

Expert group joint opinion

Evaluation Procedure: Assessment of Study Field

Higher Education Institution: Turība University

Study field: Internal Security and Civil Protection

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

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The "Internal Security and Civil Protection" study field and its programmes delivered at BAT are designed in alignment with the institution's Development Strategy 2025 and are well-connected to industry needs, particularly within the private security sector. The industry representatives are represented in the faculty board as well as take part in students assessment and provide feedback to the programmes of the study field. However, as the experts note, the bachelor's and master's programmes often overlap, limiting their distinct academic contributions. To address these issues, experts recommend a clearer focus specially for the master's level, including an emphasis on academic research methodologies. The management of the study field is generally sound, but some discrepancies in curriculum quality suggest the need for a dedicated curriculum improvement body as a Faculty Quality Panel or similar. Admissions processes are transparent, and plagiarism detection systems are in place, though assessment criteria require further refinement to ensure they meet student expectations.

BAT has a Quality Management System supported by formal guidelines and a designated Quality Manager. Student feedback mechanisms as part of the quality system are well-regulated at the university level and have contributed to improvement of all three programmes in view. At the same time, some gaps in the implementation of quality principles at the course level need to be addressed. The experts note that the quality assurance framework would benefit from additional review to ensure consistent application across programmes.

Regarding resources, BAT relies entirely on private funding, which has ensured financial stability since its inception. Revenue sources include tuition fees, seminars, and other activities, while expenditures are primarily focused on staff salaries, study materials, and infrastructure. The university's facilities include modern libraries and well-equipped laboratory, supporting the "Internal Security and Civil Protection" study field. However, unstable and even declining student enrolment is a concern, and BAT is advised to strengthen its marketing and programme visibility to reverse this trend. Additionally, a more balanced workload for teaching staff and proactive recruitment strategies are recommended by the experts to attract qualified personnel and to strengthen the research orientation of its academic programmes, especially the master's programme.

BAT's research output remains limited, with only a few staff members actively involved in scientific activities. While 22 lecturers hold PhDs and 10 are pursuing them, the number of publications is somewhat low, and the focus is mainly on national rather than international peer-reviewed research. The experts have also identified lack of integration between research and teaching, particularly at the bachelor's and master's levels, and students are rarely involved in scientific research projects. The experts suggest introducing courses on scientific writing and research methods to better prepare students and encourage greater engagement in research activities.

The institution's infrastructure is robust, offering well-maintained study environments and comprehensive digital resources. The library is well-stocked and supports a range of study fields, with access to multiple databases and an effective system for managing and updating its collections. BAT has also invested in hybrid learning solutions, which were developed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and these efforts have been commended for enhancing the flexibility of the study process.

Overall, while BAT demonstrates strong links with industry and a commitment to maintaining high standards, there is a need for further refinement of academic content, enhancement of research

activities, and strategic marketing to attract more students. Strengthening these areas will help BAT position itself as a key knowledge hub in the field of private security in Latvia.

I - Assessment of the Study Field

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1.1 Management of the Study Field

Analysis

1.1.1. The objectives of the study field are clearly defined and attainable, as set out in the BAT Development Strategy 2025 and the accompanying development plan for the study field, aligning with its main directions such as “4. Deepening cooperation with industry” and “5. Promotion of international cooperation” defined in the development plan. However, the experts believe that the scope of the study field requires further clarification to better leverage BAT’s strengths, particularly as a business university with a core curriculum centred on business. Greater alignment with this core, mainly through building inhouse synergies with business faculties and programmes, would also enhance the development of domestic partnerships with other educational institutions, fostering knowledge coalitions and positioning BAT as a key private security knowledge hub in Latvia. The latter would additionally promote the increase in the quality of the study process and improvement of study programmes as desired in the points 1 and 3 of the study field development plan.

The study field and its programmes meet the needs and development trends of both society and the national economy, with strong links to the industry as show the high representation of the industry representatives in the faculty council, examination boards as well as was expressed by members of the industry at the interviews. The industry contributes to the education through internships, and this close connection allows the study field to evolve according to industry expectations. Industry partners appreciate the flexibility of the course design and recognise the value of the competences developed through the programme. Students are employed in the field and report that their skills are in demand. Many of the teaching staff are industry professionals, bringing valuable insights into the education, the aspect which is highly valued by graduates and current students.

The experts believe that the interconnection between the programmes within the study field could be clearer and more logical. The short cycle programme is well developed and as expressed by both the graduates and employers, corresponds to the needs of the industry. However, from comparison of the course syllabuses together with interviews with students and teachers it appeared that the bachelor programme and especially the master programme is in significant part a repetition of courses of the lower levels, rather than providing an academic view on the field. Considering this, the experts conclude that there is an overlap in the description of the programs/syllabus and therefore a lack of understandable progression from the short-cycle and bachelor programme to the master programme.

1.1.2. The BAT has, in its Development Strategy 2025 as well as in the self-assessment report, identified and analyzed the main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the study field and integrated most of them into development planning documents. Although strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats were thoroughly analyzed, all parties involved in the development and approval of the SWOT analysis overlooked the low level of domestic cooperation with educational institutions as a weakness. According to the experts, it is essential to include the limited scope of academic domestic cooperation in the SWOT analysis. Consequently, objectives and activities aimed at fostering such cooperative formats and synergies should be incorporated into the study field development plan and other planning documents.

1.1.3. The management structure of the study field and its corresponding study programmes - Short-cycle Professional Higher Education Study Programme "Organizational Security" (code 41861), Professional Bachelor Study Programme "Organizational Security" (code 42861), and Academic Master's Study Programme "Security Management of Organization" (code 45861) - is implemented within the Faculty of Law, with the Faculty Council acting as the primary link to align the study field with industry needs. The short-cycle and bachelor's programmes, both being practically oriented and applied, are overseen by one programme manager, while the Academic Master's programme, developed as an academic research-oriented programme, is managed by a different programme manager. This division is appropriate, considering the differing expectations for professional and academic programmes.

During the interviews with the BAT teaching staff, it was on multiple occasions expressed by the teachers, that they have sufficient support provided by the administrative and technical staff such as access to academic library and databases, use of training and teaching facilities as well as offering support to teaching staff self-development.

Although, the formal management structure of the study field is oriented towards the development of the study field and support provided by the administrative and technical staff, as reported by the staff of the faculty during the interviews, ensures all the needs of the study programmes corresponding to the study field, the experts experienced certain discrepancies in ensuring the quality of the three programmes. The quality of course syllabi vary significantly, with some components, such as course plans, missing in several of the courses, and the subject credit allocations not matching the described subject volumes. Experts bring out that the ECTS points given need to express the workload of the courses and the workload needs to be clearly expressed in the course description. Since the responsibility for overall quality oversight across the study programmes was found to be unclear, the experts recommend establishing a dedicated group inside the faculty to focus on the development and continuous improvement of the entire curriculum for the three programmes.

1.1.4. BAT has set up and published on its public website (http://nodarbibas.turiba.lv/regdok_en.asp) a system and procedures developed for the admission of students, for the recognition of the study period, professional experience, prior formal and non-formal education and for the assessment of students' achievements and learning outcomes. The recognition of prior education and professional education as described in the "By-law on the recognition of knowledge, skills and competencies achieved outside formal education or obtained by professional experience" (approved at the BAT Senate meeting on 23.10.2019, protocol no. 9) has appeared to be one of the cornerstones to achieve sufficient number of students in all 3 programmes. Possibility to integrate prior knowledge and experience was also expressed as one of the values of programmes by both current students and graduates. Respectively, information regarding admissions and the recognition of learning outcomes, including courses completed through various forms of formal and informal education, is accessible to all stakeholders. The relevant procedures are mainly clearly outlined. At the same time the experts recommend considering analysing also other Latvian higher education institutions regulations in this regard. As it appears from the SAR, the omission of 1 (one) credit point for the study results specified by the person can be awarded if they were achieved in at least one weeklong (40 academic hours) educational or professional activity process." (SAR criterion 2.1.4.) Considering that by the end of the year all universities will have to switch to ECTS credit points, where one credit point can correspond to 25-30 hours, it might be useful to supplement the rules on equalisation of education, bearing in mind that in various institutions the ratio of KP to hours may differ.

1.1.5. Methods, principles and procedures for assessing achievements of students have been

developed and are formally defined in study regulations (Approved at 22.11.2023 BAT Senate Meeting, Minutes No.11) and in examination regulations (Approved at 24.05.2023 BAT Senate Meeting, Minutes No.7). At the same time, the experts identified that there are courses, where the assessment criteria are not described in course syllabus (for example Practical Shooting, JUR1483P), is irrelevant (for example Thinking Culture, FIL1028P - criteria is about Pharmaceutical Business) or in most cases its description is not made specific for the course, making it difficult to orientate in the assessment scale. Even though the latter is in line with the current BAT study regulation and adjustment of the assessment scale is made voluntary, it would be still recommended to encourage teaching staff making the assessment more specific to the course aiming with the same better alignment with the student needs to understand the expectations. If needed, relevant changes in the study regulation could be considered.

1.1.6. BAT has established the principles of academic integrity and mechanisms for their observance with its 24.04.2019 Senate meeting minutes No.4, making also reference to Code of Ethics of the Latvian Academy of Sciences. Also, other internal regulations, such as the study regulations and regulations on final examinations include regulations on plagiarism, providing respective guidance to both students and staff of the BAT. As has been reported in the SAR and confirmed through the interviews, one of the tools BAT practically uses to detect plagiarism, the origin and lawful use of materials, is the unified computerized plagiarism control system (VDPK), developed jointly by Latvian higher education institutions. The system allows for the comparison of BAT student work with Latvian other higher education institutions, as well as other documents within the system. BAT has joined this system and, as reported, scrutinizes every submitted study, qualification, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral thesis. According to the self-assessment report, in total, 21 cases of plagiarism have been recorded, of which five were in short cycle study programmes and eight each in undergraduate and graduate programmes. As reported in the SAR, in 6 of the cases, where the volume of coinciding non-referenced parts was above 50%, the Dean of the Law Faculty decreed that the papers should not be defended, and the students were expelled with the right to submit a new topic application for approval, to independently develop a new paper and resubmit it for defence. The decree also states that the next defence of the work will be for a fee and that, in the event of repeated plagiarism, the student will be expelled without the right to defend the work again. (SAR section 2.1.6)

Bearing the above in mind, the anti-plagiarism tools that promote the development of the internal culture of the BAT can be considered as applied and the stakeholders involved, especially students and staff, are informed about it. The experts also highlight that the increasing global use of AI tools will necessitate regular reminders for BAT students and staff about academic integrity in this regard. It may also be necessary to revise the established principles of academic integrity and the mechanisms for ensuring compliance.

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

The objectives of the study field at BAT are aligned with the Development Strategy 2025, but experts suggest better clarification to leverage BAT's strengths as a business-focused institution. The study field meets societal and industry needs, with strong industry ties and good internship opportunities. However, the bachelor's and master's programmes largely repeat lower-level content, limiting their academic scope. While the management structure is generally sound, discrepancies in syllabus quality and unclear oversight prompt experts to recommend establishing a dedicated and permanent curriculum improvement group inside the Faculty. Admissions and recognition of prior learning processes are transparent and accessible. Plagiarism detection is robust, with 21 cases reported, and BAT uses a unified system to check student work across institutions. However,

assessment criteria in some courses lack clarity, and adjustments are recommended by experts to improve alignment with student expectations. The identified weaknesses regarding master's study programme are analyzed in more detail under the chapters of the master's study programme.

Strengths:

- 1) Dedicated management team of the Turība University and Faculty to develop the study field.
- 2) Study field has a strong link with the private security industry and is aligned to their expectations.
- 3) Students who are satisfied with the industry closeness of the programme that fits their ambition - often to provide an exit from the public service to the private security sector.
- 4) The formal regulations defining the management structure and programme related procedures are in place to describe the desired state of play.
- 5) Potential to build inhouse synergies with other faculties of BAT in the field of business education to position BAT as a key private security knowledge hub in Latvia.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The scope of the study field and its respective programmes need to be clarified to be more linked to the overall strengths of the TU and its core business curricula.
- 2) Assessment of the courses needs additional attention. There are several discrepancies brought out above.

1.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System

Analysis

1.2.1. The BAT has established a Quality Policy (approved by the BAT Senate on 06.12.2022, minutes No. 11) and its execution guidelines in the form of The Quality Management Handbook (approved by the BAT Senate on 06.12.2022, minutes No.11) which regulates in detail the objectives and standards of the Quality Management System, the various processes and measurement systems, and other relevant quality assurance measures. The above Quality Policy document also sets roles in maintaining the quality assurance system, which contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field and the relevant study programmes. The Quality Management Handbook p 3.2 states that “The Quality manager is responsible for drafting, maintaining and improving the BAT quality management system. The quality manager ensures the maintenance and enhancement of process management and measurement systems, carries out assessment of the effectiveness and usefulness of BAT quality management system, organizes internal audit, ensures the updating/management of BAT normative enactments, participates in the development and updating of BAT organizational documents and ensuring their mutual compatibility”. Quality assurance roles inside the Faculty are also described in the same chapter.

Both above documents are available at the public website of the BAT https://nodarbibas.turiba.lv/regdok_en.asp.

1.2.2. The procedures for the development and review of study programmes of the study field “Internal security and civil protection” and the respective feedback mechanisms (including feedbacks to students, employers, and graduates) have been defined in the BAT Senate on 23.10.2019 approved “By-law on the development, change and approval of study programmes”. Following the by-law and as also described in the SAR (SAR chapter 2.2.2) at the end of each study course and each academic year students complete a questionnaire in which they express their objections or recommendations for the development of the study programme. The results of the student surveys are collected by the Development Department and passed to the faculties. Faculties take these student recommendations into account when amending or supplementing the content of

study programmes. SAR provides, that for example, at the suggestion of the students, the course Team building, and Organizational cyber security were included in the study programme. It was also witnessed through the interviews, that students, after passing the exam of each study course, provide voluntary feedback on each of the lecturers. These survey questionnaires, after evaluating all the circumstances, have also served as a reason for the faculty to stop cooperation with specific lecturers. As it also appeared from the interviews with the staff of the BAT, it is planned to make the student surveys mandatory for each study course (instead of the current voluntary).

The specifics of the study group are its closeness to the industry - private security, therefore involvement of the industry representatives on all levels of the programme's development was identified by experts. Both short-cycle and bachelor's programmes are built on respective professional standards defined by the industry representation organization.

The development and review regulation is logical, potentially efficient, and available for all stakeholders through BAT internal information system BATIS.

Although it can be assumed that, formally, the system provides regulation for continuous improvement, development, and effective performance of the study field and its respective programmes, the experts have identified and outlined in the preceding chapters several discrepancies at both the programme and course levels. These suggest that the quality assurance system may not be functioning entirely as described in regulations. Consequently, the oversight of the study programme's content quality requires further attention and organisational enhancement. This could be achieved, for instance, through the establishment of a permanent Faculty Quality Panel to regularly review the programme and associated documents, such as course descriptions, and provide recommendations to Faculty leadership for regulatory improvements, and helping to understand the cause of the problems in the programme and provide additional support to the faculty staff in order to improve the regulatory documents of the study programmes, including course descriptions, which can be considered as basic information sources from which students can initially obtain information.

1.2.3. The mechanism developed for submission of student complaints and suggestions is described in the "Procedure for responding to student applications and for written communication with students", approved by BAT Senate decision No. 2 from 25.01.2023 providing guidance on numerous occasions when student-BAT communication will be necessary, tasking a separate BAT unit - Study Information Centre to be main platform for such a communication. Amongst other regulations the procedure foresees that the main period of review of Turiba University student applications submitted to the Study Information Centre is 10 working days from the day of registration of the application. In case of personal data processing necessity, the review period might be extended. E-mails sent to the Centre are expected to be answered no later than within 2 business days.

From the reviewed documents and interviews with the students the experts conclude that the mechanism is effective, promotes the implementation of improvements, students are informed about such opportunities and receive feedback.

1.2.4. The statistical data collection procedures established by the BAT have been developed to be following the University Personal Data Processing Policy (approved by the Management Board decision No 21 of 08.05.2018). As provided at the meeting with the Quality Manager of the University, the statistics are collected to provide input to the Quality Management system of the university. Therefore, the main responsible also for maintaining the statistical data collection system is the Quality Manager. As the SAR chapter 2.2.4 provides, additionally to student feedback, also

data on student performance, internship placements, and final thesis topics are regularly collected. As was also reported at the interview with the Quality Manager, the data are used for the improvement of the programmes, including changes in the credit points of individual study courses, addition of new study courses (especially in Parts B and C), conversion or removal of outdated study courses.

At the meetings with both students and personnel of the BAT a question was raised to what extent the student feedback in the Student Information System is obligatory and to what extent voluntary. Different interviewees provided different answers, providing that the implementation of the system is not very well communicated to the participants. Still, it was emphasized by the personnel of the BAT, that recently more attention has been paid to asking students for feedback. Therefore also, as reported in the SAR, the survey organised annually to determine the students' evaluations of the study process in general, the elective courses offered, the organisation of the study process, material and technical support, etc., in 2023/2024 received a total of 1670 students replies (compared to 286 replies in 2022/2023), of which 320 students were from the Faculty of Law. Student survey data are analyzed in general for all study programmes, improving study processes as a whole, separately paying attention to the specifics of each study cycle. SAR chapter 2.2.2 provides, that for example, at the suggestion of the students, the course Team building, and Organizational cyber security was included in the study programme. It was also witnessed through the interviews, that students, after passing the exam of each study course, provide voluntary feedback on each of the lecturers.

The above allows experts to conclude that the established statistical data collection mechanism ensures regular collection and analysis of information on the study programmes corresponding to the study field. The mechanism for obtaining and providing feedback, including from students, graduates and employers, is effective and focused on the improvement of the study field.

1.2.5. The following programmes are available from the BAT public web page:

Short-cycle professional higher education study programme "Organizational security" (code 41861): <https://www.turiba.lv/lv/uznemsana/studiju-programmas-1/1-limena-koledzas-programmas/organizacijas-drosiba>;

Professional bachelor study programme "Organizational security" (code 42861): <https://www.turiba.lv/lv/uznemsana/studiju-programmas-1/bakalaura-programmas/organizacij-as-drosiba-1>;

Academic master's study programme " Security Management of Organization" (code 45861): <https://www.turiba.lv/lv/uznemsana/studiju-programmas-1/magistra-studiju-programmas/organizacij-as-drosiba-vadiba>.

Additionally, rather comprehensive package of regulations is available from the same page through: https://nodarbibas.turiba.lv/regdok_en.asp

The above allows experts to conclude that the information published on the website of the University about the study programmes corresponds to the information available in the official registers provided to the experts, and provides applicants and students with important information that is published in all languages of implementation of the study programmes - in the current study field, in Latvian, but with some regulations also in English.

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

BAT has established a Quality Policy and a Quality Management Handbook (both approved by

Senate), outlining the objectives, standards, and roles within its Quality Management System. The Quality Manager is responsible for maintaining and improving this system. Despite formal regulations, experts identified some discrepancies in programme and course-level quality oversight, suggesting further enhancement is needed or even additional quality oversight mechanisms, such as a quality oversight panel, established.

The study programme development and review processes, aligned with industry standards, are defined by BAT's Senate. Student feedback mechanisms are formally regulated, with the Study Information Centre managing complaints and communication. Feedback from students is collected and analyzed regularly, contributing to the improvement of study processes. Although there have been inconsistencies in communication regarding feedback requirements, efforts to increase student participation in surveys have resulted in a significant rise in responses.

Overall, the data collection and feedback mechanisms support ongoing improvements in the study field. However, the quality assurance system requires stronger oversight to address discrepancies at the course and programme levels.

Strengths:

- 1) BAT has formally described the quality assurance system in its internal regulation
- 2) Quality Manager is appointed and has been tasked with maintaining the quality assurance system
- 3) Rising attention to student feedback and data driven quality assurance process

Weaknesses:

- 1) Practical implementation of the quality principles in curricula content needs attention - mistakes and lack of some parts are found

Assessment of the requirement [1]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The Quality Policy and its implementation procedure, outlined in the Quality Management Handbook, have been established. Mechanisms for programme development and supervision are regulated by the "By-law on the Development, Change, and Approval of Study Programmes." Additional criteria and procedures are specified in the "Study Regulations" and "Examination Regulation," both approved by the BAT Senate in 2023. However, discrepancies such as course volumes not aligning with assigned credits and missing assessment criteria in syllabi indicate that the quality assurance system is not fully implemented.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The Quality Policy document and its implementation procedure in a form of a Quality Management Handbook are established.

- 3 1.2 - A mechanism for the development and internal approval of the study programmes of the higher education institution/ college, as well as the supervision of their performance and periodic inspection thereof has been developed.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The mechanism for programme development and supervision has been developed and regulated in the “By-law on the development, change and approval of study programmes”

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The criteria, conditions, and procedures have been developed and are published in “Study Regulations” and “Examination Regulation”, both approved by BAT Senate in 2023. Some discrepancies related to study course volume not corresponding to assigned credits and assessment criteria missing in the syllabus, have been noted.

- 5 1.4 - Internal procedures and mechanisms for assuring the qualifications of the academic staff and the work quality have been developed.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Internal procedures and mechanisms have been developed and described in the regulations of the organization of BAT staff remuneration (approved by the BAT Senate on October 23, 2019).

- 6 1.5 - The higher education institution/ college ensures the collection and analysis of the information on the study achievements of the students, employment of the graduates, satisfaction of the students with the study programme, efficiency of the work of the academic staff, the study funds available and the disbursements thereof, as well as the key performance indicators of the higher education institution/ college.

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The data collection procedures are in place and are developing to correspond the Quality Management Handbook (Approved by BAT senate 06.12.2022, minutes No.11).

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

There are still discrepancies inside the programmes and syllabuses - missing or partially filled parts, which allow the experts to assume that the quality assurance system is not fully implemented.

1.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field

Analysis

1.3.1 In the SAR, budget-related data for the period 2022/2023 is provided. BAT has established a system for determining the financial resources required for the implementation of the study field and its programmes. The Directors of Study Programmes, the Head of the study field, and the Heads of Branches identify specific needs or problems and submit funding applications to address them. As confirmed in interviews conducted during the on-site visit, these applications are usually approved. BAT operates a unified budget for the entire university, with funds allocated between study fields based on investment plans, strategic objectives, and the needs of the respective study fields and programmes, as outlined by the management of these fields and programmes. BAT relies exclusively on private funds for the provision of its study programmes. According to the on-site interview with BAT management, the institution’s current financial position is stable, and it has been profitable since its foundation. At the same time industry representatives have expressed concern

about the decreasing trend in student numbers in the study field, highlighting the need for marketing activities to attract more students. They also suggested reviewing ways to make the programmes more attractive and visible to the public.

BAT offers a variety of study formats, including short-cycle study programmes at its branches, which enables the institution to offset declines in income from one programme with revenues from another programme or source. As indicated in SAR Part 2, Chapter 2.3.1, revenues consist of tuition fees for higher education, participation fees for seminars, hotel services, and income from other economic activities. Expenditures are planned proportionately to the revenues, with the main expense categories being staff salaries, social security contributions, utilities, material costs for the delivery of the study process, acquisition of new equipment, and renovation and repair of premises. Investments in the development of BAT are made with consideration of demographic changes, as well as trends in the European Higher Education Area and the Latvian regulatory system.

The amount of tuition fees and the payment procedure for each academic year are determined and approved by the BAT Senate (SAR, Part 2, Chapter 2.3.1). According to the SAR, BAT is able to deliver these study programmes in an economically efficient manner and at a sufficiently high quality (as confirmed by employers during the assessment visit). However, a limited budget may negatively impact the study process, and continued efforts are needed to increase student enrolment, as student numbers in the study fields are declining.

The SAR also provides data on funding for scientific research (Other academic and scientific costs, SAR, Part 2, Chapter 2.3.1, Table 2.3.1.1). Sources of research funding include BAT's own resources as well as project funds for the involvement of BAT teaching staff in research and other initiatives. This funding is utilised for participation in conferences, presentation of research findings, and publication of articles, as well as for translating publications into English. BAT has introduced a special bonus system to encourage teaching staff to publish their research findings in scientific journals indexed in Scopus or Web of Science databases. During the on-site visit, the teaching staff confirmed the availability of this incentive system and reported that they are also supported and encouraged to pursue doctoral studies and obtain doctoral degrees.

Based on the SAR and the interviews conducted, it can be concluded that budgeting for research activities is a significant concern for maintaining and developing the study field. However, during the assessment visit, the overall funding system was described as balanced, despite challenges such as the lack of state-funded students, limited R&D cooperation with industry, and relatively high tuition fees.

In conclusion, the budget planning appears to be adequate to support the maintenance and development of the study field with some concerns about the economic stability of the study field in the context of possible further decrease in student numbers.

1.3.2. BAT has identified the necessary infrastructure, material, and technical resources required for the implementation of the study field "Internal Security and Civil Protection" and its related study programmes. BAT possesses all the essential resources and provisions to support these activities.

The primary study complex, which hosts the programmes within the study field, is located at Graudu Street 68, Riga. This location houses the faculties, library, laboratories, and other facilities. During the assessment visit, the experts found that both students and lecturers were satisfied with the material and technical resources available to support the study field's implementation. The buildings contain an adequate number of auditoriums, administrative offices, laboratories, and sanitary

facilities on each floor. The required IT equipment (laptops, monitors, printers, projectors, etc.), including modern LCD boards, is readily available.

The BAT Riga centre offers advanced infrastructure, including security technical means laboratory (Safety Laboratory). Interviews and documentation presented during the visit confirmed that BAT has a partnership with a shooting range for practical firearms training. Additionally, a modern gymnasium is available, suitable for self-defence courses included in the study programmes.

The BAT Library provides students with a modern, automated, free-access system featuring an electronic subscription and registration system, as well as access to books and periodicals through the ALISE electronic catalogue, which is accessible globally via the internet. The library's collection is relevant to the study field of "Internal Security and Civil Protection" and its related programmes. While most of the books are in Latvian, resources in English are also available. The library subscribes to periodicals in both print and electronic formats, including online databases such as LETA, Nozare.lv, Letonika, Lursoft, EBSCO Academic SearchComplete, EBSCO eBooks Academic Subscription Collection, EBSCO Business Source Complete, Scopus, and the databases of the National Library of Latvia. The library provides a comfortable and conducive environment for study and research.

During the assessment, the experts visited the Safety Laboratory (room C319 in the BAT Riga premises), which is equipped with fire and alarm installation devices (control boards, various sensors, CCTV digital cameras, alarm switches) as detailed in this link. Much of the equipment has been installed in recent years with the assistance of industry partners.

In view of future curriculum development and enhancements to the study environment, the experts recommended creating a "Laboratory Development Plan" for the next 3-5 years. This plan would outline the necessary equipment and required improvements, enabling better budgeting and alignment with industry requirements and opportunities for support.

As reported in the interviews and through the SAR, BAT also offers distance learning using internet technologies. The Information Systems Department provides technological support for the study process and ensures the maintenance and improvement of BAT's Information System. In 2018/2019, BAT invested in the development of distance learning, driven by the Covid-19 restrictions, and introduced a suite of e-learning platforms including Moodle, BATIS, Intranet, and Webex. During the on-site visit, teaching staff, students, and alumni commended the swift and effective implementation of distance learning, noting that the combination of Moodle, Intranet, BATIS, and Webex is convenient and efficient for study purposes. BAT plans to continue utilising a hybrid study approach in the future.

Foreign students, visiting lecturers, and guests at BAT have access to student accommodation facilities.

According to the SAR (Annex Table No. 2.3.1.1), for the 2023-2024 academic year, 13% of student tuition fees, depending on the programme, has been allocated for the purchase of books, periodicals, and the modernisation of equipment.

In conclusion, the experts believe that BAT provides the necessary infrastructure, material, and technical resources for the implementation of the study field. Considerable effort has been made to ensure comfortable conditions for the study process, including organising premises and providing essential equipment. A number of recommended improvements have been identified and outlined

above.

1.3.3. During the assessment visit, the experts had the opportunity to visit the library, which was found to be well-organised and adequately stocked with materials (books and journals) relevant to each study programme. Students have access to various databases and can connect to the library computers without needing a password. At least eight databases are available to students, including the Academic Terms Database, the EBSCO Database Repository, Statistics of Latvia, LURSOFT (company database), ProQuest Computing Database, ScienceDirect, and Scopus. Additionally, students have access to e-resources such as the Dienas Bizness article archive, the German News Service, the Latvijas Vēstnesis article archive, the LETA (National Information Agency) archive, and Nozare.lv (LETA business portal). If needed, students can also access 11 open-access databases.

The library provides workstations equipped with computers, designated rooms for individual study, and printing and scanning services. Microsoft Office and other software applications are also available in the library's reading room.

During the tour, the experts learned that the BAT library operates six days a week, including Saturdays. The standard opening hours are as follows: Mondays from 11:00 to 18:15, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10:30 to 18:15, Thursdays from 11:00 to 18:15, Fridays from 10:00 to 17:00, and Saturdays from 10:30 to 16:00. The reading room is accessible from Monday to Saturday, 24 hours a day. At present, the library holds 166 books on safety, with approximately 487 copies in total (Joint Report by the Experts on the Inclusion of a Licensed Study Programme on the Accreditation Form, 13 December 2023, Appendix 3.2, Page 12). The library offers a variety of services to students, which are also promoted on its webpage.

According to the SAR (Section 2.3.3), a formal process is in place for supplementing the library's collections. The selection of materials is extensive and suitable, with sections for each programme within the study field. The collection is regularly updated and includes books from both local and international authors, primarily in English. Despite the increasing reliance on digital materials in the modern era, the on-site visit confirmed that both students and staff frequently utilise the library's services, including borrowing books and other resources.

1.3.4. During the site visit, it was established that BAT utilises the BATIS information system, which serves both academic staff and students by providing unified information related to study programme content and its implementation. Additionally, it was noted that the Moodle Learning Management System (LMS) is used primarily in study programmes involving Erasmus+ and foreign students. For online distance learning, academic staff have the option to use Webex conferencing platforms.

Regarding quality assurance, a digital student survey system is in place, through which the quality of study courses and programmes is evaluated each semester. As stated in the interviews, measures are regularly taken to improve study programmes based on the survey results. Both academic staff and students are familiar with BATIS and other relevant platforms, confirming that BATIS is a fully functional and beneficial tool for supporting the study process.

Considering the above, the experts are of the opinion that further reinforcement of the Moodle Learning Platform could enhance its use across the university. Moodle not only offers various technical tools for creating interactive learning environments, but also supports academic integrity by enabling plagiarism prevention (e.g. through the Turnitin plugin) and peer-reviewing of teaching materials provided by academic staff.

1.3.5. BAT has developed procedures for attracting qualified teaching staff in accordance with national legislation, including the Law on Higher Education Institutions and relevant Cabinet Regulations, including Higher Education Standards for both academic and vocational higher education. These procedures are available to all BAT members at the BATIS information system, are rather clear and are followed by BAT staff, as appeared from the interviews. BAT ensures the attraction of highly skilled teaching staff by regularly - twice each academic year - announcing competitions for vacant academic positions, and by creating strong bonds between its teaching staff, students, and Alumni, who often become teaching staff themselves and bring back relevant expert knowledge and industry experience gained later in life back to BAT and its students. BAT has developed regulations on procedures for electing and choosing relevant teaching staff; staffing procedures are clear, transparent, and merit based. Applicants, both residents and non-residents, whose education and/or professional work experience meet the requirements specified in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and job descriptions can participate in the competition for the vacant positions of academic staff. The process is open, representatives of BAT administrative staff and representatives of other faculties, as often also industry representatives, participate in it as observers.

As outlined in the SAR and confirmed during interviews, the BAT Personnel Department advertises academic staff positions on the BAT website and in mass media, ensuring compliance with the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia (SAR section 2.3.5). To support the evaluation process, BAT submitted several academic staff CVs to the experts, which confirmed the qualifications of the lecturers necessary to fulfil the law minimum criteria set in Section 55 of the Law on higher education institutions. Many of these lecturers have practical experience working in relevant organisations, which is critical for these programmes. Examples include professionals from the State Police, judicial officers, lawyers, sworn advocates, and security officers from companies like TET SIA and SANITEX SIA.

Overall, the academic staff involved in delivering the study programmes hold master's degrees (27 persons), with 22 staff members having completed their doctorate. In total, 59 lecturers are involved in the teaching process. (SAR section 2.3.7)

1.3.6. To ensure the qualifications and quality of academic staff, BAT has implemented an incentive-based remuneration system, detailed in the "Regulation of the Organisation of BAT Staff Remuneration," approved by the Senate on October 23, 2019. Feedback from academic staff and students is collected regularly through surveys and assessment questionnaires, and improvement measures are discussed during review meetings. These measures often include participation in security conferences and seminars, pursuing higher academic positions, and motivating staff through salary increases or bonuses for engaging in such activities.

Employers' surveys for 2023/2024 have provided mostly positive feedback regarding the knowledge and overall quality of BAT students and graduates, which further attests to the competence of the teaching staff.

During the academic year, teachers have the opportunity to enhance their professional and academic skills through various workshops and lectures that are organised. Further professional development is supported by lecturers participating in conferences, publishing articles and monographs, sharing experiences, or teaching courses as part of the Erasmus+ programme. For instance, the teaching personnel has participated in international conferences in Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, and the Czech Republic, Lithuania and have been involved in experience exchange activities, with the acquired knowledge applied to improve the study process.

However, there is currently no systematic approach to the professional and pedagogical development of the teaching staff, and these activities are not organised in a targeted manner based on data-driven insights into the skills and needs of the teachers. Additionally, the outcomes and effectiveness of the implemented measures are not adequately evaluated. Appropriate improvement actions are undertaken, but the assessment of their impact remains limited.

Moreover, incoming and outgoing mobility during the evaluation period has been low, partly due to the global pandemic and partly because interviewees have not perceived significant added value to the study process. Nevertheless, the experts stress that expanding the understanding of the study field's international links and developments worldwide would bring added potential to enhance the study field and its programmes, ultimately providing students with a higher quality of education.

1.3.7. BAT has developed a methodology for evaluating and planning the remuneration and workload for academic, administrative, and research activities, including project work. This process takes into account the planned workload for the current reporting period (semester or academic year) and adjusts according to the work completed in the previous period (SAR Section 2.3.6, Regulations of the Organisation of BAT Staff Remuneration, approved by the Senate on 23 October 2019). However, during interviews, BAT staff acknowledged that it is often challenging to differentiate between academic and research work, as these tasks frequently overlap.

During the assessment visit, the academic staff highlighted issues related to research activities, with some admitting that they only engage in research when time permits after fulfilling their teaching responsibilities. Annex 14, which lists publications from staff involved in the "Internal Security and Civil Protection" study field, shows that 38 publications have been produced since 2018. However, there are relatively few academic publications from recent years within the core domain of the study field — Internal Security and Civil Protection. Some staff members have contributed multiple publications, though many are co-authored with colleagues.

According to the provided CVs, some academic staff members also hold positions in private companies or state organisations, which helps them stay connected with the practical aspects of the study field. Moreover, the annex titled "The Study Field 'Internal Security and Civil Protection' Involved Teaching Staff" reveals that some personnel are responsible for teaching a large number of courses, with some handling 5-8 and others up to 15 courses.

During the evaluation visit, it became evident that lecturers are primarily focused on teaching and have limited time for research work, including publishing articles and engaging in peer-reviewed academic activities. This situation highlights the need for BAT to review and enhance the funding and other motivational aspects of scientific and research work to encourage greater staff engagement in these areas.

While the BAT has taken measures to balance teaching workload and scientific work is supported through available funds for publications, there is no systematic approach to the professional and pedagogical development of teaching staff. Therefore, additional methods and steps should be taken to fully balance teaching staff workload. Although various workshops and lectures are organised throughout the year, activities are not conducted in a targeted manner based on analysed data regarding the skills and needs of the teaching staff. Furthermore, the outcomes and effectiveness of the implemented measures are not sufficiently evaluated.

Given these challenges, especially with regard to designing the master's programme to be more research-oriented, the experts recommend revising the staff remuneration regulations so that

research becomes an obligatory component of the full-time academic staff's responsibilities, alongside teaching. The expectation for research output should be aligned with the academic position, with higher expectations for roles such as professor and associate professor.

1.3.8. BAT has established a "Career Support Centre," offering a wide range of career and psychological support services for prospective and current students. During the assessment visit, students spoke positively about the services provided by the career centre. It was noted during interviews that since 2006, the BAT Campus has operated a Business Incubator. The BAT Business Incubator builds on an internationally popular business concept, offering startups and established companies a comfortable, fully-equipped workspace and the opportunity to collaborate creatively with other business professionals. (SAR Section 2.3.8)

The BAT "International Cooperation and Foreign Students Department" assigns academic consultants to assist foreign students with study-related and practical issues. Monitoring of foreign students' academic performance is ongoing, and students facing challenges are invited for individual consultations. However, it should be noted that none of the three programmes currently has foreign students enrolled. (SAR Section 2.3.8).

Despite these support structures, there has been a noticeable decline in student numbers across most programmes:

- "Organisational Security" (41861): 28 students in 2018/2019, 1 student in 2021/2022, and 15 students in 2022/2023.
- "Organisational Security" (42861): 28 students in 2021/2022, 21 students in 2022/2023, and 20 students in 2023/2024.

Employers from the industry have expressed concern about this trend and, during the assessment visit, highlighted the need for marketing activities to attract more students. They also suggested reviewing ways to make the programmes more attractive and visible to the public.

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

BAT has implemented a solid financial management system to ensure adequate resources for its study programmes, which are funded exclusively through private means. Financial stability has been maintained since the institution's founding, but declining student enrolment has raised some concerns. Revenue sources include tuition fees, seminar participation fees, and other economic activities. Expenditure focuses on staff salaries, study materials, and infrastructure, with tuition fees set annually by the BAT Senate. Experts consider that the current investments align with strategic goals and external trends.

The institution provides robust infrastructure, including modern laboratory and library facilities, supporting the "Internal Security and Civil Protection" study field. The library is well-stocked and offers access to various databases. Hybrid learning possibilities are in place, which were enhanced following the Covid-19 pandemic.

BAT's staffing procedures are transparent, and its teaching staff are qualified, often with practical experience. However, limited research activity and a lack of systematic staff development were noted. Student support is available through a Career Support Centre and International Cooperation Department, but declining enrolment numbers highlight the need for improved marketing and programme visibility. Experts also suggest that efforts should be made to ensure a balanced workload for the teaching staff and to actively promote open teaching positions in order to attract

qualified candidates.

Strengths:

- 1) University Information system (BATIS) offers a wealth of information and links to various databases for all involved parties, enhancing access to academic and administrative resources.
- 2) BAT provides sufficient support and opportunities for its academic staff and students. Incentive-based remuneration system has been introduced, detailed in the "Regulation of the Organisation of BAT Staff Remuneration," approved by the Senate on October 23, 2019.
- 3) Excellent Library Facilities are highly regarded for being well-organised, comfortable, and well-equipped.
- 4) Infrastructure and Material Resources: BAT has ensured adequate infrastructure, including well-equipped laboratories, to support its study fields and programmes.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The number of students enrolled in the "Organisational Security" programmes (41861 and 42861) has been decreasing.
- 2) Low volume of R&D, even though the BAT provides possibilities to do R&D activities, there only few of the staff who is really involved.
- 3) Despite the close connection between the study field and government services, no state-funded study places are available, even though government representatives are involved in the faculty board.
- 4) The topics taught are spread widely. There is a risk that if one teacher falls sick or leaves it could lead to a situation where no other teacher can continue the teaching.

1.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation

Analysis

1.4.1. The directions of scientific and applied research within the study field are weakly aligned with BAT's strategic development goals as a university. At the same time, some of the applied research conducted, can be considered as relevant to the security industry needs

With respect to programmes coded 41861, 42861, and 45861, research conducted by a few lecturers addresses legal, societal, and psychological aspects of crises, as well as quality management. However, the research output remains inconsistent. While some lecturers have actively contributed by publishing, only a few have had their work featured in peer-reviewed journals, and others have primarily focused on presenting at conferences. Moreover, several lecturers have yet to complete their PhDs and lack international publications. Additionally, some of the CVs of teaching personnel reviewed by the experts did not include any listed publications.

The topics of past research can occasionally be considered as relevant to the study field and the industry, as confirmed by industry partners. However, a stronger scientific focus is required. Establishing one or two research groups within the study field is recommended to foster collaboration with industry and other academic institutions.

Out of the 59 CVs reviewed by the experts, 22 lecturers have completed their PhDs, 10 are currently pursuing a PhD, and the remaining 27 hold either a master's or bachelor's degree, with some possessing practical experience. Overall, the CVs indicate relatively low research productivity, with publications listed in only 25 CVs, representing less than 50% of the total. Only 15 lecturers have published in international scientific and peer-reviewed journals throughout their careers. The separate list of publications provided primarily consists of national and administrative outputs,

indicating the need for a more strategic approach to research dissemination.

1.4.2. The presented list of lecturers shows that the majority hold a master's degree, with only a few possessing a PhD, which results in a limited research background. Consequently, many lecturers have not listed any publications at all, and dissemination efforts are primarily focused on national publications and conference presentations. While the topics of these publications are somewhat relevant to the field of internal security and civil protection, it is unclear whether research is effectively integrated into the study process across all programme levels.

During interviews, both lecturers and students indicated that practical experience is prioritised over theoretical knowledge in the teaching process. This emphasis is appropriate for the short-cycle programme. However, it becomes problematic for the bachelor's programme, which should be more research-based. It is particularly unsuitable for an academic master's programme, which should be grounded in the latest research and promote the development of innovative solutions through appropriate research methods.

The experts conclude that the connection between scientific and applied research in the study field and the study process is neither coherent nor adequately justified. Nonetheless, the structure and focus of the study field and study process are considered logical and appropriate for the practical domain of internal security and civil protection.

1.4.3. Some international cooperation has been established by individual lecturers, indicating positive developments in the field. In 2022, the university participated in the Nordplus-funded Security and Sustainability programme. Additionally, an ERASMUS+ cooperation partnership in higher education titled Digital Education Tools for Security Risk Management was launched in 2022. Both initiatives are primarily focused on educational activities, and students benefit from them, as highlighted earlier in the report. While these international programmes present opportunities for research collaboration, the fact that most lecturers and students are engaged in full-time occupations means that sabbaticals for visits for research work have not been conducted and are unlikely to take place in the foreseeable future.

Nevertheless, there has been notable creativity in organising summer schools to attract international students. Collaboration agreements exist with universities in Mexico, Poland, Lithuania, and Estonia, although no publications resulting from these partnerships were identified. Enhanced international collaborations would benefit both research and education. There are also plans to increase the number of scientific publications and participation in research grants, with a target of at least 20 publications during the reporting period. While this may seem a modest goal relative to the total number of teaching staff, it is a significant challenge given the current level of research engagement among staff members.

1.4.4. The SAR and BAT remuneration regulations indicate that BAT seeks to engage its teaching staff in research activities by providing remuneration for research publications. However, during interviews, academic staff noted that teaching and research are often viewed as inseparable, and as a result, distinct research activities are neither planned nor systematically implemented. While the remuneration system for publications is a positive initiative, the experts do not currently assess its impact as highly effective or efficient. The study field would benefit from better utilising BAT's existing research potential by establishing research groups and fostering collaborations with other research institutions in Latvia in areas relevant to the field.

1.4.5. During the site-visit interviews, some lecturers reported that master's students were involved

in their research projects. However, there are no courses providing in-depth knowledge in relevant qualitative or quantitative research methods, nor is there a course on statistics or similar fields. Without such preparation, it is unclear how students can effectively contribute to and engage in research activities. Some of the interviewed master's students already held a master's degree from another institution, which may enhance their research capabilities. Nevertheless, the methods for involving students in research are not well-defined, and the integration of research across all study programme levels cannot be confirmed as well-structured or efficient.

The student research output referenced in the self-evaluation report includes only a single document for the 2023/2024 academic year: a doctoral thesis from the Economics and Business Science field. There is no record of research output for 2021/2022 or 2022/2023. The only other documented activity is a list of papers presented at the Student Scientific Conference in 2021. While encouraging and enabling students to participate in such a conference is a positive step, the overall involvement of students in research remains limited. Some of the student publications demonstrate a clear methodology, while others are merely administrative guidelines with limited analytical depth. The topics range from consumer perception and waste management to tourism and COVID-19, many of which cannot be categorised as belonging to the field of security.

Given these observations, the experts conclude that BAT lacks effective mechanisms to promote and facilitate student involvement in scientific or applied research, as well as artistic creation.

1.4.6. The CVs of the teaching staff, along with interviews with students and industry partners, indicate that innovative solutions are being implemented in the study field, which positively affect the undergraduate education process at the study field programmes. These innovative approaches are particularly evident in teaching practices, where there is a high level of flexibility to accommodate the needs and circumstances of students, as well as the requirements of the industry. E-learning is also strongly supported.

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

The alignment of scientific and applied research within the study field with BAT's strategic goals is weak, although some research is relevant to the security industry. Out of 59 reviewed CVs, 22 lecturers have PhDs, while 10 are pursuing them, but research productivity is relatively low, with only 25 CVs listing publications and only 15 lecturers having published in peer-reviewed journals. The focus of these publications tends to be national rather than international, and the connection between research and the study process is not well defined, particularly in the bachelor's and master's programmes. While there has been some international collaboration, including participation in programmes like Nordplus and ERASMUS+, the potential for research partnerships is hampered by the full-time commitments of lecturers and students. Additionally, while some lecturers reported involving master's students in their research, there is a lack of training in essential research methods and scientific writing. The overall output of student research remains limited, with only a single doctoral thesis referenced for the current academic year. Thus, the experts conclude that BAT has inadequate mechanisms in place to promote student involvement in research and applied activities effectively. Despite these challenges, innovative teaching solutions are being implemented, with an emphasis on flexibility and strong support for e-learning.

Strengths:

1) Some staff of the BAT is very productive in publishing in international peer-reviewed journals and holds significant competence in scientific writing.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Small number of teaching staff in the study field are contributing in the research and development activities necessary to develop the study field.
- 2) No subjects on scientific writing or scientific methods in any of the programmes.
- 3) Limited academic cooperation with other academic institutions and industry in the research and development field.

Assessment of the requirement [2]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The number of scientific publications of the BAT teaching staff is still rather low. No academic writing or science methods subjects in the curricula to allow quality scientific research. Limited R&D cooperation with other Latvian academic institutions and industry representatives.

1.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation

Analysis

1.5.1. BAT has established agreements with various domestic organisations within the relevant areas of the study field, including industry representation bodies such as the Association of Security Professionals and the Latvian Security Business Association, as well as security companies and government agencies, including state and municipal police and the armed forces. The primary purpose of these agreements is to provide internship opportunities for students and to involve representatives from these organisations as members of the Faculty Council and student assessment panels. However, the experts noted that the last cooperation agreement related to the study field dates back to 2018, the year following the submission of the last accreditation report.

Although BAT has chosen its partners based on the specific needs of the private security study field, to ensure adequate internship opportunities and industry feedback, the experts observed that BAT lacks formal cooperation agreements with any academic organisations in Latvia. This absence of collaboration means that BAT has not established formal plans to create knowledge coalitions or position itself as an indispensable private security knowledge hub among other academic institutions, such as universities. Consequently, the experts recommend that BAT consider forming cooperative arrangements with other academic institutions, similar to those in the private security sector, to leverage its core strengths in business curricula and effectively utilise the resources of other institutions in achieving desired learning outcomes and doing joint research in the areas important to security sector.

1.5.2. One of the earlier feedback points from previous assessments highlighted the study field's low level of internationalisation. Given that security is an international phenomenon, it is challenging to provide comprehensive knowledge without input from international collaboration. In response to this earlier feedback, BAT has made some progress in internationalisation, offering its teaching staff opportunities to gain additional experience through the Erasmus network and engage in joint projects with international partners, such as the recent INTUX project and the "Digital Education Tools for Security Risk Management." However, no formal bilateral international agreements have been made since 2018, when an agreement with Panevezys University of Applied Sciences was signed.

Based on the above, the experts conclude that BAT does collaborate with institutions abroad within the study field, and this cooperation contributes to achieving the aims and learning outcomes of the study field and its relevant programmes. Nonetheless, the experts recommend that the internationalisation of the study field would benefit from a dedicated workstream, including an international cooperation coordinator position within the faculty, particularly to enhance student and staff mobility and provide access to the best available international knowledge and experience.

1.5.3. Although the university has joined international networks such as Erasmus to facilitate student and staff mobility and attract teaching staff and students from abroad to the study field, BAT staff, as well as the Self-Assessment Report (SAR), have repeatedly stated that there has been no positive trend in student participation in the Erasmus+ mobility programme for the Internal Security and Civil Defence study field during the reporting period. The Faculty of Law at BAT has accepted some students who studied in English as part of the Erasmus programme and participated in their summer schools. However, university staff mentioned in interviews that there are no specifically designed programmes similar to BAT's internal security and civil defence offerings. Further discussions with personnel revealed that opportunities for cooperation with other European universities exist for student exchange, and subjects in both bachelor's and master's programmes could be designed in English (at least partially) to attract foreign students.

Teaching staff in the study field are encouraged by the BAT management to participate in both incoming and outgoing mobility. Over the last six years, there have been zero incoming mobility cases and 21 outgoing cases recorded, which is relatively low for three study programmes. BAT notes that the accredited study programmes in the Internal Security and Civil Defence field thus far—the short-cycle professional higher education study programme "Organisational Security" (KD), the first-cycle professional bachelor's study programme "Organisational Security" (OD), and the second-cycle academic master's study programme "Organisational Security Management" (OM)—have been implemented only in Latvian, meaning that foreign teaching staff were not invited as part of the mobility, and there are no data on foreign teaching staff.

As was emphasised in the on-site interviews, in the future, BAT plans to implement the second-cycle academic master's study programme "Organisational Safety Management" in both Latvian and English. Additionally, foreign teaching staff will be invited to participate in the English-language stream of this study programme. The SAR indicates that the study programmes of the "Internal Security and Civil Protection" field have been accredited to be offered only in Latvian, resulting in no invitations extended to foreign students as part of the mobility programme.

According to the SAR, in 2017, two students participated in a mobility programme at Laurea University of Applied Sciences in Finland, but no students have participated in outgoing mobility since then. Future plans include implementing the second-cycle academic master's study programme "Security Management of Organisation" in both Latvian and English, inviting students from foreign universities to join the English-language stream. Consequently, within the framework of mobility, BAT will invite foreign lecturers and offer students opportunities for both study and internships abroad. (SAR section 2.5.3. Appendix 17_Statistikas_dati_par_studejošo_mobilitāti_en_docx)

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

BAT collaborates with Latvian business and government institutions to support its study field, focusing on internships and programme development, but lacks formal cooperation with other academic institutions in Latvia. This absence of academic partnerships limits BAT's potential to

position itself as a private security knowledge hub. Experts recommend building alliances with academic institutions to leverage BAT's strengths in business curricula and enhance learning outcomes.

Internationalisation, a past area of concern, has seen some progress through Erasmus initiatives and joint projects, but formal international cooperation agreements have not been updated since 2018. While the university has procedures for attracting international students and staff, participation in the Erasmus+ mobility programme within the internal security field remains low. To enhance international engagement, BAT could design more (at least partially) English-language courses and programs to attract foreign students/lecturers and foster deeper international collaboration.

Strengths:

- 1) BAT has joined the Erasmus+ program which creates potential to have international students and teaching staff for the study field.
- 2) Strong alliances with private security industry at a national level and everyday cooperation with them in the field of internship and student assessment.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Low level of domestic cooperation with other academic/training institutions to build knowledge coalitions and make it self-attractive or even irreplaceable as Latvian private security knowledge hub.
- 2) Low level of student and staff mobility into and out of Latvia.

Assessment of the requirement [3]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Experts emphasises that BAT has strong cooperation with private security industry at a national level and has joined the Erasmus+ program which creates potential to have international students and teaching staff, therefor has started to strengthened international aspect as well. However, BAT does not have formal cooperation with other domestic academic organisations in Latvia and as for now the level of student and staff mobility into and out of Latvia is low. To better achieve the aims of the study field, more emphasis should be put on implementation of international cooperation and creating cooperation arrangements with other Latvian academic institutions.

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

Analysis

During the 2017 accreditation process, the following recommendations were made to BAT:

1. To develop a precise focus on the direction of studies in the field of security. In the field of study, it is necessary to introduce more study courses directly related to security science, reducing the dominance of law science and economic science in the field of study.

In the experts' opinion, this recommendation has been partially fulfilled. According to the BAT SAR, changes have been implemented in the first-level professional higher education study programme

"Organisational Security" and the professional bachelor's study programme "Organisational Security." The following new courses have been introduced in the first-level professional higher education programme: JUR1629K Team Building, VAD1477K Project Management, and JUR1632K Organisation Cyber Security (SAR p.116). In the professional bachelor's study programme "Organisational Security," the new courses include KOM1232P Media Literacy, VAD1609P Team Building, JUR1635P Organisation Cyber Security, VAD1611P Time Management, JUR1647P Logic and Critical Thinking, JUR1409P Legal Provisions of Construction, JUR1638P Project Management, JUR1499P Practical Training in Detective Work, JUR1731P Practical Conflictology, and JUR1634P Data Protection Law (SAR p.78).

However, the objective has not been fully achieved. Some courses should be more explicitly linked to security issues. There is a need to critically evaluate courses such as Team Building, Business, Management of Sustainable Organisation, Theory of Law, Accounting and Financial Management, and Time Management in both the first-level professional higher education study programme "Organisational Security" (Annex 7) and the professional bachelor's study programme "Organisational Security" (Annex 7).

One of the long-term expert recommendations for the academic master's study programme "Security Management of Organisation" in 2022 was to critically assess study outcomes during the programme's appraisal process to ensure the achievement of study goals and the prominence of security knowledge in each course. According to the BAT SAR, no significant changes have been made to the master's programme since its licensing on 18 May 2022 (SAR p.153). In line with this recommendation, it is essential to critically evaluate courses such as Business Economics, Human Resources and Management, Corporate Social Responsibility and Ethics, Strategic and Change Management, and Traineeship in HR Management within the academic master's study programme "Security Management of Organisation" (Annex 7).

2. To develop and implement a study course on security issues in English.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation is partially fulfilled. According to the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (Section 56, Paragraph 3) the study programmes of higher education institutions shall be implemented in the official language. In the study programme, which is implemented in the national language, part of the study programme may be implemented in a foreign language, which is one of the official languages of other European Union member states, taking into account that this part cannot include final and state exams, as well as qualifications, bachelor's, master's, doctoral degrees, the development of the theoretical research and artistic work of the doctor. The extent of the part of the study programme implemented in the national language, which may be implemented in one of the official languages of other European Union member states, is determined by the national higher education standard in accordance with the relevant cycle of higher education. Study courses have not been introduced in English in the short-cycle professional higher education study programme "Organisational Security" (Annex 6) or the professional bachelor study programme "Organisational Security" (Annex 7). This can be explained by the fact that the content of short- and first-cycle study programmes focuses on Latvian domestic security issues. However, considering student interest and opportunities for international cooperation, some study courses are occasionally offered in English, which are included in the curriculum when a foreign lecturer visits BAT (SAR p.124). Additionally, the implementation of the master's study programme in English is currently prepared, which includes study courses related to security issues in English (SAR Annex 19).

3. To implement distance learning opportunities.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation has not been fulfilled. None of the study programmes corresponding to the study field are offered through distance learning. However, the MOODLE system is utilised in other study fields where distance learning is available (SAR p.42). Given that a master's degree programme has been prepared, in which a significant portion of the students are likely to be international, the possibility of introducing distance learning could be considered after several study cycles. These cycles would provide objective insights into the feasibility of distance learning (SAR Annex 19) and identify additional development needs.

4. To develop a strategic plan for the improvement of library resources in Riga and Liepaja libraries, especially in the direction of security studies. To expand library resources in foreign languages, especially English. To develop a strategy for continuous updating of library books, periodicals and electronic resources for organizational security studies.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation has been fulfilled, and relevant planning has been undertaken within the framework of the study field development plan. The resources of the Liepaja Library are not specifically addressed, as the study programmes related to the accredited study field are not offered at the Liepaja branch of Turība University. Resources are not allocated separately for each study programme (SAR p.101), instead, they are shared synergistically between several programmes within BAT. According to the BAT SAR, approximately 90 specialised security literature books, particularly in English, have been purchased. Students have access to around 188 different literary sources, with each title available in one to ten or more copies (SAR Annex 19). This was confirmed during the site visit. Furthermore, access to most online databases, such as EBSCO, Scopus, Eurostat, and the Latvijas Vēstnesis article archive, is available through the BAT library (SAR p.68).

5. To develop a strategy for improving the English language skills of teaching staff.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation has been partially fulfilled, as neither the BAT Strategy 2025 nor the study field development plan includes measures to enhance the English language skills of its teaching staff. However, according to the BAT SAR, two English language training courses for lecturers were organised during the reporting period: "Academic English Writing" on 13 March 2019, and another from 9 January to 10 March 2020 (SAR Annex 19). No language courses have been provided to the teaching staff in the past four years. BAT has justified its limited initiatives in fulfilling this recommendation by noting that short- and first-cycle study programmes are currently implemented exclusively in Latvian, meaning that lecturers do not require a high level of proficiency in English. During the site visit, discussions with the teaching staff indicated that several lecturers had participated in various Erasmus+ projects, demonstrating some engagement in international activities.

Recommendation for the academic master's study programme "Security Management of Organisation" (45861) - three short-term recommendations were provided by the licensing experts, along with six more substantial long-term recommendations.

The experts monitored the following implementation progress:

Short-term recommendations:

1. To review the descriptions of study courses, indicating the volume of current compulsory literature - books, publications, departments or pages - in study courses that are realistic and not. It is not permissible for study courses to include in the basic literature section such a volume of

teaching sources that is not realistically feasible within the framework of the ECTS indicated for the student.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation has been fulfilled. The descriptions of the study courses have been revised to limit the number of compulsory literary sources to 3-4, with the remaining literature listed as additional reading (SAR Annex 19, Academic Master's Study Programme "Security Management of Organisation," Annex 7).

2. To develop descriptions of the organization and tasks of students' independent work adapted to the study courses.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation has been partially fulfilled. According to SAR Annex 19, the descriptions of each study course, including the course structure, organisation of independent work, and student tasks, are clearly presented in tabular form. However, while some study course descriptions include the organisation and tasks of students' independent work, this has been done in a very formal manner in certain instances. Consequently, it can be concluded that there is a lack of unified systemic approaches in the developing descriptions of the organisation and tasks related to students' independent work across various courses. For instance, in the study course JUR1666M "Security Risk and Crisis Management" and the study course VAD1828M "Security Project Management," the descriptions of the organisation and tasks of students' independent work are well developed. In contrast, the descriptions for the courses VAD1787M "Sustainable Development and Innovation" and VAD1781M "Corporate Social Responsibility and Ethics" are overly abstract and formal (Academic Master's Study Programme "Security Management of Organisation," Annex 7).

3. To make a comparison with foreign study programmes, including reportable insights - good practices, ideas, content that should be taken over during the implementation of the study programme.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation has been fulfilled. According to the BAT SAR, a comparison was made with foreign study programmes, which was also discussed during the interviews. The University of Security and Economics (Hungary), the University of Economics and Law, Department of Police and Security Management (Germany), and the Master's programme in Integrated Security and Risk Management and Corporate Security (Austria) are similar to the one offered by BAT. However, the Northern University (Norway) has a Preparedness and Emergency Management master's programme that focuses distinctly on emergency management. The content of the aforementioned master's programmes covers subjects that are similar in nature to the BAT study programme "Security Management of Organisation" (SAR Annex 19), highlighting potential synergies for international cooperation between BAT and these universities.

Long-term recommendations:

1. Critically evaluate study results in the approbation process of the programme in order to ensure the achievement of study goals and the dominance of security knowledge in each study course.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation has been partially fulfilled. On 17 April 2023, during a meeting of the Law Faculty Council, updated study course descriptions were approved, which strengthened the emphasis on security knowledge in several courses (SAR Annex 19). However, the relevant task has not been fully achieved, as there remains a noticeable lack of emphasis on security knowledge in some study courses. In line with the recommendation, it is necessary to critically evaluate courses such as Business Economics, Human Resources and Management, Corporate Social Responsibility and Ethics, Strategic and Change Management, and Traineeship in

HR Management (Academic Master's Study Programme "Security Management of Organisation", Annex 7).

For example, the purpose of the "Business Economics" course is to promote students' understanding of the behaviour of economic entities in a market economy, providing knowledge about microeconomic and macroeconomic correlations and their forms of expression (Academic Master Study Programme "Security Management of Organisation", Annex 7). Similarly, the objective of the "Corporate Social Responsibility and Ethics" course is to equip students with knowledge about the role of corporate social responsibility in today's global business environment in relation to the strategic tasks of corporate governance and sustainability, while also fostering an understanding of fundamental issues in business ethics (Academic Master Study Programme "Security Management of Organisation", Annex 7).

2. Complement the quality assurance system, which includes key performance indicators (KPIs) and definitions of procedures.

In experts' opinion the recommendation is partially fulfilled. 06.12.2022. at the Senate meeting, the quality management handbook was improved. (SAR Annex 19). The quality management handbook provides a description of the maintenance of the quality management system of BAT. The aim is to provide all BAT employees a unified understanding of BAT quality standards. The quality management handbook includes a quality assurance system (chapter 3), which includes key performance indicators (KPIs) and definitions of procedures (SAR, Other annexes, Annex 5). In closer view the experts also note that the programme exhibits possible deficiencies in compliance with national regulations. The credit points allocated do not appear to align with the course content as required by law. The several courses do not include necessary content for achieving learning outcomes which is defined by national law (See expert's analysis in Chapter 2).

3. To start the process of digitization of the library in order to implement the BAT strategy on distance learning studies.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation has been fulfilled. The digitisation of the entire library collection is neither possible nor feasible due to restrictions imposed by copyright law. BAT utilises digitised works from the National Library of Latvia, which are obtained in compliance with regulatory requirements and with the necessary permissions from authors or collective management organisations. Furthermore, BAT provides access to electronic resources, including online databases such as EBSCO, Scopus, and ScienceDirect, to support its strategy for distance learning (SAR Annex 19). This approach demonstrates a commitment to enhancing resource accessibility while adhering to legal guidelines.

4. To examine the possibility of establishing a practical infrastructure base for experiments in the field of security systems.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation is fulfilled. A Security Laboratory has been established in the BAT Riga centre room C319, providing students access to security equipment from various industry merchants, manufacturers, and distributors. This was confirmed during the site visit. The first demonstrations took place during the XXIV International Scientific Conference "Change - the Foundation of a Sustainable Society" on 19 April 2023, and these demonstrations are ongoing (SAR Annex 19).

5. To improve the BAT infrastructure to make it more accessible to people with reduced mobility.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation is fulfilled partially. According to the BAT SAR, in cooperation with the association of disabled people and their friends, "Apeirons," ramps for disabled

individuals have been installed in the premises. However, as these ramps do not provide access for all visitors, there are plans to construct an appropriate ramp on the first floor of the C block, ensuring that individuals with reduced mobility can fully access the administration, faculties, auditoriums, and specially adapted amenities (SAR Annex 19). This was confirmed during the site visit.

6. To perform a long-term analysis of the programme's development perspective, including potential future development paths, scenarios or steps of the programme.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation has been partially fulfilled. 04.11.2021 at Law Faculty Council Meeting Development plan for the study field "Internal Security and Civil Protection" was approved. The development plan for the study field "Internal Security and Civil Protection" includes task to improvement of study programmes and creation of new ones (chapter 3) (SAR Annex 3). In order to achieve comprehensive, modern and time-appropriate education of students in the field of security, the study courses included in the study programme are subject to an annual adjustment of the study course descriptions, which will meet the requirements of both local and international environmental safety. (SAR Annex 19). However, the master's programme still has room for improvement. The content of the programme is wide-ranging and lacks a coherent structure or clear connection between courses. According to information received during the experts' group the site visit, in discussions with the industry partners, it was determined that the employers struggled to differentiate master's programme practical studying outcomes from bachelor's programme. This recommendation still remains an ongoing issue.

2023 recommendation on the inclusion of the academic master's study programme "Security management of Organization" 45861 in the study field "Internal Security and Civil Protection".

There were 4 short-term recommendations given by the experts and 7 more substantial long-term recommendations where the following implementation progress was followed by experts:

Short-term recommendations

1. To review admission requirements to comply with the existing system of levels of professional qualification.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation is not yet fulfilled. According to the BAT SAR, the admission requirements will be clarified in the Admission Regulations for the academic year 2024/2025, in line with the 2022 version of the Education Law, which upgraded the 5th level professional qualification to the 6th qualification level (SAR Annex 19).

2. To review the study programme and include additional courses that specifically address international security organisations (e.g. NATO, UN, EU), international security threats and the specificities of public sector security.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation is fulfilled. According to the SAR and confirmed through review of the syllabuses, the programmes for all 3 study cycles include the study course "Security Theory," which features an additional topic on international security organisations: NATO, the UN, and the EU security sector (SAR Annex 19). In the course "Security Theory," this topic is listed as topic number 8, titled "The Role of the EU, NATO, and the UN in Security." This section provides information on international security institutions, international security relations, conventions, and intergovernmental formats (Academic Master Study Programme "Security Management of

Organisation," Annex 7).

3. To review the content of individual courses, supplementing them with the specifics of the activities of public sector security institutions.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation is not fulfilled. The content of individual courses has not been revised to include the specifics of the activities of public sector security institutions. While the transfer of study courses has been scheduled (SAR Annex 19), this recommendation remains an outstanding issue, as a comprehensive understanding of the wider security system and its connections with the public sector is essential.

4. To encourage an academic staff teaching in the study programme to include their relevant scientific publications in the main or additional literature lists of the subjects they teach and/or explore the possibility of setting up platforms or events within the university where academic staff can disseminate their knowledge and research results to students.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation is partially fulfilled. According to the BAT SAR, academic staff are invited annually (before the start of the academic year) to update study course descriptions with the latest literature, including their own and their colleagues' relevant scientific publications. Academic staff publications are accessible on the BAT website (<https://www.turiba.lv/lv/zinatne/konferences/zinatniskie-raksti> and <https://www.turiba.lv/lv/zinatne/zurnals-acta-prosperitatis>), including collections of conference papers and editions of the scientific journal "Acta Prosperitatis" (SAR Annex 19). However, upon reviewing the study course descriptions, only a few scientific publications by teaching staff were identified. The implementation of this recommendation remains an ongoing issue.

Long-term recommendations

1. To explore the possibility of offering a study programme not only in Latvian, but also in English in order to attract international students.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation is fulfilled. According to the BAT SAR, efforts have commenced to identify the international market and develop a second-cycle study programme suitable for foreign students. The implementation of the master's study programme in English has been prepared, which includes all study courses related to security issues in English (SAR Annex 19).

2. To create and actively maintain a network of graduates and stakeholders to gather feedback on the competencies of the study programme, identify areas for improvement, and improve the overall content and relevance of the programme.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation is fulfilled. According to the BAT SAR, the Alumni Club, which includes graduates—some of whom are now lecturers at BAT—has established an Association of Security Professionals. They have also engaged with graduates working in the Latvian Security Business Association, which unites specialists in the field. This initiative not only promotes the programmes but also takes market trends in the security sector into account to update the content of the study programmes. Furthermore, programme improvements are informed by recommendations from the Association of Security Industry Companies. During the site visit, discussions with employers revealed that BAT maintains strong collaboration with employers and professional associations in the field of private security.

3. To formulate and implement strategic rules that mark the systematic integration of electronic

learning tools (e.g. through the Moodle learning platform). This strategy should include clear guidelines for the preparation, accreditation and use of such tools to enhance the overall learning experience.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation is partially fulfilled. According to the BAT SAR, the Moodle platform is exclusively used for distance learning, while the BATIS (BAT Internal Information System) platform is utilised for other forms of study. Various teaching aids, including presentations, assignments, tests, and materials, are regularly uploaded to the BATIS platform in the section "Tasks of Study Papers" (SAR Annex 19). This information was confirmed during the site visit by the experts. However, guidelines for the systematic integration of teaching aids into the learning process have not yet been developed and are still in the process of being formulated (SAR Annex 19).

4. To assess the possibility of promoting favourable conditions for academic staff to study in doctoral studies. This can be achieved by providing financial support, flexible schedules and mentoring to guide them in the doctoral process.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation is fulfilled. Financial support is available for academic staff pursuing doctoral studies, with discounts on tuition fees regulated by internal BAT regulations: the "Regulations on Crediting Studies of BAT Staff" (adopted on 05.07.21) and the "Regulations for the Application of Study Fee Discounts" (approved annually on 17.03.23). Several lecturers have successfully obtained doctoral degrees, and others in the field of study are currently engaged in doctoral studies (SAR Annex 19). For instance, the director of the "Organizational Security" study programme, has attained his doctoral degree and has been appointed as a lecturer at the Faculty of Law of BAT (SAR p.106).

5. To define clear indicators of measurement and internationalization of scientific results within the academic staff. These indicators should include aspects such as publications in high-level scientific journals, participation in international conferences and involvement in expert groups.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation is partially fulfilled. During the BAT Senate meeting on 23.03.2022, the "Rules of Scientific Research Activity of the Turiba School of Business" were clarified, outlining the basic principles of scientific research. However, these rules require further clarification and supplementation to better define the indicators for measuring and internationalising the scientific results of the academic staff. This should encompass a range of activities, including publications in high-level scientific journals, participation in international conferences, and involvement in various expert groups (SAR Annex 19).

6. To establish a motivation system that rewards and builds recognition of academic staff for achieving internationalization goals and scientific excellence.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation is fulfilled. The university provides funding for the publication of scientific monographs, as well as for participation in conferences where scientific research of an internationally cited level is presented. Last year, the total planned funding allocated from the university's budget for scientific activities and the development of academic staff exceeded one hundred thousand euros (SAR p.56). During the BAT Board meeting on 06.07.2023, the "Rules for the Financing of Scientific Activity" were adopted, which built a framework to motivate the academic staff to pursue internationalisation goals and scientific excellence. Remuneration is offered for the publication of monographs, scientific articles (differentiated by articles ranking), attendance at international scientific conferences, and publication of papers in conference proceedings, as well as for the citability of articles (SAR Annex 19).

7. To promote the scientific research of the teaching staff of the study programme to be more closely coordinated with the content of the study subjects, emphasizing the specifics of Security.

In the experts' opinion, the recommendation is partially fulfilled. According to the SAR, BAT provides opportunities and financial incentives for staff to enhance their professionalism and engage in scientific activities. As it was stated also during interviews, during departmental meetings and academic events, all academic staff are consistently encouraged to explore the various aspects of their study fields and integrate this research into their courses (SAR Annex 19). However, a review of the study course descriptions and the respective teaching staff's CVs reveals that only a limited number of faculty members have scientific publications in the field of security. Consequently, the implementation of this recommendation remains an ongoing concern.

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

The SAR provides, that the recommendations provided to the study field (Joint Report of Experts - 2017), the academic master's study programme "Security Management of Organisation" (45861) (2022), and the inclusion of the academic master's study programme "Security Management of Organisation" (45861) in the study field "Internal Security and Civil Protection" (2023) were thoroughly analysed by the programme management staff. The majority of the recommendations have been implemented across the short-cycle professional higher education study programme "Organisational Security," the professional bachelor study programme "Organisational Security," and the master's programme levels. However, some issues in the implementation of the recommendations remain:

1. There is still a need to develop a clear and precise focus on security science within the field of study, which requires improvement.
2. The opportunities for distance learning are still in the development stage.
3. Strategic guidelines for the systematic integration of electronic learning tools have not yet been approved.
4. Revision of admission requirements to comply with the existing system of levels of professional qualification have not been completed.

Strengths:

1. BAT and the programme management are highly engaged and motivated to ensure the programme's relevance to the needs of students, the security sector, and employers.
2. An analysis of the programme's development perspective has been completed, detailing potential future development paths, scenarios, and steps for advancement.
3. Preparations for the implementation of the master's study programme in English have been made, encompassing all study courses on security issues.
4. The informative and methodological resources of BAT, as well as the practical infrastructure, have been enhanced and developed to support the achievement of the study programme's objectives and planned outcomes.
5. BAT has established a motivation system for academic staff to publish their findings in high-ranking international journals.
6. Financial support is provided to academic staff for pursuing doctoral studies.
7. BAT maintains strong cooperation with employers and employer associations within the field of private security.

Weaknesses:

1. The content of the programmes especially in bachelor's and master's programmes is wide-

ranging and lacks a coherent structure or clear connections between courses. Some study courses still require a clearer focus and more precise linkage to private and public security, as well as to the field of security science.

2. The introduction of distance learning opportunities within the study field is taking longer than anticipated.

3. There is a lack of strategic guidelines to facilitate the systematic integration of electronic learning tools, such as the Moodle learning platform.

4. The revision of admission requirements to comply with the existing system of levels of professional qualification is an ongoing process.

5. Academic staff face challenges in developing publications for high-level scientific journals and in engaging with both internationally and domestically significant research related to security science.

6. Some study courses still exhibit a lack of publications by academic staff in the primary or supplementary literature lists relevant to the subjects they teach.

Assessment of the requirement [4]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The provided recommendations (Joint report of experts (2017)) as well as Recommendation to the academic master's study programme "Security Management of Organization" 45861 of 2022 and Recommendation on the inclusion of the academic master's study programme " Security management of Organization" 45861 in the study direction "Internal Security and Civil Protection" - from 2023 were analysed by BAT management and in the greater part of recommendations were implemented in the study courses at the short-cycle professional higher education study programme "Organisational Security" and in the professional bachelor study programme "Organisational Security", as well as in the academic master's study programme "Security Management of Organization" (SAR pp. 67-70; Annexes 19). Undoubtedly, the recommendations have achieved their goal - to improve the study process and improve the quality of specialists trained by the university, who are oriented towards competent work and further self-development (SAR p.67) The weaknesses identified during the evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations (2017, 2022 and 2023) have some impact on the study's quality or can be explained by objective reasons such as additional time is needed for the full implementation of the recommendations.

1.7. Recommendations for the Study Field

Short-term recommendations

1) Update and align the curriculum with ECTS standards. Review and adjust the curriculum to ensure that the allocation of ECTS credits accurately reflects the corresponding classroom contact hours and the actual workload required by students. Ensure a clear and transparent connection between credit points, course content, and learning outcomes.

2) Guarantee the availability of elective courses. Ensure that all elective courses listed in the curriculum are genuinely offered and available to students throughout their programme of study. Do not remove or replace elective courses after students have enrolled, to maintain the integrity and transparency of the academic offer.

3) Differentiate the programmes to establish their content uniqueness. Develop distinctive course content for each programme, ensuring that they are not mere repetitions of one another, especially in master's programme. Tailor the learning objectives, teaching methods, and research focus to suit the specific goals of each programme, thereby providing students with individualised and specialised educational experiences.

4) Include research methods and scientific writing as a separate distinct course in all programmes with basic methods on short-cycle programme and more advanced research methodologies in Bachelor and Master's level.

5) Continue promoting international cooperation in the study field to have more student and teachers' mobility and cooperation. Consider introducing a separate international relations coordinator position for more-hands on approach.

6) Correct the errors and complete the missing sections of the course descriptions as outlined in the analysis above.

7) Consider revising the established principles of academic integrity and the mechanisms for ensuring compliance in the light of AI (such as the ChatGPT and others) development.

Long-term recommendations

1) Establish a research-based approach for bachelor's and master's programmes: -Anchor both programmes within a specific research field to ensure better integration between teaching and research. -Increase the volume of research activities to provide a solid foundation for the programmes through establishing one or two research groups within the study field. -Clearly differentiate the content and structure of the master's programme from the short-cycle and bachelor's programmes, ensuring they each have distinct educational frameworks, learning outcomes, and bachelor's and master's programmes have a research-oriented content.

2) Revise and focus bachelor's and master's programmes content on security science: -Conduct a thorough review of all study courses to eliminate repetitive or irrelevant content. -Clearly outline the specific security science topics to be covered, ensuring that each course contributes meaningfully to the overall programme objectives. -Create a strong conceptual framework for security science to serve as the foundation for both programmes.

3) Create research groups to enhance research collaboration: -Form research group(s) within BAT and faculty to promote collaboration and synergy among researchers. -Establish partnerships with external academic institutions and industry stakeholders to support joint research and development projects, which will enhance the research profile and contribute to a more integrated academic environment.

4) Redesign programme's structure using a modular approach: -Develop a detailed concept for the bachelor's and master's programmes, using a modular approach that ensures progressive learning across courses. -Start with designing a coherent programme framework, then define the structure and content of each module, and finally develop comprehensive course descriptions that clearly outline specific learning outcomes and research components.

5) Establish a curricula Quality Panel for the study field. Set up a unified panel responsible for overseeing the entire study field. This Panel should have the authority to review and approve curriculum changes, monitor the alignment of ECTS credits, and ensure that each programme maintains a logical progression in its content and structure.

6) Accelerate the implementation of distance learning options. Finalise and implement a detailed plan for integrating distance learning options across the programmes. Ensure that necessary resources, technology, and support systems are in place to facilitate effective online and hybrid learning environments.

7) Develop strategic guidelines for E-Learning and other technology integration. Draft and approve a strategic plan for the systematic integration of modern technologies such as electronic learning tools like Moodle and laboratories. Ensure that these tools are embedded across all courses to support flexible learning and enhance student engagement.

II - "Organisational Security" ASSESSMENT

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2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The short-cycle professional higher education study programme "Organisational Security" (code 41861) is structured in accordance with the professional standard for the "Security Specialist" profession (code 5419 01), established in 2017. This standard serves as a foundational framework within the field. As detailed in the SAR, BAT has conducted a comparative analysis between the programme and the competencies outlined in this professional standard, confirming that the programme adequately covers these competencies (Short-cycle Professional Higher Education Study Programme "Organisational Security", Annex 4). At the same time the experts note that the standard has been renewed in 2021, providing that comparison with the new standard would be required to guarantee the programme compliance with the standard.

The programme equips students with the essential knowledge and skills indicated by its title and objectives, aligning closely with the professional qualifications expected of a security specialist. A key advantage of the short-cycle professional higher education programme is its capacity to rapidly supply the human resources needed to support the ongoing development of the economy, state, and society, while cultivating enterprising, creative, responsible, and competitive professionals (SAR p.112).

According to the professional standard, a security specialist's role includes providing security services to legal and natural persons, assessing and identifying threats and risks, and participating in or managing a comprehensive range of security measures aimed at protecting an organisation's property and personnel, all in compliance with applicable laws. These responsibilities, accurately reflected in the programme's content, significantly contribute to national security from a civil defence perspective—an essential component of the study field (SAR p.116).

Considering the programme's title and its alignment with the professional standard, the experts conclude that the programme is well-suited to the field of study.

2.1.2. The short-cycle professional higher education study programme "Organisational Security" (code 41861) comprises 120 Credit Points (CP) and is exclusively offered as a part-time, extramural programme with a duration of 2 years and 3 months. The programme is delivered entirely in Latvian, with admission criteria requiring candidates to have completed secondary education (SAR p. 112). Upon successful completion, graduates are awarded the professional qualification of Security Specialist, corresponding to the fifth level of professional qualification (SAR p. 112, Short-cycle

Professional Study Programme "Organisational Security" Annex 1).

The primary objective of the programme is to quickly supply human resources to meet the future demands of the national economy, state, and society in the areas of personal and property protection, while also fostering the development of students into enterprising, creative, responsible, and competitive members of society (SAR p. 112). This objective is achieved through a set of specific tasks defined within the study programme:

- Prepare students for careers as Security Specialists.
- Promote the holistic development of students, fostering mental and physical well-being and cultivating responsible, creative, and competitive professionals for the labour market.
- Provide knowledge and skills to utilise analytical approaches for solving practical problems in the field of personal and property protection.
- Facilitate the application of theoretical knowledge in practice through collaboration with employers in the security industry (SAR p. 112).

By engaging in these tasks, students are expected to attain the programme's intended learning outcomes. Graduates should demonstrate comprehensive and specialised knowledge relevant to personal and property protection, apply analytical problem-solving methods in the security field, understand their professional role within a broader societal context, and critically evaluate both their own and others' professional activities.

While the goals, tasks, and outcomes of the programme are relevant, they closely resemble those of the other two programmes within the same study group, differing mainly in phrasing. This similarity creates challenges in distinguishing their specific focus and purpose. Nonetheless, the interrelationship between the programme's goals, tasks, and learning outcomes is coherent and justified, and the admission criteria are appropriate. The programme's duration of 2 years and 3 months in a part-time, extramural format is deemed sufficient to meet its objectives and achieve the desired learning outcomes. Additionally, since the programme is offered solely in Latvian, and all faculty members are proficient in the language, this delivery method is considered appropriate and well-justified.

2.1.3. Since the previous evaluation, the short-cycle professional higher education study programme "Organisational Security" has undergone several changes as detailed in the SAR (Part 3, Chapter 3.1.1., pp. 114-116). Following amendments to the Law on Higher Education Institutions, credits have been restructured to align with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). According to the requirements outlined in the eighth Paragraph of the first Section of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, one credit point now corresponds to 25 hours of student work. Consequently, study courses with 3 ECTS now represent a total of 75 hours of study work, while those with 6 ECTS account for 150 hours. The methodology for implementing this transition from the Latvian credit point system to ECTS is outlined in the SAR's supplementary materials (see Annex 1).

However, the BAT document titled "Methodology for the transition from the Latvian credit point system to the European credit points transfer and accumulation system (ECTS)" does not provide all the necessary details for the transition process, particularly in relation to the short-cycle professional higher education study programme "Organisational Security." Specifically, the methodology fails to reference the provisions of Cabinet Regulations No. 305 "Rules on the Standard of State Professional Higher Education" (June 13, 2023) or address the requirements for implementing these regulations. Furthermore, the alignment of credit points with course content does not appear to fully comply with national regulations, presenting potential deficiencies in the programme structure.

Additionally, changes have been made to the scheduling of certain study courses across academic years and semesters. In response to labour market trends and student feedback, the programme has been enhanced by introducing three new study courses:

- Compulsory Courses (Part A): Inclusion of "Organization Cyber Security" (3 ECTS, 12 contact hours).
- Professional Elective Courses (Part B): Addition of "Project Management" (3 ECTS, 12 contact hours).
- Free Elective Courses (Part C): Introduction of "Team Building" (3 ECTS, 12 contact hours).

Moreover, the course "JUR1321K Security of Individuals" underwent changes, including a reduction in contact hours from 24 to 16 while maintaining the same credit value. It has been transferred from the 4th semester's Professional Elective Study Courses (Part B) to the 2nd semester's Free Elective Study Courses (Part C) (SAR p.115). However, in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions, Part C is intended to encompass freely chosen study courses without specifying mandatory subjects. Therefore, the inclusion of "JUR1321K Security of Individuals" as a Free Elective Course (Part C) cannot be supported, as it contradicts the regulatory framework for free-choice courses.

Experts consider these programme updates to be appropriate and aligned with industry needs, as confirmed by positive feedback from representatives during interviews. The modifications ensure that the study programme remains relevant and continues to equip students with essential professional knowledge and skills to successfully enter the labour market upon graduation. Nonetheless, further adjustments are needed to ensure compliance with legal requirements and to maintain the integrity of the credit system in relation to course content.

2.1.4. The Latvian National Development Plan for 2021-2027 outlines the goal of the "Security" direction (431) as creating a secure internal environment for residents and businesses in Latvia. This objective includes fostering trust in public services that protect rights and security, increasing public awareness of risk prevention and response, and promoting cooperation with responsible state services and mutual support among citizens. To achieve these goals, public safety and law enforcement must be ensured by professional personnel who meet the evolving demands of modern society.

As stated in the SAR, the Government's Declaration also highlights the importance of security amid ongoing geopolitical changes, emphasizing the need for a united effort to strengthen Latvia's security. The document reinforces the commitment to maintaining a consistent Euro-Atlantic foreign policy to bolster security in a rapidly changing global environment. Security, national defence, and a resilient democracy are seen as prerequisites for sustainable national development. The government remains dedicated to increasing funding for national defence, public order, and security, and enhancing the capabilities of these sectors.

The short-cycle professional higher education study programme "Organisational Security" (code 41861) directly supports these national goals by producing security specialists who focus on the protection of persons and property. During the site visit, graduates and employers confirmed that the programme effectively prepares students for the labour market, with no significant barriers to employment after graduation. Survey results from students, graduates, and employers in the study field "Internal Security and Civil Protection" (Annex 8) further affirm the high demand for graduates in this sector.

In interviews, students reported that many are currently employed in the Latvian National Armed

Forces or private security services and view the programme as a stepping stone for securing long-term careers in private security after military retirement. This suggests a positive long-term outlook and ample career opportunities for graduates in this field.

The dynamics of students admitted in the short-cycle study programme "Organisational Security" (41861) reveal an uneven trend. Between 2010 and 2016, a total of 170 students were enrolled, whereas the period from 2017 to 2023 saw a decline to 110 students. Notably, there was a significant drop in enrolment at the beginning of 2019 and 2020, likely due to the impact of COVID-19. In contrast, the period from 2016 to 2018 was more successful, with 81 students enrolled, influenced by the relatively high economic status of the Latvian population and effective marketing strategies for the programme (Short-cycle Professional Study Programme "Organisational Security" Annex 2).

The economic viability of the programme is considered in the context of BAT's long-term development strategy (SAR pp. 121-122). For the academic year 2023/2024, 11 new students enrolled in the first year, and the total number of students across all study levels is 21 (SAR pp. 120-121). One challenge identified during the evaluation is student attrition due to financial constraints, as reported by both students and staff during interviews. Despite this issue, experts agree that graduates from the programme are highly sought after and play a crucial role in meeting the demand for security professionals in Latvia.

2.1.5. Not applicable.

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

The short-cycle professional higher education study programme "Organisational Security" (code 41861) is aligned with the 2017 professional qualification standard for the "Security Specialist" (code 5419 01) as seen from the materials and comparison provided. The programme effectively covers the competencies outlined in this standard, providing students with the essential knowledge and skills needed in the security field. Its primary objective is to quickly develop a skilled workforce that meets the demands of the national economy and society, while fostering graduates who are enterprising, creative, and responsible. However, the experts note, that the standard has been updated in 2021, rising a need to compare the programme also with the renewed standard to guarantee its compliance.

Strengths:

- 1) High Demand for Graduates: The programme's graduates are highly sought after in the labour market.
- 2) Career Path for Retired Professionals: The programme offers an "exit strategy" for individuals retiring from security-related government positions, enabling them to transition into new roles within the private security sector.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The programme has faced some issues with student attrition during the period under analysis, primarily due to financial constraints.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. Analysis of the programme and its course syllabuses shows that the content of the study

programme encompasses topics related to security; however, the courses are not modular. Some courses have a certain interconnectivity, such as the courses Administrative Law and Administrative Procedural Law, Theory of Law, Labour Law, Defence, Security Labour Law, Defence, Security, which could be one larger module, as well as the courses Guarding stationary objects, Guarding tactic, Guarding Transportation of Valuables. The programme has a focus on educating guards with some insight into psychology and law. The courses reflect the specialisations of the faculty, spanning areas such as law, psychology, and economics, as well as practical topics like the guarding of stationary objects, sustainable organisation management, and private investigation.

In the expert's opinion, the prequalification of students for courses such as forensics and cyber security management is questionable, as there are no foundational courses in physics, chemistry, engineering (relevant to forensics), or mathematics, statistics, and computer science (pertaining to cyber security).

It has been challenging to assess the courses thoroughly due to inadequacies in their descriptions. For example, the course "Guarding Tactics" claims to provide "theoretical knowledge, skills, and competencies regarding security guardian tactics," yet its purpose and learning outcomes are unclear and superficial. Additionally, there is no course plan or assessment criteria for this course. Other examples include:

- The course "Detective Work" lacks a course plan.
- The course "Security Psychology" does not describe the organisation of students' independent work.
- The course on security equipment lacks a course plan, and its content appears vague, with the assigned ECTS points seeming inflated.
- The course "Security Theory" also lacks a course plan.
- The course "Forensics" fails to clarify which forensic tactics and methodologies are intended in the objectives, and this is not specified in the outcomes. Forensic work necessitates knowledge of chemistry, psychology, and fire safety science, none of which are addressed in the course description.

Overall, the courses only vaguely correspond to the programme objectives, and the learning outcomes are often faintly articulated, hindering the assurance of their achievement. Although industry representatives expressed satisfaction with the education during interviews, it is difficult to ascertain whether current scientific trends are being addressed, given the lack of a clear focus and cohesive structure in the courses.

The experts also note that the programme exhibits possible deficiencies in compliance with national regulations. The credit points allocated do not appear to align with the course content as required by law. The absence of study modules in the programme is noteworthy, as they are optional but highly recommended by legislation to enhance programme coherence. The law mandates that courses outline the content necessary for achieving learning outcomes, include a course calendar, specify mandatory and supplementary literature, indicate other sources of information, describe the organisation and tasks for students' independent work, and determine evaluation criteria for learning outcomes. This is not fulfilled for several courses, as previously noted.

The curriculum contains mandatory and elective courses. The interviews with the teachers and students show that the elective courses are sometimes not delivered even if there would be a critical number of participants available. Therefore, students cannot count on the courses of their choice to be taught. Hence, these specific study courses may not be included in the free elective part.

2.2.2. Not applicable

2.2.3. The SAR assures that the methods of study implementation contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of both the study courses and the study programme while considering student-centred learning and teaching principles. The BAT Senate-approved "Study Regulations" demonstrate an emphasis on student-centred learning, as highlighted in SAR chapter 3.2.3. It is stated there that in each course, the lecturer selects the most appropriate teaching method that best supports the achievement of the course's learning outcomes and the overall objectives of the study programme. The university is well-equipped with digital resources to enhance the learning process, employing a variety of methods.

The results of the interviews with students and lecturers indicated a high degree of flexibility regarding the needs of the students. Additionally, students expressed feeling well-supported in their learning and in achieving their goals. However, during interviews with teaching personnel, no clear consensus emerged regarding which specific methods they actually use and how these relate to the principles of student-centred learning.

2.2.4. Internships are an integral component of the study programme and are conducted based on agreements between BAT and organisations that provide the internship placements, such as security companies, police forces, and defence forces. The programme includes one mandatory internship, which has its own course description; however, this course lacks a detailed course plan. Interviews with industry representatives, students, and graduates confirm that the opportunities and arrangements for internships are effective. Industry partners actively participate in the planning of internships and provide feedback to BAT.

The tasks associated with the internship are clearly outlined in BAT's internal "Description of the Organisation of the Traineeship." As detailed in this description, the head of the department is responsible for organising the internship, while the practice advisor informs students about the internship's aims, tasks, learning outcomes, and assessment criteria for the practice reports. The practice advisor also consults students on issues related to the internship and supervises the implementation of the practice programme. Additionally, the practice advisor reviews the students' practice reports. A flow chart visualises the process for students, ensuring clarity in the expectations. Teachers ensure that the internship tasks align with the intended learning outcomes. Overall, experts assess that the internship meets the requirements set forth by the relevant regulatory enactments.

2.2.5. Not applicable.

2.2.6. SAR indicates that the topics of students' qualification papers are relevant to the sector, stemming from their own work environments, for example from 2022 - Use of self-defence weapons and special equipment in security work, Olaine Prison Guard's actions in extreme situations, Conflict resolution in policing, Security, guarding and escorting of dangerous goods. Consequently, their conclusions and proposals provide potentially concrete solutions for enhancing the legal framework. Interviews revealed that students typically select thesis topics pertinent to their sector, as many are employed in the field prior to commencing their studies and face real-world challenges. This alignment with their professional experiences ensures the relevance of their research. Additionally, the internal confirmation process within the faculty further guarantees that these topics correspond with the study programme. Thus, the topics provided to experts from 2017 to 2022 are both relevant and in line with the programme's objectives.

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

The analysis of the study programme reveals that while it covers security-related topics, the courses lack modularity and interconnectivity, resulting in a lack of clear focus. The curriculum reflects the faculty's specialisations, including law, psychology, and practical aspects such as guarding and private investigation. However, experts question the preparedness of students for advanced courses like forensics and cyber security management, as foundational subjects such as physics, chemistry, and mathematics are not included. Many course descriptions are inadequate, with notable examples being the lack of course plans and unclear learning outcomes. Despite industry representatives expressing satisfaction with the education, the programme shows potential non-compliance with national regulations regarding course content and credit allocation. Furthermore, while the SAR asserts that student-centred learning methods are applied, the teaching staff could not clearly articulate how these methods are implemented. Internships are effectively integrated into the programme, with well-defined tasks that align with learning outcomes, and industry partners actively contribute to their planning.

Strengths:

1) The content of the study programme and its implementation is close to industry and is shown to be flexible and adaptive to the wishes of the industry.

Weaknesses:

1) There are flaws in the study course descriptions which need to be corrected

2) The programme is not modular. This leads to a lack of interconnectability and focus in the programme.

3) Possible non-compliance with Law on Higher Education Institutions: The inclusion of specific courses in Part C of the programme does not comply with the standards set by the Law on Higher Education Institutions. Free elective study courses (Part C) need to be reviewed and restructured accordingly, as the students cannot count on that they are offered.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. At the site visit it was seen that the administration, academic staff, and students have access to a sufficient number of auditoriums equipped with relevant technology in the BAT buildings at Graudu Street 68, Riga. One key facility is the "Security Laboratory," which is essential for students enrolled in the "Organisational Security" programme. All users have access to the BATIS system. There are dedicated workstations for teaching and academic staff, each equipped with modern PCs. Students can also utilise the library located on the BAT campus. At the site-visit the experts experienced, that the resources available in the library are in accordance with the specifics and needs of the short cycle programme.

The "Security Laboratory" is equipped with smoke alarms donations from industry partners. It is used for practical lessons conducted in the laboratory. Hardware is important for the implementation

of the study programme, periodic upgrades and safety inspections are essential. Software provisions include licences, database subscriptions, and a learning management system, such as Moodle.

The "Organisational Security" programme (41861) also includes self-defence training, conducted in the gym. During these training sessions, students receive appropriate equipment such as helmets, body protectors, and gloves. A shooting simulator is available for students, allowing them to learn basic skills and safety techniques related to the proper use and handling of firearms, as well as how to respond to common situations they may encounter in the line of duty. Additional agreements to use partners' live shooting range were also presented to the experts.

2.3.2. Not applicable

2.3.3. The dynamics of student admitted in the short-cycle study programme "Organisational Security" (41861) reveal an uneven trend. Between 2010 and 2016, a total of 170 students were enrolled, whereas the period from 2017 to 2023 saw a decline to 110 students. Notably, there was a significant drop in enrolment at the beginning of 2019 and 2020, likely due to the impact of COVID-19. In contrast, the period from 2016 to 2018 was more successful, with 81 students enrolled, influenced by the relatively high economic status of the Latvian population and effective marketing strategies for the programme.

As enrolment numbers decrease, the associated budget also diminishes, which may adversely affect the study process and impose limitations on the development of the programme's content, study provision, scientific resources, and technical facilities. This situation may pressure BAT to seek income from other sources to finance the quality delivery of the programme. According to the SAR (p. 3.3.3), the overall cost of the programme per student is €1,162, with the largest share - 24%, attributed to academic staff costs, which primarily consist of salaries.

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

The BAT study programme "Organisational Security" (41861) benefits from a sufficient number and quality of premises and IT equipment. The institution maintains close cooperation with the security industry, ensuring that students have access to various software essential for their studies and future employment. However, there are risks associated with insufficient funding for equipment upgrades, which could compromise the adequacy of hardware tools and the sustainability of the programme's profitability.

Strengths:

- 1) Close cooperation and support from security industry employers, who are the main stakeholders in the education of graduates and potential employers.
- 2) Access to specific security programmes and technologies for practical training in the "Security Laboratory."
- 3) The programme is responsive to the demands of employers, particularly regarding the enhancement of studies.

Weaknesses:

- 1) A decline in the number of students in some years.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

BAT has ensured sufficient level of all kinds of provisions to ensure successful implementation of the study programme.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. As presented in the SAR and confirmed during interviews, both elected academic staff and guest lecturers at BAT, alongside highly qualified leading specialists in the field, participate in implementing the study programme "Organisational Security" (41861). Section 3.4.1 of the SAR states that 36 teaching staff contribute to this programme, including 14 lecturers in elected positions: 5 professors, 2 associate professors, 3 assistant professors, and 4 lecturers, as well as 22 guest lecturers. Quantitatively, the programme is supported by a sufficient number of lecturers, while qualitatively, the majority are employed as professors and associate professors. The attached CVs of the teaching staff (Annex 9_Teaching Staff of the Field of Study_EN, 10_Teaching Staff_CV_En.) demonstrate that they possess teaching and practical experience, indicating their qualifications and capacity to achieve the objectives and learning outcomes of the programme and its courses. Some staff members also have international experience, which facilitates the transfer of global knowledge to students and its application in today's dynamic world. However, further international knowledge would enhance the programme, whether through domestic or international teaching personnel.

Leading specialists from the industry and representatives from the business environment are actively involved in the educational process. They conduct training courses, deliver lectures, supervise and evaluate diploma theses, participate in the State Examinations Committee, provide internships for students. A few collaborate on research with BAT academic staff. This collaboration is also evident in published articles, conference participation, and involvement in international projects.

2.4.2. The SAR indicates that the existing teaching staff regularly enhance their professional skills by participating in conferences, projects, seminars, and courses both nationally and internationally. Notably, the increasing recognition of the value of outward mobility among the staff of the programme should be emphasised. Over the evaluation period of the last six years, there have been zero cases of incoming mobility, but 21 outgoing mobilities recorded for the overall study field. Although this is still a relatively low number, it nonetheless represents progress. This ongoing development creates potential for enhancing the programme through updates to content and the application of new learning methods in line with educational principles and requirements. It also facilitates mutual exchange and the transfer of knowledge and experience. During the assessment visit, it was observed that younger lecturers receive support from experienced colleagues and management, ensuring continuity and fostering a positive working environment.

Section 3.4.2 of the SAR states that "the study programme has a stable teaching staff, with long-standing cooperation with specialists in the field who also have teaching experience." Moreover, the number of professors and associate professors (holding doctorates) has increased during the review period. Changes in the composition has led to the involvement of top specialists with a high level of

expertise.

2.4.3. Not applicable

2.4.4. SAR Annex No. 14, titled "List of Publications," in Section 2.4 "Scientific Research" of the SAR for the study field "Internal Security and Civil Protection," indicates that the teaching staff of the "Organisational Security" (41861) programme has been occasionally engaged in research during the reporting period. Thirteen staff members reported publication activity, with some demonstrating significant productivity. A review reveals that the topics of these publications are mostly aligned with the courses taught by the authors within the BAT programme.

The geographical distribution of the publications is diverse, with a high proportion appearing in national outlets compared to international ones, and a significant number of publications are related to conferences. Many lecturers in the programme possess over 15 years of practical experience in the security related field, as evidenced by their CVs, which underscores their professionalism and deep understanding of the fields in which they teach.

2.4.5. The BAT study programme "Organisational Security" (41861) encompasses a range of courses designed to develop both general and professional competencies. As stated in the interviews, following programme development internal regulations, each year, courses are revised and enhanced with new teaching methods and the latest trends in security and safety, all while adhering to higher education quality standards. However, there is potential for further cooperation within the programme to better establish interlinkages between the courses and create a more cohesive overall focus through its subjects. The experts even recommend establishing a modular structure for the curricula to enhance its focus and improve programme coherence.

The current curriculum is structured to build knowledge, culminating in practical readiness by the end of the programme. The organisation of courses involves multiple lecturers, fostering cooperation among students and faculty in managing study courses. In addition to teaching, staff are increasingly engaging in various collaborative efforts, such as Erasmus+ mobility, joint national and international projects, and research activities, as highlighted in Section 3.4.5 of the SAR.

To facilitate cooperation, BAT has established mechanisms like departmental meetings and refresher courses. Participation in Summer Schools focused on Organisational Security further enriches staff collaboration. Notably, Section 3.4.5 of the SAR indicates that 36 lecturers support the study programme, while only 18 students are enrolled across all courses. This significant disparity, with a student-to-teacher ratio of 2 to 1, enhances the comprehensiveness and diversity of information delivery.

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

Experts conclude that the implementation of the BAT study programme "Organisational Security" (41861) involves a sufficient number of lecturers, well-distributed across various positions and educational levels. This ensures that all conditions are met to achieve the programme's objectives and learning outcomes. The inclusion of guest lecturers from the field further enhances the quality of education and the overall training of future specialists in security services.

Efforts are being made to engage more active students in research and to encourage them to pursue teaching careers at BAT. The publication activity of the teaching staff is still low but progressing, as reflected in the number of publications presented. Training courses are regularly

updated to maintain interrelation and prevent duplication of content.

Strengths:

- 1) The combination of academic staff and guest lecturers from practice in the learning process.
- 2) Continuous professional development opportunities for teaching staff, with support provided for junior lecturers by senior colleagues and management.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Many full-time lecturers lack peer-reviewed research publications.
- 2) Study courses often lack logical interconnections to create synergies and coherence, largely due to limited collaboration between the invited guest lecturers and the BAT academic staff.
- 3) A few lecturers possess extensive academic and practical experience, demonstrating their qualifications and capacity to achieve the programme's objectives and learning outcomes in their professional domain.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The expert group considers that there is sufficient evidence to support the claim that the qualification of the BAT study programme "Organisational Security"(41861) teaching staff fully meets the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements defined in the relevant legal acts.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Annex 3 (1_Isa_cikla_atbilstiba_izglitibas_standartam_en.docx) confirms that BAT study programme "Security Theory"(41861) partially complies with Cabinet regulation No 305 "Noteikumi par valsts profesionālās augstākās izglītības standartu", these specific study courses may not be included in the free elective part.

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Annex 4 (Isa cikla atbilstiba profesijas standartam_en_docx) confirms that the programme is compliant with the professional standard "Security specialist" of 2017. However, comparison with the 2021 version of the standard should be done to guarantee the programme full compliance with it.

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The attached study course descriptions (Annex 7_Īsā cikla studiju kursa aprksti_EN_zip, and Annex 8_Īsā cikla_apraksti_en_docx) are prepared both in Latvian and English. Experts have experienced serious discrepancies in the specific descriptions which in some cases were partial of missing and did not therefore full comply with regulations outlined in the Law on Higher Education Institutions

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The provided Diploma sample (Annex 1_Īsā cikla_diploms_un_pielikums_en_zip.) complies with the procedure by wich state-recognized documents of higher education are issued in accordance with Cabinet regulations No.202 "Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību apliecināšus dokumentus"

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The attached resumes of teaching staff (10_“Academic_staff_CV_ENG.pdf”) and confirmation (11_“Apliecinājums par valsts valodas zināšanām.en.edoc”) verifies that the state language proficiency is compliant with the Cabinet Regulation No. 733 "Noteikumi par valsts valodas zināšanu apjomu, valsts valodas prasmes pārbaudes kārtību un valsts nodevu par valsts valodas prasmes pārbaudi.”

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Sample of the attached study agreement ("7_Studiju_ligums_tipveida_en_docx.") complies with Cabinet Regulation No. 70 "Studiju līgumā obligāti ietveramie noteikumi".

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The attached contracts (5_Par_izglītības_iegūvi_cita_programma_en_zip.) confirm that the institution provides the possibility to continue studies within the following options in the College of Law: Short cycle professional study programme "Cyber Security Management and Personal Data Protection".

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

BAT confirmation ("6_Zaudējumukompensacija_EN_docx") states, that its students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the licence of the study programme is revoked due to the actions of the university (actions or failure to act) and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The study programme partially complies with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments due to the flaws in the study course descriptions described in the analysis, mainly related to issues with elective study courses and

errors in the course descriptions.

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

The short-cycle professional higher education programme "Organisational Security" (code 41861) aligns with the 2017 professional qualification standard for "Security Specialist," equipping students with the necessary knowledge and skills for the security sector. The programme enjoys strong industry demand for its graduates and provides pathways for retired professionals transitioning into the private sector. The programme's close relationship with the industry is demonstrated by industry representatives serving on the faculty council and student assessment panels, offering essential feedback to the faculty and study group personnel. The industry has also provided the programme with experienced external lecturers from the security field and a laboratory environment for practical training. Several professional development opportunities are available for teaching staff to update and enhance their skills and knowledge.

However, experts have noted several challenges that BAT needs to address. Key weaknesses identified in the analysis include incomplete course descriptions, the unavailability of certain elective courses, and concerns regarding the English proficiency of the teaching staff, as the courses are described in English and hence address international students. Additionally, experts have highlighted that the curriculum lacks interconnectivity between its study courses, leading to unclear course focus and inadequacies in course descriptions. The lack of interconnectivity is attributed to the programme's non-modular structure, which also hinders the creation of synergies between full-time and external teaching staff. Despite successful internship integration and strong industry collaboration, there are risks related to funding and maintaining educational resources due to fluctuating student numbers.

Overall, while the programme benefits from qualified teaching staff and practical training opportunities, revisions are necessary to improve course coherence and ensure alignment with the updated 2021 professional standard.

Evaluation of the study programme "Organisational Security"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Organisational Security"

Short-term recommendations

1) Critically revise the course syllabuses - have course plans described in all and possibly amend the assessment criteria to be better understood. Also critically analyze if the assigned credits correspond to the course volumes.

2) Verify the adequacy of the teaching staff's English knowledge to the required level, and as a result offer English language courses.

3) Find solutions to provide elective courses to the students and guarantee that the courses which have sufficient number of students enrolled are also delivered.

4) Analyse the alignment of the programme with the renewed 2021 professional standard and make the necessary amendments.

Long-term recommendations

1) Establish a programme quality panel overseeing content shortages and interlinkages between the courses for possible synergies arising from it.

2) Bring in more global/international experience into security related courses to widen students' understanding and knowledge.

3) Enhance the research incentives system to support the teaching personnel research in their respective area.

3) Introduce a modular design of the curriculum to better link the provided courses, to enhance the coherence of the programme and foster cooperation of the teaching personnel at least inside a module.

II - "Organisational Security" ASSESSMENT

II - "Organisational Security" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The professional bachelor's study programme "Organisational Security" (42861) is founded on the relevant professional standard for the "Head of the Security Service" (profession code 5419 03), established in 2013, which serves as one of the core professional standards in this field of study. The BAT has included a comparison of the programme with the competencies outlined in this standard in its SAR, demonstrating that the programme adequately addresses these competencies (see Annex 4). Based on the professional qualification of the "Head of the Security Service" and the qualities required therein, students in the study programme acquire all the necessary knowledge and skills, as reflected both in the programme's title and in the achievement of its objectives (SAR pp. 78-79).

A key contribution of this professional higher education programme is its ability to swiftly respond to the demands of the labour market by providing essential human resources for the future development of the economy, state, and society. It also aims to foster the development of individuals into enterprising, creative, responsible, and competitive members of society (SAR pp. 78-79). For example, the head of the security service provides security services to legal and natural persons, where, in accordance with legal acts and with an awareness of the nature of conflict situations, they identify threats and risks, as well as organise, plan, participate in, or ensure the comprehensive implementation of security measures for the organisation's property and personnel (SAR p. 79). Taking into account the title of the study programme and the professional standard upon which it is based, experts conclude that the programme is aligned with the field of study.

2.1.2. The professional bachelor's study programme "Organisational Security" (42861) comprises 240 Credit Points (CP) and lasts four years for full-time students. For part-time extramural and part-time studies, the duration is four years and three months. The programme is conducted exclusively in Latvian. Admission requirements for Latvian students include the completion of secondary education (SAR pp. 74-75). Upon finishing four years of full-time studies or four years and three months of part-time studies, students are awarded a Professional Bachelor's Degree in Personal and Property Protection, along with the professional qualification of "Head of Security Service" (5419-03), corresponding to the sixth level of professional qualification (SAR pp. 74-75; Annex 1).

As stated in the programme document, the programme's goal is to meet labour market needs by providing the necessary human resources for the national economy, state, and society in the field of personal and property protection. Additionally, it aims to develop students into enterprising, creative, responsible, and competitive members of society (SAR p. 74). This goal is pursued through specific tasks:

- 1) preparing students for work as Heads of Security Service,
- 2) fostering their development into well-rounded, responsible individuals,
- 3) equipping them with knowledge and skills for applied research in the security sector, and
- 4) building their competence to adapt dynamically to changes in the external environment and to transfer knowledge and technologies within the security field (SAR p. 74).

By fulfilling these tasks, students can achieve the programme's intended outcomes, which include demonstrating basic and specialised knowledge in the security sector, employing a scientific approach to problem-solving, taking responsibility and initiative, and making decisions in dynamic conditions. However, while the programme's goals, tasks, and outcomes are relevant, experts also note that they are nearly identical across the three programmes within the study group, differing only slightly in wording, which complicates the overall differentiation of their focus.

The enrolment criteria are appropriate for this programme. Experts believe that the four-year duration for full-time studies or four years and three months for part-time studies is sufficient to meet the programme's goals and learning outcomes. The programme is offered exclusively in Latvian, and all staff members are proficient in the language; therefore, the implementation of the study programme in this manner is deemed reasonable and justified. The experts still encourage the BAT staff to seek for additional international experience and therefore also to enhance its fluency in English.

2.1.3. From the previous accreditation, the study programme has undergone significant changes as outlined in the SAR (Part 3, Chapter 3.1.1., pp. 76-78). Following updates to the Law on Higher Education Institutions, credits were transitioned to the ECTS system. In accordance with the law, one credit point is now defined as equivalent to 25-30 hours of study work. Consequently, study courses with 3 ECTS require a total of 75 hours of study, while those with 6 ECTS require 150 hours. The methodology for this transition has been detailed in the SAR's annexes appendices, specifically Annex 1. However, Annex 1 BAT "Methodology for the transition from the Latvia credit point system to European credit points transfer and accumulation system (ECTS)" unfortunately does not include all the necessary information for the transition from the Latvia Credit point system to European credit points transfer and accumulation system (ECTC) in the first cycle professional higher education study program "Organisational Security". The methodology does not mention Cabinet regulations No. 305 "Rules on the Standard of State Professional Higher Education" (June 13, 2023) and implementation of these Cabinet regulations. The experts also note that the programme exhibits possible deficiencies in compliance with national regulations. The credit points allocated do not appear to align with the course content as required by law. Additionally, the scheduling of certain courses has been revised across academic years and semesters (SAR p.77).

Experts have deemed these changes overall appropriate, ensuring that the study programme remains relevant and effectively prepares students with the necessary professional knowledge to enter the labour market upon graduation.

2.1.4. The Latvian National Development Plan for 2021-2027 aims to create a safe internal environment in Latvia for residents and businesses, particularly by enhancing public trust in services that protect rights and security. This includes increasing the number of individuals equipped to

prevent risks, respond to dangerous situations, and collaborate with state services. The plan emphasises the importance of professional personnel in ensuring public safety and effective law enforcement.

As stated in the SAR, the Government's Declaration highlights a united effort to strengthen Latvia's security amid global geopolitical challenges, reinforcing the commitment to national defence and public order. The study programme in "Organisational Security" directly contributes to this goal by training specialists in the protection of persons and property. Feedback from graduates and employers during the site visit indicated that there are no significant barriers to entering the labour market after graduation. The interviewees even considered the programme as "an exit strategy" for transitioning from government service (police, military) to private security upon retirement. Surveys of students, graduates, and employers reveal that graduates are in high demand, with many securing positions in national forces and public or private security services.

Data indicates a strong employment rate among graduates, with nearly half (47%) employed in the public sector and another 47% in the private sector. A significant 78% are working in their field of specialisation, and 74% were employed before graduation. Graduates typically hold positions as specialists (57%), managers (25%), or high-level managers (6%). Between 2014 and 2018, a total of 122 students were admitted, while 112 students were admitted from 2018 to 2023. Overall, the number of students remains stable. A greater stability in enrolment numbers was observed between 2016 and the start of the 2018 academic year, attributed to targeted marketing activities for the programme. However, it is important to note that enrolment numbers declined in 2019 and 2020, largely due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic (professional bachelor's study programme "Organisational Security," Annex 2). In the 2023/2024 academic year, there are 13 first-year students enrolled across all study forms, with a total of 65 students in all study types. These fluctuations may impact the economic feasibility of the programme and compel BAT to use additional resources to maintain it.

The main reason cited for students abandoning their studies is financial constraints, a concern echoed by both students and staff during the site visit. Overall, experts agree that graduates from the programme are in high demand and play a crucial role in addressing vacancies in Latvia's security sector. The programme remains economically viable and beneficial for the long-term. (SAR p. 83).

2.1.5. Not applicable.

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

The professional bachelor's study programme "Organisational Security" (42861) is aligned with the professional standard for the "Head of the Security Service," and covers essential competencies in this field. Spanning four years for full-time students and four years and three months for part-time studies, the programme comprises 240 Credit Points and is conducted exclusively in Latvian. It aims to meet labour market demands by developing students into enterprising, creative, and responsible individuals while providing the necessary knowledge and skills for personal and property protection. Recent changes include the introduction of 11 new study courses, although the methodology for transitioning to the ECTS system lacks some regulatory details. The programme boasts a strong employment rate among graduates, with nearly half employed in both public and private sectors, highlighting its relevance to market needs. Despite fluctuations in student numbers due to external factors, the programme is deemed economically viable and plays a crucial role in addressing vacancies in Latvia's security sector. Financial constraints remain the primary reason for students

abandoning their studies, as noted by both staff and students. Overall, experts recognise the programme's effectiveness in preparing graduates for the labour market.

Strengths:

- 1) High demand for graduates in the labour market.
- 2) Provides an "exit strategy" for individuals retiring from government security-related jobs.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Lack of clarity regarding the methodology for the accumulation of European credit points within the programme.
- 2) Student high dropout rate.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. As seen from the provided comparison, the professional bachelor's study programme "Organisational Security" (42861) is aligned with the professional standard for the "Head of the Security Service," and covers essential competencies in this field. To align the programme with market trends and student preferences, 11 new study courses have been introduced. Mandatory courses (Part A) now include "Organisation Cyber Security" (3 ECTS, 75 hours), "Project Management Data" (6 ECTS, 150 hours), "Protection Law" (6 ECTS, 150 hours), and "Practical Conflictology" (6 ECTS, 150 hours). Professional elective courses (Part B) have been enhanced with courses such as "Media Literacy" (3 ECTS, 75 hours), "Team Building" (3 ECTS, 75 hours), "Time Management" (3 ECTS, 75 hours), and "Logic and Critical Thinking" (3 ECTS, 75 hours). Free elective courses (Part C) now include "Crisis Management" (3 ECTS, 75 hours) and "Legal Provisions of Construction" (6 ECTS, 150 hours) (SAR pp. 77-78). According to the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the state educational standard, part C is a part of elective subjects, and it cannot include specific study courses. Therefore, inclusion of the mandatory according to the state educational standard studying course "Crisis Management" in part C can't be supported.

The experts note that the courses of the programme lack modularity and interconnectivity, resulting in an unfocused and poorly complementary programme. While this may be acceptable for short-cycle programme, in academic programme it presents challenges for thorough assessment due to also insufficient course descriptions. For example, the course "Guarding Tactics" purports to provide theoretical knowledge, skills, and competencies related to security guarding tactics, but its purpose and learning outcomes are vague and superficial. The course content lacks clarity, as no course plan or assessment criteria are provided. Similar deficiencies are evident in several other courses:

- The course "Detective Work" lacks a course plan.
- "Security Psychology" does not describe how students' independent work is organised.
- The "Security Equipment" course lacks a clear course plan, and its content is ambiguous, raising concerns about the appropriateness of the assigned ECTS points.
- "Security Theory" also lacks a course plan.
- The "Forensics" course does not clarify which forensic tactics and methodologies are referenced in the objectives, nor do the outcomes specify necessary knowledge areas such as chemistry, psychology, or fire safety science.

Overall, the courses do not effectively align with the programme's objectives, and the learning outcomes are often inadequately defined, hindering the assurance of their achievement. Although industry feedback indicates satisfaction with the education provided, it is challenging to ascertain alignment with current scientific trends due to the lack of a clear focus and concept in course

assembly.

The experts also note, the study programme exhibits possible deficiencies in compliance with national regulations, particularly concerning the Law on Higher Education Institutions. The credit points assigned do not appear to align with the course content as required by law. There is a notable absence of modular structures, despite their recommended nature for enhancing programme coherence. The programme lacks a clear focus, and the complementarity between courses is weak. The courses reflect the specialisations of the faculty, spanning areas such as law, psychology, and economics, as well as practical topics like the guarding of stationary objects, sustainable organisational management, and private investigation.

The law stipulates that courses must outline necessary content for achieving learning outcomes, include a study course calendar, specify mandatory and supplementary literature, detail the organisation and tasks for students' independent work, and establish evaluation criteria for learning outcomes. These requirements remain unfulfilled for several courses, as noted above.

To address these issues, it is recommended that a modular structure be established for the programme, along with the formation of a quality panel comprising students and teachers responsible for programme maintenance. Regular monthly meetings of the panel could facilitate ongoing collaboration and address the challenges with the curriculum. Additionally, it is essential to identify a focus that aligns with the research activities currently undertaken at the university.

2.2.2. Not applicable.

2.2.3. The SAR (p. 3.2.3) assures that the methods of study implementation contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the courses and the overall study programme, while also considering student-centred learning and teaching principles. Documentation related to the study process indicates that student-centred learning is indeed a priority. The University is well equipped with digital resources to support this learning process. Interview results reveal a high degree of flexibility regarding the needs of the students, who reported feeling highly supported in their learning and in achieving their goals. However, experts noted that during interviews with teaching staff, there was no clear consensus on which specific methods are employed and how these methods relate to student-centred learning.

2.2.4. Internships are an integral component of the study programme and are conducted based on agreements between BAT and organisations that provide the internship placements, such as security companies, police forces, and defence forces. The programme includes one mandatory internship, which has its own course description; however, this course lacks a detailed course plan. Interviews with industry representatives, students, and graduates confirm that the opportunities and arrangements for internships are effective. Industry partners actively participate in the planning of internships and provide feedback to BAT.

The tasks associated with the internship are clearly outlined in BAT's internal "Description of the Organisation of the Traineeship." As detailed in this description, the head of the department is responsible for organising the internship, while the practice advisor informs students about the internship's aims, tasks, learning outcomes, and assessment criteria for the practice reports. The practice advisor also consults students on issues related to the internship and supervises the implementation of the practice programme. Additionally, the practice advisor reviews the students' practice reports. A flow chart visualises the process for students, ensuring clarity in the expectations. Teachers ensure that the internship tasks align with the intended learning outcomes.

Overall, experts assess that the internship meets the requirements set forth by the relevant regulatory enactments.

2.2.5. Not applicable.

2.2.6. The SAR indicates that the topics of students' diploma papers are relevant to the sector, stemming from their own work environments. Good examples of the latter from 2022 are: Level of cyber hygiene in Latvian society, Internal security in prisons, Technical security for the storage of tangible assets. Consequently, their conclusions and proposals provide potentially concrete solutions for enhancing the legal framework. Interviews revealed that students typically select thesis topics pertinent to their sector, as many are employed in the field prior to commencing their studies and face real-world challenges. This alignment with their professional experiences ensures the relevance of their research. Additionally, the internal confirmation process within the faculty further guarantees that these topics correspond with the study programme. Thus, the topics provided to experts from 2017 to 2022 are both relevant and in line with the programme's objectives.

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

As the analysis shows, the study programme's content closely resembles that of a short-cycle programme. Experts point out that it suffers from a lack of modularity and interconnectivity among courses, resulting in an unfocused and vaguely complementary structure. Several courses, such as for example "Guarding Tactics" and "Security Psychology," lack some parts of its description, such as course plans, and assessment criteria, which complicates thorough assessment. While industry feedback reflects satisfaction with the programme, its alignment with national regulations and current scientific trends is questionable due to inadequate course descriptions and credit point allocation. To improve coherence, establishing a modular structure and a quality panel comprising students and faculty is recommended. Although the university prioritises student-centred learning and offers digital resources, there appeared to be no consensus among (especially external) teaching staff on the specific methods employed in this regard. Internships of the programme are effectively organised and align with industry needs, allowing students to tackle real-world challenges in their diploma papers. The topics of these papers reflect the students' professional experiences, ensuring relevance and potential solutions for sector improvements. Overall, while the programme has strengths, significant enhancements are necessary to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with educational standards.

Strengths:

The content of the study programme and its implementation closely align with industry needs, demonstrating flexibility and adaptability to industry requirements.

Weaknesses:

- 1) There are flaws in the descriptions of the study courses.
- 2) The interconnectivity of study courses is weak, and the overall focus of the programme is vague, therefore the courses tend to be multidisciplinary rather than interdisciplinary.
- 3) The free elective courses are not genuinely voluntary, as students cannot rely on their availability.
- 4) There is a shortage of courses focused on methodology. A bachelor's program should be research-oriented and align with the standards of an academic degree. While the courses in the current curriculum address practical needs, they do not fully meet the academic expectations. The degree

should provide a foundation for further academic study at the master's level.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. At the site visit it was seen that the administration, academic staff, and students have access to a sufficient number of auditoriums equipped with relevant technology in the BAT buildings at Graudu Street 68, Riga. One key facility is the "Security Laboratory," which is essential for students enrolled in the programme. All users have access to the BATIS system. There are dedicated workstations for teaching and academic staff, each equipped with modern PCs. Students can also utilise the library located on the BAT campus. At the site-visit the experts experienced, that the resources available in the library are in accordance with the specifics and needs of the short cycle programme

The "Security Laboratory" plays a role in practical training, being equipped with basic security systems, such as fire and alarm installation devices (control boards, various sensors, CCTV digital cameras, alarm switches), installed in recent years with the assistance of industry partners. Practical lessons conducted in the laboratory provide knowledge and skills necessary for students' future professions. While the available hardware is adequate for the implementation of the study programme, periodic upgrades and safety inspections are essential. Software provisions include licences, database subscriptions, and a learning management system, such as Moodle.

The "Organisational Security" programme (42861) also includes self-defence training, conducted in the gym. During these training sessions, students receive appropriate equipment such as helmets, body protectors, and gloves. A shooting simulator is available for students, allowing them to learn basic skills and safety techniques related to the proper use and handling of firearms, as well as how to respond to common situations they may encounter in the line of duty. Additional agreements to use partners' live shooting range were also presented to the experts.

2.3.2. Not applicable.

2.3.3. As presented in the SAR, the funding of the study programme is mainly from the student fees, therefore the programme is highly dependent on the student enrolment. The dynamics of student admitted in the bachelor's degree programme "Organisational Security" (42861) has shown slight, though uneven, fluctuations. Between 2014 and 2018, a total of 122 students were admitted, while 112 students were admitted from 2018 to 2023. A greater stability in enrolment numbers was observed between 2016 and the start of the 2018 academic year, attributed to targeted marketing activities for the programme. However, it is important to note that enrolment numbers declined in 2019 and 2020, largely due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

As enrolment numbers decrease, the associated budget also diminishes, which may adversely affect the study process and impose limitations on the development of the programme's content, study

provision, scientific resources, and technical facilities. This situation may pressure BAT to seek income from other sources to finance the quality delivery of the programme. According to the SAR (p. 3.3.3), the overall cost of the programme per student is €1,513, with the largest share - 27%, attributed to academic staff costs, which primarily consist of salaries.

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

The BAT study programme "Organisational Security" (42861) is well-supported by adequate premises, IT infrastructure, and software necessary for both the study process and future professional application. The university maintains strong cooperation with the security industry, which enhances the practical relevance of the programme. While student enrolment has remained mostly stable in recent years, it is sufficient to ensure the programme's financial sustainability. However, there are risks associated with insufficient funding for equipment upgrades, which could impact the quality of hardware and long-term profitability of the programme.

Strengths:

- 1) Strong collaboration and support from security industry employers, who are key stakeholders and potential employers of graduates.
- 2) Access to specialised security programmes and technical facilities for practical training.
- 3) The programme responds effectively to employer demands, enhancing its relevance to the job market.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Incoming and outgoing teaching staff mobility is low.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

BAT has ensured sufficient level of all kinds of provisions to ensure successful implementation of the study programme.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. According to the interviews and in line with internal regulations, both the elected academic staff and guest lecturers at BAT, alongside highly qualified industry specialists, contribute to the implementation of the "Organisational Security" (42861) study programme. Section 3.4.1 of the SAR states that 47 teaching staff are involved in delivering this programme, of which 18 hold elected positions: 6 professors, 2 associate professors, 4 docents, and 6 lecturers, in addition to 29 guest lecturers. Quantitatively, the curriculum is supported by a sufficient number of lecturers, and qualitatively, the strong presence of professors and associate professors aims at ensuring high academic standards. The attached CVs (Annex 9, Annex 10) demonstrate the extensive teaching experience, some research involvement, and solid practical experience of the teaching staff, indicating their capability to meet the programme's objectives and learning outcomes. Some staff members also bring valuable experience as both academics and practitioners, facilitating the transfer of field knowledge to students and its application in a dynamic environment. However,

experts are convinced, that increasing the availability of international expertise would broaden students' perspectives and enhance their understanding of developments in the security sector.

During the site visit, industry specialists noted that business representatives contribute to the educational process by conducting training, delivering lectures, supervising and examining diploma theses, participating in the State Examinations Committee, offering internships, and collaborating on joint research with BAT staff, as evidenced by published articles, conference presentations, and international projects. However, the programme is not anchored in a single research field, resulting in a lack of synergy among ongoing research efforts and limited collaboration among researchers. This situation negatively impacts the scientific value of the bachelor's programme.

2.4.2. The SAR indicates that the existing teaching staff regularly enhance their professional skills by participating in conferences, projects, seminars, and courses both nationally and internationally. Notably, the increasing recognition of the value of outward mobility among the staff of the programme should be emphasised. Over the evaluation period of the last six years, there have been zero cases of incoming mobility, but 21 outgoing mobilities recorded for the overall study field. Although this is still a relatively low number, it nonetheless represents progress. This ongoing development creates potential for enhancing the programme through updates to content and the application of new learning methods in line with educational principles and requirements. It also facilitates mutual exchange and the transfer of knowledge and experience. During the assessment visit, it was observed that younger lecturers receive support from experienced colleagues and management, ensuring continuity and fostering a positive working environment.

Section 3.4.2 of the SAR states that "the study programme has a stable teaching staff, with long-standing cooperation with specialists in the field who also have teaching experience." Moreover, the number of professors and associate professors (holding doctorates) has increased during the review period, positively impacting the quality of education. Changes in the composition of the teaching staff do not compromise educational quality; rather, the educational process increasingly involves top specialists with a high level of expertise. The programme successfully attracts the next generation of lecturers.

2.4.3. Not applicable

2.4.4. SAR Annex No. 14, titled "List of Publications," in Section 2.4 "Scientific Research" of the SAR for the study field "Internal Security and Civil Protection," indicates that the teaching staff of the "Organisational Security" (42861) programme has been occasionally engaged in research during the reporting period. Eighteen staff members reported publication activity, with some demonstrating significant productivity. A review reveals that the topics of these publications are mostly aligned with the courses taught by the authors within the BAT programme.

The geographical distribution of the publications is diverse, with a somewhat higher proportion appearing in national outlets compared to international ones, and a significant number of publications are related to conferences. Many lecturers in the programme possess over 15 years of practical experience in the security related field, as evidenced by their CVs, which underscores their professionalism and deep understanding of the fields in which they teach.

2.4.5. The BAT study programme "Organisational Security" (42861) encompasses various study blocks that address both general and professional competencies. Each year, the courses are developed and updated to incorporate new teaching methods and the latest trends in security and safety, while adhering to higher education quality standards. The teaching staff is expected to

collaborate within their respective courses to ensure interconnections across the curriculum. The courses are expected to be structured so that foundational knowledge acquired at the beginning is progressively built upon with technological skills, thereby preparing students for practical application by the end of their studies. This organisation of courses involves a dedicated number of lecturers, creating a high need for cooperation both with students and in the management of individual study courses. As it was noted by the experts also earlier, more cooperation amongst the full-time and external teaching personnel could be expected through providing more modularity to the programme.

In addition to teaching, the academic staff have been offered a possibility to be engaged in various collaborative activities, such as Erasmus+ mobility, projects, and research initiatives. Examples of such collaboration are outlined in Section 3.4.5 of the programme's SAR. The participation of staff in Summer Schools on Organisational Security is also noteworthy.

According to Section 3.4.5 of the SAR, 47 lecturers deliver the study programme, while 54 students are enrolled across all years of study. The number of students is significantly lower than the teaching staff per academic year:

First year (group ODL1) - 13 students

Second year (group ODL2) - 9 students

Third year (group ODL3) - 18 students

Fourth year (group ODL4) - 14 students

This 3- to 5-fold difference between students and staff offers students a comprehensive and diverse range of perspectives, contributing to the development of both professional and communication skills.

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

Experts conclude that the implementation of the BAT study programme "Organisational Security" (42861) involves a sufficient number of lecturers, well-distributed across various positions and educational levels. This ensures that all conditions are met to achieve the programme's objectives and learning outcomes. The inclusion of guest lecturers from the field further enhances the quality of education and the overall training of future specialists in security services.

Efforts are being made to engage more active students in research and to encourage them to pursue teaching careers at BAT. The publication activity of the teaching staff is progressing, as evidenced by the number of publications indexed in internationally recognised databases. Training courses are regularly updated to maintain interrelations and prevent duplication of content.

Strengths:

- 1) The combination of academic staff and guest lecturers from practice in the learning process.
- 2) Several lecturers possess extensive practical experience, demonstrating their qualifications and capacity to achieve the programme's objectives and learning outcomes in their areas of expertise.
- 3) Some lecturers have extensive teaching experience.
- 4) Continuous professional development opportunities are available for teaching staff, with support provided for junior lecturers by senior colleagues and management.

Weaknesses:

- 1) A majority of lecturers lack scientific peer-reviewed publications indexed in Scopus and Web of Science.

- 2) The programme would benefit from having more academic staff involved in research.
- 3) Greater interlinkages between the courses through full-time and external teaching personnel cooperation would benefit the quality of the programme.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The experts conclude that the gathered evidence support the claim that the qualification of the BAT study programme “Organisational Security”(42861) teaching staff only partially meets the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements defined in the relevant legal acts. The experts have noted that more emphasis should be paid to promoting and supporting the research work and related initiatives in the programme, including research groups and security sector relevant research in the faculty.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Annex 3 (Bakalaura atbilstiba izglitibas standartam_en.docx) confirms that BAT study programme “Organisational Security”(42861) fully complies with the Cabinet regulation No 305 “Noteikumi par valsts profesionālās augstākās izglītības standartu”.The experts have experienced that not all elective courses in the curriculum are offered. It is not obvious to the students’ what courses are offered when they sign up.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Annex 4 (Bakalaura atbilstiba profesijas standartam_en_docx) confirms that the programme is fully compliant with the professional standard “Head of the security service” (approved 16. October, 2013).

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The attached study course descriptions (Annex 7_Bakalaura studiju kursa aprksti_EN_zip, and Annex 8_Bakalaura_prakses_apraksti_en_docx) are prepared in Latvian and English. The relevant course description is incomplete, not all free elective courses in the curriculum are offered. It is not obvious to the students what courses are offered when they sign up.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The provided Diploma sample (Annex 1_Bakalaura_diploms_un_pielikums_en_zip.) complies with the procedure by which state-recognized documents of higher education are issued in accordance with the Cabinet regulations No.202 "Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību apliecinājumus".

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The attached resumes of staff (10_“Academic_staff_CV_ENG.pdf”) and confirmation (11_“Apliecinājums par valsts valodas zināšanām.en.edoc”) verifies that state language proficiency is compliant with the Cabinet Regulation No. 733 "Noteikumi par valsts valodas zināšanu apjomu, valsts valodas prasmes pārbaudes kārtību un valsts nodevu par valsts valodas prasmes pārbaudi".

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Sample of the attached study agreement(“7_Studiju_ligums_tipveida_en_docx.”) complies with the Cabinet Regulation No. 70 "Studiju līgumā obligāti ietveramie noteikumi”

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The attached contracts (5_Par izglītības ieguvi cita programma_en.zip.) confirm that the institution provides the possibility to continue studies within the following options Riga Stradins University: Professional Bachelor Study Programme "Law".

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

BAT confirmation ("6_Zaudējumukompensacija_EN_docx") states, that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the licence of the study programme is revoked due to the actions of the university (actions or failure to act) and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The study programme partially complies with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments as relevant course descriptions are incomplete and not all free elective courses in the curriculum are offered.

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

The professional bachelor's study programme "Organisational Security" (42861) aligns with the professional standard for the "Head of the Security Service" and covers essential competencies within a four-year framework for full-time students and four years and three months for part-time students. Conducted exclusively in Latvian and comprising 240 Credit Points, the programme aims to develop enterprising, creative, and responsible graduates who meet labour market demands. Recent programme enhancements include the addition of 11 new study courses, although some methodological details related to the ECTS system remain unclear. Graduates demonstrate a strong employment rate, with nearly half working in public and other half in private sectors. However, the programme faces several challenges, such as high dropout rates, weak interconnectivity between

courses, and unclear or partially described course descriptions, which also impede effective assessment and alignment with national regulations. While internships are well-organised and relevant to industry needs, more effort is needed to ensure a coherent and possibly modular programme structure. The BAT maintains robust cooperation with the security sector, but there are concerns regarding funding due to decreasing student numbers, which could impact future programme quality. Overall, while the programme is well-supported and responsive to industry needs, significant improvements are necessary to enhance its effectiveness and compliance with educational standards.

Evaluation of the study programme "Organisational Security"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Organisational Security"

Short-term recommendations

- | |
|---|
| 1) Critically revise the study course descriptions - have course plans described in all and possibly amend the assessment criteria to be better understood. Also critically analyze if the assigned credits correspond to the course volumes. |
| 2) Introduce basic scientific methods and academic writing courses. |
| 3) Verify the adequacy of the teaching staff's English knowledge to the required level, and as a result offer English language courses. |
| 4) The free elective study courses (Part C) should be revised to comply with the educational standard, including moving the mandatory Civil and Environmental Protection from Part C to the mandatory content of the programme. |
| 5) Find solutions to provide free elective courses to the students and guarantee that the courses which have sufficient number of students enrolled are also delivered. |

Long-term recommendations

- | |
|---|
| 1) Identify a more clear focus for the programme that amongst others also aligns with the research activities at least at the faculty level. |
| 2) Establish a programme quality panel overseeing content shortages and interlinkages between the courses for possible synergies arising from it. |
| 3) Bring in more global/international experience into security related courses to widen students' understanding and knowledge; continue facilitating student- and teachers exchange through available international formats. |
| 4) Enhance the research incentives system to support the teaching personnel research in their respective area. |
| 5) Introduce a modular design of the curriculum to better link the provided courses and to enhance the coherence of the programme. The modular design would also foster teachers' cooperation through need to interlink their subjects to the module common goal. |

II - "Security Management of Organization" ASSESSMENT

II - "Security Management of Organization" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. As described in the SAR, the master's study programme is intended to be a natural progression from the bachelor's programmes related to security, encompassing areas such as occupational safety and personal protection. As further detailed in the SAR, it offers the opportunity to acquire advanced theoretical knowledge and develop research skills in personal and property protection. The primary objective of this study programme aligns with that of the academic master's programme "Management of Organisational Security," which is to "prepare high-level security managers with a broad multidisciplinary perspective on the security and protection of persons, movable property, and real estate" (SAR, p. 154). Considering the title of the master's programme and recognising that its main objective closely mirrors that of the study field, experts conclude that the academic master's programme "Management of the Security of the Organisation" is compliant with the study field.

2.1.2. The academic master's study programme "Management of Organisational Security" comprises either 60 CP over 1 year and 3 months or 120 CP over 2 years and 1 month and is delivered exclusively in Latvian. The admission requirements for Latvian students are as follows:

- For the 60 CP programme: a professional bachelor's degree in civil and military protection with a sixth-level professional qualification, or a professional bachelor's degree and a sixth-level professional qualification in another field, along with at least two years of experience in civil and military protection (SAR pp. 148-152). This programme is designed for individuals with prior security experience or professionals seeking to enhance their qualifications and knowledge in organisational security management (SAR p. 154).
- For the 120 CP programme: an academic bachelor's degree in the thematic group of social sciences, commerce, or law, or an academic bachelor's degree in another thematic group, provided that at least 15 CP have been obtained in social sciences, commerce, or law (SAR pp. 148-152). This option is aimed at students without specific knowledge in the security sector, offering foundational knowledge needed to align with the study outcomes of the 60 CP programme by the second year (SAR p. 154).

After graduating from the academic master's study program the Master of Social Sciences in Security Management of Organization is awarded (SAR p. 150). The master's degree - [...] Master of Social Sciences [...] - is awarded to the relevant sciences in the group of allied sciences according to the thematic groups of education defined in the Latvian education classification (The academic master's study programme "Management of Organisational Security" Annex 3).

The programme, coded 45861 in the Latvian Education Classification, aims to equip students with theoretical knowledge and research skills aligned with Level 7 of the European Qualification Framework. It ensures that graduates can responsibly utilise information technologies in their professional activities, research, lifelong learning, and the creation of digital content (SAR p. 148). The programme's objectives are supported by tasks that include preparing students for research in the security sector, fostering personal development, enhancing their ability to transfer knowledge and technologies within the security industry, and achieving in-depth theoretical knowledge and research skills in personal and property protection (SAR p. 148).

Through these tasks, students are expected to demonstrate advanced knowledge in security,

independently apply theory and methods in research and professional activities, and critically analyse complex scientific and professional issues to contribute to the creation of new knowledge (SAR p. 148).

Experts note, that while the programme's goals, tasks, and outcomes are well-founded, they closely resemble those of other programmes in the same study group, with only minor differences in wording. This similarity makes it difficult to clearly distinguish the master's programme, which should, by its nature, focus more on equipping students with theoretical knowledge and research skills (as defined in the programme objectives). The above enrolment criteria and the programme's duration are considered appropriate for achieving the study goals and outcomes. Since the programme is currently taught exclusively in Latvian, with no English language requirement, and all staff members are proficient in Latvian, the language of instruction is done only in the state language. Students who participated in the site visit confirmed that the language of instruction, courses, and pedagogical approaches align with the intended learning outcomes. As previously stated in the report on several occasions, the experts strongly believe that incorporating more international experience through both foreign lecturers and students would greatly benefit the programme.

2.1.3. Several changes have been made to the programme since its licensing in 2022. First, the name of the awarded degree was changed. Previously, during the master's programme licensing, it was titled the Master of Social Sciences in Personal and Property Protection. It has now been renamed to the Master of Social Sciences in Security Management of Organisation. This new title better reflects the academic master's programme "Management of Organisational Security." Although the BAT SAR does not provide an explanation for these changes, they remain in line with the study field.

Secondly, several adjustments are noted in the SAR (Part 3, Chapter 3.1.1., p. 153). Following amendments to the Law on Higher Education Institutions, credits have been converted to the ECTS system. According to Paragraph 8 of Section 1 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, one credit point corresponds to 25-30 hours of study work. Consequently, courses worth 3 ECTS now require 75 hours of study, while those worth 6 ECTS require 150 hours. The methodology for transitioning from the Latvian credit point system to ECTS is outlined in the SAR annexes (SAR Annex 1). However, the experts note potential deficiencies in the programme's compliance with national regulations, as the allocation of credit points does not appear to fully correspond with the course content as required by law.

Additionally, the scheduling of certain study courses has been adjusted across different years and semesters. These changes primarily affected the Master's thesis process, which has now been divided into several courses. This allows students to submit topic proposals in a timely manner and begin drafting their thesis earlier, rather than postponing it until the last minute. This modification has also increased the credits allocated to research, acknowledging the central role of research in the academic study process (SAR p. 154). However, the experts highlight that the programme's content is extensive but continues lacking a coherent structure and clear connections between courses.

Despite the above discrepancies, the experts agree that the made changes are appropriate and ensure that the programme remains relevant, potentially equipping students with the knowledge and skills necessary for entering the labour market after graduation.

2.1.4. The Latvian National Development Plan for 2021–2027 outlines the goal of the "Security"

(431) action area to create a secure internal environment for residents and businesses in Latvia. This objective aims to foster public trust in services that protect rights and ensure security. It seeks to increase the number of people who can prevent risks, respond effectively in dangerous situations, cooperate with state services, and support one another. Public safety and law enforcement are delivered by professional personnel who meet the demands of modern society.

According to the SAR, the Government's Declaration also emphasises that, in times of global geopolitical instability, enhancing Latvia's security must be prioritised. By adhering to a stable Euro-Atlantic foreign policy, Latvia's security will be strengthened in an increasingly unpredictable world. Security, national defence, and a resilient democracy are viewed as essential foundations for sustainable national development. The government is committed to continuing efforts to increase funding for national defence, public order, and security, and to enhance the capabilities of these sectors.

The master's programme "Management of the Security of the Organisation" aims to train "high-level security managers with a broad multidisciplinary perspective on the security and protection of individuals, movable property, and real estate" (SAR, p. 154). During the site visit, graduates and employers confirmed that graduates experience no difficulties entering the labour market following the graduation. All graduates of the master's programme are employed in the security sector, holding leadership roles in the National Armed Forces, the police, and various security sectors, or managing occupational safety in their organisations. Notably, two graduates have moved to higher-level positions since completing the programme, indicating also career progression prospects (SAR, p. 157).

Since 2022, the number of enrolled students has ranged from 19 (2022) to 13 (2023) (SAR, p. 158). Two students have not completed the programme: one took a study break for personal reasons, and the other suspended their studies due to health issues, without submitting a master's thesis (academic master's programme "Management of the Security of the Organisation", Annex 2).

The "Management of the Security of the Organisation" programme is unique within the Latvian higher education system, especially in the field of security studies. This was confirmed during the site visit by various stakeholders, including students, management, and professors. According to experts, graduates from this programme are in high demand, and the programme plays a valuable role in addressing key vacancies in Latvia's security sector.

2.1.5. Not applicable.

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

The master's programme in Management of the Security of the Organisation serves as a natural progression from bachelor's programmes related to security, such as occupational safety and personal protection. Its primary goal is to prepare high-level security managers with a multidisciplinary perspective on the protection of persons and property, aligning with national academic education standards. The programme is offered in two variants: a 60 CP version for those with prior security experience and a 120 CP version for those without, both of which ensure that students acquire the necessary theoretical knowledge and research skills. Since its launch in 2022, the programme has implemented changes to align with the ECTS system and has restructured the Master's thesis process to better support students. Graduates of the programme have confirmed its relevance in securing positions in the security sector, with many advancing to leadership roles in fields such as the National Armed Forces and the police. The programme is recognised for its unique

contribution to Latvia's higher education sector, particularly in the field of security studies.

Strengths:

- 1) The academic master's study programme "Management of the Security of the Organisation" is unique within the Latvian higher education sector, specifically in the field of security studies.
- 2) There is a high demand for graduates in the labour market, with many securing positions in key security sectors.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The programme lacks a clear focus that would differentiate it from the short-cycle and bachelor's programmes in the same study field. It is recommended to enhance the scope of the programme, placing a greater emphasis on equipping students with advanced theoretical knowledge and research skills, rather than serving as an extension of the other two programmes.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. As outlined in the SAR, one of the primary aims of the programme is to prepare students for research work within the security sector. However, many of the other objectives overlap with those of the short-cycle and bachelor's programmes. Although the content covers a broad range of security-related topics, it lacks a modular structure, which would be particularly beneficial for a master's programme. The absence of coherence and interconnectivity within the course content is a significant issue, as an academic master's programme requires a clear focus and a structured progression of learning towards a masters thesis, that is an academic research work.

The courses offered reflect the diverse specialisations of the teaching staff, spanning areas such as law, psychology, cyber security management, and emotional intelligence. Experts have expressed concerns regarding the students' pre-qualification for certain courses, such as "Information technologies and Introduction in Cybersecurity" and "Organization cyber security", given the absence of foundational subjects in mathematics, statistics, or computer science. Furthermore, experts found it challenging to conduct a thorough assessment of the courses due to shortcomings in their descriptions. The course Security Psychology appears to duplicate two bachelor's courses (JUR1096K and 1329K), utilising the same literature and course plan, despite being accredited with more ECTS points. This raises concerns about whether research-based teaching can be effectively delivered within this framework.

Additionally, courses such as "Security of individuals" lacks a course plan and contains an overdetailed list of content. The course comprises 24/48 hours, lacks research-related content, a course plan, or assessment criteria, being accredited with 6 ECTS points, for both part and full time students.

Overall, the courses only loosely align with the programme's objectives, and the learning outcomes are not clearly defined, making it difficult to ensure these are met. While industry partners have expressed satisfaction with the master's programme, they find it challenging to distinguish it from the bachelor's and short-cycle programmes. This lack of distinction and scientific depth is a critical shortcoming for a master's programme. Furthermore, the programme does not fully comply with national regulations, particularly concerning the alignment of credit points with course content and the absence of study modules. It was also concluded by the experts that the programme content through its subjects is too broad and therefore lacks coherent or clear interlinkages between courses.

2.2.2. The course topics and thesis work within the programme generally centre on security-related

subjects, with a strong emphasis on practical application. The provided to experts student theses typically resemble guidelines or manuals rather than research-based studies, suggesting a prioritisation of practical implementation over academic inquiry. This trend may be attributed to the fact that the teaching staff are primarily industry professionals with extensive practical experience, rather than academics with a robust background in research and theoretical investigation. While this focus on practical skills is beneficial, it may hinder the programme's ability to enhance students' research competencies and theoretical understanding, which are essential at the master's level.

2.2.3. Interviews with both students and teachers highlight the programme's high degree of flexibility in teaching methods and the selection of topics for final papers. E-learning is utilised and offered based on student demand, supporting a range of learning preferences. The teaching methods employed vary, including lectures and practical exercises, reflecting the programme's strong emphasis on student-centred learning. Evaluation questionnaires confirm that the programme supports the application of diverse teaching techniques, such as audio and video presentations. It is recommended that the programme consider integrating the flipped classroom method to further enhance student engagement and active learning.

2.2.4. The internship is scheduled for Semester 2 and carries 12 ECTS. Industry partners have expressed strong appreciation for the master's students, particularly highlighting the well-organised internship component provided by BAT. A comprehensive plan outlines the structure of the internship, including the organisation of the practical experience, relevant procedures, and the presentation and assessment of practice reports. Teachers play a crucial role in defining the learning outcomes for the internships, ensuring that students' practical experiences align with the programme's objectives and contribute to their professional development. This structured approach effectively integrates theory and practice, a key factor in the programme's overall success. However, the internship is not yet prepared for foreign students, as the programme does not detail the process for arranging international internships or provide information about internships conducted in English.

2.2.5. Not applicable

2.2.6. The thesis topics are generally aligned with the study programme but tend to focus on providing administrative recommendations rather than engaging in rigorous academic research within the relevant fields. For example, a title such as "Profiling - its Importance in Security Work" would benefit from a research-oriented approach, such as "Profiling - its Impact on Security Work." Similarly, "Improvement of the Anti-Corruption Legal Framework in Latvia" could be restructured as "The Effect of Measures 1, 2, and 3 on the Anti-Corruption Legal Framework in Latvia," thereby highlighting the need for methodological testing and empirical verification. Other titles, such as "Preparation of Civil Defence Plans for Municipalities in Latvia," could be revised to "Preparation of Civil Defence Plans for Municipalities in Latvia: A Comparative Analysis," indicating the method employed. Additionally, topics like "Safety Aspects of Driving Forklifts and Legal Regulation" would benefit from incorporating analytical or comparative elements, while "Fighting Fake News and the Security Risks it Poses" lacks scientific rigour and should be reformulated with a research-focused title.

Moreover, the theses do not adhere to the standard IMRAD structure (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion), and the research methods employed are often unclear. This deficiency may be due to the absence of a dedicated research methods course within the curriculum, resulting in vague and inadequately developed methodologies.

The experts also noted that the digital copies of the theses provided were not in a computer-readable PDF format, which limits their automated translation from Latvian into other languages. Should BAT proceed with the involvement of international students and teaching personnel in the programme, as recommended by the experts, it is advisable to save academic works in the BAT library in a machine-readable PDF format, making them usable also for foreign readers.

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

The master's programme aims to prepare students for research in the security sector but shares many objectives with short-cycle and bachelor's programmes, resulting in a lack of focus and progression. The content covers diverse security-related topics, reflecting the teaching staff's specialisations; however, the absence of a modular structure and prequalification requirements for advanced courses, such as Cyber Security Management, hinder coherence and effectiveness. Course descriptions are unclear, and some courses duplicate bachelor's-level content without sufficient adaptation. The learning outcomes are not well defined, making it difficult to ensure they align with the programme's objectives. Moreover, student theses often take the form of practical guidelines rather than research-based studies, suggesting a stronger focus on practical skills over academic inquiry. This trend may be attributed to the teaching staff's professional backgrounds, with limited emphasis on academic research. While industry partners appreciate the well-organised internship component, they find it challenging to distinguish this master's programme from bachelor's-level offerings. Furthermore, the programme does not fully comply with national regulations concerning credit alignment and course content. A more structured approach, integrating advanced research methods and clearer progression, would enhance the programme's academic depth and distinction.

Strengths:

1) The master's programme is developed in close collaboration with stakeholders and is adaptable to the needs and interests of both students and the industry.

Weaknesses:

1) The master's programme in the study field particularly needs a clearer focus. In its current form, the experts perceived it as an extension of the previous programmes rather than an academically research-oriented development of them. For instance, there is no dedicated course on scientific methodologies or academic writing at the master's level, which means students are not adequately prepared to conduct research or produce academic work.

2) The programme lacks a coherent structure and interconnectability; it would benefit from a more modular format.

3) The programme should place greater emphasis on research. To achieve this, increased involvement of staff in research activities is necessary.

4) There is no dedicated research methods course in the programme.

5) There are deficiencies in the descriptions of some study courses – poorly described or missing parts.

6) The elective courses are not truly optional, as students cannot rely on their availability even if opened.

7) Master's theses are digitally saved in the BAT library in a PDF format that is not machine-readable, limiting their accessibility for users who are not fluent in Latvian.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Non-compliant

The programme and its topics lack focus, propagation and scientific relation. The lack of research community in the field affects the master programme.

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. The administration, academic staff, and students have access to a sufficient number of auditoriums with relevant equipment at the BAT buildings on Graudu Street 68, Riga. The building also houses a "Security Laboratory," which is important for students in the "Organisation Security" and "Security Management of Organisation" programmes.

Everyone in the BAT has access to the BATIS system. There is a dedicated room with workstations for teaching and academic staff, all equipped with modern PCs. Students can access the library located on the BAT campus. Although the available hardware is sufficient for the realisation of the study programme, periodic upgrades and safety inspections are required. Software provisions, such as licences, database subscriptions, programmes, and the learning management system Moodle, are also available.

2.3.2. Not applicable

2.3.3. The programme is primarily financed through student fees, supplemented by some support from the industry, which makes its sustainability highly dependent on enrolment numbers. According to the SAR, the current student enrolment fully ensures the cost-effectiveness of the BAT study programme "Security Management of Organisation (45861)," as the minimum required number of students is 10 to 12 (Study Programme SAR, chapter 3.3.3). For the academic year 2023/2024, there were 33 students enrolled in the programme (Annex 2: "Statistical Data on Students of the Study Programme 'Security Management of Organisation (45861)'") with fee from 2 520.- euros to 3 090.- euros depending on the study form. The cost per one student has been calculated in the SAR to be 1 648.- euros.

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

The programme is delivered at the BAT campus on Graudu Street 68 in Riga, where staff and students have access to well-equipped auditoriums and a dedicated "Security Laboratory," which supports research in the field. The BATIS system is available to all, and staff benefit from a dedicated room with modern PCs. Students can also access the campus library, and while the hardware is adequate, periodic upgrades and safety checks are necessary. Software, including licensed programmes, database subscriptions, and Moodle, is provided to support the study process. The programme is primarily funded by student fees, making its sustainability dependent on maintaining sufficient enrolment numbers. Currently, the enrolment figures ensure the financial viability of the "Security Management of Organisation" programme, with a minimum of 10-12 students required. For the 2023/2024 academic year, 33 students were enrolled, with tuition fees ranging from 2,520 to 3,090 euros, depending on the study format. The cost per student has been calculated at 1,648 euros.

Strengths:

- 1) Strong cooperation and support from security industry employers, who are key stakeholders in

graduate employment.

- 2) Access to specialised security software in the “Security Laboratory” for practical training.
- 3) The programme effectively meets employer demands for improvements in studies.

Weaknesses:

- 1) There is a need for improved monitoring of the quality of study programme content.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

BAT has ensured sufficient level of all kinds of provisions to ensure successful implementation of the study programme.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. The academic staff and guest lecturers at BAT, along with highly qualified specialists in the field, play a key role in delivering the “Security Management of Organisation” (45861) programme. According to Section 3.4.1 of the SAR, 28 lecturers contribute to the programme, including 14 university faculty members—5 professors, 3 associate professors, 3 docents, and 3 lecturers—alongside 14 guest lecturers. The data suggest that the programme is sufficiently staffed, with a qualitative contribution from professors and associate professors. The SAR, supported by the lecturers' CVs, confirms that those potentially teaching the programme in English have at least a B2 level of proficiency. However, this might not be sufficient to providing in the future their subjects (at least partially) in English also to foreign students of the programme. All staff members possess teaching and practical experience, demonstrating their qualifications and ability to achieve the programme’s objectives and learning outcomes related to practical experience in the field. However, the everyday research experience of most lecturers is limited, resulting in a low number of high-quality research publications and limited number of ongoing research activities. Some staff members have substantial international experience, enriching students’ learning by integrating global perspectives, but there is room to further expand international knowledge to enhance the master’s-level academic approach.

Industry professionals and business representatives also actively contribute by delivering training courses, supervising theses, participating in the State Examinations Committee, providing internships, and collaborating on research with BAT staff. Their engagement is reflected in scientific publications, conference contributions, and international projects, thereby enhancing the educational experience. However, the programme lacks a cohesive research field or fields, resulting in limited synergy and collaboration among researchers, which diminishes the scientific quality of the master’s programme. Establishing a vibrant research community through research groups, would significantly benefit students and strengthen the academic foundation of the programme.

2.4.2. As reported in the SAR, the current teaching staff regularly enhance their professional skills by participating in mobility programmes, conferences, projects, seminars, and courses at both national and international levels. Although the level of teacher mobility for master's programme educators remains relatively low, it has been increasing since the programme's licencing. These activities contribute to improvements in study courses, updates to content, and the adoption of new teaching

methods, ensuring alignment with educational principles and requirements. Mobility, in particular, fosters mutual knowledge exchange and the transfer of experience. During the evaluation visit, it was observed that new teachers receive support from experienced colleagues and management, facilitating smooth transitions and favourable working conditions.

Section 3.4.2 of the SAR emphasises the stability of the teaching staff, noting long-term collaboration with industry specialists who also have pedagogical experience. The number of professors and associate professors with doctoral degrees has risen, potentially positively impacting the quality of education. Additionally, lecturers who have pursued further qualifications are naturally promoted to higher academic positions. Another avenue for professional development is through doctoral studies, as demonstrated by some lecturers met during the site visit.

However, the experts also note that the teachers engage in parallel research projects with limited collaboration. It was also witnessed through the course descriptions analysis, that the programme is largely tailored to the teachers individual profiles and grounded in the short-cycle programme rather than adhering to a broader concept of research based programme. If one teacher is unavailable, there is no one to take over their responsibilities, indicating that this criterion has been fulfilled only partially.

2.4.3. Not applicable.

2.4.4. Annex No. 14, "List of Publications," in Section 2.4, "Scientific Research," of the SAR for the study field of "Internal Security and Civil Protection" highlights that the teaching staff of the "Security Management of Organisation" (45861) programme have produced some research-based publications during the reporting period. Twenty-four staff members reported publication activity, with a few being particularly prolific. A review of the publications indicates that the topics align to some extent with the courses the authors teach within the programme. However, experts note that the majority of staff have not published at all or have only published in national outlets that lack peer review.

The publications exhibit a diverse geographical distribution, with a larger proportion appearing in national rather than international journals; however, this does not detract from their practical value. Nonetheless, at the master's level, higher activity is expected concerning internationally peer-reviewed publications, the number of which remains relatively low.

2.4.5. The BAT study programme "Security Management of Organization" (45861) encompasses various study blocks that address both general and professional competencies. As foreseen in the study regulations, each year, the courses are developed and updated to incorporate new teaching methods and the latest trends in security and safety, while adhering to higher education quality standards. The teaching staff is expected collaborate within their respective courses to ensure interconnections across the curriculum. The courses both here and also on lower academical levels are expected to be structured so that foundational knowledge acquired at the beginning is progressively built upon with technological skills, thereby preparing students to deliver a research work at the end of the studies. This organisation of courses involves a dedicated number of lecturers, fostering strong cooperation both with students and in the management of individual study courses.

In addition to teaching, the academic staff engage in various collaborative activities, such as Erasmus+ mobility, projects, and research initiatives. Several examples of such collaboration are outlined in Section 3.4.5 of the programme's SAR, like the BAT annual scientific conference and few

examples of joint research article writings. To further promote staff cooperation in delivering the curriculum, mechanisms such as departmental meetings and refresher courses organised by BAT are in place. The participation of staff in Summer Schools on Organisational Security is also noteworthy.

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

The academic staff and guest lecturers at BAT play a vital role in delivering the “Security Management of Organisation” (45861) programme, which comprises 28 lecturers, including 14 faculty members and 14 guest lecturers. While these staff members possess extensive teaching and practical experience, many lack robust research backgrounds, leading to a low number of high-quality publications. Some faculty members do have substantial international experience, which enriches the student learning experience, but further global perspectives could enhance the master’s-level academic approach. Industry professionals contribute actively to the programme by delivering training courses, supervising theses, and providing internships, which adds value to the educational experience.

However, the absence of a cohesive research focus of the programme limits collaboration among researchers and detracts from the programme’s scientific quality. There is a commitment to professional development, with staff participating in mobility programmes and conferences, though the level of mobility for master’s educators remains low. The teaching staff’s stability is commendable, with an increasing number holding doctoral degrees, potentially positively impacting the quality of education. Due to engaging in parallel personal research projects, there is limited collaboration among lecturers, hindering the overall effectiveness of the programme.

Fostering a vibrant research community is essential for benefiting students and strengthening the academic foundation of the programme.

Strengths:

- 1) Successful integration of academic staff and guest lecturers from industry into the teaching process.
- 2) Regular professional development opportunities for teaching staff, with strong support for junior lecturers from senior colleagues and management.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The majority of lecturers do not have peer-reviewed publications indexed in Scopus, Web of Science, or other relevant databases.
- 2) While only a few lecturers possess academic research credentials, the majority bring practical experience. However, this does not enable them to effectively meet the programme’s goals, which are academic and research-based at the master’s level.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The experts note that there is limited evidence to support the claim that the qualification of the BAT study programme “Security Management of Organization” (45861)

teaching staff fully meet the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements defined in the relevant legal acts. The experts consider the research background of the teaching staff is currently too weak for supporting a master education.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

An analysis of the materials available to experts in Annex 3, "Magistra atbilstība izglītības standartam_en.docx," confirms that the BAT study programme Security Management of Organization (45861) complies with Cabinet Regulation No. 240 "Noteikumi par valsts akadēmiskās izglītības standartu." with several additional recommendations made by the experts.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The attached study course descriptions (Annex 7_Magistra studiju kursa apraksti_EN_zip and Annex 8_magistra_prakses_apraksti_en_docx) are provided in both Latvian and English. These descriptions partially comply with the regulations set out in the Law on Higher Education Institutions but contain several significant discrepancies, as noted in the analysis. For instance, some courses are merely copies of those from the "Organisational Security" (42861) programme, often with only slight rewording. Additionally, there are incomplete course descriptions, and not all elective courses in the curriculum are available. Consequently, it is unclear to students' which courses are offered at the time of enrolment.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The provided Diploma sample (Annex 1_Magistra_diploms_un_pielikums_en_zip.) complies with the procedure by which state-recognized documents of higher education are issued in accordance with the Cabinet regulations No.202 "Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību apliecinājošus dokumentus".

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The academic staff listed in the SAR complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55,

Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The attached resumes of staff (10_“Academic_staff_CV_ENG.pdf”) and confirmation (11_“Apliecinājums par valsts valodas zināšanām.en.edoc”) verify that the state language proficiency is compliant with the Cabinet Regulation No. 733 "Noteikumi par valsts valodas zināšanu apjomu, valsts valodas prasmes pārbaudes kārtību un valsts nodevu par valsts valodas prasmes pārbaudi".

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The attached resumes of staff (10_“Academic_staff_CV_EN.pdf”) and confirmation (12_“Apliecinājums par svesvalodu prasmi.en.edoc”) verify that the language proficiency in English is at least B2.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Sample of the attached study agreement (“7_Studiju_ligums_tipveida_en_docx.”) complies with the Cabinet Regulation No. 70 "Studiju līgumā obligāti ietveramie noteikumi”.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The attached contracts (5_Par izglītības ieguvi cita programma_en_zip.) confirm that the institution provides the possibility to continue studies within the following options in the BA School of business and finance: Professional Master's Study Programme “Finance and risk

management”; Professional Master's Study Programme “Cyber security management”.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

BAT confirmation (“6_Zaudējumukompensacija_EN_docx”) states, that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the licence of the study programme is revoked due to the actions of the university (actions or failure to act) and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

There are several discrepancies noted by the experts with regard the content of the programme and its courses with some parts in study course descriptions vaguely described or even missing, allowing the experts to consider that the programme at this stage is only partially compliant with the requirement.

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

The master’s programme in Management of the Security of the Organisation is designed to build on bachelor's degrees in security-related fields, with the aim of developing high-level security managers through a multidisciplinary approach. It offers two pathways: a 60-credit option for students with prior security experience and a 120-credit option for those without. Since its inception in 2022, the programme has undergone several adjustments, such as adaptation to the ECTS system and refinement of the Master’s thesis process to better support students. According to interviews, its graduates have successfully entered the security sector, often progressing to leadership positions.

However, experts believe that the programme still lacks a clear focus that distinguishes it from short-cycle and bachelor’s programmes, which affects its academic depth. While it covers a wide range of security topics, the absence of a modular structure and clear course descriptions, coupled with an overemphasis on practical skills rather than research, undermines its effectiveness. The lack of a dedicated course on research methods and academic writing further limits students' research capabilities.

The programme teaching staff comprises a mix of experienced lecturers and guest professionals;

however, many lack strong research backgrounds, resulting in a limited number of high-quality peer-reviewed publications and research initiatives within the programme. Although the programme benefits from strong industry support and provides valuable practical training, the experts are in position, that its overall structure and content require revision. To enhance the programme's impact, steps such as fostering a more cohesive research community and increasing research collaboration between faculty members and industry are essential.

Evaluation of the study programme "Security Management of Organization"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Average

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Security Management of Organization"

Short-term recommendations

- | |
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| 1) Encourage lecturers in the master's programme to dedicate more time to scientific writing and to register their work in Scopus, WoS, or other relevant databases amending the incentives system accordingly. |
| 2) Introduce scientific methods and academic writing courses for students. |
| 3) Establish study-field specific research group(s) with involvement of both teachers and master's students. |
| 4) Integrate foreign language subjects (or parts of them) into the current programme to help both teaching staff and students acclimatise to delivering learning outcomes in other languages. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approaches could be tested in this regard. |
| 5) Publish master's theses in computer-readable PDF format to facilitate automated translation into other languages and therewith their usage by foreign readers. |
| 6) Critically revise the study course descriptions - have course plans described in all and possibly amend the assessment criteria to be better understood. Also critically analyse if the assigned credits correspond to the course volumes. |
| 7) Find solutions to provide free elective courses to the students and guarantee that the courses which have sufficient number of students enrolled are also delivered. |
| 8) Verify the adequacy of the teaching staff's English knowledge to the required level, and as a result offer English language courses. |

Long-term recommendations

- | |
|---|
| 1. Establish a working group to refine the programme's focus on equipping students with advanced theoretical knowledge and research skills, rather than simply extending the other two programmes. |
| 2. The experts recommend adopting a modular structure for the programme as a potential solution to address several discrepancies, primarily related to its focus and the interconnection between study courses. |

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

Relevant Study Programmes

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

Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation	Comment
R1 - Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 2.1 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field whilst implementing its internal quality assurance system:	Partially compliant	The Quality Policy and its implementation procedure, outlined in the Quality Management Handbook, have been established. Mechanisms for programme development and supervision are regulated by the "By-law on the Development, Change, and Approval of Study Programmes." Additional criteria and procedures are specified in the "Study Regulations" and "Examination Regulation," both approved by the BAT Senate in 2023. However, discrepancies such as course volumes not aligning with assigned credits and missing assessment criteria in syllabi indicate that the quality assurance system is not fully implemented.
R2 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the level of development of scientific research and artistic creation (if applicable)	Partially compliant	The number of scientific publications of the BAT teaching staff is still rather low. No academic writing or science methods subjects in the curricula to allow quality scientific research. Limited R&D cooperation with other Latvian academic institutions and industry representatives.
R3 - The cooperation implemented within the study field with various Latvian and foreign organizations ensures the achievement of the aims of the study field.	Partially compliant	Experts emphasises that BAT has strong cooperation with private security industry at a national level and has joined the Erasmus+ program which creates potential to have international students and teaching staff, therefor has started to strengthened international aspect as well. However, BAT does not have formal cooperation with other domestic academic organisations in Latvia and as for now the level of student and staff mobility into and out of Latvia is low. To better achieve the aims of the study field, more emphasis should be put on implementation of international cooperation and creating cooperation arrangements with other Latvian academic institutions.

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation	Comment
R4 - Elimination of deficiencies and shortcomings identified in the previous assessment of the study field, if any, or implementation of the recommendations provided.	Partially compliant	The provided recommendations (Joint report of experts (2017)) as well as Recommendation to the academic master's study programme "Security Management of Organization" 45861 of 2022 and Recommendation on the inclusion of the academic master's study programme "Security management of Organization" 45861 in the study direction "Internal Security and Civil Protection" - from 2023 were analysed by BAT management and in the greater part of recommendations were implemented in the study courses at the short-cycle professional higher education study programme "Organisational Security" and in the professional bachelor study programme "Organisational Security", as well as in the academic master's study programme "Security Management of Organization" (SAR pp. 67-70; Annexes 19). Undoubtedly, the recommendations have achieved their goal - to improve the study process and improve the quality of specialists trained by the university, who are oriented towards competent work and further self-development (SAR p.67) The weaknesses identified during the evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations (2017, 2022 and 2023) have some impact on the study's quality or can be explained by objective reasons such as additional time is needed for the full implementation of the recommendations.

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

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

No.	Study programme	R5	R6	R7	R8	Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)
2	Organisational Security (42861)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Partially compliant	Good
3	Security Management of Organization (45861)	Non-compliant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Partially compliant	Average

The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts

None