

JOINT REPORT BY THE EXPERTS ON THE INCLUSION OF A LICENSED STUDY
PROGRAMME ON THE ACCREDITATION FORM

RĪGA STRADIŅŠ UNIVERSITY and DAUGAVPILS UNIVERSITY

Study field

“INTERNAL SECURITY AND CIVIL PROTECTION”

Joint professional masters study programme

“ECONOMIC SECURITY”

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I. Summary of the Assessment

The joint professional Master's Study Programme "Economic Security" was developed with the agreement between Riga Stradiņš University (hereinafter RSU) and Daugavpils University (hereinafter DU). According to the Self-Assessment Report (hereinafter SAR) the common aim of the study programme (hereinafter StP) "Economic Security" is to prepare highly qualified specialists with the knowledge and skills needed to be able and competent to assume responsibility and address the legal and challenges of high complexity, including the prevention, detection and investigation of economic crimes, to develop and coordinate international cooperation, to represent diverse interest and to ensure sound decision-making in the field of economic security.

Topicality of the programme itself is proven well with trends in industry and the support of state level and private sector, main questions remained about the lack of professional qualification standard and the necessity to have it as a joint study programme is not so clearly identified, however to increase the involvement of regional level and indicate the exchange of good practices it is good initiative and essential activity to keep regional communities sustainable but it should be the positive side effect not the main reason for cooperation.

It was noted that the motivation of the students is high, but in different reasons and it is not related of joint studies but study programme itself. There is a quite a wide range of improvement activities in short-term and long-term perspective. For example, joint seminars in both locations to unite students and give them opportunity to change experience, wider the network of contacts and discover the study field. It is important to offer studies in hometown, but at the same time it is essential to expand the experience nationally and internationally, joint study programme gives a good opportunity to have short joint study trips to different locations without a fear of losing people from region, but seeing the possibility to bring more people to region by the introducing the job opportunities in region.

Discussions with the academic staff remained the feeling that the ability of the academic staff is higher than it is used, for example joint meetings, exchange of experience between universities and internationally (for example joint Erasmus trips etc.), however the language skills for teaching in English did not convince the experts as most of the interview's interpreter was involved.

According to the financial base, question raised about the cost effectiveness to have two small study groups instead of one united group in two locations at the same time as the teaching staff is doing most of the lectures in hybrid mode anyway.

It was not clearly recognised how deeply research is integrated to studies, however the possibilities to have support or grants for the research activity were well presented, but possibilities to use the joint research groups under the joint study programme cooperation were not implemented yet.

Main remarks for the recommendations besides of the recommendations provided from study committee are about improvement possibilities of the internationalization, perspective of attraction of students and real partnership between universities.

II. Description of the study programme

1. Indicators describing the Study Programme

| | | |
|----|--|---|
| 1. | Name of the higher education institution/college | Rīga Stradiņš University Daugavpils University |
| 2. | Name of the study field corresponding to the study programme | Internal Security and Civil Protection |
| 3. | Name of the study programme | Joint Professional Master's Study Programme "Economic Security" |
| 4. | Code of the study programme in accordance with the Latvian Education Classification | 47861 |
| 5. | Language of study programme implementation | Latvian, English |
| 6. | Amount, duration, form and type of the study programme (also distance-learning) | Full-time, on-site studies 2 years Part-time, on-site studies 2 years 6 months |
| 7. | Admission requirements | <p>Professional bachelor's degree (first cycle professional higher education) in Commercial Science and Administration, Management Science, Economics, Finance, Organisational Security, Domestic Security and Civil Protection, Police Work or Law, or equivalent education. An interview regarding the applicant's previous work experience with regard to economic security issues.</p> <p>If previous work experience has been acquired in Commercial Science and Administration, Management Science, Economics, Finance, Organisational Security, Domestic Security and Civil Protection, the applicant must have taken at least 10 credit points` (15 ECTS) worth of study courses in Law.</p> <p>If previous work experience has been acquired in Police Work or in Law, the applicant must have taken at least 10 credit points` (15 ECTS) worth of study courses in Management Science.</p> <p>Studying in English requires English skills at least at level B2.</p> |
| 8. | Address of the study programme implementation, indicating whether the study programme is implemented in the branches of the higher education institution / college | <p>Rīga Stradiņš University, Dzirciema street 16, Riga</p> <p>Daugavpils University, Parādes street 1, Daugavpils</p> |

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 9. | Degree, professional qualification or degree and professional qualification to be awarded | Professional Master's degree in Organisational Security; no qualification is awarded. |
| 10. | Date of study programme licensing | 04.10.2022. |
| 11. | Date of starting the implementation of the study programme | 10.02.2023. |
| 12. | Accreditation term of the study field | 23.04.2025. (RSU) 31.12.2024. (DU) |

Analysis

1. Compliance of the study programme with the study field.

Development of the Master's study programme "Economic Security" is based on different aspects, from one side it is closely related of the continuing studies of study programme "Police work", on the other hand it is closely related with economy, as well as law. The trend is noticed that the criminal activities are more complex and moved from the physical environment to the online, which raises the growing demand for skilled workers who are able to address these challenges. Comprehensive base of knowledge is needed to solve the wide range of economical offences, as criminal offences related to the earning illegal profits, threat to economic stability information system, cybercrime, illegal movement of goods etc. However, there is wide scope of study fields which could be involved or are involved (economy, law), the main common denominator is the criminal activity and security.

The aim of the RSU study field "Internal Security and Civil Protection" is to prepare comprehensive specialists in the fields of internal security and civil protection for the Latvian labour market. The aim of the DU study field "Internal Security and Civil Protection" is to prepare, in the course of implementation of undergraduate studies and higher level programmes, highly-qualified civil profession and occupational safety specialists competitive at international level, who are capable of independently planning and performing tasks related to the profession, innovative research, and make a contribution to growth in welfare of the Republic of Latvia and the European Union. The objective of the joint study programme "Economy Security" is described in SAR (page 8-9) to prepare highly qualified specialists with the knowledge and skills needed to be able and competent to assume responsibility and address the legal and economic challenges of high complexity, including the prevention, detection and investigation of economic crimes, to develop and coordinate international cooperation, to represent diverse interest and to ensure sound decision-making in the field of economic security. To achieve the learning outcomes of the StP, there is close cooperation needed with the study field "Law", but according to the aim of the StP and degree to be awarded (Professional Master's degree in Organisational Security) the study field "Internal Security and Civil Protection" is in better compliance with the StP.

The study results are clearly formulated, and the study content includes appropriate study courses, the learning of which achieves certain expected learning outcomes of the study programme. For example, one of the tasks is to provide students with the necessary professional skills for work in law enforcement institutions acquisition of skills in the field of economic

security, which is implemented in several study courses, including analysing the judicial process, the nature of court cases and other aspects.

Nevertheless, professional qualification could give more clarification about the profession itself, therefore it could be considered to review the compliance of the study field afterward the professional standard is released and StP has graduates employed.

2. Compliance between the title of the study programme, the degree to be awarded and the qualification (if applicable).

The Joint Professional Master's Study Programme "Economic Security" is licensed to award a professional Master's degree in organisational safety without any professional qualification. Mandatory content of the master's studies are regulated by the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers nr. 305 (from June 13, 2023) "Regulations on the state standard for professional higher education". According to the information provided it could be noticed that the content of the StP is in compliance with the mandatory content of the master's studies. For example, Scientific Research in Economic Security includes topics of research, creative work, design work and management study courses. However, the study programme lacks professional practical study projects (according to subsection 23.2 of the national education standard), namely research work, creative work, design work and management study courses, in which the final evaluation is the evaluation of creative work. Study courses included in the study programme: Scientific research in economic security; Organisational theory and management; Economic Security Management is a more theoretical study course. There is no assurance that they reflect the principles of creative work defined in the educational standard, at least this is not foreseen in the evaluation of the results of the specific study courses.

Also Human Resource Management and Protecting of Personal Data and Management of Strategic Resources are provided in the StP which are relevant part of organisational management as well the topics as Economic Security Management, Economic Cyber Crime and Security etc are part of organisational behaviour. Conclusion could be made that it is good compliance between the title of the study programme and the degree to be awarded.

The main concern of experts remains about the lack of the qualification which is not accordance with the direction, the content and code of the joint study programme. It is admitted that unfortunately, the professional standard has not yet been developed, the corresponding qualification requirements have not been determined, and the qualification is not issued within the framework of the study programme. It must be resolved in the near future by responsible institutions (Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Education, etc.) by developing an appropriate professional standard. Representatives of employers' organisations must be involved in the development of the standard.

Employers cited the following key competencies that graduates would need: knowledge of how decision-making process takes place; how to use available public databases (including EU registers of persons); how to assess economic security risks in the activities of merchants, including compliance with international sanctions obligations; understand aspects of EU law, including being an expert in tax law and liability issues. These and other recommendations of employers must be taken into account when developing and adopting a professional standard.

During the discussions different opinions and expectations were expressed about the potential profession of the graduates, which raises the importance of the qualification standard even more. If the professional qualification standard is declared, it gives more specific understanding about the new profession in the market and helps to re-assess the name of the degree to be awarded and the study programme itself. For clarification, necessity of the study programme was clear, and all the subjects were valued highly by interviewed parties, however the scale of expectations varies quite a wide range and did not give the clear answer to experts about the name of the degree. The first impression questioned the name of the degree, but opinion was left open as the possibility is to define differently, for example, the graduates are high level experts who could have a good influence on organisational behaviour which is part of the organisational security. Another perspective is that graduates are seen also as a high-level managers who have wider area of influence in community and security which could name differently.

For now, only students who will use state funding are studying in the study programme. So far, it has not been possible to attract those who study with private funds, because one of the possible reasons is the relatively high tuition fee.

3. Compliance of the study programme indicators (study programme code, amount, implementation duration) with the learning outcomes defined for it.

The study programme indicators (study programme code 47861, amount 80 CP (120 ECTS), implementation duration 2 years for full-time studies and 2 years 6 months for part-time studies) are in overall compliance with the learning outcomes defined for it. In general, the content of the study programme and the learning outcomes of the study courses correspond to the aim and objectives of the study programme.

The learning outcomes mainly focus on the fact that graduates acquire the necessary competences for leading jobs as managers and experts in the field of economic security, including being able to independently obtain, select, analyse and critically evaluate information, identify problem situations and offer possible solutions, understand the most important concepts and regularities of the professional field, as well as being able to make decisions in difficult situations regarding economic security in law enforcement institutions.

The duration of the study programme implementation is appropriate (2 years/ 2.5 years for part-time students. According to the mapping carried out, when evaluating the planning of StP, it is created in such a way that students' knowledge, skills and competences are developed over the course of 4 (or 5 for part-time attendance) academic semesters in the field of economic security.

However, an impression remained that some of study courses and their content are relatively similar, e.g. financial and tax system, risk identification and financial and tax law. It could be considered to strengthen the cooperation between teaching staff to avoid the possible similarities and to find possibilities to include more international studies

Conclusions, strengths and weaknesses

The study programme focused more on issues related to combating economic crimes, it is intended for future specialists who are ready to work in law enforcement institutions, or as specialists responsible for economic security issues in companies (for example, banks). The

study programme is important for development of Daugavpils region, as the region also needs appropriate specialists in regional institutions.

In conclusion it could be confirmed that Study Programme “Economic Security” fits well in the study field of “Internal Security and Civil Protection” and is in compliance between the title of the study programme and the degree to be awarded, as well as the indicators of StP are in compliance with the learning outcomes defined for it. The main concern remained about the lack of professional qualification, which is pointed out in the chapter about topicality. Significant strengths and weaknesses were not identified according the compliance with the mandatory requirements.

Strengths:

- Study programme content and expected outcome is highly valued by students and the employers.

Weaknesses:

- Proportion of international studies is rather low.
- Some of study courses and their content are relatively similar, e.g. financial and tax system, risk identification and financial and tax law.

2. Topicality of the study programme

Analysis

1. The topicality of the study programme and the compliance of the content with the tendencies of the industry (area), the changes made since the licensing of the study programme.

The topicality of the study programme is described in the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) thoroughly and relevance was justified during the site visits, equally employers and students highly valued the StP. Employers showed great interest to have high level expert of topics which are taught in the StP, it was clearly recognized that criminal activities are moved and are moving continuously to online instead of physical environment. As it is mentioned in SAR number of economic offences is increasing, for example criminal offences related to the earning illegal profit, threats to economic stability information systems, cybercrime, illegal movement of goods etc., and it means that there is a growing demand for skilled experts and managers who are able to address these challenges in state level as well in the private sector.

The study programme “Economic Security” was developed in accordance with the conceptual report of the Consortium ”Academy of Internal Security” and follows the agreement with the Central Finance and Contracting Agency (CFCA) on the project “Reduction of fragmentation of StPs and promotion of internalization of studies at RSU”, specific objective “To reduce fragmentation of study programmes and strengthen resource sharing” (SAR page 11) within a joint professional Master's study programme ”Economic Security” was developed in cooperation between RSU and DU.

The aim of the joint study programme is to expand the range of potential high level experts of economy security from the field of law, economy and/or local government. It is realised that economic security is not only a police matter, but it is essential to have prevention work and raise organizational awareness and behaviour. Joint Study Programme between universities gives the opportunity to train high level experts in regional and national level, it is unique and needed Master's StP, however understanding of the target group of the studies and positions to be employed are not clearly defined for the joint programme. In the SAR it is described that the focus of the study programme is to prepare managers with knowledge and skills in economic security, however according to the interviews with employers and description of the StP, highly qualified experts are the expected outcome. Comprehension of need of the professional qualification standard for the new profession in market was acknowledged in the SAR and it was confirmed to be in a progress during the site visit, however group of employers were not informed about this activity but were very interested to cooperate. This initiative and interest should have been exploited.

Students of both study groups were highly motivated and satisfied with their studies so far, although the studies are in the early stages it deserves recognition as a well implemented studies by the high-level teaching staff. The site visits gave a good understanding that the study programme is sufficiently covered with learning materials and necessary e-sources are available to support their independent learning, however it was not fully confirmed that both study groups had the equal opportunities mainly because technical base is more advanced level in RSU platforms and gives more additional possibilities.

The Study Programme has also remarkable part of subjects EU legislation and internalization which were equally highly valued by employers and students, however the readiness of teaching staff or students was not clearly confirmed. During the most of interviews interpreter was used, which showed the insecure feelings about learning or teaching in English. Also, the question raised about foreign students who need to be aware about Latvian legislation to get the possibility of internship and on the other hand lot of studies are based on Latvian legislation which are probably not attractive for foreign students abroad who would like to see more international (EU) level studies. Experts find this topic as a good development possibility in the future, but do not see it as a remarkable obstacle at this early stage of studies. For example, in the content of the study courses more international topics should be included for all students (both Latvian and foreign), instead of using Latvian legal framework, but with focusing on international law and the relevant field of regulation. As well as in the literature to be used more available international publications, books or other sources of information should be included. RSU has created a special list on the website: List of recommended e-books. It also includes e-books for study programmes. It would be recommended to refer to this list in the descriptions of the respective study courses.

The implementation of the licensed Study Programme started on 10 February 2023 and no significant changes have been done (SAR p16). However, some improvements have been done since the licensing which are related with recommendations from the licensing experts, for example, (SAR p.24), most of the study course descriptions have been reviewed, including by specifying readings for the Latvian flow and readings for English flow separately. The possibilities of placement also have been reviewed within the framework of existing cooperation agreements with State Police and State Revenue Service. Not all placements are necessarily related to the use of restricted access information. Also, the English language and digital

competences of the lecturers are taken to focus according to the SAR, but as it is long-term activity there was not detected by the experts a significant progress in that area yet. But it should be noted that digital competences were not evaluated during the visits and language skills improvement could not be noticed because of the insecurity of teaching staff involved to interviews and interpreter was used.

2. Dynamics of the student number and prospects of employment for graduates.

The first group of students started their studies in the professional master's study programme "Economic Security" on February 2023 as students of RSU, 11 students were enrolled during winter enrolment. From September 2023 the second group started in DU with 13 students. The state budget covers 20 full-time students per year, which were completed. Also, self-paid places were available for national and international students, however the interest was equally low in national and international level probably mainly caused of the quite high tuition fee and lack of the promotion work.

Study programme do not have any graduates at the moment therefore, there are no examples about employment yet, however during the interviews, several important aspects revealed that could be considered as positive assumptions. For example, employers were very interested in hiring graduates and sending their employees to participate in studies. Some students were promised to promote after graduation. It gives a confirmation about necessity of the study programme and an idea about the future possibilities to include also the self-paid students and/or foreign students. From students side the willingness to have joint seminars with groups from both universities time to time were seen as a good possibility to learn from each other, in fact, it was brought up by students that besides of the high-level teaching staff, they also learn from each other because of the different background, and it gives a great benefit to their studies. Moreover, the idea of joint study visits to RSU and DU were welcomed very warmly, and it was seen as a possibility to exchange experience between students who are employees in different areas and from different regions as well as from state level.

Conclusions, strengths and weaknesses

Conclusion can be made that the study programme is an innovative and necessary development which meets the interest of students, expectations of employers from public and private sector and compliance with trends in the sector. Since the study programme is still in its early stages, it is difficult to give final assessments, but based on the information so far, the following strengths and weaknesses can be identified:

Strengths:

- The study programme has been valued by all parties the students, state level and private sector.
- Joint study programme allows to use more resources and gives different perspective from regional and state level.
- The study programme combines different study courses, for example, those more focused on economy, finance, taxes, with those more focused on rights, fight against

violations, security. In the joint study programme, therefore, RSU makes more of its contribution with strengthened competences and experience in the field of law, while DU has more experience in economic, customs, combating the shadow economy.

Weaknesses:

- Lack of the professional qualification standard, which defines the new profession in the market, gives the range of target group and employment possibilities.
- Joint study programme should mean joint activities, however the first groups started studies separately at RSU and DU and there was an impression to the experts that the cooperation consists in the division of tasks and not so much in joint activities. At the same time, it was recognised that it could be beneficial for different parties in very different levels to students, teaching staff, research activities etc.

3. Resources and provision

Requirement [R1]: Compliance of the study base, science base (if applicable), information base (including library), material and technical base and financial base with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and for ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes.

Analysis

During the sites visits RSU and DU premises were introduced to experts as well as electronic platforms and libraries. Both universities, RSU and DU possesses a comprehensive and well-equipped technical base which supports conducting hybrid lectures and self-learning. Although, the students are divided in to two groups and are located separately, main study base is endured, however RSU is in several aspects in more advanced level which can be considered as the study group of RSU is in preferred conditions. Nevertheless, according to the study quality it was confirmed that the access for teaching staff is guaranteed to most useful platforms, for example RSU research portal (RSU ZDIS Pure system) which is used by teaching staff as well as students and possibilities to record or maintain lectures online are available also to DU teaching staff.

All the study materials are available at the platform Moodle, even if teaching staff need to duplicate all the materials to both universities' platforms, they did not bring it up as a predatory activity. However, the fact itself that the groups of students in the same study programme are separated, is subject which should be considered as improvement possibility.

Libraries in both universities were (as written in the SAR page 17) appropriate for complete support of the modern study, scientific and research process, including for convenient availability of study materials on-site and online, quick ordering of new materials in accordance with needs of study programme “Economic Security” and content of study courses. Self-service is available in RSU 24/7 and in DU is self-service available for extra hours. Access to e-books, publications and journals are guaranteed by using different databases and search engines as EBSCO, Primo, ProQuest, SAGE Premier 2021 etc.

The cost of the study programme “Economic Security” is calculated according to the Law on Higher Education Institutions, Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 445 of July 2016

“Regulations Regarding Remuneration of Teachers”, internal regulatory enactments of RSU, etc. (SAR p20). The main cost is the remuneration, which is around 70% of the budget, remained part of budget is divided between goods and services (including licence expenses), depreciation of fixed assets of departments and overheads. The tuition fee is determined equal to the State budget funding. The planned number of students in the study programme was 30 students per year, including 20 state budgeted students. Two study groups have been enrolled, which covers the state budget places, but during both enrolments there was a lack of interest to start studies in self-financed places nationally nor internationally. During the interviews it was recognized that promotion work was not made during the enrolments, but also was admitted that the tuition fee is quite high and could be the reason also. For example, full-time on-site studies in English costs EUR 7,000 per year or 14,000 per 2,0 years. Under the RSU discount regulation, an excellent discount may be granted, which would reduce the tuition 50%, however it is a remarkable discount, it cannot be guaranteed.

Even though there are no self-financed students nor students abroad yet, it is not seen as a significant risk. It should be bear in mind that only first groups started their studies, after the first graduates there will be feedback from students and employers, experience of teaching staff and quality assessment implemented by both universities which gives good bases for the improvements and promotion work.

Conclusions, strengths and weaknesses

Conclusion can be made that the study base, information base (including library), material and technical base and financial base of the joint study programme “Economic security” comply with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and for ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes with following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths:

- The study programme implementation is supported by impressive technical and material base.
- Clearly defined responsibilities between RSU and DU.
- Diversity of informational resources, including a variety of digital resources are available to students and teaching staff: databases (library network, research centre databases), books, materials (research materials, scientific publications, including Web of Science and Scopus publications, archives), statistical data as well as IT programmes.
- For the supply of RSU e-resources, two e-book databases and seven full-text multisectoral databases of journals are available for the study programme “Economic Security”. The full texts of scientific articles in economic security are available in subscribed databases: SAGE Premier 2021, Communication Source (EBSCO), Sociology Source Ultimate (EBSCO), PsycARTICLES (APA), Wiley Online Journals, Science Direct, Academic Search Complete (EBSCO).

Weaknesses:

- Lack of the joint activities, two groups of the students are studying in the same study programme, but are students at different universities.
- High tuition fee which could be the obstacle of the enrolling the self-financed places (including internationally), especially in the context of the region, so until now only students from the budget group are enrolled in the study programme. Due to the limited funds from the state budget, the question of who will study in this programme in the future for the relatively high tuition fees, especially in the region, remains open
- Study Programme is presented as international programme but there is lack of foreign students so far.
- Internship possibilities for foreign students are unclear.

Evaluation of the requirement [R1]:

| Requirement | Compliance | | | Justification |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|---------------|--|
| Compliance of the study provision, science provision (if applicable), information provision (including library), material and technical provision and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and for ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes. | Fully compliant | Partially compliant | Non-compliant | According to the information available compliance of the study resources and provision is fully compliant. |
| | X | | | |

Requirement [R2]:

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 of the laws and regulations.

Analysis

All teaching staff involved in the study programme have extensive professional experience. Although it is not clear from the submitted documents how actively the lecturers participate in research activities.

Teaching staff have relevant academic degrees and qualifications. More than 60% of the teaching staff have the required PhD degree (Annex 6.1 - List of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the joint professional Master's study programme "Economic Security").

The teaching staff involved in the study process have long experience in the professional field, for example, former high-level state police officers and employees of other competent

institutions. In addition, existing guest lecturers also work in institutions of various levels, such as the Ministry of Finance or private companies in the field of security.

It should be positively noted that several guest lecturers from different countries (US, Germany, Lithuania, etc.) participated in the implementation of the study programme. Erasmus+ mobility opportunities are available to all teaching staff. In the implementation of the study programme, Erasmus+ has also been used for incoming mobility guest lecturers opportunities.

The study programme is also applied for implementation in English. Most of the teachers have appropriate qualifications (B2 level). However, some teachers lack this qualification. Although teachers are provided for the relevant duplicating lecturers in study courses this creates a risk for the full implementation of the study programme.

Also, it was noticed that during the interviews the interpreter was used quite a lot, which gave an impression about the lack of English language skills which could not be in a level that allows to teach or learn in English. Likewise, there was not clearly understood the main value for the students abroad as the main part of studies are based on Latvian law and internship possibilities needed more coordination. However, it deserves to be highlighted that the group of students as well as employers were very optimistic about involving foreign students, they saw an opportunity to adopt the future and force themselves to practice English.

RSU has created a common system for improving the qualifications of teaching staff. It is organized with the support of the Pedagogical Growth Centre of RSU, and a special platform (RSU Grow) is also used. RSU offers modern professional development courses, including the development of teaching staff's digital skills. Professional development may include international mobility and participation in conferences and seminars appropriate to the purpose of professional development. Teaching staff of DU can also use the qualification opportunities offered by the system.

Students and teaching staff have the opportunity to participate in events organised by the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL). CEPOL is the European Union agency that promotes European and international law enforcement cooperation through training. The Agency develops, implements and coordinates training for law enforcement officials (<https://www.cepola.europa.eu>). In 2019, the new electronic platform LEEd (Law Enforcement Education) was launched. On this platform, teaching staff, researchers and students have the opportunity to gain new knowledge through the CEPOL electronic library, which contains publications on the experience and research of EU countries in the field of police science, as well as to read E-journals. The platform offers online modules, recorded e-seminars etc.

It should be noted that representatives of employers are involved in the Quality Committee. Meetings are regular and employers can always make suggestions.

Conclusions, strengths and weaknesses

Practicing industry experienced professionals are involved in the implementation of the study programme. RSU and DU management support the professional and research development of academic staff.

Following strengths and weaknesses could be highlighted:

Strengths:

- RSU has created a special system for improving the qualifications of teaching staff: RSU Pedagogical Development Centre.
- It is planned to involve a relatively large number of lecturers whose professional activities are related to the protection of economic security in the implementation of the study programme.
- High-level professionals are involved in the implementation of the study programme, some of them still work in competent institutions, and there are also opportunities to use professional qualification opportunities within organized events by the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL).

Weaknesses:

- Some teaching staff lack the necessary proficiency in English (B2) to teach students in English.

Evaluation of the requirement [R2]:

| Requirement | Compliance | | | Justification |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|--|
| 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 of the laws and regulations. | Fully compliant | Partially compliant | Non-compliant | The qualifications of teaching staff meet the requirements of regulatory acts. |
| | X | | | |

Requirement [R3]: 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 artistic creation (if applicable).

Analysis

RSU and UD libraries provide support for research, the study process, as well as obtaining current information. Teaching staff participate in qualification improvement activities organized by cooperation partners, such as activities, trainings, experience exchange visits and conferences organized by CEPOL. RSU and UD regularly organizes conferences, publishes its collection of articles. However, since the study programme has been implemented for less than a year, no joint researches have been carried out, nor have students been involved in joint researches. Joint scientific activities, including publications, would be vital in the implementation of the joint study programme in the future.

The study courses should include more findings and results from the researches and publications carried out by the teaching staff. There is a list of research conducted by teaching staff, reports at conferences and publications in scientific journals indexed in Scopus, WoS, but the mentioned publications do not appear in the study course content with the literature to be used. It would be desirable that the scientific activity carried out by the teaching staff be integrated with the study process and the results obtained in scientific research and publications be included in the study process, that is, by including the scientific publications as the literature should to be used.

It should be noted very positively the approach implemented in individual study courses (example, Criminology) within the framework of which specific court cases are analysed and solved, moreover, the knowledge gained in such practical work is later tested already in the final exam, in which similar (court) cases must be solved.

In some courses, as one of the results evaluation criteria within the summative evaluation, attendance is also determined, example: International security, Financial management, National and international legal framework for credit institutions, Cryptocurrency and blockchain technology law, etc. Moreover, in some study courses, attendance at lectures is mandatory, e.g. Human resources management and personal data protection, Commercial law and insolvency law, Organisation theory and management, Research in economic security. In certain study courses (Analysis and management of prevention of money laundering, terrorism and proliferation financing), the total assessment is inadequate, the exam is 95%, and the report 5%, which calls into question the meaning of including the report in the evaluation criteria. All such evaluation criteria are not an objective indicator in the examination of student results, it should be adjusted.

Conclusions, strengths and weaknesses

In overall, the aim and tasks of the study courses included in the study programme meet the aim and tasks of the study programme, related to the use of scientific innovations in the study process. The study programme includes the latest developments in the relevant scientific field, such as the fight against cybercrime. Therefore, the content of the study programme as a whole is consistent with the knowledge of the relevant scientific field.

Following strengths and weaknesses could be highlighted:

Strengths:

- Teaching staff and students have access to the necessary databases and access to publications and research in the field of science, thus they have the necessary resources for conducting research and better achievements in study results.

Weaknesses:

- It is not quite clear whether and how the scientific research conducted by the teaching staff and their findings are integrated into the study process, because most of the conducted research does not appear as literature in the study course descriptions.
- It would be desirable to cooperate more in the implementation of joint research, including more actively involving students.

Evaluation of the requirement [R3]:

| Requirement | Compliance | | | Justification |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|---|
| 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 artistic creation (if applicable). | Fully compliant | Partially compliant | Non-compliant | The study programme could be improved if more findings from research conducted by teaching staff and researchers would be included in content of study courses. Students should be involved in research, including organizing joint student conferences or seminars, and also at the international level. |
| | | X | | |

Requirement [R4]: Compliance of the study programme with the requirements of the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other laws and regulations.

| No. | Requirement | Fully compliant | Partially compliant | Non-compliant | Justification |
|-----|--|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|---|
| 1. | <p>The study programme complies with the State Academic Education Standard or the Professional Higher Education Standard, including the minimum requirements for the content of the compulsory civil protection course and the content of civil protection training for employees specified for the implementation of the study programme.</p> <p>The study courses of the professional study programmes include a module for the development of professional competence of entrepreneurship in the amount of at least 6 CP, if it</p> | | X | | <p>If a student has not studied the requirements set out in the Environmental Protection Law and the Civil Protection Law in a study programme at a lower level, the professional Master's study programme is intended to provide study courses "Civil Defence and Environmental Protection" (2 CP / 3ECTS). In accordance with the national education standard (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 305 of June 13, 2023 "Regulations on the National Professional Higher Education Standard",</p> |

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| | has not been acquired in the previous professional study programme or is not included in the theoretical basic courses of the study programme branch (field of professional activity). | | | | <p>subsection 23.2) the study programme must include research work, creative work, design work and management study courses in the amount of at least five credit points.</p> <p>However, the study programme has more theoretical study courses, but there are less practical study courses based on independent research, in which the final evaluation is the evaluation of creative work.</p> <p>At the same time, experts draw the attention on that with 21.06.2023. Cabinet Regulations No. 305 'Regulations on the National Professional Higher Education Standard' entered into force, issued to replace the previous national standard, mainly without changing the essence, however, the newly approved national standard stipulates that a professional qualification must also be awarded as a result of the completion of a professional master's study programme, which means that Universities should find the possibility to grant a qualification or apply some other solution to ensure the compliance of the programme with the requirements specified in the regulations of the CR No. 305.</p> |
| 2. | The study programme complies with a valid professional | | | X | The study programme is not intended to award a |

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| | (occupational) standard, or with the requirements of professional qualification (if it is not necessary to develop a professional standard for the profession), if a professional qualification is awarded after acquisition of the study programme | | | | professional qualification, as currently no professional standard (or professional qualification requirements) has been established. |
| 3. | The code of the study programme complies with the Cabinet regulations on the Latvian Education Classification | X | | | The code of the study programme complies with the Cabinet regulations on the Latvian Education Classification |
| 4. | The qualification of the teaching staff ¹ complies with the conditions and requirements set for the implementation of the study programme, which are specified in the regulatory enactments in the field of education including the participation in the implementation of an academic study programme of at least five professors and associate professors together who have been elected to academic positions in the respective higher education institution, except in the cases provided for in Section 55, Part two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions. | X | | | The qualification of the teaching staff meets the conditions and requirements of the study programme implementation set out in the regulatory acts in the field of education. |
| 5. | Confirmation of the higher education institution/college that 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, according to the European Language Proficiency Assessment levels (the division of | X | | | Most of 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. However, in certain study courses, which are also included in the programme in |

¹ As used in this document, the term “teaching staff” refers to the academic staff and visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting lecturers, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants of the corresponding higher education institution / college.

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| | levels is available on the website www.europass.lv), if the study programme or any part thereof is to be implemented in a foreign language or proficiency of the Latvian language at least on the B2 level, if the study programme or a part thereof is intended to be implemented in the Latvian language and the lecturer has not acquired secondary or higher education in the Latvian language. | | | | English, the teachers do not have the required minimum English language level (B2). This is addressed by duplicating teaching staff of the appropriate level, but this is not rational and efficient resource management. It is not clear why the study programme is to be implemented in English. It is not clear which foreign students could study in this programme. |
| 6. | The study programme, which is intended to be implemented in a foreign language, complies with the requirements of Section 56, Part three of the Law on Higher Education Institutions | X | | | According to the Law on Higher Education, Article 56 part four subsection 3, the study programme can be implemented in English as it is a joint study programme. |
| 7. | The sample of the study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement (if applicable). | X | | | The sample study contract will comply with regulatory enactments (Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of January 23, 2007 No. 70 "Study contract mandatory provisions"). |
| 8. | The sample of the diploma to be issued for the acquisition of the study programme complies with the procedure by which state recognised documents of higher education are issued (if applicable). | X | | | The sample diploma to be issued complies with the procedure for issuing state-recognized documents certifying higher education. |
| 9. | The higher education institution/ college has confirmed that it will provide the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in another study programme or at another higher education institution/ college (a contract with another accredited higher education institution/ college), in case the | X | | | RSU and DU have submitted a document confirming that students will have the opportunity to continue their education in another RSU professional master's study programme: "Economic security" (licensed 02.08.2023). |

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| | implementation of the study programme is discontinued (if applicable). | | | | |
| 10. | The higher education institution/ college has confirmed that it guarantees to the students a 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 higher education institution/ college (actions or omissions) and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme (if applicable). | X | | | RSU and DU have submitted a document that confirms that the university guarantees compensation for losses to students if the study programme is not accredited due to the university's actions (activity or inaction) or the license of the study programme is revoked. |
| 11. | 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). | | | | Not applicable |
| 12. | The scientific and pedagogical qualification of doctors of science complies with the criteria specified in the regulatory enactments regarding the evaluation of the scientific and pedagogical qualification of a candidate for the position of a professor and an associate professor (if applicable). | | | | Not applicable |
| 13. | The joint study programme complies with the requirements prescribed in Section 55 ¹ , of the | X | | | The joint study programme complies with the requirements prescribed in Section 55 ¹ , of the Law on |

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|--|---|--|--|--|------------------------------------|
| | Law on the Higher Education Institutions (if applicable). | | | | the Higher Education Institutions. |
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Evaluation of the requirement [R4]:

| Requirement | Compliance | | | Justification |
|---|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|---|
| | Fully compliant | Partially compliant | Non-compliant | |
| Compliance of the study programme with the requirements of the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other laws and regulations. | | X | | Overall, the study programme complies with the requirements of the requirements of the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other laws and regulations. At the same time, experts draw attention to issues related to professional qualification. The submitted study programme is not intended to award a professional qualification. However, in accordance with Clause 37 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 305 'Regulations on the State Professional Higher Education Standard' of June 13, 2023, a master's degree and a seventh-level professional qualification are awarded after the completion of the master's study programme. Therefore, after the adoption of the profession's standard, the study programme must be provided for in the future also acquisition of appropriate professional qualification. |

4. Implementation of the recommendations received during the licensing of the study programme

Assessment of the implementation of the recommendations provided by the licensing experts of the study programme.

Analysis

Recommendation of licensing experts

Several recommendations were made by the licensing experts: 3 short-term and 3 long-term basis recommendations. Additionally, study quality commission submitted 3 long-term recommendations.

According to the documents submitted and during the evaluation process (more precisely annex 11 “Plan for the Implementation of Recommendations Provided by Licensing Experts Riga Stradiņš University and Daugavpils University”) it could be confirmed that the agreement on the implementation of the joint StP defines a quality management system, which is supervised by the joint study quality council. There was a meeting of StP directors and a working group of specialists of the Centre for Educational Growth to determine the way and resources of implementation of the recommendation. Outcomes of the **short-term** recommendations are as follows:

- 1) Study-course description have been reviewed by specifying in the list reading for the Latvian flow and reading for English flow separately.
- 2) Both universities have harmonised quality requirements for e-content of study courses, e-examinations, digital literacy of teaching staff.
- 3) A free elective study course is included in the study programme.

It should be bear in mind that there has been short period between licensing and evaluation process, however also the **long-term** recommendations are implemented or are in progress, which should be recognized:

- 4) The process of digitalisation of library stocks at DU is in progress. DU students have databases available (database of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training CEPOL).
- 5) Within the framework of cooperation agreements placement providers concluded with the State Police and the State Revenue Service, students already can have placement in the above mentioned institutions. Not all placements involve the use of restricted access information.
- 6) To strengthen English language competences for teaching staff English language courses are organised at RSU on a regular basis. The RSU Information Technology Department provided weekly training in digital literacy in 2020-2022. In the following period, IT provides lecturers with individual consultations as necessary. The information is available on the Academic Portal of RSU. At DU, the project Strengthening the professional competence of academic staff of Daugavpils University in the areas of strategic specialisation is implemented, within the framework of which training is provided for teaching staff to learn English and also to improve digital competence.

In opinion of experts, good improvement is done according to the long-term recommendation, however work should be continued in area of digitalisation, English language competencies as well as cooperation should be continued and widened to private sector to prove placement opportunities also for students abroad.

Recommendations of Study quality commission:

- 1) The Study quality commission recommends that the Partner HEIs also re-assess and harmonise the name of the degree to be awarded and the title of the Joint study programme prior to the accreditation of the study field.
- 2) The Study quality commission recommends that the Partner HEIs revise the study plan prior to the accreditation by creating a common compulsory part for all students and a limited elective part depending on previously acquired professional competences, as well as by combining several study courses where possible, thus reducing the fragmentation of study courses into smaller study courses.
- 3) The Study quality commission recommends to initiate the development of an appropriate professional qualification prior to the accreditation of the study field.

While the reflection of the activities about study quality commission recommendations were modest in the documents, during the site visit more attention was paid to this topic. The main concern of experts was lack of professional qualification which is required by Latvian legislation. The importance of the issue was understood by all parties, and it was confirmed by the representatives of universities that development of the professional qualification is in process, however the observation was made by experts that employers were not informed about the process but should be involved.

In conclusion, the recommendation remains the topicality, but suggestion of the experts is to return to this topic after the professional qualification standard is issued. The same proposal applies to second recommendation of the study quality commission, but different basis. The content of the recommendation was discussed with students and so far, they did not evaluate the study-load too high, however studies are in their early stages and more comprehensive feedback will be available after the first group will graduate (quality management system is harmonized and implemented in both universities).

Conclusions, strengths and weaknesses

Conclusion can be made that the parties are highly motivated, previous recommendations were seriously considered and important results were achieved. However, the studies are in their early stages and in some cases, during the short timeline comprehensive improvements has not been able to accomplish, although it is not reasonable to make changes in the middle of the studies, feedback from the graduates should be collected to evaluate the study related matters (including placement organisations, possible job opportunities, work-load during the studies etc).

Following strengths and weaknesses could be highlighted:

Strengths:

- There is clear plan for the improvement activities according to the recommendations and study quality assessment system.

Weaknesses:

- Lack of initiative from RSU and DU to prioritise the development of the professional standard and including employers in this process.

III. Assessment of the study programme

| | | | |
|-----------|--------------------|---------|------|
| Excellent | <u>Good</u> | Average | Poor |
|-----------|--------------------|---------|------|

IV. Recommendations

The experts recommend including the joint Professional Master's Study Programme “Economic security” in the study field “Internal Security and Civil Protection” with the following recommendations:

Recommendations for the elimination of the deficiencies identified (on a short-term basis):

1. Indicate the joint activities for the students and teachers not only directly related to study programme but to raise the feeling of the joint team and take the advantage of the cooperation and possibilities it offers (exchange of experience between students and teaching staff, study trips with Erasmus financing, joint seminars as hybrid but also onsite in both locations etc.). It could be considered to issue an activity plan to describe possible joint activities according to the students, teaching staff, scientific research conduction and internalization. It will be suggested to issue the activity plan not later than during the study-year 2023/2024 (30.06.2024) so that some activities could be implemented already to first year students.

Recommendations for the improvement of the study programme (on a long-term basis):

2. Continue the activities to initiate the development of an appropriate professional qualification standard (suggested deadline for implementation 2025).
3. Consider to develop the promotion plan to enroll the students to fill continuously the budgeted places, as well as the self-financed places (including foreign students) (suggested deadline for implementation 2026).
4. Review the joint activities to find the possibilities to save and reduce the tuition fee (suggested deadline for implementation 2025).
5. The description of the study programme would require more information about internships, including potential foreign students who might have limited opportunities to do an internship in a state institution. Work to wider the possibilities of placement should continue and cooperation with private sector could be considered (suggested deadline for implementation 2025).
6. Improvement of teaching staff language skills (consistently on long-term basis).