

# Expert group joint opinion

Evaluation Procedure: Assessment of Study Field

Higher Education Institution: Baltic International Academy

Study field: Management, Administration and Management of Real Property

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

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

The assessment covers the study field "Management, Administration and Management of Real Estate Property" ( study field) with 2 study programmes implemented and applied for accreditation in various formats at Baltic International Academy (BIA) branches in Riga and Daugavpils:

1. Professional Bachelor study programme "Entrepreneurship Management" 42345 (PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management"): Full time studies in Latvian and in English; Part time studies in Latvian.
2. Academic Master study programme "Business Management and Administration" 45345 (AMASP "Business Management and Administration"): Full time (4 or 5 semesters) studies in Latvian and English.

The experts visited the BIA in its Riga and Daugavpils branches as part of the assessment procedure on February 7, 8 and 9 of 2024. Prior, during and after the assessment visit the experts have conducted an in-depth and broad analysis of the BIA submitted self-evaluation report (SER) of the study field and study programmes submitted to AIKA via its e-platform in accordance with the national regulations including those regulating the assessment procedure. Prior and after the assessment visit the experts had requested and received additional information from BIA to facilitate high quality analysis leading to strongly justified conclusions and assessments.

It is to be noted, that the current evaluation takes place 2 years after the previous assessment based on which the study field under review was granted an accreditation period of 2 years, meaning that serious shortcomings and deficiencies were identified during the previous assessment, with the following recommendations for the improvement. The current evaluation, among other aspects in this report, took close focus and attention to analyse and assess the implementation of the recommendations received during the previous assessment procedure (see section 1.6. of the assessment of study field). Detailed analysis, conclusions, strengths, weaknesses, recommendations, and evaluations are provided below in this report - experts' joint opinion. The experts during the evaluation have detected both, strengths and weaknesses, of the study field and its study programmes. Based on both the experts identified the recommendations largely focusing on considering weaknesses, but also to use the strengths further and also the yet unused potential of the study field and its study programmes.

Overall, the experts recognize the improvement and considerably justified development of the study field and its study programmes implementation since the last assessment results in 2022, including the shift from professional master study programme to academic one. Some of the major positive aspects and the strengths the experts observed and where shown to by engaged and enthusiastic people, the study field and study programme representatives at BIA, are as follows: highly motivated and dedicated administrative and academic personnel, especially study field and study programmes directors, Daugavpils branch director, and clearly also students, graduates, among which the programmes has very good reputation, which is a strong asset - overall a well kept positive informal micro-climate; This contributes well to loyalty of students - there is well-developed business-client-management system with "Family" aspects in the business model as a result many examples of a student`s family members studying here (parents to children, siblings); the loyalty is largely supported by flexible and client-oriented approach towards students; Such business oriented approach towards running the academy manifests also within the activities of Quality Assurance system, paying attention to student satisfaction surveys, consider graduate, employer, and academic staff members` opinions via surveys and informal contact. The labour market is engaged in the study and research process (employers are interested in the partnership; various forms of co-operation exist e.g. internships to students, examination committees, case studies), which, however, could also benefit further from systematising this cooperation. Visibly research oriented Master

thesis, including its cooperation with the BIA scientific Journal and Conferences a Master thesis must be part of, as well as good support for scientific research for academic staff. Students` engagement in general and management decision-making is visible with the student Parliament in Daugavpils - active, engaged, co-responsible - can show a good example for the Riga branch. Also, among strengths, a few potential aspects were noted, e.g. potential to expand cooperation with employers, including, in Daugavpils, where employers are eager to buy short continuous professional development and micro qualification courses in various areas (e.g., municipality of Daugavpils has secured funding for that, is ready to provided data for analysis, support new young entrepreneurs through grant programme IMPULSS), and other positive aspects and strengths of the study field and its study programmes.

With the strengths and their potential value-added in mind, the experts have also identified several risk factors and deficiencies, all of which can be resolved some in short-term for up to 2 years and some in the long-term in 2-6 years; some of the major are: still lack a board and comprehensive QA system including management (communication and cooperation) chain from board to teachers in Daugavpils. Academic side of the study field (Results, Course descriptions) is not entirely up to international higher education standards. Slightly weak focus on Learning Outcomes (study results) as part academic quality assurance. Unused potential of market partners in Daugavpils; challenges with the number of students thus having impact on financial, sustainability and quality aspects.

Detailed assessment analysis, conclusions, strengths, weaknesses, recommendations, and evaluations are provided below in this report of experts` joint opinion.

## **I - Assessment of the Study Field**

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#### **1.1 Management of the Study Field**

##### **Analysis**

1.1.1. The aims of the study field "Management, Administration and Management of Real Property" (study field), including the strategic aim (SER p.19-20) to prepare high level business administration specialists in accordance with the requirements of the job market, which would be competitive on the Latvian and international job markets, to improve research skills and competencies, as well as to ensure the development of the students' personalities and their motivation for further education, as well as the five main objectives of the study field development strategy (SER p.20) are well and classically defined and show compliance with the BIA Strategy of activities and development 2022-2025 ([https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/strategija\\_2022\\_en.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/strategija_2022_en.pdf)); are also connected to National Development Plan of Latvia 2021-2027 (SER, p.20), and the EU level major development and higher education benchmarking guiding document (SER p.20 mentions the "EUROPEAN Programme for the Modernisation of Higher Education Systems", the Lisbon Strategy, and the main Bologna principles). A noteworthy remark - the "EUROPEAN Programme for the Modernisation of Higher Education Systems" mentioned the SER (p.20, [https://publications.europa.eu/resource/cellar/3059915a-0ea1-43d6-aa83-c870835227f7.0002.02/DOC\\_1](https://publications.europa.eu/resource/cellar/3059915a-0ea1-43d6-aa83-c870835227f7.0002.02/DOC_1)) in relation to broader basis of the study field strategic objective, adopted in 2011, is a EU 2020 strategy document likely outdated, thus a newer basis for compliance of study field within EU higher education area would be necessary (including EU Green Deal, Sustainability and AI guidelines). The study field and its two study programmes generally acknowledge and address the needs and trends of the society and national economy, including both, the content-wise and the format-wise dimension of the study field and its two study programmes.

1.1.2. The SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) of the study field are conducted structurally and is being reviewed, updated annually (see SER p.22-23). Although the

SWOT analysis are not presented in conventionally accepted structure of a 4-squares table of respectively Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, nevertheless the contents of the analysis shows considerate and structured approach to identifying BIA`s and and the study field`s opportunities and underlying weaknesses. The results of SWOT analysis are linked to both, to the necessities and perspectives outlined in the strategic development documents including study field aims and objectives, as well as to tactics of the development plans, thus showing how the challenges and problems (well recognized as weaknesses) can be solved via study field development plan tactics; also, the two-staged results of SWOT analysis (SWOT + respective sub-activities) seems to have helped turn BIA activities into strengths (SER, p.22.). Overall, the SWOT analysis of the study field and its study programmes is sound, considerate and realistic, identifying major internal and external impact aspects towards the challenges and possibilities of the study field as well as the sub-activities respective to SWOT elements.

1.1.3. The management structure of the study field generally follows a conventionally classical approach of structurally hierarchical top-to-bottom management and decision-making with functional representation and engagement of all level stakeholders related to the implementation and development of the study field and its study programmes. The major development and decision-making competence is held by the study field Council - it creates the development strategy, mission, vision, goals and objectives of the study field, controls their implementation, plans study and methodological work. ..council include directors of the study field or programmes, senior academic staff, student representatives and representatives of employers or professional associations. (SER, p.24). The considerations about the study programme development and implementation are discussed also within the Study Programme (StP) Council, where the expected results of the programme, the interconnection of study courses, the necessary changes, as well as the possible overlap between study courses, are discussed (SER, p.107 and p.138). The study field Direction council as well as the StP Council are responsible before the BIA Senate (SER, p.24) and the Board. Although, the communication management procedures in BIA organisational structure (hierarchy) are generally in place (SER, p.24-25, p.74) and also during the visit`s discussion with various BIA representative experts noticed that the academy does pay attention to it, including the communication between mid- and higher level management representatives in Riga on one side and administrative and academic staff in Daugavpils on the other side, still experts noticed at some points there is disruption in the information reaching all all the involved stakeholders as far as local course teachers in Daugavpils branch - e.g. a) in relation to StP results implementation within course; b) alignment of the courses` learning outcomes to the StP results, and c) Course descriptions themselves, including their updates and review. Overall though, the management structure of the study field and the corresponding study programmes is clearly oriented towards the development of the study field, decision-making takes place generally efficiently, and the support provided by the administrative and technical staff does ensure the needs of the study programmes (see also SER p.58). Also, noteworthy to mention that students are sufficiently well represented in study programmes` and the very BIA`s management structures (SER p.25-26), furthermore during the visit the experts noted that Daugavpils branch students` self-organisation and engagement is stronger than in study programmes` Riga branch.

1.1.4. The admission procedure and its administrative, contentwise, legal compliance and efficiency and quality management is sufficiently documented and ensured. Furthermore, during the visit the experts noted that the admission process and its administration, which is BIA centralised unbundling the programmes internal management, is well recognized by study programme directors, administrative representatives and also students (also, experts visited the BIA Admissions Office facilities and met the Head of Admission Committee during the respective visit session). The Admission Committee is recognized as one of the 1st group structures crucial to the quality of study

programmes by support staff in the programmes` implementation - admission committee provides student enrolment, preparation of documents, collaboration with schools, open door days (SER, p.25). In higher education institutions in Latvian and also in Europe such broad competence of the Admission Committee shall be perceived as a good case example. BIA follows the respective Cabinet regulations (No. 846 of 10 October 2006, No. 932 of 16 November 2004, and No. 505 of August 14, 2018, SER p.26) various admission peculiarities (general requirements, starting later studies, as well as competence recognition aspects), as well as has specified internal admission rules and matriculation procedure approved by BIA Senate (SER, p.26). Those include also the a) admission requirements (see [https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/admission/uznemsanas\\_noteikumi\\_BSA\\_2024\\_25\\_eng.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/admission/uznemsanas_noteikumi_BSA_2024_25_eng.pdf), pp.3-6, Sections II and III Chapters 8-21).as well as b) the procedure to assess and recognize the professional experience, prior formal and non-formal education and for the assessment of students' achievements and learning outcomes which is done by a special Commission, which if necessary, may determine examinations to evaluate the learning outcomes achieved in previous education or professional experience (SER, p.27). For admission of the international students, the BIA International Relations Department cooperates with the Admissions Committee to manage the immigration procedure on behalf of BIA and its external cooperation, e.g. for the recognition of education acquired abroad with the Academic Information Centre in accordance with Article 85 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions. The information about the Admission process is well established and available publicly also on BIA`s website at <https://bsa.edu.lv/index.php/en/admission/admission-process.html>. BIA in SER (pp.27-28) provides 3 specific different extensive examples of the admission procedures and regulation in practice.

1.1.5. Procedures for assessing achievements of students follows the Cabinet regulations No.305 and 240 (SER, p.29) as well as BIA internal Regulations for Evaluation of the Study Results ([https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/Regulations\\_Evaluation\\_Study.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/Regulations_Evaluation_Study.pdf)), and separate internal regulations for internships ([https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/2020/BSA\\_Prakses\\_nolikums\\_en.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/2020/BSA_Prakses_nolikums_en.pdf)) as well as pre-defence and defence of final thesis ([https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/2020/BSA\\_diplomdarbu\\_nolikums\\_ENG.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/2020/BSA_diplomdarbu_nolikums_ENG.pdf)). Regulations are detailed and include specifics, peculiarities, cases, guidelines and practical examples, evaluation criteria and other detailed aspects, including e.g. forms and methods for evaluation of study results (knowledge, skills and competence) (see [https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/Regulations\\_Evaluation\\_Study.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/Regulations_Evaluation_Study.pdf), pp.3-4). From the meetings with the teaching staff during the visits, the experts noted that teachers apply various engaging teaching and evaluation methods to assess students` achievements and learning outcomes. Also, several master students whom the experts met during the visit showed very satisfactory feedback about teachers including their work with the course assessments: "Teachers know their job - methods, homeworks and assessments! Also their digital skills are fully sufficient.". It can be concluded that methods, principles and procedures for assessing achievements of students have been developed and defined in detail.

In SER p.30 the BIA states about "the principle of the possibility of revision of the assessment - the Academy determined the procedure for reviewing the grades obtained. The BIA Regulations of Studies, which are approved by the Senate, state that if a student wishes to improve his/her final grade..", however the experts could locate such a provision within the Regulations of Studies at BIA ([https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/Stud\\_nolikums\\_eng.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/Stud_nolikums_eng.pdf)).

The needs of students in relation to knowledge transfer and learning achievements seem to be noticed, analysed, taken into account and addressed (SER, pp.29-30, and also experts meeting with teaching staff and students), however in relation to the relevance of assessment methods and procedures for achieving the aims of study programme as well as the relevance of assessment methods against the learning outcomes shows space for improvement to catch up to internationally increasingly well-recognized good case practice of very strong and detailed cross-related of mapping of the study course learning outcomes to study programme`s learning outcomes in the course

descriptions, mapping also study course`s evaluation criteria against study course learning outcomes. Example: Currently, within the study course descriptions (of Master study programme, submitted to experts additional upon request) there is a section titled "Course Learning Outcomes and assessment criteria", which is mostly well-filled by teacher in all course descriptions, but largely on the learning outcomes part, i.e.g describing the learning outcomes in forms of knowledge, skills and competence, leaving assessment criteria separately and often unrelated. Experts would suggest integrating such mapping in the templates of course descriptions. Good example: Some of the submitted course descriptions contain such a cross-related table of learning outcomes connected to study methods and to assessment methods (see e.g. 2nd semester course "Research project", and partly the course description of the 2nd semester Internship, as well as course description for Master thesis).

1.1.6. BIA has approved the Code of Academic Integrity and Ethics and Regulations on Plagiarism Control (SER, p.31, [https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/2020/BSA\\_Akademiska\\_godiguma\\_etikas\\_KODEKSS\\_2019\\_ENG.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/2020/BSA_Akademiska_godiguma_etikas_KODEKSS_2019_ENG.pdf), [https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/nolikums\\_plagiata\\_kontrole\\_ENG.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/nolikums_plagiata_kontrole_ENG.pdf)). The principles of academic integrity and sanctions in case of non-compliance are repeatedly stressed to students during studies at the beginning and during the study process. Also teaching staff, researchers and general staff are trained on methods for academic integrity violation detection. For academic integrity violation detection BIA uses VDPKS - unified computerised plagiarism control system created jointly by Latvian higher education institutions. Plagiarism checks are conducted twice a semester (before the pre-defence and before the defence of final thesis) and, if necessary, also applied to term papers and internship reports are also checked, which is regulated by Regulation on the Graduation Paper Development and Defence in ([https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/2020/BSA\\_diplomdarbu\\_nolikums\\_ENG.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/2020/BSA_diplomdarbu_nolikums_ENG.pdf)). Anti-plagiarism or similarity reporting procedure is in place (SER, p.31) - diploma theses must contain at least 60% of the original text (so up to 40% similarity allowed, but reviewed), while master's theses must contain at least 70% of the original text (up to 30% similarity).

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

Conclusions:

The aims of the study field, including the strategic aim as well as the five main objectives of the study field development strategy are well and classically defined and show compliance with the BIA Strategy of activities and development 2022-2025, are also connected to National Development Plan of Latvia 2021-2027, as well as show considerations of the EU higher education benchmarks. The study field and its two study programmes generally acknowledge and address the needs and trends of the society and national economy, including both, the content-wise and the format-wise dimension of the study field and its two study programmes. Overall, the SWOT analysis of the study field and its study programmes is sound, considerate and realistic, identifying major internal and external impact aspects towards the challenges and possibilities of the study field as well as the sub-activities respective to SWOT elements. Overall though, the management structure of the study field and the corresponding study programmes is clearly oriented towards the development of the study field, decision-making takes place generally efficiently, and the support provided by the administrative and technical staff does ensure the needs of the study programmes. The admission procedure and its administrative, contentwise, legal compliance and efficiency and quality management is sufficiently documented and ensured. Methods, principles and procedures for assessing achievements of students have been developed and are defined. The needs of students in relation to knowledge transfer and learning achievements seem to be noticed, analysed, taken into account and addressed. The relevance of assessment methods for achieving the aims of study

programmes and the learning outcomes of the study courses is not clearly shown in the course descriptions. Principles of academic integrity and its violation mechanisms, including the anti-plagiarism system, are in place and the stakeholders involved are informed about it.

Strengths:

1. The study field and its two study programmes` are implemented based on considerations of BIA, Latvia national and EU level strategic development guidelines including ones within higher education area, as well as visibly acknowledges and takes into account the needs and trends of the society and national economy addressing them in both, content- and format-wise dimensions of the study field and its two study programmes.
2. Broad competence of the BIA Admission Committee shall be perceived as a good case example ensuring both, the efficient engagement in the respective marketing activities, including attraction and communication to potential students, as well as the very peculiarities of the admission procedure followed by student integration and orientation activities.

Weaknesses:

1. The "EUROPEAN Programme for the Modernisation of Higher Education Systems" mentioned and link provided in the SER p.20 is EU 2020 strategy document likely outdated. A new basis for compliance of the study field within the EU higher education area would be welcomed.
2. Experts noticed at some points there is disruption in the information reaching all all the involved stakeholders as far as local course teachers in Daugavpils branch - e.g. a) in relation to StP results implementation within course; b) alignment of the courses` learning outcomes to the StP results and c) Course descriptions themselves, including their updates and review.
3. In SER p.30 the BIA states about "the principle of the possibility of revision of the assessment - the Academy determined the procedure for reviewing the grades obtained. The BIA Regulations of Studies, which are approved by the Senate, state that if a student wishes to improve his/her final grade..", however the experts could locate such a provision within the Regulations of Studies at BIA ([https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/Stud\\_nolikums\\_eng.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/Stud_nolikums_eng.pdf)).
4. The relevance of assessment methods for achieving the aims of study programmes and the learning outcomes of the study courses is not clearly shown.

## **1.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System**

### **Analysis**

1.2.1. BIA has established a quality policy presented in 2 documents: Quality Policy ([https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/BSA\\_kvalitates\\_politika.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/BSA_kvalitates_politika.pdf)) and BIA Study Quality Assurance System ([https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/BSA\\_Studiju\\_kval\\_nodros\\_sist\\_eng.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/BSA_Studiju_kval_nodros_sist_eng.pdf)) (SER, p. 32) which are publicly available at the website of BIA (section documents). The Study Field Council is responsible for the system.

The two documents mentioned above do not refer to learning outcomes of the evaluated study programmes. During the assessment visit in discussions with the BIA authorities, it was confirmed that learning outcomes are not the key element of these documents. However, the Master's programme course descriptions do not outline what methods are used to assess the learning outcomes. BIA also has several templates for course descriptions that are broken down by degree programme. The course descriptions of other degree programmes may include the methods used to assess learning outcomes.

Teaching staff have not provided examples of how learning outcomes are modified at the course level, so the effectiveness of quality assurance of programme goals may be limited.

The quality assurance system is efficient and effective enough and contributes to achieving the objectives of the study field and the corresponding study programmes. However, a focus on learning outcomes increases the international competitiveness of the programmes in particular.

1.2.2. BIA have the procedure rules described in document: “The regulations for the development, approval and modification of study programmes at the Baltic International Academy” ([https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/Studiju\\_programmu\\_izstrade\\_09072020.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/Studiju_programmu_izstrade_09072020.pdf)). SER emphasises the use of the Nexus system to gather feedback from students, graduates and employers. However, based on the interviews with programme directors, the system is general based on qualitative methods - face-to-face meetings between the BIA's authorities and external stakeholders. According to the BIA authorities, one of the most important sources for reviewing the programmes is the direct experience of the teaching staff. The Daugavpils branch offers the same programmes as in Riga, but the contribution of external stakeholders to the programmes is less than in Riga. For example, the Daugavpils authorities do not involve students in projects for the local community and employers do not provide students with topics that would interest them.

1.2.3. The procedure for submitting complaints is regulated by the internal document titled “Procedure for Submission and Consideration of Student Applications, Proposals, and Complaints” (adopted by the Senate on 09.07.2020) ([https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/BSA\\_sudziba\\_09072020.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/BSA_sudziba_09072020.pdf)), which is available on the website of BIA. Since the previous accreditation procedure (08.12.2021), no complaints have been received. The experts obtained confirmation during the assessment visit interviews that students are informed about this procedure, as the study programmes directors explicitly informed them about it upon enrollment. As explained in the SER (p.34, chapter 2.2.3) and during the interviews, the reason for the absence of complaints might be the ability to address all issues informally, through personal communication, at the level of administration.

The procedure applies to the quality of the study process, infrastructure and material technical provision, methodological and information provision, and service quality. To ensure that the complaint is considered, the complainant must indicate their name, surname, and student card number. It is possible for the complainant to request in the application that the facts mentioned should not be disclosed, thus preserving anonymity.

This procedure does not apply to complaints about study fees, interruptions of studies, and other official applications, which are considered in accordance with the procedure outlined in the Law on Applications. The experts do not consider this procedure to be easily accessible for students and recommend broadening the internal procedure to allow students to raise concerns on any process-related issue internally first.

Appeals regarding the evaluation of study results or the conduct of tests are considered in accordance with the procedure established by the regulations on the evaluation of study results.

Thus it can be concluded, that the mechanism developed for submission of student complaints and suggestions is established, students are informed about the mechanism, but the official mechanism is not being actively used due to effective non-formal communication that allows to address issues and provide feedback to students. Nevertheless, the experts recommend to widen the scope of the recommendation to provide formal opportunity for students to raise concerns on any process-related issues internally, within the BIA.

1.2.4. The data, such as the number of students in the study programmes, enrollment dynamics, expelled students, reasons for ex-matriculation, material and technical resources of the study field, library stock, and the results of student, graduate, and employee surveys, are collected and analyzed by the directors of the study field and study programmes. This data is used to prepare annual self-assessment reports and to take appropriate actions. BIA also monitors student

attendance, especially since multiple courses grade students based on class attendance. Given the low number of students, monitoring student progress mainly occurs on an individual, informal level through personal contacts between teachers and students (SER, 2.2.4, interviews).

As required by regulations, BIA submits necessary data to various external institutions, including the Ministry of Education and Science, Central Statistical Bureau, State Education Information Centre, and State Security Service (SER, 2.2.4).

BIA collects feedback from students, graduates, and employers, with student feedback surveys playing a significant role in the internal quality assurance system. The surveys aim to evaluate student satisfaction and gather assessments of the programmes and educational experiences. Students are invited to provide feedback after each course and semester, with questionnaires featuring both closed and open-ended questions. The results are made available to lecturers for immediate feedback. Graduates and employers receive surveys via email. The graduate survey assesses the relevance of acquired knowledge, skills, and competencies to professional requirements, as well as graduates' plans for further studies. The employer survey gathers opinions on graduates' knowledge, skills, competencies, and their suitability for the job market, exploring employability and employer expectations (SER, 2.2.4, interviews).

According to the interviews, survey results are used to assess lecturer performance, improve courses, enhance programme content, compile self-assessment reports, develop program improvement plans, organise educational processes, adapt timetables, and involve student self-government. Survey results also inform the election of academic staff members and guide efforts to improve staff qualifications by vice-rectors and department heads.

Although information collected feed into programme improvement plans, the development planning is not target-oriented because neither BIA's Strategy or activities and development for 2022-2025 (available at [https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/strategija\\_2022.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/strategija_2022.pdf)), nor study field development plan 2023-2029 (annex: Studiju virziena attīstības plāns LV.pdf) includes measurable KPIs.

The experts noted that analytical reports on survey results (Annex to the SER, 2.2.chapter) lacked information about research methodology, including respondent numbers, data collection dates and methods, as well as conclusions regarding areas for improvement. Although feedback to students, from meetings during assessment visit with programmes directors, occurs twice per semester and informally, systematic feedback on survey results and subsequent actions does not consistently reach graduates and employers. The experts recommend preparing more comprehensive, analytically critical reports and action plans, discussing them, and sharing them with stakeholders to ensure effective feedback and closure of the feedback loop.

It was evident from the SER and interviews, that feedback from academic and administrative staff is not collected and analysed on a systematic basis. In line with the best international practices, feedback from all groups within a higher education institution should be considered in the internal quality assurance system.

1.2.5. The analysis of the website [bsa.edu.lv](http://bsa.edu.lv) indicates that the information regarding the study field and corresponding study programmes is published on the BIA website in both Latvian and English languages. Information provided on the website includes:

- Description of the Admission Process, encompassing study fees, required documents, and admission requirements. For international students, additional information on English language proficiency requirements, visas, residence permits, and accommodation is available.
- Details about the study programs, comprising a brief description of the competencies acquired, career prospects, program content, enrollment requirements, qualifications to be obtained, program duration in years, credit points, and contact information of the program director.
- Library information, including the electronic catalogue.
- Organisational structure of BIA and contact details of all main structural units.
- Internal policies and regulatory documents concerning the study process and quality management

system.

- Information on scientific activities and opportunities, such as conferences, journals, projects, and relevant news.

- International activities and opportunities, including guidance on applying for Erasmus+, partner organisations (160), and other practical information for international students.

Although basic information about study programmes is available on the website, the experts suggest that, in accordance with best international practices, further expansion of study programmes details could enhance transparency and increase awareness among potential students. This expansion could include, at minimum, details about study courses, learning outcomes, assessment methods, key lecturers, and accreditation details for the study field.

As the Experts learnt during the visit, lecture details, news, academic achievements, and financial data are published on the internal website "My BIA," accessible through personalised login credentials. Course descriptions, study materials, tests, assessments, feedback, and lecture recordings are accessible to students through the Moodle system using personalised login credentials. Students can also utilise this system to communicate with lecturers. Confirmation obtained during interviews suggests that students highly appreciate the Moodle system, particularly emphasising its importance in providing flexibility in learning, which is essential for adult learners.

The information published on the website of BIA about the study programmes corresponds to the information available on AIKA's E-platform and VIIS (<https://is.viis.gov.lv/Default.aspx>). The information in the AIKA database and VIIS reflects the previous accreditation information. In case accreditation is renewed, the information should be updated reflecting the changes implemented by BIA (including changing the professional master study programme into academic master programme, credit points expressed in ECTS).

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

Conclusions:

The BIA has established a quality policy which is publicly available. The BIA has developed and maintains a quality assurance system, which contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field and the relevant study programmes. The system ensures continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field and the relevant study programmes. The procedures for the development and review of the relevant study programmes of the study field and the feedback mechanisms (including feedback to students, employers, and graduates) have been defined and they are logical, efficient, and available for all stakeholders.

The learning outcomes are not the main framework of the programmes in the assessed area. Therefore, the procedures for developing and reviewing study programmes may have limited effectiveness. However, stakeholders are involved in the reviews - only graduates could be more involved in this process. There is a visible major contribution to the development of the field from teachers who have a practical background and experience. Complaint procedures exist but may need expansion. Data analysis informs programmes improvements, but survey reports lack methodological details. Feedback collection from staff needs enhancement. Programme information is available online but could be more detailed. Moodle system aids student learning flexibility and is highly appreciated.

Strengths:

1. Well-designed moodle system that supports students' independent work by providing both lecture recordings, learning materials, and consultation opportunities with academic staff.

2. The practical approach of the teaching staff is used to enhance the programme.

Weaknesses:

1. Learning outcomes are not the key element of Quality Policy and BIA Study Quality Assurance System
2. Graduates are used to review the programme to a limited extent.
3. Limited scope of complaint procedures.
4. Insufficient methodological details in survey reports, reducing their effectiveness as tools for program evaluation.
5. Inadequate systematic collection and analysis of feedback from academic and administrative staff.

### 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 internal quality assurance system is in place and functional, it considers feedback from students, employers and graduates. However, improvements for quality enhancement are recommended such as clearer alignment between quality assurance processes and learning outcomes.

- 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 procedure is in place and functional

- 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 is in place and functional.

- 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:** Fully compliant

The course descriptions include learning outcome descriptions (study results) and the assessment methods, which are published on Moodle platform.

- 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

There are requirements set for academic staff members (SER, chapter 3.4.2) and they are implemented evidenced by the qualifications of recruited teaching staff members

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Partially compliant

The information is collected and analysed as required, however, the reports from student, employer and graduate surveys should be improved to include methodology, analysis and conclusions for improvements, including gathering more of qualitative feedback (comments, opinions) from graduates on the development of programmes (also by e.g. organising events aimed at graduates where they can express their opinions). It is recommended to distinct and integrate measurable KPIs in the QA system and also update the study field and its program`s development planning documents accordingly.

- 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:** Fully compliant

The internal quality assurance system has been developed since previous accreditation, recommendations have been addressed. The internal quality assurance system facilitates development of the study field, although its efficiency and scope should be increased.

### 1.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field

#### Analysis

1.3.1. According to SER (p. 39-44) BIA is funded by its founders who oversee financial operations and ensure compliance with set objectives. The institution operates with a unified budget, approved by the founders, aimed at fostering institutional development and programme optimization. As of June 30, 2022, BIA's assets totaled 6.4 million EUR. The budget for the "Management, Administration and Management of Real Property" study field is managed collaboratively yet ultimately by the Board, with major income source being student fees. Minor income sources - scientific project funding, and other sources like international projects and book sales. The study field's income sources include student tuition fees, scientific project funding, and other revenues. Tuition fees are determined annually by the BIA Board, with discounts available, and individual study agreements are made with students. Expenses for the study field encompass wages, social contributions, goods and services, capital formation, and other costs, with a significant portion allocated to wages and utilities. Despite variations in tuition fees, expenses per student are covered by income. The financing system ensures quality education for all students, with emphasis on resources, research activities, and small group learning opportunities. Scientific activities are mainly self-financed and supported (although, only minorly) by EU funds. Staff members do have opportunities to participate in research activities such as conferences funded by BIA, yet it is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. There is also a minor financial incentive for publication activities for staff members. If financial requirements are relatively low then activity can be covered by the institution, in other cases - partial funding is an option. In conclusion, financial resources for the study field are deemed sufficient, ensuring sustainability even in fluctuating student numbers.

1.3.2. According to SER (p. 44-47) and information obtained during the assessment visit, the study field is being implemented in the facilities in Riga and Daugavpils. The facilities include various study and scientific workspaces, auditoriums, computer classrooms, conference halls, libraries and administrative offices. The premises in Riga and its branches are well-equipped to support the study

process, offering auditoriums, computer classrooms, halls, and cultural centers for classes and scientific activities. Additionally, there are libraries, reading rooms, and administrative spaces to ensure the quality of education delivery. Some of BIA's auditoriums are equipped with visual display equipment, including microphones and video projectors, however featured equipment in some cases does not fully facilitate proper hybrid mode - full participation of all attendees are quite limited. For example, in some of the presented auditoriums there is only one hand-held microphone available limiting participation in hybrid lectures only to lecturers, not the students. As BIA claimed after assessment visit to experts, they have both handheld microphones (1 set - 4 pcs) and 360-degree microphones (20 pcs), in addition, all the classrooms where the studies take place are equipped with web-cameras with a microphone option. During online lectures, lecturers mostly use this type of equipment. Handheld microphones are not used during lectures. In the hybrid mode (when the lectures take place simultaneously in the classroom and online), Although during the assessment visit, when the BIA demonstrated auditoriums for experts to reflect what is stated in the SER, experts also asked a question of teaching staff members regarding how BIA is conducting hybrid classes and received confirmation that there are some cases when the hybrid mode is used in a non-inclusive manner.

Statement, that 360 microphones is not producing echo in hybrid auditoriums, while during assessment visit hybrid case it did, is nonsensical as expert meeting was just another type of hybrid call.

Based on the experts' observations, this inconsistency further suggests that BIA may not have a comprehensive understanding of teaching and learning methods beyond traditional lecture formats.

The BIA computer systems, totaling 279, are connected to a network and equipped with necessary software for academic use.

The BIA library collaborates closely with programme directors and lecturers to update its collection, aligning with required reading lists and market demand. Recent updates focused on increasing English-language titles and removing outdated editions. In 2018, 1,808 books were acquired, with a significant portion in Latvian and English. Management prioritizes incorporating new technologies and educational innovations while continuing to invest in traditional paper books. Procurement decisions are guided by lecturer requests, with budgets approved by the library head and board. Additionally, donations, particularly electronic publications in English, enhance the collection. It seems that there is no fixed allocation of funds for procurement of informative and/or technical provision and purchases are handled on-need/ad-hoc basis. However, there were no indications from the teaching staff that there are issues regarding acquisition of necessary materials.

The experts praised the artworks in the BIA hallways, however noted that hallways and open spaces could be used in more student friendly ways, including resting and co-working places.

1.3.3. The Baltic International Academy's Scientific Library, a member of LATABA (Latvijas Akadēmisko bibliotēku asociācija) (SER p. 47-51), offers extensive resources accessible to students and staff across its Central Library in Riga and branches in various Latvian cities including Daugavpils. These facilities provide educational materials, periodicals, electronic databases, and other resources necessary for academic pursuits. Users can request materials and services remotely, and the library accommodates individuals with mobility impairments. The library actively supports research and learning by assisting students individually, participating in professional development activities, and staying updated on industry trends. Additionally, it hosts Information and Culture Centres, contributing to cultural and linguistic enrichment. Library continually updates its facilities and services, enhancing digital resources and remote access. It also collaborates with other institutions to expand its collection and offers consultation services on e-services and

information search skills. Moreover, the library's collection development aligns with the BIA study programmes, incorporating both traditional and digital resources procured through purchases, donations, and collaborative efforts. However the library features a large amount of literature units that are in Russian language and is outdated, therefore suggestion would be to reevaluate the collection and reconsider how scientifically accurate they are. The library space and resources are regularly assessed and expanded to meet the evolving needs of students and researchers. Overall, available informative provision is at a good level and meets the needs of study field.

1.3.4. BIA utilises Moodle, an e-learning platform (SER p. 51-53), with BigBlueButton add-on to enhance the study process, offering flexibility and accessibility. Lecturers develop course materials, including theoretical content and self-assessment tasks, uploaded to Moodle classrooms. The platform supports various teaching methods, such as presentations, video demonstrations, and group activities, fostering and feedback. Moodle facilitates student engagement through chat options for clarification and provides access to lecture recordings and course materials. The overall state - including the availability of study materials - of e-studies seems to be in good order and in select courses lecture recordings are provided. While alternative platforms like Zoom were available, Moodle and BigBlueButton remain the preferred choice due to its diverse features and ease of use. The IT Service Centre ensures the smooth functioning of the technology infrastructure and provides timely user support. Moreover, BIA provides an e-learning environment through its website, Moodle, BigBlueButton, Zoom, Nexus, and "My BIA" platform. These platforms offer access to study materials, announcements, schedules, and other relevant information to enhance the learning experience. Overall, BIA focuses on providing comprehensive infrastructure and digital resources to support its programmes and ensure a conducive learning environment for students and faculty however capacities of ensuring full involvement of all participants in hybrid mode is highly limited. Overall, the technology solutions are appropriate for implementation of study programmes within the study field.

1.3.5. According to the SER (p.52-54), which was also supported with the statements of BIA management, study field and study programmes directors and academic staff during the assessment visit, the aim of the BIA Staff Policy is to provide qualified, professional and motivated employees to achieve high operational efficiency of the BIA. Uniform, special approach criteria for academic staff elections are reflected in the "Regulations on the Academic Positions of the BIA" ([https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/Regulations\\_Academic\\_Positions.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/Regulations_Academic_Positions.pdf)). The selection of academic positions is based on an open competition taking into account the requirements of the person's academic qualifications and professional competence. Vacancies are advertised in an open competition by following regulatory enactments. In the election of the academic staff, uniform criteria are set, the most important of which are the achievements of the scientific and pedagogical activity, as well as the coherence of the respective field with the mission of the BIA. Both elected and invited personnel are required to comply with the conditions of study programme implementation and the requirements of laws and regulations, including qualifications, higher education, language skills, pedagogical and practical work experience.

The policy for the composition of academic staff incorporates a broad number of criteria. Majority of the academic staff in the study field are elected in BIA, with the competition taking place every six years. This enables periodic evaluation of the teaching staff's competencies and provides them with a strong incentive to maintain high performance and improve. The BIA also attracts foreign lecturers, as well as practitioners who are specialists in the field. Teaching staff and guest lecturers on short-term contracts are employed to improve and diversify the study process and bring applied knowledge. Based on the SER (p.56 and Annex 3. List of teaching staff involved in the field\_ENG.xlsx) and information gathered during the assessment visit, BIA efficiently involves international teaching staff in teaching study courses of the study field in English. The experts

appreciate BIA policy to develop their own qualified teaching staff by inviting graduates from the management study programmes to join doctoral studies. Overall, BIA has well developed and followed policies and procedures for attracting qualified teaching staff, which are also applied for this study field. Such policies and procedures are openly available and teaching staff know about them.

1.3.6. The SER indicates that management of BIA acknowledges that the qualification of BIA academic staff has the most direct impact on the quality of study and research work. According to the SER (p. 22-23), which was also verified during the assessment visit meetings with multiple stakeholders, there are policies and practices for professional and didactic development of the teaching staff, covering their scientific activities, professional and didactic development, provision of necessary infrastructure, etc. BIA academic staff development policy includes: monitoring of the qualification of the BIA academic in accordance to the BIA's academic staff policy; support (including financial) to the academic staff for participation in scientific conferences, scientific research, methodical seminars, development of methodical materials, experience exchange events in Latvia and abroad; careful selection of personnel, their regular training and professional development.

During the assessment visit, teaching staff in Riga and Daugavpils confirmed that the academic staff development policy is transparent and well known to them. It is available online (<https://bsa.edu.lv/index.php/en/system-of-promotion-of-scientific-activity.html>) All participants in the meetings with academic staff in both Riga and Daugavpils branches assured that BIA had supported (including financially) their participation in scientific conferences, training events, paid for their publications in scientific journals, etc. Over the assessment period BIA also organised training for all teaching staff on English language and didactical skills. BIA also encourages academic staff to improve their qualifications through joining doctoral studies. The experts learned during the assessment visit that one graduate of the study field currently studies in doctoral studies while 6 members of the academic staff had previously graduated from the multiple doctoral study programmes in BIA. This could be viewed as an example of best practices in addressing the issue of ageing teaching staff and developing the younger generation.

1.3.7. Based on the information provided in SER (p. 56-57 and Annex Pedagogu darba samaksa 11012024.pdf) and learned during the assessment visit meeting the experts believe that the academic, research and administrative (for study field directors and study programmes directors) workload of the teaching staff is balanced. Teaching staff shows a good record of scientific research and contiguous participation in didactical development.

1.3.8. BIA has a well developed and student oriented support and motivation system (SER, p. 57-59). The programmes directors, study field director and other responsible structural units of BIA ensure that all students receive career support, IT support, information on lesson planning and psychological support. Students and graduates of the study field especially noted the professional, efficient and warm support in any questions they have received from the programme directors. In Daugavpils branch such support also is ensured by the branch director and administrator. A client oriented approach towards the students is one of the exceptional points of the study field.

BIA also has a well developed, clear and transparent financial support system. According to the SER, the amount of tuition fees and the payment procedure for each academic year are determined by the BIA Board and approved by the Senate. Before the beginning of studies, individual study agreements are concluded with all students, which are valid for the entire study period. There are a number of financial discounts and support measures that are available for BIA students. The list is available on the BIA webpage (<https://bsa.edu.lv/index.php/en/tuition-fee/tuition-fee-discounts.html>). There is also a possibility to apply for study and student loans. According to the SER, every academic year, the Board of BIA also determines the number of BIA-financed budget places in full-

time studies; the competition for budget places is regulated by the “Regulations on the competition for budget places” (LV only). During the assessment visit the experts learned that students and graduates know about the financial discounts and support measures, and highly appreciate them. Some of the meetings’ participants had used them in practice (i.e. had their tuition split into monthly payments) and regarded them as being very efficient for being able to continue their studies.

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

Conclusions:

The BIA's financial model, overseen by its founders and managed collaboratively by the Board, ensures sustainability mainly through tuition income stream. The BIA has well-equipped facilities in Riga and Daugavpils, including auditoriums, computer classrooms, libraries, and administrative offices, supporting the study process. The BIA's Scientific Library offers extensive resources and services, meeting the needs of students and staff across its branches. BIA effectively utilizes Moodle with the BigBlueButton add-on and other e-learning platforms to enhance the study process, providing diverse teaching methods, student engagement opportunities, and comprehensive infrastructure while facing challenges in ensuring full participation in hybrid learning modes. The BIA has developed its Staff Policy as well as staff recruitment and development regulations which facilitates in attracting qualified teaching staff, according to the needs of the study field and its study programmes, and ensures their continuous professional, didactic development as well as engagement in scientific activities. The policy and regulations are transparent and publicly available; teaching staff take advantage of and appreciate them. The needs of professional and didactic development of the teaching staff at BIA are met. There are policies and practices in place for broad spectrum relevant professional development of staff. Workload of the teaching staff is balanced. Teaching staff shows a good record of scientific research and continuous participation in didactical development. BIA has a well-developed student oriented support and motivation system, including, its infrastructural, procedural, financial, social and other aspects dimensions.

Strengths:

1. Admission policy and procedures enable attracting appropriate teaching staff for the needs of the study field and its study programmes, efficiently balancing between academic staff and professionals, those teaching in Latvian and English  
Transparent and well appreciated by the teaching staff staff development policy ensuring availability and support for continuous professional, didactic development and engagement in scientific activities.
2. An efficient and appreciated by the students system of financial support and motivation.
3. A student oriented and dedicated Programme Directors and Daugavpils Branch Director.

Weaknesses:

1. There is limited capacity to conduct hybrid study mode ensuring full participation of all attendees.
2. Library features some amount of literature that is outdated.
3. The hallways and open spaces of the facilities in Riga are not fully utilised as student friendly resting and/or co-working spaces (with some exceptions) - few more study-environment-design elements with functions of chairs and tables would be beneficial.

### **1.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation**

#### **Analysis**

1.4.1. The BIA declares the research activities of academics to be one of the main activities. The academic staff of the study field has the opportunity to conduct research at the BIA Research Institute for Social and Humanitarian Problems (SER, p. 59). The scientific profile of the teaching staff corresponds to the development goals of the BIA and is relevant to the field of study (SER Section II - Description of the Study Field - 2.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation, Annexes "Summary of quantitative data on scientific research.pdf" and "List of UDV Scientific Publications\_2023.docx"), as well as for the industry, which was justifiably sensible during the visits meeting with employer`s in Riga and Daugavpils branches, e.g. employers provide data for BIA`s students` research of their (employers) interest, offers topics for final research thesis (bachelor, master), as well as with students who mentioned practical examples of research case studies for e.g. market research for industry companies (e.g. SIA Constantum Moto, SIA Saules Paneļi, SIA ThermoVisuals, SIA DaiļRade koks) and other research on national and international companies is conducted in co-operation with the specific enterprises, including e.g. for master students it is a mandatory to participate in BIA scientific conferences & develop articles (from experts notes during the BIA assessment visit meeting with students) in Riga). The discussions with the teaching staff during the assessment visit confirmed the above statements of the SER. The Daugavpils branch employs only a limited number of local academic staff - most courses are taught by staff from Riga (usually in online mode). However, the staff in Riga and Daugavpils are involved in research at a satisfactory level.

1.4.2. There are a total of 50 staff members in the field. Of these, 4 are professors and 5 are associate professors in the study field "Management, Administration and Management of Real Property". Of these 9 teaching staff, 4 have a degree in economics (SER, p. 60). Seven professors are involved in publications related to the programme area. (Annex II 2.4 - SER Section II - Description of the Study Field - 2.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation - Annexes "Summary of quantitative data on scientific research.pdf" and "List of UDV Scientific Publications\_2023.docx"). The Professional Bachelor study programme "Entrepreneurship Management" 42345 has a professional profile, i.e. there are more teaching staff with professional experience. The Academic Master study programme "Business Management and Administration" 45345 has more staff with an academic/scientific background. From the observations during the assessment visit, it appears that the academic staff have a practical background but are also involved in research. There is also a visible difference between the staff offering the study programmes in Riga and Daugavpils - the staff in Riga has more experience and offers more opportunities to students, e.g. students are invited to do marketing research based on employers' needs. However, the study programmes are mainly run by the staff in Riga, so the students from Daugavpils also benefit from these opportunities.

1.4.3. The BIA list of international projects ensures a satisfactory level of international cooperation (SER, p. 66). The number of foreign students and teaching staff participating in ERASMUS is manageable - in the period 2020/2021-2022/2023, there was an average of 83 students in Entrepreneurship Management and more than 66 students in Business Management and Administration (SER Section II 2.5. Annex "Statistical data on foreign students and teaching staff.pdf"). Student mobility is relatively low - in the academic year 2021/2022 only 2 students left the university (for practise) and 5 students (4 - practise, 1 - study) in 2022/23 (SER Section II 2.5. Annex "Statistics on student mobility.pdf"). The international mobility of teaching staff is at a satisfactory level, i.e. 13 teaching staff participated in mobility in the academic year 2022/23. A quite large number of guest teachers (17 teachers came to BIA), (8 from Turkey and 4 from Poland) used mobility to come to BIA in the academic year 2022/2023. There are 6 guest lectures directly involved in the study field. However, not enough international cooperation was observed during the assessment visit at the level of programmes (e.g. joint programmes, double degree programmes),

field of study (membership in international networks related to the field of study, applying for international accreditations, etc.) and courses (e.g. running joint courses, virtual project collaboration of students).

1.4.4. BIA developed a system for stimulating and supporting the scientific activities. (SER, p. 66) According to SER, the system is open to suggestions for improvement for academic staff, doctoral students and other students of the Baltic International Academy. The assessment visit confirmed that statement. However one of threats presented by BIA is ageing of academic staff in Latvia (Annex SWOT analysis). At the same time, BIA faces the general challenge specified for the Higher Education Sector - problems with attracting the highest skill persons for the academic work. This challenge is particularly evident in the Daugavpils branch. During the assessment visit, an opportunity for BIA was identified - to involve external stakeholders of BIA, e.g. employers, to offer more courses in the evaluated programmes. External stakeholders in Riga and Daugavpils confirmed their interest in expanding co-operation with the university.

1.4.5. According to SER, the final (bachelor's, master's) thesis in the study programmes of the field "Management, Administration and Management of Real Property " is a project independently developed and implemented by the student with a practical implementation part in the problem chosen by the student. (SER, p. 67). Thesis are the main research activities of students (SER, p. 67) In the SER, the BIA did not provide specific examples of student involvement in academic research and/or applied research, other than a list of conferences involving students from the programmes. BIA emphasises the obstacle that students are not sufficiently self-motivated to participate in research activities. [SWOT Analysis]. However BIA generates opportunities for students and the visit delivered evidence of students' participation in the research. Especially master students are obligated to prepare a scientific article during the course Academic writing.

1.4.6. There are solutions that are used in the study field. The study process is equipped with the e-learning platform BIA Moodle and BigBlueButton (BBB). A system has also been introduced to support the administration of BIA - the NEXUS programme. But there are no solutions specifically designed for the evaluated study field - e.g. dedicated software, simulation games. However, the university has some innovative solutions in other areas, e.g. for psychology there is the Laboratory of Neurocognitive Implicit Processes (SER, p. 68). According to the information from the visit, the students of the evaluated programmes could also use this facility, but the students did not confirm its use. The BIA has individualised the teaching methods and adapted them to the students, and, following the internationally growing good practice, could further develop it further by integrating tutoring or mentoring methods in the learning and teaching process.

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

Conclusions:

The faculty profile is in line with the development goals of the BIA and is relevant to the field of study. There is also a visible difference between the faculty offering the study programmes in Riga and Daugavpils - the faculty in Riga has more experience and offers more opportunities to students, however most of the courses in both branches are offered by the same faculty (in Daugavpils the faculty from Riga offers most of the courses in online mode). International cooperation in the field of scientific research within the study area and the corresponding study programmes is guaranteed and is being systematically expanded. The teaching staff participates in international research programmes and takes part in mobility. However, the BIA does not offer joint programmes, double degree programmes, virtual collaboration with international students, etc. The approach of the

external stakeholders is very committed, so the co-operation with them can still be improved. Students participate in research, especially Master's students, which opens up the possibility of running academic programmes. Innovative solutions are mostly based on the technical side, there is a lack of innovative ways to offer programmes such as tutoring and mentoring.

Strengths:

1. Master's students must participate in research by writing a scientific article.
2. Student-centred learning approach manifests in the study process and has potential to be further developed by internationally growing good case practices of integrated tutoring and mentoring methods.
3. Highly engaged external stakeholders of BIA - especially employers.

Weaknesses:

1. Yet lacking systematic tutoring or mentoring methods in the learning and teaching process as the element of the student-centred approach. (Although among weaknesses, this observation must be looked at as the enhancement potential that soon is to be an internationally recognized good study quality requirement.)
2. Limited cooperation with international higher education institutions, e.g. no double degree or joint programmes.

## **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:** Fully compliant

The scientific research and applied research conducted within the study field correspond to the development goals of BIA and are relevant for the study field and for industry, which was justifiably documented and also practically mentioned during the visit with examples of research case studies for e.g. market research for industry companies.

## **1.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation**

### **Analysis**

1.5.1. The BIA has a network of employers, municipalities, and higher education institutions with whom they cooperate regularly, representing both the private and public sectors. Official cooperation agreements have been concluded with 15 national organisations: 8 municipalities, 1 employer, and 6 higher education institutions (Annex to 2.5 section of SER "List of cooperation agreements"). Some of the agreements were concluded in 2009 with municipalities that have changed their names after the administrative territorial reform in 2021, and it would be necessary to review this list and update the concluded agreements.

The experts were able to verify during the assessment visit interviews that the BIA has a network of employers who are actively engaged in cooperation with the academy. The BIA also cooperates with employers' organisations, such as the Employers' Confederation of Latvia, the Chamber of Commerce of Latvia, and the Latvian Traders' Association. This is an area in which, according to the interviews, BIA has made some progress since the previous accreditation.

Almost all of the actively engaged employer representatives whom the experts met during the assessment visit interviews were alumni of BIA, indicating strong loyalty among graduates. Cooperation with employers takes place in various forms, but the most common is the provision of internships. The BIA provided a list of internship contracts with 60 enterprises for students in Riga

and 90 enterprises for students in Daugavpils (ibid.). For employers, internships serve as a method to select and recruit new talents. Employers also participate in the examination of students. Although Cabinet regulations require "no less than half" employer participation in the state examination committee, the examination committee at BIA is currently composed of 100% employer representatives, ensuring an independent opinion of the preparedness of graduates in the labour market. Employer representatives are engaged in study programme development through participation in the Study Programme and Study Direction Council. BIA also conducts employer surveys about the preparedness of their graduates and the competencies required in the labour market. Case studies from employers and practical work using enterprise information are integrated into the study content. Employers have also been consulted about study content informally. In general, employer representatives confirmed during the interviews that they have an impact on the curriculum.

According to the interviews, BIA makes some effort to regularly invite guest lecturers from the business world. These lectures are highly appreciated by students. The experts learned during the interviews that students and graduates would have appreciated even more engagement of practising professionals in the study process, and that there is potential to utilise the alumni network more actively, who would be glad to support the institution and students, both through guest lectures and mentoring activities.

While the experts was able to meet a significant number of private sector representatives during the assessment visit interview in Riga, mainly public sector or public enterprise representatives were participating in Daugavpils. While the experts commend the good cooperation ties with the public sector in Daugavpils, it also points out the need to strengthen ties with the private sector.

Additionally, the experts observed a very high interest from employers in using adult learning opportunities if provided by BIA in Daugavpils. Some even confirmed that funding is available to cover the costs of employee training. In the opinion of employers, BIA has clear competitive advantages compared to other higher education institutions regarding targeting the employed adult population, due to flexible arrangements of studies and accessibility of learning.

Considering the relatively weak economic situation of the Latgale region, the experts is of the opinion that BIA should further develop the unique proposition of the study programmes that would be relevant to the Latgale region, linked to the mission to develop local entrepreneurship and advance the skills of employed people. In this process, there is good potential to advance relationships and strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation with the local municipality and entrepreneurs.

1.5.2. The BIA has concluded a total of 160 agreements with international higher education institutions for Erasmus exchanges (SER, section 2.5.2). Many of these agreements ended in 2023 and require renewal. In the field of business and administration, there are 39 international study programme opportunities available within the current agreements for Erasmus exchange, offering ample opportunities for students and staff (bsa.edu.lv, Erasmus+, Partner organisations).

BIA also facilitates international cooperation by implementing international projects. According to the BIA, within the framework of international cooperation, the university is regularly visited by delegations from related foreign universities and other institutions. For example, in 2023, the BIA hosted the Ukrainian Science Days, which were implemented within the Erasmus+ programme grant KA-107. Professors and assistant professors from five scientific institutions of Ukraine participated, exchanging experiences on study methods and scientific research work (SER, section 2.5.2). According to the interviews, a project proposal for a Nordplus grant is being developed. At least part of the academic staff members are engaged in implementing international projects, international conferences, or international exchanges, valuing this experience as a means of self-development.

Nevertheless, insufficient recognition of BIA on the international scale is mentioned among the the weaknesses in their SWOT analysis in self-assessment, and more efforts should be invested in

engaging in additional international projects that would contribute to the study and research capacity.

1.5.3. The number of international students in the study field has gradually increased since the 2020/2021 academic year. In the 2022/2023 academic year, there were 165 international students, compared to 126 in 2020/2021. Of these, 89 international students were enrolled in bachelor-level study programmes and 76 in master-level study programmes. Students came from 22 various countries in the Central Asian region, Asia, Europe, Africa, and the USA. The largest number of international students comes from Cameroon (65 students), Uzbekistan (36 students), and Pakistan (14 students). The number of international academic staff members has also increased from 3 in 2020/2021 to 6 in 2022/2023 (Annex to section 2.5 of SER, Statistical data on foreign students and teaching staff).

Between 2021 and autumn 2023, the study field was not able to achieve the pre-pandemic level of student mobility. Only 7 students from the study field participated in Erasmus+ exchanges, mainly in traineeship programmes (Annex to section 2.5 of SER, Statistics on student mobility). As it was explained during the interviews, the low student mobility level is due inability to combine living abroad with responsibilities in Latvia – most students work parallel to studying, and many also have family and children. Thus, the mobility period abroad is not accessible for many BIA students.

However, students can gain other international experiences during their studies, such as through guest lectures, practical classes, seminars, and meetings with foreign specialists. Foreign specialists are attracted both based on personal contacts and within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme.

Currently, six academic staff members from foreign countries, including Estonia, Germany, Ukraine, Bulgaria, and Turkey, are involved in implementation of the study field (Annex to section 2.5 of SER, Statistical data on foreign students and teaching staff). According to the interviews, lectures by international academic staff members are delivered to international students enrolled in study programmes delivered in English. Local students enrolled in study programmes delivered in Latvian can join international lectures free of charge if no recognition is required. However, the experts learned during interviews that these opportunities are very rarely used by students, primarily due to a lack of English language skills. The experts believes that opportunities for international lectures should be actively promoted to local students, especially to compensate for limited international mobility. Foreign language learning should also be promoted more actively, as English skills are widely required in today's business world. The language learning offer should be expanded, which could be done by developing cooperation with other training centres to increase the competitiveness of graduates in the labour market.

At the same time, the BIA has achieved the pre-pandemic level of incoming Erasmus+ student mobility. While only 5 students visited BIA in 2020/2021, there were 19 incoming mobile students in 2021/2022 and 15 in 2022/2023 (ibid.).

Regarding outgoing teacher mobility, there were 10 mobility cases in 2021/2022 and 13 in 2022/2023, with few teachers particularly active in using these opportunities. For example, one academic staff member was involved in 6 mobilities during the period of 2 years (Annex to section 2.5 of SER, Teachers Mobility). BIA could pay attention to promoting more equal opportunities among staff members to benefit from international exchange opportunities, for example, by supporting English language development where necessary.

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

Conclusions:

BIA maintains an extensive network of cooperation with employers, municipalities, and higher

education institutions, fostering partnerships in both the public and private sectors. The academy has established official agreements with various national organisations and actively engages employers through internships, examinations, and programme development. However, there is room for improvement in strengthening ties with the private sector, particularly in Daugavpils. BIA's efforts to expand international cooperation are evident through Erasmus exchanges and participation in international projects, yet there is a need to enhance recognition on the global stage and increase student mobility opportunities. Despite challenges in achieving pre-pandemic levels of mobility, the academy continues to attract a growing number of international students and academic staff, highlighting its commitment to internationalisation.

Strengths:

1. The BIA sustains a network of employers and municipalities, fostering regular cooperation.
2. The examination committee at BIA comprises 100% employer representatives.
3. BIA holds competitive advantages in comparison to other higher education institutions, particularly in its ability to target the employed adult population, owing to the flexible study arrangements and ease of access to learning.
4. Number of international students, incoming mobile students and international academic staff has increased since 2020/2021.

Weaknesses:

1. There is unfulfilled potential for expanding cooperation with the private sector in Daugavpils.
2. There is a need to strengthen cooperation with both public and private sectors to facilitate local entrepreneurship and competency development among the employed adult population.
3. Insufficient internationalisation of studies for local students, with unused opportunities to attend lectures by international experts and limited international mobility activity.
4. Unequal international activity by teaching staff members, with few very active and others not active.

### **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:** Fully compliant

BIA maintains an extensive network of cooperation with employers, municipalities, and higher education institutions, fostering partnerships in both the public and private sectors.

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

#### **Analysis**

1.6.1. Previous accreditation of the BIA study field "Management, Administration and Management of Real Property" and corresponding study programmes was approved on 08.12.2021 (Accreditation Decision No. 2021/77) with the decision to grant the accreditation for 2 years - until 09.12.2023. (see AIKA e-platform database at <https://eplatforma.aika.lv/index.php?r=site%2Fprogram%2Fview&id=1524> for PBStP) and <https://eplatforma.aika.lv/index.php?r=site%2Fprogram%2Fview&id=946> for PMStP). The accreditation experts formulated a total of 42 recommendations - 17 recommendations for the study

field, 12 recommendations for the bachelor and 13 - for the master study programmes. Based on the received recommendations BIA prepared an action plan where the results to be achieved, actions of BIA and implementation deadlines were set. A report on the implementation of the previous recommendations was presented in the Annex ( Recommendation\_Eng.pdf) of the SER. The annex (Recomendation\_Eng.pdf) also indicated that all previous recommendations had been accomplished. During the assessment visit, the experts collected information from different stakeholders to verify such statements.

The experts concluded that BIA had shown dedication and reasonable efforts to implement all short term recommendations. Relevant and significant changes were noted in improvement of communication about possibilities and benefits of scientific activities with students in Daugavpils and Liepaja branches, improved interconnection between Riga and Daugavpils branches in the implementation of the study process, as well as more active involvement of business representatives and industry professionals into the study process and quality assurance of the study programmes. The experts praised BIA's efforts to improve academic staff qualifications by organising English language, didactic and other training as well as supporting other development needs of the teaching staff. During the assessment visit meetings with the students confirmed that international students know about the possibilities to participate in the student union and in the life of the students of the academy and take advantage of it. The experts also noted that the BIA's website was updated to become more user friendly and transparent. In regards to study programmes, the expert appreciated timely and efficient recommendations-based changes to change the name of the bachelor study programme, review and update study curriculum and study course content. Based on the information provided in SER and also collected during the assessment visit meetings, the experts also concluded that some areas could be further improved (acknowledging the efforts made), such as motivation of students and teachers to participate in mobility programme, further and more focused engagement of social partners in the study process, especially in Daugavpils branch, development of quality standards for the on-line materials and activities, increase it the level of use of IT tools in the study process and updating the list of references in study course descriptions. In regard to long term recommendations, the experts noted an impressive qualitative and quantitative improvement in scientific activities in the study field, including increase in high level international publications, involvement of students in scientific research as well as efforts to improve BIA's quality system. The experts believe that BIA has shown actions and progress with the other long term recommendations, however it is too early to evaluate the outcomes. Overall, BIA has a strategic and systematic approach for using recommendations of previous accreditations to improve quality of the study process, achievement of learning outcomes and development of teaching staff and material resources.

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

Conclusions:

The accreditation experts formulated a total of 42 recommendations. The experts concluded that BIA had shown dedication and reasonable efforts to implement all short term recommendations for the study field and study programmes. The progress has also been noted in implementation of long-term recommendations, especially in regard to scientific research and quality assurance.

Strengths:

1. A strategic and systematic approach for use of previous accreditations' recommendations to improve quality of the studies in BIA.
2. Generally, all short term recommendations for the study field and study programmes were

implemented.

3. Notable efforts in improvement of long term-recommendations, especially in scientific research and quality assurance

Weaknesses:

1. Some of the previous short term recommendations need further attention, e.g. No.3 (about stronger industry engagement, equally strongly from and in Daugavpils branch), No.4 (about Riga and Daugavpils branch cooperation including between students)

#### **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:** Fully compliant

All previous short-term recommendations were considerably addressed and implemented to a reasonable and acceptable extent. Time after previous accreditation was not sufficient to implement long term recommendations.

#### **1.7. Recommendations for the Study Field**

##### **Short-term recommendations**

1. For up to 2 years: To integrate in the study course description templates a mapping table showing the relevance of assessment methods against the learning outcomes, which is internationally increasingly well-recognized good case practice: strong and detailed cross-related mapping of the study course learning outcomes to study programme`s learning outcomes, mapping also study course`s evaluation criteria against study course learning outcomes.

2. For next annual SER: A new basis for compliance of study field within the EU higher education area should be used instead of the likely outdated EU2020 "European Programme for the Modernisation of Higher Education Systems" mentioned and linked in SER p.20.

3. For up to 2 years: The internal complaints procedure should be broadened to allow students to express their dissatisfaction about the conduct of the process or those carrying it out regarding any issues relevant to their studies at the higher education institution.

4. For up to 2 years: The reports from student, employer and graduate surveys should be improved to include methodology, analysis and conclusions for improvements, including gathering more of qualitative feedback (comments, opinions) from graduates on the development of programmes (also by e.g. organising events aimed at graduates where they can express their opinions).

5. For up to 2 years: To distinct and integrate measurable KPIs in the QA system and also update the study field and its program`s development planning documents accordingly.

6. For up to 2 years: To update and expand the cooperation agreements with industry, market partners in Riga and Daugavpils branches, including municipalities, especially the ones where municipalities have changed under Latvian Municipal reform, aiming at study and research process development (including via e.g. courses, guest-lectures, study visits, internships, research topics, market research, case studies, data access, presentations and defence committees, possibly micro-qualification trainings and mentoring programmes, employers cooperation, etc.)

7. For up to 2 years: Provide more opportunities for internationalisation of studies to local students, e.g. guest-lectures by international experts to compensate for limited international mobility activity.

### Long-term recommendations

1. The quality assurance system needs to be developed further to encompass all operations comprehensively and to further develop processes and quality assurance tools. The quality assurance system should consistently cover all areas, including management, administration, governance, research, and communication. Ensure follow-up actions, improvement, and measure their effectiveness based on the systematic analysis of the academy's performance data. (E.g. Experts noticed at some points there is disruption in the information reaching all the involved stakeholders as far as local course teachers in Daugavpils branch - e.g. a) in relation to StP results implementation within course; b) alignment of the courses' learning outcomes to the StP results and c) Course descriptions themselves, including their updates and review.)

2. Expand quality assurance monitoring tools to obtain feedback from all groups for use in improvement, including both academic and administrative staff.

3. There is a need to expand and strengthen cooperation with the public and private sectors in Daugavpils, while ensuring a visible contribution to facilitating local entrepreneurship and enhancing the skills of the employed adult population.

4. To enhance the engagement with practising professionals in the study process by leveraging the alumni network more actively to provide support to both the institution and students through increased participation in guest lectures and mentoring activities.

5. More efforts should be invested in engaging in additional international projects that would contribute to the study and research capacity, and ensure that more academic staff members benefit from international exchange and project experience.

6. Foreign language learning should also be promoted more actively to both students and lecturers.

7. Pay attention to promoting more equal opportunities among staff members to benefit more from international exchange opportunities.

8. Besides the excellent tradition with presenting artworks, consider modernising and upgrading and thus utilising also the hallways and open spaces of the facilities in Riga to be fully utilised as student friendly resting and/or co-working spaces with more study-environment-design elements with functions of chairs and tables.

9. To strengthen the capacity to conduct hybrid study mode ensuring full participation of all attendees.

10. Review library collection ensuring that it does not feature scientifically outdated material and offers newest source and trends availability.

11. Keep implementing the previous short- and long- term recommendations, e.g. No.3 (about stronger industry engagement, equally strongly from and in Daugavpils branch), No.4 (about Riga and Daugavpils branch cooperation including between students)

12. Pay attention to increasing the awareness and start to systematically integrate the internationally growing good case practices of tutoring and mentoring methods in the learning and teaching process as the element of the student-centred approach.

## II - "Entrepreneurship Management" ASSESSMENT

### II - "Entrepreneurship Management" ASSESSMENT

#### 2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

##### Analysis

###### 2.1.1.

Professional Bachelor study programme "Entrepreneurship Management" (PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management"), code 42345 at BIA is implemented within the study field "Management, Administration and Management of Real Property" ( study field) , which is an integral conventional affiliation of such study programmes with this particular study field in Latvian higher education area according to Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No 322 „Regulations on Classification of Latvian Education" (13.06.2017) (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>) and its Annex 2, Section 3 "Social Science, Commercial Science, Law", subsection 34 "Commercial science and administration" sub-subsection 345 "Management and administration". Also, according to Vocational education and employment tripartite cooperation sub-council`s minutes No. 2 of April 5, 2023 (PINTSA, [https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/nozkval/NKSK\\_uznemejdarbiba.pdf](https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/nozkval/NKSK_uznemejdarbiba.pdf)), the profession (occupation) "Manager of an Enterprise" lies within structure of the business, finance, accounting and administration (wholesale and retail trade, commercial science) sector. The BIA has developed and submitted within SER section III. 3.2 the following respective Annexes, additionally conforming the compliance of this study programme to be implemented within this particular study field:

Annex "Compliance to the national education standard.docx" (there's a misspell mistake in the Annex title - should be "Compliance.." Instead of "Compilation..") connecting the requirements specified in national standard for higher education with the indicators of the study programme (aim, expected results, learning outcomes, scope, content-wise focuses and other formative and thematic aspects).

Annex "UDV\_Manager of an enterprise.pdf" detailing the compliance of the qualification to be acquired (Manager of an Enterprise) against the national requirements for the profession specified in Occupational Standard (for for Manager of an Enterprise see the standrat at <https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS115.pdf>, in Latvian only).

Annex "Mapping of the study courses.pdf" showing the programme learning outcomes (study results - knowledge, skills, competence) mapping against all the study programme courses.

Overall the study programme clearly complies within its respective study field.

###### 2.1.2.

The interrelation of major and detailed parameters of the study programme, including its:  
- type (Professional bachelor study programme).

- title (Entrepreneurship Management),
  - code (42345),
  - degree to be obtained Professional Bachelor degree in Business management.
  - professional qualification (Manager of an Enterprise),
  - aims (goal and tasks at SER p.112),
  - objectives,
  - learning outcomes (study results at SER p.113, 116, 116)
  - and admission requirements (SER, p.114, 118, <https://bsa.edu.lv/index.php/en/admission/admission-process.html> )
- is sufficiently analysed (SER, p.115-118) and are well interrelated with their formulations and terminology corresponding to and strengthening one another.

### 2.1.3.

The major parameters (study field, programme title, code, type) of the PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" has not been subjected to the necessity of correction thus no significant changes in the parameters since the previous accreditation (SER, p.115) except for the content-wise parameters of the programme - aims and tasks which has been renewed. Also, content-wise, following the recommendations of experts of the previous evaluation in 2020. The PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" plan has been updated, reducing content fragmentation and introducing the higher CP (ECTS) points courses (SER p.115).

### 2.1.4.

PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" fully aligns within the landscape of management sector bachelor level study programmes general offer in Latvia, showing also its international competitiveness and resultative claims for its market share. Thus, the economic and social substantiation and justification of the programme has clear grounds and is sufficiently and realistically analysed (see SER, p.118-120), including the basis of Latvian national and EU supranational reports on labour market forecasts (<https://www.em.gov.lv/en/media/15434/download?attachment>, [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Education\\_and\\_training\\_in\\_the\\_EU\\_-\\_facts\\_and\\_figures](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Education_and_training_in_the_EU_-_facts_and_figures)). Additionally, the PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" offer in Daugavpils branch plays a crucial role for regional development and definitely strengthens BIA`s socio-economic role also in the region, which was clearly emphasised during the experts visit in Daugavpils branch by students, teachers and local employers. Programme`s socio-economic regional role is also strongly justified by the fact that BIA`s Daugavpils branch with the offer of the business and management field study programmes at bachelor and master levels adds to a very scarce (almost none) competition in the region - there are only 2 other higher education institutions offering thematically close education options (<https://www.daugavpils.lv/pilseta/iedzivotajiem/izglitiba-un-zinatne/profesionalas-un-augstakas-izglitiba-iestades/>) - Daugavpils University (<https://du.lv/studijas/studiju-programmas/>), which does not offer study programmes in this field and ISMA University colleague, which offers only Professional Bachelor's Programme in Business Administration (<https://www.isma.lv/en/study-programmes/professional-bachelor/business-administration-b>).

In relation to the dynamics of the number of students and employment indicators of the study programme (SER Section III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme Annex "Study program statistic.pdf"), the number of bachelor level students in Riga and Daugavpils branches is decreasing, but still visibly satisfactory - at the end of the review period (Autumn 2023/2024) there are 159 students in total studying in the programme, including, 78 full-time and 81 part-time, 123 students in Riga branch and 36 - in Daugavpils branch, 81 in Latvian

study flow and respectively 79 in English (SER Section III Annex "Study program statistic.pdf"). As for the employment indicators, BIA provides extensive analysis on their graduates employment aspects - according to SER (p.119-120) all graduates are in demand on the labour market and are employed within their specialty after graduation; the latest survey of graduates showed that more than half (65%) of graduates rate their prospects in the labour market as good and 6% - as excellent; the survey also show that 94% of the graduates noted that their professional work is in one way or another related to the education they received at BIA - 29.4% received a promotion at the workplace, while 35.3% found a new job; 88.2% of the graduates believe that the acquired education has sufficiently prepared them for work in the position they hold.

2.1.5.

Not applicable

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

Conclusions

PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" clearly complies within the study field "Management, Administration and Management of Real Property", which is an integral conventional affiliation in Latvian higher education area according also to Cabinet Regulations on higher education classification. Supportive documentation conforming the compliance as Annexes in SER section III. 3.2 are soundly developed, analysed and submitted.

The interrelation of parameters of the PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" is sufficiently analysed and well interrelated corresponding to and strengthening one another.

The technical parameters of PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" has not been subjected to the necessity of significant changes in the parameters since the previous accreditation while content-wise parameters - aims and tasks - has been renewed, and also the programme plan has been updated, reducing content fragmentation and introducing the higher CP (ECTS) according to previous evaluation experts recommendations.

The economic or social substantiation and justification of the PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management", particularly in Latvia`s regional aspects in Daugavpils branch, are strong and necessary; the dynamics of the number of students and employment indicators are fully satisfactory.

Strengths:

1) The PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" offer in Daugavpils branch plays a crucial role for regional development and definitely strengthens BIA`s socio-economic role also in the region.

Weaknesses:

none

## **2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof**

### **Analysis**

2.2.1.

The duration of the PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" is 4 years for full-time studies and 4.5 years for part-time studies, the volume is 240 credit points. Upon completing the bachelor's study programme and fulfilling all obligations, students obtain a professional bachelor's degree in business

management and the professional qualification of "Manager of an enterprise" at the sixth level of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (SER, section 3.1.1.).

The aim of the PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" is "to provide knowledge relevant to modern market requirements in the fields of entrepreneurship and management, while maintaining the compliance of study quality with European education standards, to prepare students for future professional activities capable of strategically and analytically solving business management problems, to develop students' personality and to ensure the opportunity to obtain a professional qualification with the right to continue studies at a master's degree." (SER, section 3.1.2.).

The experts learned during assessment visit interviews that since the previous accreditation, the following improvements have been made according to the recommendations:

The study course descriptions and learning outcomes have been reviewed.

Digital marketing and e-commerce courses have been included in the course content, and courses that improve students' social skills have been strengthened.

The number of credit points has been adjusted, with many small subjects being reorganised into larger subjects. These changes are reflected in the study programme plan.

The title of the programme has been changed to better reflect its content.

Closer collaboration with employers has been established.

Teachers have received training in English and ICT.

The BIA has provided detailed mapping on how the content of the study programme complies with state standard and national professional qualification requirements (Annexes to the SER, section 3.2., *Atbilstība valsts izglītības standartam, UDV\_Uzņemuma\_vaditajs*), as well as which courses ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme (Annex to the SER, section 3.2., *Studiju\_kursu\_kartejums*). The course descriptions are detailed, with learning outcomes distinguishing knowledge, skills, and competencies, along with assessment methods (Annexes to the SER, section 3.2., *Studiju programmu plans, Kursa apraksti\_LV*). To incorporate best international practices, consideration could be given to incorporating assessment methods for each learning outcome.

The experts noted that course descriptions contain mandatory and complementary literature sources, mostly printed materials and books. The experts recommends that literature sources be reviewed, and more recent online materials and scientific publications be added.

During the assessment visit interviews, the experts obtained confirmation from employers that basic disciplines such as finance and economics are well established in the study programme, and that employers are generally satisfied with the level of graduate preparedness. However, integrating additional trends and skills required in the labour market was suggested, building on good international relations, such as sustainability, leadership, modern business management, digital marketing, and agile management methodologies such as Lean, Kanban, Scrum, and Prince project management methodologies. Strengthening advanced methods of business intelligence data analysis, application of artificial intelligence, and integrating even more practical knowledge were also recommended.

In Daugavpils, the same study programme is implemented, with the support of a few local academic staff members.

The experts conclude that the name of the professional bachelor's study programme, the degree to be obtained, and the goals and objectives are interconnected and appropriate. Students are provided with knowledge, skills, and competencies according to the 6th qualification level in the field of management science. The name of the programme also indicates that the programme is oriented towards management processes in the organisation. The tasks defined by the study programme aim at achieving the defined goals and ensuring study results. The study programme complies with national regulations, including professional standards (Annex to the SER, section 3.2.: *UDV\_Uzņemuma\_vaditajs*). At the same time, further programme development is recommended to integrate more novelties in the management field into the content of study courses and practical

skills for application in the labour market.

#### 2.2.2.

Not applicable

#### 2.2.3.

The experts confirmed during assessment visit interviews that various and student-centred learning and assessment methods are utilised in lectures to support the attainment of learning outcomes. Lectures incorporate presentations, seminars, discussions, practical exercises, project development, and consultations. Problem-solving and case studies based on real company examples, occasionally supplemented with data from these companies, are integrated into the learning process and highly valued by students.

Instruction is delivered in a blended format, allowing students who cannot attend face-to-face lectures to participate online. Recordings are available for missed lectures. The option for online participation is particularly appreciated by employed students with family responsibilities and those travelling or working abroad. Online learning opportunities are predominantly utilised during evening classes on weekdays, while face-to-face lectures are typically held on weekends.

The experts received feedback from students engaged in online learning, confirming that the methods and tools facilitate their active participation in group work and discussions during lectures. However, the experts observed in some lecture halls that personal microphones are utilised, requiring them to be passed to the speaker for online participants to follow the discussion. This practice may be cumbersome, and the adoption of more modern equipment is recommended to ensure a seamless blended learning experience.

#### 2.2.4.

Internship is an obligatory component of the study programme, governed by the BIA's internal regulation titled "Regulations on Internships at the Baltic International Academy" ([https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/2020/BSA\\_Prakses\\_nolikums\\_en.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/2020/BSA_Prakses_nolikums_en.pdf)). As per the SER, the internship within the study programme amounts to 39 credit points and is divided into four distinct periods:

Qualifications (management) internship: aimed at familiarising students with the organisation of managerial activities within a company.

Qualifications (economic) internship: focused on introducing students to economic activities and financial management within a company.

Designing internship: entails engagement in real-world projects, requiring independent problem-solving in business or other relevant fields.

Pre-diploma internship: involves researching and analysing a company's operations, gathering necessary information and materials to conduct analytical and research work pertinent to the chosen topic of the bachelor's thesis.

Internships are conducted externally, within companies, under a tripartite cooperation agreement. Students are responsible for securing internship opportunities themselves, as the BIA does not guarantee placements. However, the BIA occasionally assists students in finding internships by connecting them with alumni.

Internship outcomes are assessed by both the internship manager from the hosting company and the internship manager from the BIA, who oversees the internship report. Additionally, a BIA commission, including the programme director, evaluates the internship results following a review of the student's internship documents and defense presentation.

The experts had the chance to review samples of internship reports, which were deemed sufficiently comprehensive. Overall, students expressed satisfaction with the organisation of internships and the support provided by the BIA during assessment visit interviews.

2.2.5.

Not applicable

2.2.6.

The development and defense of the diploma thesis adhere to the internal regulations outlined in the "Regulations on the development and defense of final theses at the BIA". Students select their thesis topics from those offered by leading lecturers of the study programme, with the option to propose their own topics. However, all final thesis topics must align with the programme's requirements, focusing on business and management themes. The relevance of proposed topics is evaluated by the Study Direction Council.

From the academic years 2020/2021 to 2022/2023, a total of 89 diploma theses were defended in the professional study programme "Business Management" during the spring semester. The majority of theses were concentrated in the following research areas: Financial Management (21%), Personnel Management (19%), Marketing Management (19%), Company Management (15%), and Strategy Development and Management (11%) (SER, section 3.2.6). These areas closely correspond to the curriculum of the study programme. The experts were able to become acquainted with samples of diploma theses.

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

Conclusions:

The PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" complies with national regulations (state education standard, professional standard). The content of the study programme included the essential topics, the content of the study courses is interconnected and complementary, corresponds to the objectives of the programme and ensures the achievement of learning outcomes, as well as meets the primary needs of the industry, labour market and scientific trends. Further improvements are needed to integrate topical issues and practical skills into the content of the programme. The study implementation methods contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study courses and the study programme. Student-centred learning and teaching principles are considered.

The internship complies with the requirements of regulatory enactments. The tasks of the internship are related to the learning outcomes achievable. Opportunities and provision of internship offered to students, as well as the organisation of work are sufficiently effective. The topics of students' final theses are relevant to the field and correspond to the study programme.

Strengths:

- 1) The basic disciplines such as finance and economics are well established in the study programme.
- 2) Various student-centred learning and assessment methods are utilised in lectures, including real business case studies. Students participating in lectures online are successfully integrated in the learning process.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Lack of recent online materials and scientific publications in the literature list of the course descriptions.

### **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.

Based on the information provided in SER and collected during the assessment visit as well as after the visual verification (by actually visiting the premises, library, laboratories, dormitory, etc.) the experts were assured that classrooms, laboratories, library and other material provision both in Riga and in Daugavpils are sufficient for the needs of the study programme and for the achievement of its learning outcomes. BIA premises are accessible to the people with special needs. The experts acknowledge the well-developed e-learning resources (Moodle) which provides a great help in implementation of the study programme. Moodle is highly appreciated by students and graduates.

To ensure the study process, especially in Daugavpils branch, teaching staff from Riga use various tools and solutions, such as video lectures, video seminars and video consultations on MOODLE platform, Web meetings, SKYPE consultations, ZOOM, Whatsapp group information platform, video calls, sms, email, etc. The experts concluded that the availability and use of various e-resources and online communication tools fully meets the needs of the Programme. However, the experts noted that bachelor students could have more specialised IT solutions used during the study process. For instance, the experts observed in some lecture halls that personal microphones are utilised, requiring them to be passed to the speaker for online participants to follow the discussion. This practice may be cumbersome, and the adoption of more modern equipment is recommended to ensure a seamless blended learning experience. The experts suggest that further development of e-learning resources could involve quality assurance and/or content standardisation policies and measures to further build on this BIA's competitive advantage and even further increase student satisfaction.

#### 2.3.2.

Not applicable

#### 2.3.3.

Financial resources for PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" are mainly obtained from tuition fees. According to the SER (p.135-136), the study programme has managed to maintain a positive balance between income and expenses, despite the decreasing number of students in recent years. As it was emphasised during the meeting with BIA management, the BIA founders use their right to control expenses and set the minimum number of students in the study programme, thus giving the right to learn for students from minority groups. In order to ensure the effectiveness of the programme, if the number of students is small, similar study courses are implemented in streams for students of several study programmes. Thus, there is no difference between study programme types, forms, languages and locations. The experts also acknowledge the programme portfolio management approach of the BIA, whereas more numerous programmes support those with less students. During the meetings with students and graduates the experts also learned about the well developed, clearly presented and practically working financial support system, which is highly appreciated by the students.

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

Conclusions:

Premises, laboratories, library and other material provisions available to the students in Riga and in

Daugavpils are sufficient for the needs of the study programme. In the study process, especially in the Daugavpils branch, multiple and various IT solutions and tools are utilised ensuring equal study content in the Riga and Daugavpils branches. E-learning resources (Moodle) are well developed and appreciated by students. Financial resources for the study programme are mainly obtained from tuition fees. BIA has a well developed student financial support system, which is known and appreciated by students. The number of students in the study programme is relatively decreasing, which is a threat to the sustainability of the PBASP “Entrepreneurship Management”.

Strengths:

1. Premises, laboratories, library and other material provisions in BIA are sufficient for the needs of the Study Programme and for the achievement of its learning outcomes.
2. Well-developed e-resources and use of multiple IT solutions and tools ensures the effectiveness of the study process in the Riga and Daugavpils branches.

Weaknesses:

1. The students of the PBASP “Entrepreneurship Management” have a limited possibility to get acquainted with specialised IT solutions and software, used in contemporary businesses.
2. Some lecture halls do not have the most modern equipment to ensure the best blended learning experience.

## 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

Material and technical provision, and financial provision is sufficient for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes.

## 2.4. Teaching Staff

### Analysis

#### 2.4.1.

According to the SER p.137, 46 teaching staff members are involved in the implementation of the PBASP “Entrepreneurship Management” including six foreign lecturers. Among them, 30 (18 elected from BIA, 12 non-elected, including foreign lecturers) hold a doctorate degree (65%), while 16 (6 elected from BIA, 10 not elected) possess a master's degree (35%). Of the lecturers, four are professors (9%), two are visiting professors (4%), four are associate professors (9%), three are visiting associate professors (6%), thirteen are assistant professors (28%), eight are visiting assistant professors (17%), two are lecturers (4%), nine are guest lecturers (19%), and one is a leading researcher (2%). Additionally, eight academic staff members participate in the programmes implementation and hold the title of Latvian Science Council experts (SER, section 3.4.1.). Twenty-eight lecturers are involved in the implementation of the Latvian language study programmes, with nineteen holding a doctoral degree. Nineteen lecturers primarily work at BIA, while nine are guest lecturers. Twenty-five lecturers participate in the English-language study programme, with sixteen holding a doctoral degree. Among them, ten are lecturers, and fifteen are guest lecturers, including foreign lecturers (SER 3.4.1. pp.136-138.). From SER Section III Description of the PBASP “Entrepreneurship Management” 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof Annex “Study plan.pdf” it is concluded that there are 38 teachers conducting courses in the PBASP

“Entrepreneurship Management”. 27 or 71% hold the Doctoral (Dr.) or Phd degree, which is a noteworthy mentionable amount, while all of the rest - 11 teachers or 29% of all staff hold no lower than a master degree, which is also noteworthy. Annex “Study plan.pdf” contains information only about the lecturers who are responsible for the development of the study course, it does not contain information about all lecturers who are involved in the implementation of the study programme (for example, the Annex does not contain information about the lecturers of the branch and the lecturers who also conduct this course, or part of it). Thus, the exact number of lecturers involved in the study programme is reflected in SER p.137, as well as Annex List of teaching staff involved in the field\_ENG.xlsx

The experts take the inconsistency of data - difference among source - as technical minor deficiency of data presentation, but also points out to interrelation of such technical minor inconsistencies to quality assurance system.,

During the reporting period, teaching staff improved their English language proficiency by passing an exam confirming at least B2 level proficiency (SER, section 3.4.1.). The experts were able to verify during the assessment visit interviews that the English language skills are sufficient for the majority of teaching staff members. Teaching staff members also completed the "Innovations in Higher Education" professional development programme for higher education pedagogues, earning certificates. The experts also obtained information during the assessment visit interviews that to ensure the currency of the curriculum, academic staff members integrate practical work and case studies into the coursework, utilise enterprise information, and engage in research within the field. One teacher owns her own enterprise. According to the SER, some of the lecturers employed in the study programme are simultaneously employed in scientific research work, which ensures the synergy of studies and research work. The main criteria for the selection of lecturers are: education (degree), professional experience and research and creative activity, communication skills. Overall, the qualifications of lecturers involved in the study programme's implementation meet regulatory requirements and align with the programme's objectives.

#### 2.4.2.

From the academic year 2020/2021 to 2022/2023, the number of academic staff in the study programme decreased from 56 to 46, a change attributed to the revision of programme content and the reduction of study courses (SER, section 3.4.2). As the experts learned during the interviews, another contributing factor was the completion of studies by students enrolled in Russian-language programmes, leading to the departure of professors exclusively teaching in Russian groups from BIA. Additionally, new lecturers with practical and scientific experience in economics, individuals holding doctorate degrees, and foreign experts were recruited. Compared to the previous accreditation period, the number of guest lecturers from various countries increased by 50%, including from Estonia, Germany, Bulgaria, and Turkey. Furthermore, two teaching staff members from Ukrainian universities are now involved in the study programme (SER, section 3.4.2).

The experts learned during the interviews that academic staff members' workload includes 100 hours per year for research and that support is available to attend international conferences, although requests are considered on an individual basis based on costs. A bonus of 250 EUR is paid for up to 3 scientific articles per year published in databases such as Scopus, WoS, or ERIC. Although academic staff members found this support for their research work appropriate, the experts recommend considering more motivating conditions for research and development work of academic staff members.

Thus it can be concluded that there have been changes in the composition and qualifications of the teaching staff since the previous accreditation (2022), but these changes affected positively the quality of the implementation of the study programme.

#### 2.4.3.

Not applicable

#### 2.4.4.

According to SER (p.64), scientific publications are published within the thematics of research areas related to the study field. Scientific publications contribute also to the improvement of the content of the study courses. From SER Section III Description of the PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof Annex "Study plan.pdf" it is concluded that there are 38 teachers conducting courses in the PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management". 27 or 71% hold the Doctoral (Dr.) or Phd degree, which is a noteworthy mentionable amount, while all of the rest - 11 teachers or 29% of all staff hold no lower than a master degree, which is also noteworthy. The SER Section II - Description of the Study Field - 2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field provides the Annex "CV management\_eng.7z", with 50 Biographies (CV) being all of teaching staff members of the whole study field under evaluation. Additionally the SER Section II - Description of the Study Field - 2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field Annex "3. List of teaching staff involved in the field\_ENG.xlsx" provides the review list of all 50 academic staff involved in teaching within both programmes of the field - given the really reviewable (transparent) nature of the list, clearly showing different parameters of the academic staff (academic degree, qualification, titles, election period, positions, language proficiencies, and courses taught across different programmes), it would have been and shall be beneficial in future also within the context of quality management system (research metrics and KPI) to add compiled information about the amount of each staff's scientific publications here in a break-down by years. All in all out of 50 study field teachers, 4 are professors; 10 are associate professors, including 5 guest associate professors; 22 are docents (assistant professors), including 8 guest assistant professors; 12 lecturers, including 10 guest-lecturers and 2 leading researchers.

The scientific publications of the academic staff teaching and involved in the programme are added to SER II - Description of the Study Field - 2.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation annex "List of UDV Scientific Publications\_2023.docx" and to a large part can be found at staff's CVs added within the SER Section II - Description of the Study Field - 2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field chapter of Biographies of the teaching staff members (Curriculum Vitae in Europass format) with an annex "CV management\_eng.7z". The compilation. A summarising compilation of the publication of the academic staff is added in the study field SER Section II 2.4. Annex "Summary of quantitative data on scientific research.pdf", including both aggregated data and also conveniently individual breakdown by teachers. Furthermore, to navigate through the list of publications, CVs in the breakdown of programmes, the annex "3. List of teaching staff involved in the field\_ENG.xlsx" under study field SER Section II - Description of the Study Field - 2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field is of much use. After a thorough review of information within these 4 mentioned sources as well as fragments of the SER, where this criteria is addressed (see SER p.47, 64, 65 and 77), the experts conclude that overall the criteria can be considered as satisfactory fulfilled, meaning, that each member of academic staff, including large majority of guest-staff, has published in peer-reviewed editions, including international editions and in most cases results being indexed in Scopus, WoS or Erih Plus, but also EBSCO, Copernicus and other. In some cases the criteria is very highly achieved showing BIA ability to attract, keep and motivate staff with and for high scientific publishing results. Overall, the scientific publishing results are rather smoothly contributed to by nearly each member of the academic staff.

At the same time, while reviewing, comparing, compiling and analysing the information the experts came across several minor, but worth-mentioning inconsistencies, within the four mentioned Annexes of SER - "List of UDV Scientific Publications\_2023.docx", "CV management\_eng.7z", "Summary of quantitative data on scientific research.pdf", and "3. List of teaching staff involved in the field\_ENG.xlsx" - a) in relation to data differing among the sources e.g. some of the teaching

staff within the staff list break-down between the two programmes do not appear in the publication list; b) publications shown in the List of UDV Scientific Publications are in several cases different (usually less) than shown in the respective CV; c) several of the added CVs are very visibly outdated.

#### 2.4.5.

According to the interviews, the academic staff collaborates in the implementation of the study programme through various channels. They actively participate in meetings of the study programme council, focusing on the programmes expected outcomes, the interconnection of study courses, necessary adjustments, and potential overlaps between courses. Additionally, regular meetings among academic staff members ensure continuous communication and collaboration, serving as platforms to discuss programme-related matters and promptly address emerging issues.

In Daugavpils, academic staff members are actively involved in reviewing course content in collaboration with their counterparts in Riga. To facilitate the implementation of courses in Daugavpils, teachers from Riga travel to Daugavpils, or alternatively, students from Daugavpils may join online lectures. This approach, with approximately one-fifth of courses delivered online for Daugavpils University, fosters an interconnected learning environment, ensuring consistency in degree attainment and content delivery across locations (SER, section 3.4.5; interviews). Thus, a mechanism for mutual cooperation of the teaching staff in the implementation of the study programme has been established, and it includes teaching staff from Daugavpils.

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

#### Conclusions:

The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme. There have been changes in the composition and qualifications of the teaching staff since the previous accreditation (2022), but these changes affected positively the quality of the implementation of the study programme. In particular, the number of teaching staff members decreased due to reduction of study courses. At the same time, more individuals holding doctorate degrees and foreign experts were recruited. During the reporting period teaching staff improved their English language proficiency and pedagogical skills. Members of academic staff, including a large majority of guest-staff, have published in peer-reviewed editions, including international editions and in most cases results being indexed in Scopus, WoS or Erih Plus, but also EBSCO, Copernicus and other. A mechanism for mutual cooperation of the teaching staff in the implementation of the study programme has been established, and it includes teaching staff from Daugavpils.

#### Strengths:

- 1) The qualifications of the teaching staff members involved in the study programme are generally high, with a significant percentage holding doctoral degrees, which aligns with the requirements for programme implementation and enables the achievement of programme aims and learning outcomes.
- 2) The implementation of the study programme is supported by regular meetings among academic staff members, ensuring effective communication and collaboration.
- 3) Mechanisms for collaboration between academic staff members from different locations, such as Daugavpils and Riga, have been established.

#### Weaknesses:

- 1) While there are mechanisms in place for supporting academic staff members' research activities,

such as incentives for publication in databases like Scopus, WoS, or ERIC, the experts suggest that more motivating conditions may be needed to further enhance research and development efforts.

2) There are several inconsistencies among data of the SER 3.4.1. and the four Annexes of staff, publications and CVs Annexes of SER - "List of UDV Scientific Publications\_2023.docx", "CV management\_eng.7z", "Summary of quantitative data on scientific research.pdf", and "3. List of teaching staff involved in the field\_ENG.xlsx" - a) in relation to data differing among the sources e.g. some of the teaching staff within the staff list break-down between the two programmes do not appear in the publication list; b) publications shown in the List of UDV Scientific Publications are in several cases different (usually less) than shown in the respective CV; c) several of the added CVs are very visibly outdated.

## **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 qualifications of teaching staff meet requirements and align with PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" objectives.

## **2.5. Assessment of the Compliance**

### **Requirements**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Annex "Compilation to the national education standard.docx" confirms that the study programme complies with Cabinet Regulation No. 305 "Noteikumi par valsts profesionālās augstākās izglītības standartu". Also, Civil and Environmental protection courses in 3CP amount

- 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

Provided doc ("UDV\_Manager of an enterprise.pdf") confirms that the PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" is compliant with Occupational Standard for Manager of an Enterprise, approved 18.09.2019.

- 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:** Fully compliant

The attached study course descriptions ('Kursa apraksti\_Eng.pdf') are prepared in Latvian and English. The descriptions comply with the regulations set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions. However, it would be necessary to review and update the literature sources in the study course description by adding more recent online materials and scientific publications.

- 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 ("Paraugš dipl\_pielikums UDV pl\_lat.pdf") complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 202 "Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību apliecinājošus dokumentus". Experts pay attention to technically formal errors: the sample of the diploma annex includes data about implementation language only in Latvian, but the PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" has Latvian and English flows. Additionally, the study type and form are shown only as full time, but the option for part-time studies should also be added.

- 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

Attached resumes ("CV Vadība\_lv.7z") and confirmation letter ("Par valsts valoda zināšanas UD\_virziens\_lv.pdf") verifies that state language proficiency is compliant with 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

Attached resumes of staff (“CV Vadība\_lv.7z”) and confirmation (“ Virziens par angļu valodas zināšanas.edoc”) verifies that 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 attached study agreement (“Ligums\_\_BAK\_UDV\_pl.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

Attached contract (“Ligums par parnemsanu.pdf”) confirms that the institution provides the possibility to continue studies within academic bachelor study programme “Business and Management” in Transportation and Telecommunication Institute (TSI). However, it would be beneficial to seek out cooperation with professional bachelor study programme as well.

- 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

BIA confirmation (“Saistibas\_Vadiba\_2\_programmas.pdf”) 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 college (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:** Fully compliant

PBASP 'Entrepreneurship Management' complies with regulatory enactments and requirements. Additionally, BIA needs to pay attention to study programme data and match data in all documents. Furthermore, BIA should ensure that it provides the very best options for students, including opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or at another

higher education institution or college if the implementation of the current study programme is terminated.

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

PBASP 'Entrepreneurship Management' aligns with the designated field of "Management, Administration and Management of Real Property" in Latvian higher education, as per Cabinet Regulations. Comprehensive documentation in the SER supports this compliance. The interrelation among programme parameters is well-analyzed. While technical parameters remain unchanged, content-related aspects, such as aims, tasks, and programme structure, have been updated to address previous recommendations. The PBASP 'Entrepreneurship Management' economic and social justification, especially in Daugavpils branch, is strong, with satisfactory student enrollment and employment indicators.

It was found that significant improvements have been made since the previous accreditation, including revisions to course descriptions and learning outcomes, incorporation of digital marketing and e-commerce courses, and closer collaboration with employers. Despite the PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" compliance with national regulations and positive feedback from employers, recommendations were made to integrate additional industry trends and skills. The study implementation methods were found to be student-centered, employing various techniques such as presentations, seminars, and practical exercises, though modernization of equipment for online participation was suggested. The internship component was deemed effective, with internships structured to align with learning outcomes and comprehensive assessment processes. However, the provision of internship opportunities could be further enhanced. Overall, the PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" objectives, including the attainment of a professional qualification and preparation for future professional activities, were found to be appropriately aligned with industry needs and national standards. Further development is recommended to integrate more novelties in the management field and enhance practical skills for application in the labour market. The facilities, including premises, laboratories, and the library, are deemed sufficient for the needs of the study programme in both Riga and Daugavpils. Multiple IT solutions and tools ensure equal study content between the branches, with well-developed e-learning resources such as Moodle appreciated by students. Financial resources mainly come from tuition fees, supported by a well-developed student financial support system. However, a concerning trend of decreasing student numbers poses a threat to the programmes sustainability.

The teaching staff involved in the PBASP 'Entrepreneurship Management' meets regulatory requirements, with 65% holding doctoral degrees and a variety of academic ranks represented. Measures are in place to mitigate negative impacts of staff changes, including recruitment of new lecturers and increased international collaboration. Academic staff engage in research and professional development, although further incentives for research are recommended. Collaboration among staff members ensures the cohesion of the study programme, with active participation in program councils and regular meetings to discuss curriculum coherence.

#### Strengths:

- 1) Premises, laboratories, library and other material provisions in BIA are sufficient for the needs of the Study Programme and for the achievement of its learning outcomes.
- 2) Well-developed e-resources and use of multiple IT solutions and tools ensures the effectiveness of the study process in the Riga and Daugavpils branches.
- 3) The qualifications of the teaching staff members involved in the study program are generally high, with a significant percentage holding doctoral degrees, which aligns with the requirements for

program implementation and enables the achievement of program aims and learning outcomes.

4) The implementation of the study program is supported by regular meetings among academic staff members, ensuring effective communication and collaboration.

5) Mechanisms for collaboration between academic staff members from different locations, such as Daugavpils and Riga, have been established.

6) The basic disciplines such as finance and economics are well established in the study programme.

7) Various student-centred learning and assessment methods are utilised in lectures, including real business case studies. Students participating in lectures online are successfully integrated in the learning process.

Weaknesses:

1) Several elements of the Diploma Sample and its Supplement especially, the qualification to be obtained, the study language, and also the study form is inconsistently mentioned in various sources (SER p.114, p.116, the Annexes "Sample Diploma with appendix UDV\_full\_eng.pdf" and "Sample Diploma with appendix UDV\_part\_latv.pdf").

2) Lack of recent online materials and scientific publications in the literature list of the course descriptions.

3) The students of the PBASP "Entrepreneurship Management" have a limited possibility to get acquainted with specialised IT solutions and software, used in contemporary businesses.

4) Some lecture halls do not have the most modern equipment for blended learning opportunities.

5) While there are mechanisms in place for supporting academic staff members' research activities, such as incentives for publication in databases like Scopus, WoS, or ERIC, more motivating conditions may be needed to further enhance research and development efforts.

6) There are several inconsistencies among data of the SER 3.4.1. and the four Annexes of staff, publications and CVs Annexes of SER - "List of UDV Scientific Publications\_2023.docx", "CV management\_eng.7z", "Summary of quantitative data on scientific research.pdf", and "3. List of teaching staff involved in the field\_ENG.xlsx" - a) in relation to data differing among the sources e.g. some of the teaching staff within the staff list break-down between the two programmes do not appear in the publication list; b) publications shown in the List of UDV Scientific Publications are in several cases different (usually less) than shown in the respective CV; c) several of the added CVs are very visibly outdated.

## **Evaluation of the study programme "Entrepreneurship Management"**

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

## **2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Entrepreneurship Management"**

### **Short-term recommendations**

1. To clarify, double-check and make sure that all elements of the Diploma and its Annex (degree, language, format) is fully clearly consistent among sources (its inconsistently used in SER various sources p.114., p.116 the Annexes "Sample Diploma with appendix UDV\_full\_eng.pdf" and "Sample Diploma with appendix UDV\_part\_latv.pdf mention").

2. Review and update literature sources in the study course description by adding more recent online materials and scientific publications.

### **Long-term recommendations**

- |   |
|---|
| 1. Provide students with a possibility to get acquainted with specialised, study content related IT solutions and software, used in contemporary businesses.                                      |
| 2. Continue development of the programme to integrate more novelties in the management field and practical skills for application in the labour market into the content of study courses.         |
| 3. Adoption of more modern equipment is recommended to ensure a seamless blended learning experience.   |
| 4. Consider more motivating conditions for research and development work of academic staff members.   |
| 5. Consider contracting with another higher education institution for a comparable professional bachelor's study programme that students can pursue if the current study programme is terminated. |

## II - "Business Management and Administration" ASSESSMENT

### II - "Business Management and Administration" ASSESSMENT

#### 2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

##### Analysis

2.1.1. BIA submitted for accreditation an academic Academic Master study programme "Business Management and Administration" 45345 (AMASP "Business Management and Administration"), which previously was implemented as a professional master study programme. The new academic study programme is aligned well with the study field "Management, administration and real estate". It is also in compliance with the state education standard (annex: Compliance with the national Education Standard(3).docx). The name of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" is formulated according to the international practices and implies a broad scope of management and business administration related competences provided to the students.

2.1.2. SER (p. 82-84) specifies that the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" will be implemented in two lengths: full-time studies, in Latvian and English (2 years) with 120 credit points (hereafter - CP) and full-time studies in Latvian and English (2 years, 6 months) with 150 CP. Based on the information gathered during the meetings (especially with the BIA's administration and Study Feld and Programme Directors) the experts concluded that implementation options, locations and language are reasonable, justified and well thought off.

To be admitted to the 120 CP length, a person shall have obtained an academic bachelor's degree in economics and management, a professional bachelor's degree, or professional qualification in business, management, marketing, finance, and/or economics.

A person is qualified for admission to the 150 CP length if he/she has an academic bachelor's degree or professional qualification in other fields of education. At the time of submitting the documents, the candidate must submit a report on the research topic of the planned master's thesis and participate in discussions with the head of the study field.

Both 120 CP and 150 CP length in English additionally require candidates to have at least a B2 level of English. Entrants to the 150 CP length have to complete 60 CP preparatory courses, which the experts believe are relevant and sufficient to study in the AMASP "Business Management and Administration". In general, the BIA's admission requirements are regulated by the Admission Rules, which are developed in line with the relevant regulatory requirements (as described in SER p. 87) and approved annually at the BIA's Senate meeting Admission Rule are publicly available at

<https://bsa.edu.lv/index.php/en/admission/admission-process.html>. The experts concluded that the admission requirements are in line with the level of studies and are a sufficient prerequisite to reach the aim of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration".

Currently, the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" is implemented in two locations – Riga (in English only) and in Daugavpils (in Latvian only) (SER, p. 83-84). During the assessment visit, BIA administration did not indicate that there are any changes planned in terms of the location or language of implementation. After graduating from the AMASP "Business Management and Administration", students obtain a master's degree in Social Sciences in Business Management and Administration.

The AMASP "Business Management and Administration" corresponds to the education classification code 45345, with the last three numbers (345) standing for Management and administration according to the classification of Latvian education (Cabinet 322), which can be accessed here: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju> (only in Latvian).

The analysis of the indicators that describe the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" revealed that the title, code, degree to be obtained, the aims, the tasks, and the learning outcomes (the study results) and admission requirements are mutually compatible and interrelated, with some reviews in the aim, objectives and learning outcomes needed (see discussion below).

SER (p. 85) indicates that apart from the transition from a professional to an academic master's study programme, some changes have been made in the wording of the objectives, tasks, and study results to be achieved by the AMASP "Business Management and Administration". The experts acknowledge and appreciate the dedication and efforts of the study field and AMASP "Business Management and Administration" director to review the aim, tasks, and learning outcomes – LOs (referred to as the results in the SER) of the Study Programme. The current aim, tasks, and LOs of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" are to the most extent coherent, in line with regulations and the level of studies. Saying so, the experts also acknowledge that some further changes and improvements could be done.

The SER (p. 81) states that "the aim of the academic master's study programme "Business Management and Administration" is to provide students with academic education, the highest level of professional knowledge and the skills necessary for the labour market, competences in management and administration, to develop research skills in the field of management, to prepare management specialists whose knowledge and skills enable them to manage companies or organisations, to give direction to doctoral studies". Reviewing the SER and after the discussions with the stakeholders during the assessment visit, the experts noted that the aim of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" ("the highest level of professional knowledge and the skills") might be too ambitious for the level and previous knowledge of the entrants to the programme; the current curriculum (annex: Master\_plan\_Eng.docx) of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" does not balance the content between management and administration, it might be insufficient "to prepare management specialists ...to manage companies or organisations"; also, a great emphasis on scientific research in the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" curriculum is not sufficiently reflected in the aim of the study programme. The experts recommend reviewing the formulation of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" aim.

Besides the aim, the SER (p. 81-82) also indicates 4 tasks and 10 LOs of this study AMASP "Business Management and Administration". The experts concluded that the tasks of the Study Programme should be reviewed and better matched with its curriculum. It was not clear why Task 2 only indicates knowledge and research in marketing management, strategic management, and leadership. The tasks should more clearly indicate scientific research, which constitutes about half of the current curriculum (also see section 2.2.1 of this report). SER also indicates a total of 10 LOs (the results) of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration", which are grouped into knowledge (2 LOs), skills (LOs), and competencies (5 LOs). In contrast to the tasks, the LOs of the

Study Programme put a (too) great emphasis on scientific research. The experts agreed that formulations of the LOs should be reviewed to balance scientific research and business/administration content; also, LOs should better reflect the “administration” part of the study programme. The experts believe that well-defined aim, tasks, and LOs of the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” are important to BIA considering its growing numbers of international students. The experts have some considerations regarding the formulation of learning outcomes and their mapping annex: Mapping\_master.xlsx to study courses. E.g., as presented in the annex (Mapping\_master.xlsx) of the SER, more LOs of the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” are linked to the Internship than to the Master Thesis, which is the final and the most complex task of the Study Programme.. See also section 2.2.1 of this report on the further discussion regarding mapping LOs of the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” to the study courses and curriculum of the study programme.

2.1.3. Previously, the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” was implemented as a professional master study programme, and the experts carefully examined if such a change meets the legal requirements, is well designed and supported. During the assessment visit, the experts had received sufficient assurance that the transition from a professional to an academic study programme was well thought out, discussed with stakeholders (teaching staff, students) and supported with the changing needs of local and international entrants and the labour market. Some of the relevant changes which were made included: 1) introduction of the new study courses dedicated to scientific research and academic writing (Modern scientific research methodology and data analysis, Academic writing, Scientific research work), which is expected in an academic master study programme (see section 2.2.1 of this report for further analysis); 2) a mandatory requirements for the students to participate in at least one scientific conference with a presentation and at least one publication in the collection of articles of the conference before defending their master thesis (p. 93 of SER); 3) replacement of previous practice oriented Internships with a new scientific research oriented 9 CP Internship (p. 93, 99-100 of SER and section 2.2.4 of this report); 4) a more internationally focused approach towards scientific research of academic staff with noticeable improvements in quality and quantity of scientific outcomes. The experts has also confirmed that the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” complies with the State Educational Standards, as defined in Regulations of Cabinet of Ministers No. 240 of 13 May 2014 on the State academic Education Standard (annex: Compliance with the national Education Standard(3).docx). As discussed in SER (p. 92) the curriculum of the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” includes the required CP for compulsory and limited choice study courses as well as master thesis. The compulsory section also has a course on “Civil defence and environmental protection”, which is obligatory for all students with no prior CP in these studies in Latvia.

2.1.4. SER (p. 89-90) discusses economic and/or social justification of the AMASP “Business Management and Administration”, however the experts had some considerations due to the generally decreasing entrants to higher education in Latvia. During the assessment visit, the BIA management as well as study field director presented a clear and supported approach regarding the segment of entrants to the AMASP “Business Management and Administration”. In this respect, BIA balances Latvian and international students, as well as targets the adult population, especially in Daugavpils, which gave the experts sufficient assurance about the need of the AMASP “Business Management and Administration”. During the assessment visit, the experts learned that graduates of the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” are highly regarded in the labour market, and graduates easily find a place of employment. The importance and appreciation for the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” is especially evident in Daugavpils branch and was emphasised by students, graduates and business and public sector representatives. Looking into the entrants, graduates, and drop-outs dynamics, the experts raise some concerns about the decreasing

student numbers and therefore the long-term financial sustainability of the AMASP “Business Management and Administration”. The issues with decreasing/fluctuating number of entrants and high drop-outs remain an issue from the previous accreditation. According to the Annex (tables\_statistics.docx) on student dynamics, there was a drop in the number of entrants in the 2022/2023 academic year in both locations (with 29 entrants in Riga, if compared to 39 and more entrants in previous years, and 3 entrants in Daugavpils, if compared to 20-25 in previous years). Moreover, in the 2021/2022 academic year, the number of drop-outs in Riga was 21 persons (compared to 41 graduates), while in Daugavpils drop-outs amounted to 15 students (compared to 15 graduates). The AMASP “Business Management and Administration” director explained that, despite many inquiries about the studies, such a decrease was influenced by the results of the previous accreditation (the study field and relevant study programmes were accredited for 2 years). The experts also appreciate the long-term study programme portfolio management approach of the BIA management, allowing financially supporting and running less numerous study programmes. Generally, BIA is a private educational institution that operates on the principle of self-financing. Study fees are covered by the student's personal or legal entities' funds. According to the finance director, BIA is profitable during most of the financial years.

2.1.5. Not applicable

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

Conclusions:

The BIA has submitted for the accreditation an AMASP “Business Management and Administration”, which represents a change from the previously implemented professional master programme. Transition to the academic programme was clearly explained and supported, some related changes in its aims, tasks, and results were made. The programme has 4 tasks and 10 learning outcomes. The analysis of the indicators that describe the Study Programme revealed that the degree to be obtained, the aims, the tasks, the learning outcomes are mutually compatible, yet some reviews in formulation and focus are needed. The admission requirements are in line with the level of studies and are the sufficient prerequisite to reach the aim of the programme. The programme is implemented in two lengths in Latvian (currently in Daugavpils only) and English (in Riga only): full-time studies, (2 years) with 120 CP and full-time studies (2 years, 6 months) with 150 CP. The programme is highly regarded in the labour market, especially in Daugavpils. However, the number of entrants decreased sharply in the 2022/2023 academic year, and the number of drop-outs remains high, questioning financial sustainability of the programme.

Strengths:

1. Transition to the academic master study programme is well thought about, designed and supported by the stakeholders and the needs of the labour market.
2. The study programme is highly regarded in the labour market, especially in Daugavpils.

Weaknesses:

1. The aim, tasks, and learning outcomes of the study programme are not fully clear and coherent in the context of the transition to the AMASP “Business Management and Administration”.
2. Decrease in entrants and a high number of drop-outs is a threat to a long term sustainability of the programme.

## 2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

### Analysis

2.2.1. The task 2 of AMASP "Business Management and Administration" (page 81) states that the programme is aimed to "to prepare competitive and highly qualified specialists in the economic and business sector with in-depth and/or expanded knowledge in the field of management science for the Latvian and foreign labour market and research: marketing management, strategic management and leadership". However, once the changes in the curriculum of the study programme were made (transitioning to an academic master study programme) there were no economics related courses left in the study curriculum. And in contrary, such courses as Financial Management of the Company, General quality management, or Human Resources in a Global Environment seem not to be needed.

Generally, the tasks of the programme under-state administration and especially scientific research aspects of the programme. Task 4."to prepare competitive managers for the labor market at regional, national and international levels" implies development of administration knowledge, skills and competences which, to the experts opinion, is not sufficiently present in the study programme. The experts believe that ability to plan and perform scientific research using various scientific methods, to communicate its findings and to be able to continue studies in doctoral programmes should be among the tasks of the academic master study programme. Saying so, the experts noted that the LOs of the programme place a great emphasis on the scientific knowledge, skills and competences of the students. Therefore the experts concluded that paragraph 16 of the Cabinet Regulations No. 240 stating, that "16. The content of the master's study programme ensures the achievement of learning outcomes that include the acquisition of in-depth theoretical knowledge and the development of research skills and abilities." will be satisfied (once the programme is actually implemented) while the tasks of the programme should be revised.

The experts also found that translation of the tasks and LOs of AMASP "Business Management and Administration" to English needs a revision. For example, formulation of Taks 3 and LO2 of Competences in English is not clear. Clearly formulated tasks are important for attracting international students which is among the strategic directions of the programme.

In regard to LOs of a programme, the experts believe that they should be implementable (achieved) during the studies. Therefore the experts question if LO2 and LO4 of the Competences may be achievable during the master studies as they talk about students ability to adapt to the labour market (after the studies) and be able to continue research during doctoral studies. Moreover, the LO4 of the Competences sounds very ambitious from an organisational perspective as it targets students' ability to conduct scientific studies in internationally funded projects and contract works. This is a big dedication for the BIA to provide all students with such possibilities. LO1 of Knowledge only emphasises the knowledge in the management process of an enterprise. This questions how the aim of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" to develop "...the highest level of professional knowledge and the skills necessary for the labor market, competences in management and administration" will be achieved.

The experts concluded that the curriculum of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration", as listed in the Annex (Master\_plan\_Eng.docx) rather well represents the needs of the labour market as the renewal involved social partners (confirmed during the visit). Additionally, after the renewal the curriculum includes such up to the market courses as Digital Market Strategies, Corporate Social Responsibility and Business Ethics, etc. Furthermore, as it is explained in pages 93-94 of the SER, within the framework of the study courses, current affairs of the area, as well as scientific trends, challenges, problems and possible solutions are examined. This was confirmed during the meetings with students and graduates. However, the experts also noted that administration is merely present in the study curriculum. Also, some study courses (Innovation Management and Sustainable development and Corporate Social Responsibility and Business Ethics)

seem to have overlapping topics (based on their descriptions in the Annex (Description\_of study courses.pdf) of the SER. Also, content of the study courses could better reflect issues and topics relevant to contemporary business. For example, the study course on Corporate Social Responsibility and Business Ethics should include the current trends in the sustainability reporting and assurance in the EU and how that impacts the ways business is conducted. Also, the description of the study course Management Information Systems seems rather theoretical and does not reflect which practical IT solutions and systems are studied.

Looking into the study course descriptions the experts concluded that overall the learning outcomes at the course level are correctly linked to the learning outcomes at the programme level however, the quality assurance of the programme is not based on learning outcomes. Course descriptions do not contain the verification methods of learning outcomes.

2.2.2. According to SER the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" prepares specialists who are competitive in the international labor market, developing their abilities and motivating lifelong learning. (SER, p. 95). The Master's thesis consists of a theoretical part, which is largely based on literature research, and based on the review of selected master's theses during the assessment visit, the level of the thesis is satisfactory. They contain research parts. Only the research methods used in the thesis should be explained in more detail. However, the general picture of the thesis is positive and it meets the requirements of an academic programme. The research is related to current challenges in management and administration. The experts concluded that students' scientific work is at a high level (considering that up to now the professional programme was implemented). Students are required to write an academic article as part of the Academic Writing course. It is mandatory to participate in a scientific conference before students are allowed to defend their thesis. The literature used for Master's theses and course descriptions make limited use of international literature and international sources.

2.2.3. The study courses` descriptions (annex: Description\_of study courses.pdf) contain implementation methods, including, forms of assessments and its structure - seminars, home assignments, presentations, debates, case studies, a.o. (see also e.g. BIA internal Regulations for Evaluation of the Study Results at [https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/Regulations\\_Evaluation\\_Study.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/Regulations_Evaluation_Study.pdf) and forms and methods for evaluation of study results at [https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/Regulations\\_Evaluation\\_Study.pdf](https://bsa.edu.lv/docs/nolikums/Regulations_Evaluation_Study.pdf), pp.3-4), and the learning outcomes that are linked to the learning outcomes of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration", mapping: Mapping\_master.xlsx. Passing the course - achieving the learning outcomes at course level - guarantees the achievement of the learning outcomes at AMASP "Business Management and Administration" level. However, the course descriptions do not include methods for assessing the learning outcomes, which limits their practical application.

A student-centred approach is used, based on individual feedback, different learning methods and mutual respect (SER, p. 98), which experts find efficient and well-working. The master's thesis summarises the achievement of the learning outcomes by the students and their level is appropriate. Innovative solutions are mostly based on the technical side, there is a lack of innovative ways to offer programmes such as tutoring and mentoring. During the visit and meeting with teachers and students in Riga and Daugavpils branches, as well as by reviewing the provided course descriptions, the experts observed that teachers and students focus mainly on course contents and methods, and not so much on the learning outcomes or study results. Focus on learning outcomes (study results) must be strengthened in various ways (including via course descriptions, classes, mapping seminars among staff) also as it is becoming more and more a requirement in higher education area in Europe.

lectures are delivered in a blended format. This allows students who cannot attend face-to-face lectures to participate online. The option for online participation is particularly appreciated by

employed students with family responsibilities and those travelling or working abroad. Online learning opportunities are predominantly utilised during evening classes on weekdays, while face-to-face lectures are typically held on weekends. During the visits with graduates and students the experts learned that some students choose to study online for the entire duration of their studies. Recordings are available for missed lectures. Therefore, considering the decreasing number of students in Daugavpils branch, yet an existent need for master degree in regions and smaller towns, the experts recommend to consider introducing fully distant online studies.

2.2.4. As the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” transitions from a professional to an academic study programme, major changes in the scope and content of the Internship were made. The new curriculum of the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” has a single 9 CP Internship (named “practice” in the SER, section 3.2.4, p. 99-100), which is oriented towards the development of students’ scientific skills. According to SER the purpose of the scientific research practice is to systematise, strengthen and expand theoretical and practical knowledge and skills in the selected study field, prepare for the formulation of the problem of the Master's research. (SER, p. 99). Based on the course description for the Internship (provided in the Annex “Practice.ENG.docx” of SER), an internship takes place in a company where a student collects data and solves relevant business problems. However, based on the information collected during the assessment visit (during meetings with the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” director and teaching staff), the experts learned that the Internship is aimed at exploring scientific literature (in the library), and students are asked to conduct a literature review. Acknowledging that the new internship was not yet implemented in practice, the experts still note that the aim and the content of the Internship in the course description should match the teachers' understanding about it. The experts acknowledge that a research-oriented internship (especially dedicated to the literature review and research methodology development) is an innovative approach to the Internship (which is generally not required in academic study programmes). Such an internship could be a great value-added to the academic master study programme. However, the study field and AMASP “Business Management and Administration” directors should ensure that work done by the students during the internship and developing master studies (as well as in the other courses) do not overlap to a significant extent (if the same research problem is being explored). If the internship were conducted on literature review, library resources (especially scientific databases) are sufficient and available mostly in English in both Riga and Daugavpils branches. Based on the discussions during the assessment visit with graduates and students, international students are able to find places for much more extensive internships under a professional master study programme either in their country or in Latvia. Therefore, the experts concluded that the provision of internship in Latvian and foreign language meets the requirements of the AMASP “Business Management and Administration”.

2.2.5. Not applicable

2.2.6. The experts was able to review a list of the topics of the Master thesis in the Annex “Master Thesis2.pdf” of SER concluding that the theses are developed on a diverse topics in multiple fields related to the content of the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” (especially marketing and strategy), however there was no administration related topics. Some master theses were also brought in for the expert review during the assessment visit to BIA. The experts noted the high quality and scientific orientation of the example thesis. They also noted that, although the thesis were developed under the professional master study programme, more than half of them had a separate and rather well developed section dedicated to scientific research methodology (for the professional master study programme). Moreover, all master students are required to present the results of master thesis research in scientific events before they are allowed to defend their thesis. All this brings reasonable assurance that the scientific research has already been a part of the

AMASP “Business Management and Administration” studies, which will be further developed in the academic study programme. However, the experts suggests that Master Thesis in an academic study programme should have a dedicated and more extensive research methodology part, including research hypothesis and their testing criteria, well explained and supported research methods, research scope and limitations. A discussion of the findings in the results part of the Master Thesis would also be expected.

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

Conclusions:

The content of the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” generally is up-to-date, the content of the study programmes/modules is interrelated and complementary, corresponds to the objectives of the study programme and ensures the achievement of learning outcomes and meets the needs of industry, the labour market and scientific trends. However, the administration part is not visible in the programme. The award of a degree is based on the achievements and knowledge of the respective field of science or artistic creation. However, the learning outcomes are not used as the main framework of the degree programme, e.g. the course descriptions do not include methods for assessing the learning outcomes, teachers and students do not see the learning outcomes as the goals to be achieved during the course. The new academic study programme introduced a 9 CP Internship which is yet to be implemented. The experts noted differences in the course description and Programme management’s perception about the aim and content of the Internship. Currently master theses are developed on diverse topics (especially marketing and strategy), however administration related topics are scarce; research methodology part, which was already present in some of the thesis under the professional master programme should be more pronounced under the new academic study programme.

Strengths:

1. asks, learning outcomes and study curriculum of AMASP “Business Management and Administration” were reviewed and updated while transitioning to an academic master study programme;
2. Scientific work of students is already in line with requirements of an academic study programme - Master Thesis thesis are scientific research oriented, before graduation students are required to participate in a scientific conference.
3. Answers to the current challenges that are visible in the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” and in the thesis produced by the students
4. Scientific research oriented practice is a value added in the AMASP “Business Management and Administration”

Weaknesses:

1. Tasks and learning outcomes of the programme are not fully coherent and need a revision. The tasks should better reflect the scientific research aspect of the programme.
2. The administration part is not visible in the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” both in study curriculum and in the topics of Master Thesis.
3. Learning outcomes are not perceived by students and teachers as the most important framework of the programme and courses.
4. The aim and tasks of the new 9 CP Internship are not clear. The course description and the explanations of the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” director and teaching staff about the Internship are not in line.

5. Formulation of the tasks and LOs of AMASP “Business Management and Administration” in English is not clear.

### **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:** Fully compliant

There are various strong (and some very strong) elements showing BIA`s effort, tradition, culture and results for scientific upkeep of the master study programme to be academic, e.g. BIA`s annual conference, master thesis relation to it, BIA`s teaching staff research support, etc. Given the visible improvement work by BIA including one on the development of the academic master programme, including also the strengths of the programme in relation to science and research development, experts come to conclusion that this study programme for obtaining a master's degree is clearly based on the achievements and findings of the respective field of science or field of artistic creation. The improvement aspects mentioned by experts also in the format of shortcomings do not affect the compliance of the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” to the criterion, but are for enhancement.

### **2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme**

#### **Analysis**

2.3.1. Based on the information provided in SER (p. 102-105) and collected during the assessment visit as well as after the visual verification (by actually visiting the premises, library, laboratories, dormitory, etc.) the experts was assured that classrooms, laboratories, library and other material provision both in Riga and in Daugavpils are sufficient for the needs of the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” and for the achievement of its learning outcomes. BIA premises are accessible to the people with special needs. The experts also noted that the literature listed in the descriptions of the study courses is rather outdated (while the high number of total books and other reading materials available in paper and online). Despite availability in BIA and National Library of Latvia, most of the study course descriptions (as presented in the Annex Description\_of\_study\_courses.pdf) miss to include e-resources (for example, compulsory courses Financial management of the company, General Quality Management), while scientific papers are only referrer to as “other information sources” (without the references to particular articles), which would be expected in the academic master study programme. Yet, it has to be mentioned that e-resources are well utilised in some of the study courses (for example, study course Innovations management and Sustainable Development). The experts acknowledged well-developed e-learning resources (Moodle) which are sufficient for implementation of this programme and appreciated by students and graduates. Existing practices (e.g. videos of lectures) and experience of the teaching staff create a solid background for the further development of distant studies, which is currently a practice with Daugavpils branch. The experts suggest that further development of e-learning resources could involve quality assurance and/or content standardisation policies and measures to further build on this BIA’s competitive advantage and even further increase student satisfaction.

2.3.2. Non applicable

2.3.3. Financial resources for the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” are mainly obtained from tuition fees (as presented in p. 104 of the SER). Tuition fees are covered by students'

personal funds or legal entities. During the assessment visit meetings with students and graduates the experts learned that BIA has a well developed, clearly presented and practically working financial support system, which is appreciated by students. A few students/graduates mentioned using it. However, the experts noted a downward trend in the number of students (see the Annex tables\_statistics.docx) in the AMASP “Business Management and Administration” (especially in Daugavpils), which the experts perceives as the threat to the financial sustainability of the programme.

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

### Conclusions

Premises, laboratories, library and other material provisions available to the students in Riga and in Daugavpils are sufficient for the needs of the study programme. The experts noted that literature resources in some study course descriptions are rather outdated, and do not include e-resources and scientific papers, which would be expected in an academic master study programme. E-learning resources (Moodle) are well developed and appreciated by students. Financial resources for the study programme are mainly obtained from tuition fees. BIA has a well developed student financial support system, which is known and appreciated by students. The number of students in the study programme is relatively decreasing, which is a threat to the sustainability of the programme.

### Strengths

1. Premises, laboratories, library and other material provisions in BIA are sufficient for the needs of the Study Programme and for the achievement of its learning outcomes.
2. Well developed and appreciated by students e-learning resources.

### Weaknesses

1. The AMASP “Business Management and Administration” does not include library’s e-resources and scientific papers in some study course descriptions, which would be expected in an academic master study programme.

## **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

Premises, library, e-resources and other material provisions in BIA in general are sufficient for the needs of the study programme and for the achievement of its learning outcomes.

## **2.4. Teaching Staff**

### **Analysis**

2.4.1. The AMASP “Business Management and Administration” is being implemented by 31 academic staff members. Based on the information provided in Annexes (Proffesors.pdf and Master\_plan\_Eng.docx) of SER and discussed during the meetings, the composition of teaching staff ensures the quality of studies. Teaching staff of this Programme involves 4 professors (13%), 5

associate professors (16%), 11 docents (35%), 4 visiting docents (13%), 1 lecturer (3%), 5 guest lecturers (16%) and one leading researcher (3%). All academic staff members have significant practical experience in relation to the topics and study courses included in the study programme, appropriate education, and pedagogical experience. 5 members of academic staff of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" have the right of an Social science expert of the Latvian Science Council. The AMASP "Business Management and Administration" has 19 members of teaching staff who are elected in BIA, while another 8 Latvian and 4 international teaching staff members are employed under the fixed term employment contracts. BIA branch in Daugavpils has 6 full time members of teaching staff, while the others commute between the campuses and/or provide classes online. According to SER, BIA has the necessary academic staff to ensure the implementation of AMASP "Business Management and Administration" in Latvian and English. During the assessment visit to BIA, the experts got sufficient assurance, that academic staff involved in the study programme both in Riga and Daugavpils is experienced to implement the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" and complies with the regulatory requirements.

2.4.2. The selection of teaching staff takes place according to the needs of the implementation of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" in order to ensure the quality of studies and the connection between students' theoretical knowledge and the development of practical skills. The changes made during the reporting period were aimed to ensure the quality of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" implementation in both Riga and Daugavpils branches and in both Latvian and English languages. For example, 4 international members of academic staff who were included into the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" mainly teach study courses in English, reflecting on the recommendations on the previous accreditation. Some new members of teaching staff joined the study programme to strengthen business topics (i.e. General quality management) or scientific research skills. Moreover, the academic staff of the Programme regularly improves their qualifications. During the self-evaluation period, teaching staff have increased their knowledge of the English language, they also attended the professional development programme on innovations in higher education. Annexes ( Knowledge of the state language.pdf and Direction for English language skills.edoc) of SER indicate that all members of academic staff are native in Latvian or have the C1 level (for those who teach in Latvian) or English level B2 (for those who teach in English). During the meetings academic staff both in Riga and Latvia assured that BIA provides support and financing for most of the personal development and scientific work needs. The academic staff highly appreciates possibilities provided by BIA.

2.4.3. Non applicable

2.4.4. The staff publish regularly and fulfil the criterion of having published in the last six years - members of academic staff, including a large majority of guest-staff, have published in peer-reviewed editions, including international editions and in most cases results being indexed in Scopus, WoS or Erih Plus, but also EBSCO, Copernicus and other (Annexes of SER - "List of UDV Scientific Publications\_2023.docx", "CV management\_eng.7z", "Summary of quantitative data on scientific research.pdf", and "3. List of teaching staff involved in the field\_ENG.xlsx"). In addition to scientific publishing, a large part of the staff, especially in Riga, has practical experience which reflects well with the BIA pursue of a strategy of employing practitioners as teaching staff, which has a positive effect on the scientific and practical sides and their balanced synergy of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration". The proportion of international publications is high, but the number of employees who regularly publish internationally could be increased.

2.4.5. There is a mechanism for mutual cooperation - teachers share their experiences at faculty meetings and also at internal conferences. The AMASP "Business Management and Administration"

director is in regular dialogue with the teaching staff. Student evaluations are also used for this dialogue. During the assessment visit, the teaching staff confirmed their knowledge and understanding of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration". The academic staff collaborates in the implementation of the study program through various channels. They actively participate in meetings of the study program council, focusing on the program's expected outcomes, the interconnection of study courses, necessary adjustments, and potential overlaps between courses. Additionally, regular meetings among academic staff members ensure continuous communication and collaboration, serving as platforms to discuss program-related matters and promptly address emerging issues. In Daugavpils, academic staff members are actively involved in reviewing course content in collaboration with their counterparts in Riga. To facilitate the implementation of courses in Daugavpils, teachers from Riga travel to Daugavpils, or alternatively, students from Daugavpils may join online lectures (SER, 3.4.5. p.109 and experts meeting with BIA staff in Riga and Daugavpils).

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

Conclusions:

Academic staff involved in the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" are experienced and complies with the regulatory requirements. BIA takes efficient measures to ensure a qualitative composition of academic staff to implement the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" in Riga and Daugavpils. Teaching staff have possibilities to improve their qualification and participate in scientific activities and highly appreciate it. Members of academic staff, including a large majority of guest-staff, have published in peer-reviewed editions, including international editions and in most cases results being indexed in Scopus, WoS or Erih Plus, but also EBSCO, Copernicus and others. A mechanism for internal cooperation among academic staff is in place and manifests at faculty meetings and also at internal seminars, workshops and conferences with the programme director being present and coordinating the cooperation.

Strengths:

1. Academic staff involved in the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" are experienced and complies with the regulatory requirements.
2. The composition of the academic staff enables to efficiently implement the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" in both Riga and Daugavpils branches and in both Latvian and English languages.
3. Teaching staff understand the general framework and logics of the new AMASP "Business Management and Administration" supporting BIA's readiness for the change.

Weaknesses:

1. Data on the teaching staff and its competences is not clearly and coherently reported. There are several inconsistencies among data of the four staff, publications and CVs Annexes of SER - "List of UDV Scientific Publications\_2023.docx", "CV management\_eng.7z", "Summary of quantitative data on scientific research.pdf", and "3. List of teaching staff involved in the field\_ENG.xlsx" - a) in relation to data differing among the sources e.g. some of the teaching staff within the staff list break-down between the two programmes do not appear in the publication list; b) publications shown in the List of UDV Scientific Publications are in several cases different (usually less) that shown in the respective CV; c) several of the added CVs are very visibly outdated.

## 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 requirements for the teaching staff including the visiting academic staff are well met, the staff showing relevant and compliant qualification respective to both, the regulatory norms, as well as to thematics of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration".

## 2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

### Requirements

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Annex ("Compliance with the national Education Standard(3).docx") confirms that AMASP "Business Management and Administration" complies with Cabinet Regulation No.240 "Noteikumi par valsts akadēmiskās izglītības standartu"

- 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:** Not relevant

- 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:** Fully compliant

Attached study course descriptions ("Description\_of study courses.pdf") are prepared in Latvian and English. Descriptions complies with regulations set forth in Law on Higher Education Institutions. However, BIA needs to review the translation of the aim, tasks, and learning outcomes, as well as the study course descriptions, to English. Additionally, BIA should review the content of the study courses to integrate issues and topics relevant to contemporary business.

- 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 ("Paraugs dipl\_pielikums UDV pl\_lat.pdf") complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 202 "Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību apliecinājošus dokumentus". Experts pay attention to technically formal errors: the sample of the diploma annex includes data about implementation language only in Latvian, but the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" has Latvian and English flows.

- 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:** Fully compliant

Annex ("Profesori.pdf") confirms that involved in implementation of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" are 2 professors and 4 associate professors.

- 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

Attached resumes ("CV Vadība\_lv.7z") and confirmation letter ("Par valsts valoda zināšanas UD\_virziens\_lv.pdf") verifies that state language proficiency is compliant with 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

Attached resumes of staff ("CV Vadība\_lv.7z") and confirmation ("Virziens par angļu valodas zināšanas.edoc") verifies that 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 attached study agreement ("Līgums\_\_BAK\_UDV\_pl.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

Attached contract (“Ligums par parnemsanu.pdf”) confirms that the institution provides the possibility to continue studies within academic master study programme “Business and Management” in Transportation and Telecommunication Institute (TSI).

- 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

BIA confirmation (“Saistibas\_Vadiba\_2\_programmas.pdf”) 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 college (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:** Fully compliant

AMASP 'Business Management and Administration' complies with regulatory enactments and requirements. Additionally, BIA needs to pay attention to study programme data and match data in all documents. However, BIA needs to review the translation of the aim, tasks, and learning outcomes, as well as the study course descriptions, into English. BIA also needs to integrate issues and topics relevant to contemporary business into the content of the study courses.

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

BIA has applied for accreditation of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration," transitioning from a professional master's programme to academic master study programme. The transition rationale is clear and supported, with adjustments made to aims, tasks, and outcomes. The programme comprises 4 tasks and 10 learning outcomes, deemed mutually compatible but requiring some formulation and focus refinement. Admission requirements align with the programme's level and objectives. Implemented in Latvian and English, the programme offers full-time studies of 2 years (120 CP) and 2 years, 6 months (150 CP). While highly valued in the Daugavpils labor market, a sharp decline in entrants in the 2022/2023 academic year and high drop-out rates raise concerns about financial sustainability. The AMASP “Business Management and Administration” content is deemed current and relevant to industry needs, but lacks visibility in administration aspects. Degree awarding is based on field knowledge, yet learning outcomes are not central to the programme, lacking assessment methods alignment. Introduction of a 9 CP Internship awaits implementation, with discrepancies noted in its description and management perception.

Master theses topics vary, with fewer administration-related topics; emphasis on research methodology is recommended under the new academic study programme.

The facilities, including premises, laboratories, and the library, both in Riga and Daugavpils, adequately cater to the needs of the study programme. However, the experts observed outdated literature resources in some course descriptions, lacking e-resources and scientific papers typically expected in an academic master's programme. Students value the well-developed e-learning resources (Moodle). Financial resources primarily stem from tuition fees, supported by a robust student financial aid system, which students appreciate. Despite this, there is concern over the declining student enrollment, posing a threat to the programme's sustainability.

The academic staff engaged in the study programme possess ample experience and meet regulatory standards. BIA has taken effective steps to ensure a high-quality team of academic staff for the programme's implementation in both Riga and Daugavpils. Faculty members are provided opportunities for professional development and engagement in research activities, which they highly value.

#### Strengths:

1. Dedication and continuous involvement of the AMASP "Business Management and Administration" Director And Daugavpils Branch Director well appreciated by the students;
2. The MASP "Business Management and Administration" is highly regarded in the labour market, especially in Daugavpils.
3. Timely, well thought about and well designed transition from a professional to an academic master study programme;
4. Academic staff involved in the study programme are experienced and complies with the regulatory requirements, showing both excellent practical experience as well as overall requirements-meeting scientific results.
5. The composition of the academic staff enables to efficiently implement the Programme in both Riga and Daugavpils branches and in both Latvian and English languages.
6. Already evident students' involvement into scientific research, reflected in mandatory participation in scientific conferences before graduation and scientific research oriented Master Thesis;
7. Answers to the current challenges that are visible in the programme and in the thesis produced by the students
8. Designed scientific research oriented practice is a value added in the academic master study programme.
9. Premises, laboratories, library and other material provisions in BIA are sufficient for the needs of the Study Programme and for the achievement of its learning outcomes.
10. Well developed and appreciated by students e-learning resources.
11. The study process is student-centred, and the implementation and evaluation methods in general contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study courses.

#### Weaknesses:

1. Tasks and learning outcomes of the MASP "Business Management and Administration" are not fully coherent and need a revision.
2. Scientific research part of the programme is not visible in the programme's tasks.
3. Administration part is not visible in the programme both in the study curriculum and in the topics of Master Thesis.
4. Learning outcomes are not perceived by students and teachers as the most important framework of the programme and courses.

5. The aim and tasks of the new 9 CP Internship are not clear. The course description and the explanations of the MASP "Business Management and Administration" Director and teaching staff about the Internship are not in line.
6. The MASP "Business Management and Administration" does not include library's e-resources and scientific papers in the study course descriptions, which would be expected in an academic master study programme.
7. Content of the study courses could better integrate issues and topics relevant to contemporary business.
8. Decrease in entrants and a high number of drop-outs is a threat to a long term sustainability of the MASP "Business Management and Administration".

## Evaluation of the study programme "Business Management and Administration"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

## 2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Business Management and Administration"

### Short-term recommendations

- |   |
|---|
| 1. Review the formulation of the aim, tasks and learning outcomes of the MASP "Business Management and Administration" to have them mutually coherent and feasible. Tasks and learning outcomes should balance scientific research, management and administration nature of the programme |
| 2. Review translation of the aim, tasks and learning outcomes and study course descriptions to English;   |
| 3. Make a better use of e-resources available in BIA and National Library of Latvian during the studies, starting with integrating them in the study course descriptions;   |
| 4. Discuss the scope, content and requirements of the new 9 CP Internship with the relevant stakeholders and align the stakeholders' expectations and/or understanding with the course description;   |
| 5. Review content of the study courses to integrate issues and topics relevant to contemporary business   |
| 6. Review Master Thesis requirements to include requirements and guidance for scientific research part, which is expected in an academic master study programme.  |
| 7. More actively engage social partners into the study process, especially in Daugavpils branch   |

### Long-term recommendations

- |  |
|--|
| 1. Develop quality assurance and/or content standardisation policy and practices to further strengthen Moodle as the key study resource of the study programme (allowing to overcome an issue with old literature sources in Latvian); |
| 2. Focus the programme more strongly on learning outcomes and, in particular, define the methods for verification of the learning outcomes;  |

3. Acknowledging the decreasing number of students in Daugavpils branch and the evident demand for master degree studies in regions and smaller towns, consider introducing fully distant online studies.

4. Ensure constant up to market content of the studies. For that develop a system engaging social partners, academic staff and their scientific research results and/or other sources to identify relevant issues and topics to be included in a study curriculum.

### 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 internal quality assurance system is in place and functional, it considers feedback from students, employers and graduates. However, improvements for quality enhancement are recommended such as clearer alignment between quality assurance processes and learning outcomes.
R2 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the level of development of scientific research and artistic creation (if applicable)	Fully compliant		The scientific research and applied research conducted within the study field correspond to the development goals of BIA and are relevant for the study field and for industry, which was justifiably documented and also practically mentioned during the visit with examples of research case studies for e.g. market research for industry companies.
R3 - The cooperation implemented within the study field with various Latvian and foreign organizations ensures the achievement of the aims of the study field.	Fully compliant		BIA maintains an extensive network of cooperation with employers, municipalities, and higher education institutions, fostering partnerships in both the public and private sectors.

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.	Fully compliant		All previous short-term recommendations were considerably addressed and implemented to a reasonable and acceptable extent. Time after previous accreditation was not sufficient to implement long term 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	Entrepreneurship Management (42345)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
2	Business Management and Administration (45345)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good

### The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts

None. The report represents fully joint collective experts` opinion with no dissenting opinions.