction

Analysis

The management system is clearly established, operates effectively and works positively towards the development of the Study Direction and the Study Programme. Processes for the revision of the current Study Programme are well established, but their effectiveness is hard to measure, since there have been no graduations as yet from the 'Police Work' Study Programme.

The RSU is a respected, experienced and well-established HEI and has internal systems of processes and procedures that are well-functioning within the university. Existing RSU and Faculty of Law procedures were applied to the Study Direction 'Internal Security and Civil Protection' and work very well. A system for constant review and update of existing processes and procedures is also in-place.

Student admission procedure is established and regulated by existing internal regulations. All documents are following the Latvian State's regulations for HEIs. Students selected for the part-time studies by law enforcement agencies are properly processed and admitted into the RSU. There is no significant contest for participation in the Study Programme, since the State Police cannot fill all the slots available for study (45% - 1st year and 36% - 2nd year, Presentation 'Professional Bachelor's Study Programme 'Police Work', Study Direction 'Internal Security and Civil Protection' by Head of the Study Programme Dr. iur. Valdis Voins, Slide No 4'). There were not sufficient number of students, who applied for the full-time programme in previous years, so no such full-time programmes have been run thus far.

Procedure for recognition of the Study Programme is regulated by variety of external and internal laws and regulations. Recognition of the Study Period, professional experience, previously acquired formal and non-formal education is recognised and arranged by internal regulations. The RSU established a commission that is responsible for evaluation of knowledge, skills and competences acquired by the person from non-formal education or professional experience and if these comply with the learning outcomes to be achieved by the respective study programme and assign respective credit points. Procedure for recognition of the Learning Outcomes is also in place. RSU has organised studies recognition process with one commission, where all the experts from different educational areas are involved. Such approach ensures unified approach to all Study Directions, including direction 'Internal Security and Civil Protection'.

Evaluation system of student achievements is developed and defined in numerous internal regulations and based on the State's regulating Acts. The analysis of performance of the students is performed twice per academic year. The RSU has guidelines for performing of analysis of students, which monitors risks to successful study process and reasons for exclusion of underperforming students.

The RSU is committed to 'student-centred' approach to education process. As a student-centred HEI, the RSU actively involves the students in improvement of the study process. This positive trend should continue in the future. Working together with experts of 'Peer Assessment of Student-centred Learning' (PASCL), among other things, resulted in implementation of the processes of quality monitoring that promotes quantitative and qualitative student feedback, identification and assessment of quality indicators of the study programmes.

The module feedback process is very important for the continuous development of the Study Programme and the RSU should take further steps to encourage students to take a more active participation in this process. The level of submitted module feedback is too low (34%) and should be improved.

Anti-plagiarism tools and mechanisms are in-place and operating effectively. However, during our visit the attitude towards 'plagiarism' seems inconsistent across the partnership (HEI and employers) and steps should be taken to ensure all parties are aware of the policy.

Conclusions, specifying strengths and weaknesses

In conclusion, the management of the Study Direction is well-organised and achieves a good level of success. All formal procedures are established and functioning well. Procedures for review and update of processes and procedures are also in-place.

The strengths of the Study Direction are:

- The Study Direction management system is established and successfully functioning.
- All processes and procedures within RSU and the Study Direction are established and functioning.

Weaknesses of the Study Direction are:

- The level of student module feedback (34%) could be increased to provide information to assist making any decisions or implementing changes to the existing single Study Programme.
- The attitude towards 'plagiarism' and other forms of academic cheating appears inconsistent across the partnership (HEI and employers) and steps should be taken to ensure all parties are aware of the policy.

Evaluation of criteria

Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
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K3. The effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system

Analysis

According to the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European higher education area institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders. In terms of meeting this requirement the RSU has employed a particular model (the 'Plan-Do-Check-Act' cycle) to implement its internal quality assurance system.

In general, oversight of RSU activity is ensured by activities that are integrated into the usual processes of the Faculty; for example, approval, validation, evaluation of teaching and learning, distribution of duties and responsibilities. At the same time purposeful control measures have been implemented that are used at various periods during the whole year.

In order to ensure the maintenance of programme quality, a yearly self-assessment of the Study Direction is undertaken, including a SWOT analysis. In 2016, the indicators of the Study Programme quality were approved. Heads of the programmes summarise and assess the quality indicators of Study Programmes each year in accordance with "Procedure for Assessment of Quality Indicators of Study Programmes". The results are included in the overall summary evaluations of the Study Programmes. A data analysis related to studies, including of performance, survey results of study courses and study programmes, of visitations, and other measures are also performed.

The current system ensures a comprehensive supervision of Study Direction quality with control measures throughout the year.

During the visit students were asked if they receive any feedback or see any positive changes from filling questionnaires issued to them, but they could not tell or give any examples for the benefits about this part of the quality assurance system. However they stated that it was possible for them to directly talk to academic or administrative staff to improve things.

Conclusions, specifying strengths and weaknesses

In conclusion, the internal quality assurance system meets the standards specified in the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

The strengths of the Study Direction are:

- The RSU quality policy is defined and publicly available.
- Interested parties are involved in the determination of the policy.

Weaknesses of the Study Direction are:

- Quality assurance indicators are not currently defined as specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based ('SMART') therefore it is hard to assess their successful implementation.
- On site visit concluded that there appears to be lack of understanding by all parties of the quality assurance system.

Evaluation of criteria

Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
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K4. Resources and provision of the study direction

Analysis

The criteria for the financial provision for the Study Direction were set out in the self-assessment report (SAR) and were more fully explained during the visit. A formula is used which applies to all Study Directions in the Faculty. (With a similar arrangement to support research). Although the unit of resource for the 'Police Work' Study Programme appears lower than the Faculty norm this reflected the part-time nature of the programme and the major contribution made by the police service. The long-term planning for resource provisions follows that of the 'host' Faculty and in the case of this particular Study Programme is expected to grow from its current low rate to 15% of the Faculty budget by 2020. During a presentation at the RSU we saw the ambitious plans for increasing the resources for 'Police Work' students, including major new building work and specialist teaching and learning rooms. The Faculty had accumulated a surplus to enable at least the first phase of this development to occur, but longer term appeared to require greater assurances concerning State funding beyond 2022.

Both the SAR and our meetings with management, staff and students indicate that both the HEI and employers are aware of the specific resource needs of the 'Police Work' Study Programme. The infrastructure supporting teaching and learning for this Study Direction are currently adequate. The library appeared well-resourced - for example, it was claimed during the visit that 'Police Work' students have access to 432 full-text e-journals in the subject area of 'Crime, Criminality and Law Enforcement'. Although a print-out of the journals showed that some were only marginally relevant at best - for example, 'Accent on living buyer's guide' - the vast majority of internationally recognised journals were available to the students. However, the Library appeared to supply data concerning the use of books, journals and other library resources by 'Police Work' students. Specialist resources are made available both at the university itself - for example, a toxicology laboratory - and via the

partner police service. Where resources might be lacking then 'Police Work' students are able to request these and there are established ways for doing so (which were described to us during the visit). However, the onus appeared to be very much on the student to do so and there did not appear to be a policy of proactively checking on student need.

There is good support from administrative staff - this was evidenced both in the written SAR but also in terms of our meetings during the 'site visit'.

The support systems for 'Police Work' students follow those of the university as a whole and the Faculty of Law in particular. In the main these are good and were as described in the SAR when we questioned members of panels during the visit. For example, the Library was open outside of normal 'office hours' and 'Police Work' students were able to access learning resources at weekends (important to them given their part-time status and professional commitments). However, some other support seemed to be geared more towards full-time and more 'conventional' students (such as in medicine or Law). For example, students in RSU are also supported by the Student Council. However there appeared to be only a limited engagement between 'Police Work' students and the Council itself.

E-learning provision was good. The description in the SAR was confirmed during our visit - for example, the use of Moodle to provide 'Police Work' students with electronic copies of lectures etc. We also saw an example of an online video that has been produced specifically for the 'Police Work' programme. However, it was unclear to us, even after questioning, how many such videos were available to students.

As far as we could determine through the SAR and the site visits, procedures for selection and employment of the teaching staff follow those of the 'host' Faculty of Law. Less clear was whether the same criteria and procedures applied to part-time lecturers provided by the police service.

The professional and didactic improvement of the teaching staff appeared to us (from panel discussions and presentations during the site visit) to follow those outlined in the SAR. For example, there was much evidence of good practice by the RSU 'Centre for Development Growth' and its work with lecturers. We also had opportunity to discuss the results of the questionnaires issued to students and others which attempt to measure the effectiveness of teaching (and summarised in the SAR). These seemed to indicate a high level of satisfaction amongst students and stakeholders.

The CVs of staff (which include both RSU Faculty of Law academic staff and visiting police lecturers) showed clearly that the qualifications, professional and academic experience of the teaching staff are fully in line with the Study Direction requirements.

Mobility of teaching staff appears, inevitably, somewhat limited. This is understandable given the nature of the programme and the professional commitments of the visiting lecturers concerned. Although it would probably be advantageous to have greater mobility of teaching staff this would not appear to be wholly within the ability of the RSU to implement. Both the SAR and the site visit confirmed that the RSU students and academic staff are provided with a well-developed IT infrastructure and virtual study environment. However, existing IT systems require improvement and implementation of new e-solutions in order to ensure closer integration of systems, development of new e-services and more user-friendly interface for students and teaching staff.

Both the SAR and the onsite visit suggested that there is no policy or action towards resource saving such as electricity or water. A policy and actions towards saving would ensure extra funds and would benefit sustainability.

Conclusions, specifying strengths and weaknesses

In conclusion the resources and provision for the Study Direction ‘Internal Security and Civil Protection’, and in particular the Study Programme ‘Police Work’ are more than adequate to support a good quality learning and teaching experience.

The strengths of the Study Direction are:

- Ambitious plans for improving the infrastructure and specialist resources for the ‘Police Work’ Study Programme.
- Skilled, experienced and enthusiastic teaching staff, including both full-time members of the Faculty of Law and visiting lecturers from the Latvian police service.
- Innovative and developing e-learning provision to support the largely part-time ‘Police Work’ students.

Weaknesses of the Study Direction are:

- The lack of confirmed State funding to support the Study Direction beyond 2022.
- The lack of statistics from the Library on resource use for this Study Direction: for example, in terms of e-journals accessed by ‘Police Work’ students, and the number of online videos which are specific to the Study Programme of ‘Police Work’.

Evaluation of criteria

Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
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K5. Scientific research

Analysis

Both the SAR and the visit confirmed that in the context of research the RSU works in accordance with approved strategies. The current RSU research strategy (for 2015-2020) was developed in 2015. The strategy is based on all three major areas of RSU activity: internationally competitive education, excellent research and technology transfer for strengthening innovation as a foundation for sustainable development.

Research activities of the academic staff are part of their normal employment and hence is funded partly through the normal salary arrangements. The proportion of employment devoted to research depends on the position held by the individual. According to the financial position of the RSU, and the relevance and topicality of the research, the RSU supports participation of academic staff in scientific conferences by assigning a paid period of absence or creative leave. Such an arrangement operates throughout the RSU.

In research priorities in the SAR there is no reference to research in the area of 'Police Work'.

In most cases the research undertaken by the academic staff is related to their teaching specialisation within the programme and with the courses taught. Research carried out by the academic staff is an important contribution to both the development of the sector represented and the development of the Study Direction and the improvement of the Study Programme 'Police Work' course content.

In 2015-2018 the Faculty of Law has cooperated with Max Plank Institute for Foreign and International Criminal Law in Freiburg, Department of Criminology by participating in the international project "WiSKoS" regarding industrial economic espionage: this is recognition of the experience of Latvia in this respect.

In the past the Faculty of Law together with the Swedish Institute for Security and Development Policy and the International IDEA Institute participated in the international project 'Protecting Legitimacy in Politics' and the results were used in the professional Bachelor's Study Programme 'Law Science', for the preparation of police officers, and in the Study Programme 'Police Work' (within the Study Direction 'Internal Security and Civil Protection'). In general, the Faculty of Law successfully cooperates with other national institutions in scientific research.

Students in university may be involved in scientific activities, by participating in scientific groups of students in various areas.

The SAR gave a good insight into how scientific research is developed at the RSU, but only a small proportion of it relates to this Study Direction. Further, both the visit and SAR gave enough evidence to conclude that 'Police Work' students are not fully involved in scientific research work. The reason for this might not be fully understood, but most is probably tied to the fact that all of the students work in demanding occupations in the State Police.

Conclusions, specifying strengths and weaknesses

In conclusion, scientific research in this Study Direction is at an average level.

The strengths of the Study Direction are:

- Research activities of the academic staff are part of their normal employment and they have the possibility to participate in scientific conferences by undertaking a paid period of absence.
- The research is considered important at the strategic level.
- There is a well-developed IT infrastructure to support research.

Weaknesses of the Study Direction are:

- There are no research priorities explicitly identified for ‘Police Work’.
- ‘Police Work’ students are not given adequate support to undertake joint research.

Evaluation of criteria

Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
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K6. Cooperation and internationalization

Analysis

The aims and management of cooperation and internationalization in this Study Direction are aligned with the development aims of the RSU. The RSU International Department has established a broad network of partnering HEIs in Europe and also undertakes a variety of activities to enable successful cooperation and internalization. Meetings with management, academic staff and employers indicate that mobility options are limited because of the fact that students also work in full-time for the State Police which means that mobility could only be an option whilst students are studying in the State Police College (students at study programme “Police Work” study after they have received education in the State Police College).

There are several cooperation agreements in place:

- Cooperation agreement between the State Police and RSU;
- Cooperation agreement with the State Police College;
- Cooperation agreement on the creation and operation of the shooting range;
- Cooperation agreement on room TEMPEST measurements;
- Cooperation agreement on provision of placement location.

Regular meetings between academic staff and students assure that these agreements are enacted whilst delivering the Study Direction.

Cooperation with employers is unique in this Study Direction as the RSU won the public

procurement which was held by State Police. The SAR indicates several ways in which cooperation with employers is maintained, for example through a contract with the State Police regarding traineeship. Meetings between management and academic staff not only secured the procurement but was also the basis for the creation of Study Programme “Police Work” at the RSU. Procurement should also be considered as a threat to the study programme as it limits some of the possibilities regarding academic freedom.

The SAR indicates that foreign students have not been attracted to the Study Programme, despite the inclusion of overseas teaching staff. The SAR provides information about students’ outgoing and ingoing mobility regarding those who study Law. Our meetings with management, academic staff and students suggest that there has been no ‘Police Work’ student mobility. This is understandable as the only study programme is relatively new and students also work for the State Police which limits their possibilities.

The SAR provides a description and assessment of the Study Direction within an international environment. However, all of the initiatives described in the SAR are in reference to the RSU as a whole and none of them were specifically concerned with this particular Study Direction.

Conclusions, specifying strengths and weaknesses

In conclusion, within the constraints of both the Study Direction and the Study Programme, cooperation and internationalisation are good.

The strengths of the Study Direction are:

- The RSU has mechanisms to develop strong international cooperation.
- There is a strong and effective collaboration with the State Police.

Weaknesses of the Study Direction are:

- There is limited student mobility, largely due to the fact that students also work full-time.
- Any possible cooperation needs to be more fully coordinated with the State Police.
- The RSU has limited influence over cooperation and internationalization that takes place at the State Police College.

Evaluation of criteria

Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
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K7. Work of students' self-governance

Analysis

Both the SAR and the on-site visit provided evidence that the RSU Student Union (RSU SU) is experienced in self-governance and represents students in academic, material and cultural life matters, complying with the Law on Institutions of Higher Education. There is also a defined procedure that for students to be elected to collegiate entities of RSU.

However our meetings with panels indicated that 'Police Work' students rarely take part in activities organised by the RSU SU because of full-time work commitments. Furthermore it would appear that none of the students of this Study Programme ('Police Work') are involved with the RSU SU.

Both the SAR and the meeting with management confirmed that the RSU SU budget is negotiated and agreed by the Rector.

The RSU SU is supported by the RSU in several ways:

- the RSU management promotes activities and development of the RSU SU by inviting representatives of students to express their opinion in the meetings and work groups;
- The RSU SU activities are promoted by involving the representatives of students in events organised by the university and by supporting the events organised by the Union.

Conclusions, specifying strengths and weaknesses

In conclusion the work of students' self-governance at the university and Faculty levels is evaluated as good.

The strengths of the Study Direction are:

- A well established Student Union that represents students in academic, material and cultural life matters.

The weaknesses of the Study Direction are:

- The Student Union budget is negotiated and agreed with the Rector and hence may not be as fully independent as students' self-governance should be;
- The 'Police Work' students are not fully engaged with the Student Union. Although it is not mandatory to have each Study Direction student taking part in self-governance, the Student Union should make sure that 'Police Work' student interests are being represented especially in the decision making regarding the Study Direction. The Student Council needs to 'reach out' more to 'Police Work' students, given the part-time and weekend nature of their study.

Evaluation of criteria

Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
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K8. The implementation of the recommendations (if such had been given) provided for a particular study programme within the previous accreditation of the study direction (if such had been conducted) or licensing of a study programme

Analysis

Both the SAR and on-site visit confirmed that all of the recommendations have been implemented. However it is debatable to what degree the recommendations have been executed. SAR includes RSU made analysis about execution of the implementation plan of the recommendations provided by licensing experts.

Poorly executed recommendations:

- No 9. “Possible inclusion of management course and strategic planning course”. SAR argues that it is possible to acquire knowledge, skills and competence in management and strategic planning required by the Standard of Profession for a Senior Police Officer in other study courses. Experts do believe that this knowledge, skills and competence can be acquired by other courses. However we also believe that implementation of independent study courses would influence study quality in a positive manner as these courses being separated would enable more focus on developing management and strategic planning skills.
- No 10. “Promotion of scientific activity”. SAR mentions that development plan of the study direction plans to increase the number of publications of the teaching staff. There has been incentive to promote scientific activity, but expert group believes that it has not been enough. Analysis in “K5. Scientific research” gives additional arguments about the fact that promotion of scientific activity has not successfully developed.

Conclusions, specifying strengths and weaknesses

The strengths of the Study Direction are:

- The majority of recommendations have been implemented.

Weaknesses of the Study Direction are:

- Two recommendations have been poorly realised.

Evaluation of criteria

Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
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Recommendations for the study direction

Recommendations for elimination of the deficiencies found (in the short-term period:

- There is a need to ensure greater shared understanding between the RSU Faculty of Law and employers about how integrity matters (such as forms of academic cheating e.g. plagiarism) are addressed to ensure a consistent approach. In particular, the RSU should ensure its current policies are understood and implemented by all partners. This should be done before next study semester.
- The Student Council needs to 'reach out' more to 'Police Work' students. This should be done systematically, especially at the beginning of the study year, so students know that SU can help them.
- The current SWOT analysis needs to be reviewed to reflect internal weaknesses and threats to the Study Direction. This review process also should identify strengths of the of the Study Direction that will counter identified threats and ensure achievement of the aim of the Study Programme 'Police Work'. This should be done before next study semester.
- The RSU should re-appraise its development plans for the Study Programme 'Police Work' in the following areas: increased student participation in research projects, academic staff involvement in mobility activities and future development of related master's degree programmes for the progression opportunities for "Police Work". This should be done before next study semester.

Recommendations for improving the study quality in the long-term period:

- The feedback 'loop' with students needs improvement, starting with increasing of the percentage of the students who submit their feedback reports. Based on such feedback, relevant conclusions on future development of the programme can be made. Students should also be more informed about the inner quality system and its role in providing qualitative study content.
- The RSU, together with other Latvian HEIs, should consider a possibility to initiate discussion with Latvian Ministry of Education and Science in order to articulate Latvian regulations with accepted practices of the HEIs from the EU.
- Take more steps to develop cooperation with police service beyond that of a supplier to a fuller partnership e.g. in terms of increasing collaboration with recruitment, providing greater feedback between the partners.
- The study direction management should more actively promote scientific research.

This should be done not only with regards to teaching staff, but also include the involvement of students. Concrete, measurable, attainable and relevant goals should be developed to ensure the further development of scientific research. Goals should be continuously monitored and re-evaluated if it is necessary. Indicators for evaluations should be in more dimensions e.g. not looking only at the total number of publications per study direction, but also measuring the number of publications for each individual member of teaching staff.

- To improve greater student mobility possibilities, the RSU should seek to negotiate an agreement with the State Police that allows students to take time off from their duties in order to undertake study.

Assessment of the study direction

The expert group would like to thank all the stakeholders that took part in the process of accreditation as they provided the necessary information for this report. Taken into account both the SAR and the onsite visit, the recommendation is for a two year period for accreditation. It was a difficult decision between either a two or six year period. However, a two year period is more suitable as the study direction lacks scientific research, sufficient feedback loop with students, there is no mobility for students and there are concerns about State funding beyond 2022. It is also the fact that this is a new study direction and having the next accreditation after two years would have an extra benefits, namely the chance to evaluate the study direction after the first students have graduated as well as before the next State procurement.

K9. The reciprocal compliance between the name of the study programme, the degree to be acquired, professional qualification or degree and professional qualification, aims and objectives, and terms of admission

Analysis

The Study Programme 'Police Work' is established and its title, degree and professional qualification are interconnected and are in compliance with the requirements established for Latvian HEIs. Admission requirements for the policing 'Police Work' students are coordinated with the State Police and are strictly followed during admission process.

The Aims of the Study Programme relate to its Objectives, and they are formulated in

accordance with the requirements established for Latvian HEIs. Learning Outcomes are also formulated in accordance with regulations established for Latvian HEIs. The Learning Outcomes are mapped with the courses of the Study Programme establishing clear correlation between them. However, a disconnect exists between the Objectives of the Study Programme and its Learning Outcomes. There is no clear connection between the two. After expert request during the onsite visit it was found that there had been no mapping undertaken to connect the Objectives to the Learning Outcomes in the same way that Learning Outcomes had been connected to the programme courses/modules. None of the Learning Outcomes is connected to Objective No. 4. All other Learning Outcomes could be attributed to any of the Objectives. The Study Direction and Study Programme management should consider an additional effort in order to connect them into one coherent picture.

In the formulation of the Objectives and Learning Outcomes the RSU is following national protocols and systems, but these do require further articulation with international systems (such as Bloom's Taxonomy.) The RSU should consider an opportunity to initiate discussion between Latvian HEIs and the Ministry of Education in order to better articulate Latvian requirements with Bloom's taxonomy.

Conclusions, specifying strengths and weaknesses

The Study Programme 'Police Work' is organised in accordance with requirements established for Latvian HEIs. The title, degree and professional qualification of the programme are interconnected and comply with local requirements. Admission requirements for the students are established and strictly followed.

The strengths of the Study Programme are:

- The Learning Outcomes of the Study Programme are mapped to the courses and there is a clear correlation between them.

The weaknesses of the Study Programme are:

- A disconnect exists between the Objectives of the Study Programme and the Learning Outcomes. There is no clear connection between those two and additional effort is needed in order to connect them in one coherent picture.
- In formulating the Objectives and Learning Outcomes the RSU is following national regulations, but these require better articulation with Bloom's taxonomy.

Evaluation of criterion

Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
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K10. The content of studies

Analysis

The study plan of the study program ‘Police Work’ within the Study Direction ‘Internal Security and Civil Protection’, and reflected in the RSU SAR and its Annex (14) is transparent and is in line with the requirements of the employer, the labour market and current developments in the sector. This is demonstrated by the choice of subject matter for the program, and during the meetings with the representatives of the Faculty of Law of RSU and with the Study Direction, academics, lecturers and representatives of the State Police. The curriculum of the program has been developed in accordance with the professional standard for “senior police officer”, according to the technical specifications of the State Police for public procurement. The RSU won the contract offered through the procurement process due to making the most appropriate bid.

Annex 16 of the SAR provides details of the study program ‘Police Work’, in which the topics, objectives, evaluation, lecturers and study results are described. The description of the study courses provides a comprehensive and detailed overview. The bibliographic list provides information on literature sources: they are topical and, according to information provided during the visit, are regularly updated with current innovations in the field. The topicality of the courses and their compliance with the requirements of the employer, the labour market and actual trends in the sector were also verified during the meeting with the representatives of the RSU, lecturers, employers' representatives and students. One panel added that the study topics and the content are topical, courses are supplemented with practical examples that are analysed and discussed during lectures, as well as lecturers regularly updating the content of sessions about current issues in the field and available literature. It was also confirmed during our visit that the knowledge and practical skills acquired in the RSU support students in their work duties.

The sequence of study courses is logical and their sequencing is aimed at achieving the goals of the study program. In addition, it should be taken into account that the courses of the State Police College are integrated in the first level study courses of the RSU, the State Police College courses are updated according to the demands of the employer and the labour market, as well as according to the current trends of the field. It is also the case that the second level study courses in the RSU form a continuation of the first level of professional training implemented by the State Police College. A condition for this to occur was included in the technical specification of the procurement to ensure that State Police College graduates could continue to study in the second level courses in the field of policing.

The achievement of the program objectives is assessed by a coherent mapping exercise. The SAR shows the mapping results; the mapping methodology was demonstrated during the meetings with the RSU representatives and were explained in detail. The results of the mapping are transparent and reflect the link between the required knowledge, skills and competences of the profession standard and the study courses.

The SAR describes the principles of student centered learning and training and the formative and summative assessment that lead us to the conclusion that these methods are fully utilised and hence were not discussed further during the visit.

The RSU students' practice is described within the RSU and State Police Cooperation Agreement (Annex 8), according to this agreement the State Police provides students with internships. During the meeting with the RSU representatives and panels internships were discussed, but it is not yet possible to see the actual results, because according to the study plan they have not yet been fully completed. Students can choose placements and practice supervisors themselves, and for practical purposes, these placements tended to occur at student workplaces. Practice opportunities theoretically and practically could also be provided in principle by other competent authorities (such as the Municipal Police, etc.) if they meet the specifics of the police field.

At the end of the studies the 'Police Work' students are expected to develop a bachelor's thesis and carry out a research to support this. It should be noted however that, as of yet, no cohort of students has graduated. The topic of research can be chosen freely or from the list offered and agreed with the State Police. As was reported by the RSU representatives, the RSU also offers separate final work research topics that correspond to the topicality of the field. The leader of the research can either be RSU lecturers or representatives of other educational institutions. To lead the research of the student a contract with the RSU is required. It appears that the State Police regularly submit topical research topics to the RSU. The selection of specific topics students is not limited unless there is no availability of the appropriate research manager. Some RSU students continue to research topics that they have already started in the State Police College.

The correspondence of the content of the study courses is coordinated and agreed with the State Police, but teachers and students can also initiate corrections and improvements in study courses. Updating possibilities are also seen from the SAR and its schematic illustrations, surveys on study program courses and quality management systems. The RSU has established a quality control system, which was explained during the meeting with the representatives of the RSU. The RSU employs questionnaires with the aim to improve study process and study courses. The SAR and its annexes also reflect the completion rate for the questionnaires (the SAR gives 11% in one period and 42% in the second period of completed questionnaires for study course and 100% for the study programme as a whole) and the analysis of responses has been carried out, but it is not possible to conclude to what extent the survey results are taken into account to improve the quality of studies. One panel noted that students are questioned at the end of each semester, but it is not possible to conclude and to compare improvements as their study period is too short (only two semesters).

The issues of improvement of the study course were also discussed during the meeting with representatives of the RSU, lecturers and students. The RSU representatives confirmed that

content development is possible particularly so for urgent topics, for example, the content of the topics is complemented by various innovations at national, local and EU level. According to the students' suggestions and feedback, improvements or elimination of gaps is also undertaken. However, the supplementation of the study program itself is not possible as it is agreed with the State Police and strict requirements are imposed on the program by the Ministry of the Interior. Panels confirmed that students are satisfied with the programme and no special improvements are needed. However, one panel did argue that it might be better to devote more time to practical matters and illustrations on how to apply the theory in practice. It is possible that other proposals on the improvement we be able to be made after the first 'Police Work' students graduate. One panel noted that in their opinion improvements or changes are not necessary because the program is implemented only for two years and hence improvements can be made within the existing themes, supplemented with topical issues.

The RSU also foresees the questioning of graduates, after the first cohort has graduated. The content of the questionnaires is mutually agreed. The employer questionnaire is not yet available. It is not possible to evaluate the results of the questionnaire because there are no graduates of this study course yet. Consequently, it is not possible to ascertain whether the knowledge acquired by these graduates of the RSU affects the quality of work.

During the meeting with the RSU representatives it was repeatedly discussed the issue with regard to the profession standard "senior police officer". The RSU report provides a general description of this standard, but the State Police submitted the "Standard of the State Police Senior Officer", agreed on 20 May 2015. This standard provides a detailed description of occupational codes and a description of the professional competencies required by a senior police officer, the skills required to perform basic professional tasks and the necessary knowledge. It should be noted that this standard has been elaborated on the basis of the previous Cabinet of Ministers Regulations, as on 13 December 2016 the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations Nr. 810 'Regulations on the Classification of the officials with a special service ranks of the Ministry of the Interior and the Prison Administration' were issued, which replaced the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 601 of 29 June 2010 ('Regulations Regarding to the Highest Special Service Ranks Appropriate for the Officials with the Special Service Ranks Positions in the Institutions of the System of the Ministry of the Interior and Prison Administration') mentioned in the report. Regulation No. 810 was valid for the time of the study program development and the time of the agreement with the State Police at the beginning of 2017. In addition in 2017, changes in the profession classification were also made (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 461 which expired on 1 June 2017) and in 2018 on profession standards as well (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 626, which entered into force on 9 October 2018), these conditions should be taken into account when assessing their possible impact on the Study Programme.

When discussing this issue with the representatives of the RSU and the State Police, it was explained that although the profession standard description was harmonized in 2015, it is still relevant and the new regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers has practically no impact on it.

Conclusions, specifying strengths and weaknesses

In conclusion, there are many strengths in terms of the content of studies that mean that overall it can be assessed as ‘good’.

The strengths of the Study Programme are:

- The requirements of the study program have been developed by the client (State Police) and have been agreed by the RSU with the client in accordance with the requirements of the client, which are based on the profession standard.
- The content of themes of the study program have been developed by experienced and qualified lecturers in the field of law and police and law enforcement (representing the police, prosecutor's office, court, former Police Academy of Latvia, etc.)
- The study program is implemented at the RSU Faculty of Law, whose an experienced and well-resourced Faculty, and the RSU as a whole has already had experience in training of the State Police officers after the closure of the Police Academy of Latvia.

The weaknesses of the Study Programme are:

- The Study Programme ‘Police Work’ was agreed in 2016 between the RSU and the State Police and whilst some change is possible in terms of the introduction of new topics, the RSU only has a limited ability to make more significant changes.
- For now, there is limited scope for attracting graduates who have studied Law in the other Latvian first level education institutions.

Evaluation of criteria

Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
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K11. Resources and provision of the study programme

Analysis

We found the teaching staff to be well-suited to the study programme of ‘Police Work’. This was the case for both staff employed on a full-time basis by the Faculty of Law and staff seconded on a part-time basis from the Latvian police service. This was evidenced both by the overall description of teaching staff in the SAR (including such requirements of at least 10 years practical experience) and the detailed CVs found in an Appendix to the SAR. Our conclusions are further supported by the discussions we had with panels during the site visit (including with students, teaching staff and employers). However, we found it difficult to

assess the research and scholarship record of the team delivering the programme as this information was distributed amongst various documents and did not appear to be analysed centrally.

Conclusions, specifying strengths and weaknesses

The resources and provision made available to support the 'Police Work' study programme are of a good standard.

The strengths of the Study Programme are:

- Well qualified teaching staff (from both the RSU Faculty of Law and the Latvian police service) who contribute fully to the success of the 'Police Work' programme.

The weaknesses of the Study Programme are:

- The lack of a detailed analysis of the research and scholarship records of academic staff involved in delivering the 'Police Work' study programme.

Evaluation of criteria

Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
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K12. Employment opportunities of the of experts for study directions graduates of the study programme

Analysis

The following analysis relates to students undertaking the study programme after completing initial police training. There are insufficient numbers undertaking to form an assessment in the case of students undertaking all four years.

Currently, according to the SAR, 99% of students are employees of the State Police who hold various positions in the structural units of the State Police. When discussing with State Police representatives, it was clarified that posts for the students of the RSU are currently secured. After graduating from the RSU, the State Police as an employer provides graduates with career development opportunities. The students' opinion on this issue is reflected in the questionnaire of the report, where 42% of the respondents pointed to the possibility of obtaining a higher position. When discussing with employers, they pointed out that the

number of posts of 'senior inspector' is sufficient, as these posts had more than 100 vacancies on average. During the meeting with the Panels, they indicated that the opportunities for job growth are secured, and there are also opportunities for graduates to be offered higher positions in other departments due to career development, in this case also an example of a State Police employee was mentioned. Representatives of the RSU and the State Police also noted that opportunities after study are also provided to experience different structural units of the State Police, in other institutions of the interior system (without repaying the tuition fee by the graduate), as well as in the Municipal Police (in this case the study fee should be returned to the State Police).

During meetings with several of the panels, the issue of the approach of the employers towards the students' learning was discussed. One panel noted that the State Police employees are being supported to study, with the State Police providing them with various benefits at the workplace (for example, before the day of training, the employee is not involved in on-call or other overtime work). This is in addition to the scheduled sessions provided by the Latvian legislation (10 working days per year). One panel noted that there had been cases where the immediate policing superior of the student did not follow the usual procedures, but this had been rectified. A number of panels argued that the working conditions of students were satisfactory and their needs are being met. In addition, studying at the RSU was recommended by the line managers of at least some students.

At present, all the employees of the State Police are part time students, the study days are every week on Saturdays: Monday to Friday are normal working days. Hence the study occurs much of the students' non-working time. Thus, during the meeting with the RSU and employers, as well as with students, other possible training models were discussed, for example, taught session occurring during one whole week, but this is not possible due to restrictions provided by the Latvian legislation (Law On Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities, Section 44 on the Study Leave which says that student may be granted paid study leave up to 10 working days just for passing of semester examinations or development of promotion work).

According to the agreement between the State Police and the employee, after the first graduation in 2019 and later, the graduates who are paid by the State Police have to remain in the service at State Police for five years in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 257 issued on March 16, 2010 'Regulations Regarding to the Procedures by which Officials of the Institutions of the Ministry of Interior and Prison Administration with Special Service Ranks are sent for the acquisition of education, as well as the procedure for covering and reimbursing the expenses of studies'. Otherwise, the employee has to cover the full or partial cost of the training, depending on the length of service after graduating from the RSU. This circumstance has definite effect as the employees of the State Police are willing to study at other higher education institutions for a fee.

In the State Police, like in the other public institutions, there is a lack of qualified specialists, the State Police is particularly lacking in qualified investigative specialists, to whom demands are higher, because the quality of their work and knowledge has an impact on the outcome of the investigation and the prosecution of the perpetrators. It should be noted that four State Police investigators have chosen to study at the RSU, but they do not have the

opportunity to study in their specialization because there is not sufficient numbers of students (20) to be economically viable, and these students have instead joined another group (related to the operational activities). This issue was also discussed during the meeting with representatives of the RSU and the State Police and students, and one panel expressed the wish to provide the students with the possibility to study in the desired specialization. The State Police representatives added that specialised knowledge in the specialization of investigators can be acquired by the State Police employees in various State Police College and other qualification courses. The RSU noted that for financial reasons it is not possible to form a training group of less than 20 students, and in addition the number of students currently working in the State Police is not sufficient.

One panel added that filling of vacancies would be better if the employees of the State Police had competitive salaries, which would motivate the employees of the State Police to study in the police sector, which at the moment is not attracting recruits in sufficient numbers for remuneration and other reasons. Currently, several measures are being taken to promote the studies at the RSU and to popularize career development opportunities.

Conclusions

The close cooperation and partnership between the RSU with the State Police mean that employment opportunities for the Study Directions graduates of the Study Programme ‘Police Work’ are excellent.

The strengths of the Study Programme are:

- The employer (State Police) has the exclusive right to offer working places.
- The provision of support at the workplaces is sufficient.
- Career opportunities are available at the workplace.
- The employer takes measures to support and motivate employee training.

The weaknesses of the Study Programme are:

- After graduating from the RSU there are limited possibilities to work in other law enforcement institutions (for example, in the State Border Guard investigation service, in the State Revenue Service Tax and Customs Police).
- Whilst the need for graduates to complete a compulsory five-year work period after graduation is a guarantee for the employer, it does contribute to the choice of employees to study in other universities at their own expense.

Evaluation of criterion

Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
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Recommendations for the study programme ‘Police Work’

Recommendations for elimination of the deficiencies found (in the short-term period)

- Reiterate to the Study Programme ‘Police Work’ students the existing RSU security policy considerations around use of ICT whilst at RSU e.g. that cloud storage at the university is from a third-party supplier, that laptops temporarily borrowed at the library are likely to store copies of files.
- If the RSU continues to offer the ‘Police Work’ study programme to non-police officers then it should take steps to ensure that applicants are aware that the degree title is explicitly identified with the policing profession and that all parties are aware that simply gaining the degree in ‘Police Work’ is not equivalent to qualification as police officer. This should be done before next admission.

Recommendations for improving the quality of the study programmes in the long-term period.

- The RSU should consider developing the current Study Programme ‘Police Work’ to attract students from the wider law enforcement community, seeking extra funding from other partnerships if required.
- The RSU should re-evaluate its current ambition to establish the Study Programme ‘Police Work’ as an “internationally competitive study programme” due to unavoidable limitations. However, the ability to offer several study courses of the programme to international students may be an intermediate objective to pursue.
- There is a need to establish greater flexibility in programme design e.g. the ability to make quick changes to reflect policing needs.

Summary of the criteria for assessing the study direction

No.	Criteria	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
K1.	The relevance, aims and objectives of the study direction and its relevant study programmes as a whole and their clarity, attainability, and compliance with the general strategic development of the HEI		X		
K2	The management of the study direction			X	
K3	The effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system with regard to achieve the development aims of the study direction, by assessing aspects in the internal quality assurance system			X	
K4	Resources and provision of the study direction			X	
K5	The organisation of scientific research, and, if study direction “Arts” is assessed – also the organisation of artistic creation, within the study direction and the scientific research work of the academic staff and students of the HEI, and, if study direction “Arts” is assessed – also the work of artistic creation		X		
K6	The compliance of cooperation and internationalisation with achieving the development aims of the study direction, and with the implementation of the relevant study programmes of the study direction and with associated research, and, if the study direction “Arts” is assessed – also the compliance with artistic creation			X	
K7	Activities of students’ self-governance			X	

K8	The implementation of the recommendations (if such had been given) provided for a particular study programme within the previous accreditation of the study direction (if such had been conducted) or licensing of a study programme			X	
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Summary of the criteria for assessing the study programmes

Table references: poor – 1, average – 2, good – 3, excellent – 4

No.	Criteria	Police work
K9	The reciprocal compliance between the name of the study programme, the degree to be acquired, professional qualification or degree and professional qualification, aims and objectives, and terms of admission	3
K10	The content of studies	3
K11	Resources and provision of the study programme	3
K12	Employment opportunities of the graduates of the study programme	4

[1]The definition “higher education institution” used herein is applicable to all higher education and science institutions mentioned in the Law on Institutions of Higher Education which implement academic and professional study programmes, as well as deal with science, research activities and artistic creation (universities, higher education institutions, academies, and institutes).

[2] The definition “teaching staff” used herein is applicable to the academic staff of the relevant higher education institution and its visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers and visiting assistants.