

Expert group joint opinion

Evaluation Procedure: Assessment of Study Field

Higher Education Institution: Riga Technical University

Study field: Translation

Experts:

1. Riccardo Pozzo (Chair of the Experts Group)
2. Jolita Sliogeriene (Secretary of the Experts Group)
3. Maija Burima
4. Vasilijš Ragačevičs (Employers' Confederation of Latvia)
5. Justīne Širina (Student Union of Latvia)

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

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The Institute of Digital Humanities at Riga Technical University (RTU) is a public scientific, academic and technological institution dedicated to advancing science and fostering economic, social, and cultural progress in Latvia. The institute emphasises the use of the Latvian language in research and training.

The International Assessment Expert Group commissioned by the “Academic Information Centre” Foundation (AIKA) conducted an external assessment of the study programmes “Technical Translation and Textuality” (42227) and of the study programme “Technical Translation and Terminology.” (47227). This Expert Group, comprising academics and industry leaders, reviewed RTU’s self-assessment report and conducted a two-day on-site visit from June 20-21, 2024. To prepare a joint Expert Group opinion of the study field and its corresponding study programmes.

The agenda for the in-person visit included extensive discussions with the RTU representatives such as management, Heads of both study programmes, students, graduates and employers representatives, and the RTU teaching staff. During the on-site visit, the Expert Team visited the facilities, including the library. More details on the agenda of the visit are provided at the end of the report. The Expert Group is very grateful for the support it received from AIKA and the RTU team throughout the review.

The RTU Translation study field has a solid foundation and clear programme objectives, aligned with the needs of institutions and society. The study field effectively prepares graduates for a successful professional career, and the University has invested in modern infrastructure and staff development. However, several areas need to be addressed for optimal results:

Vision and Integration: While the degree course maintains a clear structure, its long-term vision, especially in terms of integrating language studies with technical disciplines, lacks specificity. This, together with concerns about administrative efficiency and stakeholder involvement, offers room for improvement. The University’s quality assurance system is sound but could benefit from better feedback mechanisms to encourage continuous improvement.

Research strategy: While research shows promising initiatives, a more strategic approach is needed. A comprehensive plan, in coordination with the Institute for Digital Humanities, is needed to increase the impact of research. In addition, more attention needs to be paid to student participation in research to develop future research leaders.

Internationalisation: Efforts in internationalisation cooperation and student mobility are praiseworthy. However, developing partnerships and defining priority areas for internationalisation can further enhance the global reach of the field of study.

In conclusion, RTU’s two translation study programs have significant strengths, but to fully exploit the potential of the field of study, targeted improvements in strategic planning, administrative efficiency, stakeholder involvement and research focus are needed. By addressing these issues, RTU can consolidate its position as a leading institution for translation studies and research.

The main features of the expert report can be summarised as follows:

1. Overall assessment. The Expert Group conducted a detailed analysis of the work being done within and across the study programs, it considers that the overall scientific output of both of them is noticeable and perspective in the Latvian and international context. However, the performance metrics that were described to the Expert Group tended to focus on inputs (number of people hired into cross-disciplinary projects, for example) rather than outputs. The RTU system would benefit from regular international expert reviews of the Institutes - and of cross-cutting programs and initiatives, demonstrating impact on key societal challenges. Tools to monitor research excellence and impact that are both accurate and legible to the international scientific community should be developed, as well as a stronger culture of international assessment and benchmarking.

2. Higher education and research. The relationship between the study programs and Latvian universities and research agencies is both complex and evolving. The Expert Group gives several recommendations for a deepened and more complete partnership between the RTU and the Latvian higher education and research landscape.

3. Business and industry. The Expert Group observed that there is considerable pride in being associated with the RTU brand. However, it finds that workforce development in the study programs is an underappreciated but important element of the national impact of the RTU that warrants additional attention. Also, the bi-directional flow of people between the RTU faculty and students in the private sector is an important element of knowledge and technology transfer. The Expert Group considers that recruiting and retaining the best talent, at all levels and in all activities, is the primary challenge for the RTU.

4. Administrative processes. The administrative burden seems heavy at all levels. Administrative staff members are under growing pressure due to a lack of resources, the complexity of procedures, and high turnover.

5. Governance. The Expert Group noted that the RTU's high-level governance is playing a strategic role. Also, the distribution of key responsibilities and the main decision-making processes within the RTU are clear. The Expert Group does appreciate that the RTU leadership is balancing tensions between a bottom-up and top-down approach to scientific leadership and management, but it finds that a reconsideration of the various organisational roles, relationships, and communication channels, is needed.

6. Engagement in society. The Expert Group considers that the RTU should strengthen its contribution to the development of a well-educated society through the dissemination of knowledge and increase the level of its communication both with the public at large and with the government. Reinforcing research and leveraging expertise on the main societal themes chosen as RTU priorities is an opportunity for this stronger engagement.

7. Innovation and technology transfer. There is evidence of significant progress in engagement and relations with the private sector. The efforts made to develop technology transfer through professional support, skills, and accessible staff, are commendable. Many initiatives have been undertaken to support innovation and technology transfer. These efforts are to be pursued and strengthened, and their impact will need to be assessed.

8. European commitment. Thanks to its size and the breadth of its expertise in all scientific fields, the RTU is able to propose ambitious programs that contribute to the success and influence of European science and innovation.

I - Assessment of the Study Field

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1.1 Management of the Study Field

Analysis

1.1.1.

Until 2024, the study field was implemented at the Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities. Still, after the reorganisation of the faculties, starting in 2024, the study field was implemented at the Faculty of Computer Science, Information Technology and Energy (Self Assessment Report, further – SAR, p. 4). The main goal of the study field is to facilitate the formation of a knowledgeable society by successfully applying different modern methods of translation studies, terminology, applied linguistics, text production, pedagogical theory and language learning and research, integrating interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary quantitative, qualitative and design research methods in academic and scientific work (SAR, p. 16). It is closely linked to policy planning documents at the national level, such as the National Development Plan 2021-2027, etc. The study programmes included in the study field are based on professional standards developed by industry representatives, and the employment indicators of graduates. During the Expert Group on-site visit meetings with stakeholders, both graduates and representatives of employers, confirmed the need for such specialists in Latvia and internationally. Given the rapid technological advancements, society and industry need to have specialists who can engage with and expand the potential of technology, as well as enhance technical language across various fields. The Expert Group believes that the study field and its study programmes fulfil the requirements of society and the national economy.

SAR states that the study field has three main development goals - excellent science, quality studies and institutional excellence, providing a detailed explanation of these goals and the actions Riga Technical University (hereafter - RTU) is taking to achieve them. When assessing RTU's technological and resource base both material and immaterial, along with its institutional reputation, it is evident that these objectives of the study programme can be achieved and maintained with a focused approach. However, further Expert Group analysis highlights challenges that may hinder the achievement of these objectives, which the RTU should assess and analyse. The study programmes "Technical Translation and Textuality" (42227) and "Technical Translation and Terminology" 47227 are mutually integrated and linked in a logical, consecutive order to provide students with the opportunity to successively develop knowledge, competencies and skills at the highest level of professional qualification, and correspond to the study field "Translation", which is confirmed by the annexes submitted for evaluation - study plans, course descriptions, compliance with professional standards, as well as the responses received from students, graduates and representatives of employers during the Expert Group visit to RTU. During the Expert Group on-site visit, it was confirmed by the RTU highest level management - the Vice-Rector of Studies, the faculty and the research institute leaders - that RTU, even after the reorganisation of the faculties, clearly sees the directions of development of this study field and the potential for interdisciplinary scientific activities, for example, research and study courses in the areas of large language models, localisation, machine learning, implementation of new technologies. At the management level, there is a clear short- and long-term vision for the development of the field of study and its growing role in the future. However, it should be noted that this is not clearly outlined in the study field development planning documents, such as the annexe submitted for evaluation - Development Plan of the Study Field "Translation" for 2024-2029, which lacks a clear link to the objectives mentioned in the SAR, as well as specific actions and activities that will be carried out to achieve these objectives, which are formulated in a rather general way, and it would be advisable to supplement

this development plan with more specific actions to be taken and clear key performance indicators (hereinafter - KPI), which would help to assess the progress of implementation of the plan in the future.

1.1.2.

RTU has conducted an analysis of its Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (hereinafter - SWOT) analysis and attached it to SAR, p. 20-22, it contains a detailed description of the strengths and weaknesses/challenges of the study field in the areas of study content, human resources, study process and outcomes and infrastructure, as well as opportunities and threats in the areas of local and foreign applicants, external cooperation, competition and legislation. As RTU points out in the SAR, SWOT analysis is an important part of the quality assurance of a study field, which is carried out annually in the context of the development reports of the study field (SAR, p. 19). According to SAR it was mandatory to submit annual self-assessment reports for consideration of external experts until 2018. These self-assessment reports are available at the specified site. After 2018, the system of internal self-assessment was changed, and annual SWOT analysis and revision thereof as well as introduction of the changes to the study programs were discussed and conducted at the meetings of study field committees. It should be noted that a lot of the main points are remaining since the SWOT analysis carried out in 2014 (for example, weaknesses especially related to demographic factors remain unchanged) which leads to believe that insufficient action has been taken to address them and which raises concerns about the quality of the analysis carried out and the effectiveness of actions taken in the past to address weaknesses, threats and opportunities identified in the analysis.

Also during the Expert Group on-site visit at RTU, the Expert Group was not convinced that in the last five years, the activities indicated in the study field improvement reports have been successfully implemented, which raises concerns about the effective management and improvement of the study field and study programmes. It should be noted that RTU representatives are actively involved in work on the improvement of professional standards related to study programmes, and study programme management actively responds and makes changes in study content following the regulatory framework, however, the impression is that this is the main driving force for change. Also, when analysing the link between the SWOT analysis and the development plan of the study field for the next six years, it is noticeable that it has been developed in a narrow circle, as indicated in the SAR - in a working group composed of Heads of both study programmes (SAR, p. 22). It would be advisable to improve this development plan by involving a wider range of stakeholders - students, graduates, academic staff, RTU authorities, and employers - in the process to promote faster development and competitiveness of the study field by defining more specific achievable results and actions needed to achieve the set goals.

1.1.3.

In general, RTU has established a stable organisational system for the management of study fields with clearly defined responsibilities, rights and duties of the persons and institutions involved, both in ensuring the management and development of the study field and its study programmes, and in providing technical and administrative support. An important aspect to note is that at the time of the evaluation, the study field and its associated university faculty have gone through a reorganisation process - starting in May 2024 the study process is being implemented in a new faculty - with new management and infrastructure. After the Expert Group on-site visit, it was assured that this reorganisation process has been successfully managed and that the parties involved - administration, academic staff and students - are satisfied with it. The stakeholders are already

seeing the positive benefits - a unified infrastructure, studies taking place in one location - the Ķīpsala campus, technological capacity, in particular highlighting the resources currently available for development. It should be noted that the reorganisation process, as pointed out by the management of the faculty during the Expert Group on-site visit meeting with representatives of the RTU, has been well thought out and has lasted four years to ensure as smoothly and as efficiently as possible the merge of the faculties. The Heads of the study programmes, as well as the Study Field Committee and the Institute for Digital Humanities, play a major role in the management and quality assurance of the study field. The fact that the Head of the Master's degree study programme is also the head of this institute is a positive aspect, which can promote and ensure a strong link between the study process and research work in the future; the administrative experience of the former Dean of the Faculty, which was highlighted during the Expert Group on-site visit, should be highlighted as an additional aspect; this approach and vision in the management of the study programme should be positively assessed and supported in the future. However, a couple of aspects that raised doubts during the Expert Group on-site visit about the future sustainability and student-centred management of the field of study need to be highlighted.

It should be noted that during the Expert Group on-site visit, various administrative challenges, such as the effectiveness and quality of day-to-day communication with students and industry, were also highlighted during meetings with various stakeholders. It would be advisable to assess the possibilities to find more successful compromises between the university's capacities and more efficient lesson planning by informing stakeholders in a timely manner, providing timely information to stakeholders - students and teaching staff, on changes in study plans, the process of organising internships, ensuring that up-to-date information is available in RTU internal information systems (ORTUS), especially in English, taking care also of foreign students and teaching staff, as this type of technical and administrative support also plays an important role in ensuring a quality study process.

Overall, the management structure of the study field at RTU is effectively oriented towards its development, with a successful reorganisation enhancing infrastructure and resources. However, concerns about the Bachelor's degree study programme Head's communication skills and the need for improved administrative communication and risk analysis should be addressed to ensure sustainability and student-centred management.

1.1.4.

RTU has a clear procedure for the admission of applicants from Latvia and abroad (described in the SAR, p. 26-28). The admission rules have been established and approved following the first part of Article 15.1 of the Law on Higher Education and the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 846 of 10 October 2006 "Regulations Regarding the Requirements, Criteria and Procedure for Admission to Study Programmes and State Support for Citizens who Have Volunteered for and Completed National Defence Service" (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/146637>); the requirements of specific study programmes are also taken into account when establishing the admission rules.

The admission rules are approved annually by the university's collegiate decision-making body, the Senate. The admission requirements are similar to other universities in Latvia - the results of centralised examinations are taken into account, but to increase the quality of applicants for state-funded study places, a minimum score threshold in the mathematics examination is set - at least 15% for the average of all parts of the examination. Otherwise, students can only apply for fee-paying places. There are also clear procedures for applying for studies for persons who completed their secondary education before 2009, as well as for persons who have completed their education

abroad or have received exemptions from centralised examinations. In addition, in situations where the Latvian language centralised examination has not been passed or they do not meet the requirements set out in the RTU Admission Rules, an entrance examination in Latvian is organised. It is also possible to replace the centralised examination in a foreign language, e.g. English, with an examination in a foreign language by an international testing body. The admission rules are available in Latvian and English on the University's website (<https://www.rtu.lv/en/studies/admission-1>), where the admission process is described in detail.

In addition, RTU provides access to information on the study programme, its parameters, aims, objectives, and learning outcomes, as well as the study programme plan and course descriptions in Latvian and English on its website, which is a highly commendable good practice and is highly encouraged to raise awareness among applicants, students and stakeholders. The admission rules for the Professional Bachelor (first cycle) study programme require applicants to have completed general secondary education or 4 years of vocational secondary education (<https://www.rtu.lv/en/studies/all-study-programmes/open/technical-translation?id=83>). In addition, the admission rules for this study programme provide for specific coefficients for the results of the centralised examinations: the total percentage marks in the centralised examination (hereinafter - CE) in Latvian and in a foreign language (English or German) are multiplied by 1.00; the total percentage marks in CE in mathematics are multiplied by 0.75; the total percentage marks in CE in physics and/or chemistry are multiplied by 1.00; and the average of the total percentage marks in all CE passed is multiplied by 0.50 (Latvian only: <https://www.rtu.lv/lv/studijas/uznemsana/uznemsanas-noteikumi/uznemsanas-noteikumi-pamatstudijas>).

There are also minimum entry requirements for international students, such as English proficiency minimum B2 level, as determined by an internationally recognised English proficiency test or letter confirming that previous studies' medium of instruction was in English Language. Similarly, the Professional Master (second cycle) study programme has specific admission requirements that are justified and in line with the objectives of the study programme and the study field. To enter the Professional Master study programme, a professional degree in technical translation or an equivalent Bachelor's degree in translation or English philology or a second-level higher professional education in technical translation is required. There is a discrepancy between the number of credits obtained in the internship for graduates of the Academic Bachelor. They are therefore required to take an additional 39 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (hereinafter - ECTS) credit points (Source: <https://stud.rtu.lv/rtu/vaaApp/sprpub>).

In these sections, students and other interested parties have access to the procedures established and approved by RTU - the Regulations "Recognition of Courses Taken at Other Higher Education Institutions and RTU Study Programmes" and "Procedure for Recognition of Competences and Study Results Acquired at Riga Technical University Outside Formal Education or in Professional Experience". These documents are available on the RTU website in both Latvian and English. This practice, in the opinion of the Expert Group, is very welcome.

In addition, during the Expert Group on-site visit, the stakeholders confirmed that they were aware of such procedures, but indicated that they had not made use of these possibilities. Study programme management also indicated that the recognition of these experiences has not been widespread in these study programmes so far and that it is most often that recognition of prior academic education or professional experience may occur only at the Master study programme level.

In summary, RTU has successfully set up and established procedures for student admission, the recognition of the study period, professional experience, prior formal and non-formal education and for the assessment of students' achievements and learning outcomes. They are logical and easily accessible to stakeholders and it was confirmed during the Expert Group on-site visit that stakeholders are aware of them.

1.1.5.

Trough SAR (SAR, p.28-29) and RTU provided Annexes among the information provided in RTU public website, experts' have verified that RTU has developed a number of regulations and procedures regulating the evaluation of study results and the organisation of study examinations, for example, the Regulations on the Evaluation of Study Results (In Latvian: https://www.rtu.lv/writable/editor_files/files/studiju_rezultatu_vertesanas_nolikuma_apstiprinasana_jauna_redakcija_17_06_2024_1.pdf; In English: https://www.rtu.lv/writable/public_files/RTU_studiju_rezultatu_vertesanas_nolikuma_apstiprinasana_jauna_redakcija_eng.pdf), the Procedure for the Organisation of Internships (Available on Latvian only:

https://www.rtu.lv/writable/public_files/RTU_par_prakses_organizesanas_kartibas_rigas_tehniskaja_universitate_apstiprinasana_jauna_redakcija.pdf) and the Regulations on Study Final Examinations at Riga Technical University (In Latvian: https://www.rtu.lv/writable/public_files/RTU_par_nolikuma_par_studiju_nosleguma_parbaudijumiem_rtu_apstiprinasana_jauna_redakcija.pdf; In English: https://www.rtu.lv/writable/public_files/RTU_par_studiju_nosleguma_parbaudijumiem_rtu_jauna_redakcija_eng.pdf), as well as the Study Regulations (Available on Latvian only: <https://www.rtu.lv/lv/studijas/studiju-reglaments>); documents are available on the RTU website and in the RTU internal information systems in Latvian and with selected translations available in English. The Regulations on Evaluation of Study Results regulate in a detailed, logical and comprehensible manner the approach to the evaluation of study results, the types of examinations, explain in detail the evaluation scales, regulate how examinations are planned and organised, as well as how they are evaluated; in addition, the procedures for students to appeal the grades they have received, settle their academic debts, as well as improving grades they have successfully obtained are regulated.

The assessment process consists of formative and summative assessment. Formative assessment takes place throughout the study process, providing feedback for improving learning outcomes, while summative assessment provides an assessment of the learning outcomes achieved. This approach was confirmed by the stakeholders met during the Expert Group on-site visit. The assessment criteria for courses and individual/homework assignments are published in advance in the e-learning environment of the ORTUS portal, ensuring that students are aware of the requirements. Homework, assignments, papers, presentations and other work carried out during the semester are weighted in the final grade. The regulations on the assessment of learning outcomes stipulate that the examination mark may not account for less than 20% and not more than 50% of the final grade (SAR, p.29). This ensures that the summative approach can work in practice and that students' final assessment takes into account work throughout the semester and assesses different forms of examinations, such as tests, homework, study projects and presentations, not just the final examination. This approach is to be welcomed. Learning outcomes are defined separately for each study course and included in the course description, which is published in the RTU Register of Study Courses.

During the visit, the Expert Group found that heads of the study programmes are responsible for

informing academic staff about the learning outcomes of study programmes and the learning outcomes of the study courses are discussed at meetings with the heads of the study programmes and the representative of the Curriculum Design Committee, as well as seminars for the members of academic staff involved in the implementations of the study program are organized on regular basis, for example, “Modern Trends and Opportunities in Student-Centered Education” or “Modern Understanding of the Study Process”.

During the Expert Group on-site visit, stakeholders suggested that teaching methods, especially at the Bachelor level of studies, could be evaluated and improved to include more student-centred methods, meaningful group work, and more hands-on activities with modern industry technologies that reinforce and develop students' skills and knowledge. In such situations, the direct management of the study programmes - the Heads of the study programmes - should take a more active role and leadership to assess the situation of the study programmes, regularly collect feedback and, where possible, improve them to proactively respond to the needs of the industry and face the challenges of the educational system development. It was confirmed during the on-site meeting with stakeholders that there are courses where this is actively practised and highly appreciated by students and alumni, but there are courses where new, more modern teaching methods could be introduced. The Expert Group recommends involving students, alumni, employers and the teaching staff more actively in this internal evaluation process, using different ways of obtaining feedback - not only through surveys but also, for example, through more extensive focus group discussions.

In general, the methods, principles and procedures for assessing student learning outcomes are established and clearly defined, but RTU has the potential and resources to develop this area and pedagogical excellence more fully.

1.1.6.

RTU has developed a Code of Academic Integrity, as well as separate rules of procedure for academic integrity violations and their handling and the Expert Group was able to verify the existence of such documents and approve their contents. These documents are part of the Academic Integrity Code and are available to all parties in Latvian and English. It defines the procedures for the preparation, handling and registration of a report of an academic integrity violation, as well as the possibilities for student appeals. Students are informed and educated about aspects of academic integrity both within their study courses and in specially organised seminars. It is highly appreciated that RTU has integrated several automated anti-plagiarism solutions into its information systems (ORTUS and e-learning environment), which checks not only the final works of students but also the works submitted in the e-learning environment during the daily study process. Since 2010, all students' final works have been digitally uploaded to the ORTUS environment, forming a digital database, and since 2015 final works of study programmes have been checked in the Unified Computer-based Plagiarism Control System (VDPKS), which unites many Latvian universities and colleges. In addition, since 2017 RTU has used Turnitin® - the world's leading tool for correcting and preventing plagiarism in written work, integrated into the RTU ORTUS e-learning environment, and providing a full service for submission, correction, detection of originality of content (plagiarism) and return of submitted work. The tool checks all electronic versions of the final theses submitted for defence and promptly takes further control measures to check for possible plagiarism. In addition, to respond promptly to modern technological challenges and the introduction of artificial intelligence solutions in the educational process, RTU has developed and from autumn 2023 used in its e-learning environment and final thesis register the plagiarism control tool CAPS, which can recognise text matches in copied, paraphrased and translated text in Latvian, English and

Russian. The system checks the work against the collected index and the work of students from other institutions. The works are also compared with each other. CAPS recognises whether the text has been generated by different artificial intelligence tools (SAR, p. 30). During the Expert Group on-site visit to RTU, it was confirmed that this approach works effectively and is positively valued by stakeholders.

In addition, it should be highlighted that RTU is investing extensive and significant awareness-raising efforts to enhance the culture of academic integrity at the university by organising various webinars, and methodological conferences and developing educational materials to raise students' and faculty members' understanding in this area.

In the context of the study field, it should be noted that during the Expert Group on-site visit, the direct management of the study programme - the Heads of the study programmes, confirmed that violations of academic integrity in their study programmes are very rare; in the last academic year, only one student's work was found to have used the artificial intelligence tool ChatGPT. RTU is currently developing a separate policy on the use of artificial intelligence solutions in the study process. Such results show that the university has developed a strong culture of academic integrity and takes action to continuously improve it, which is very positive.

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

Conclusions:

The analysis of the study field and its study programmes reveals that the aims of the study field are clearly defined, attainable, and aligned with both the strategic development of RTU and the broader needs of society and the national economy. The reorganisation of faculties in 2024, transitioning the study field to the Faculty of Computer Science, Information Technology and Energy, has not disrupted the clarity and logic of the interconnected study programmes. These study programmes are tailored to meet professional standards and the demands of industry, preparing graduates for successful careers both in Latvia and internationally.

The analysis indicates that RTU has established a stable and clear management structure for the study field and its corresponding study programmes. However, there are concerns about the future sustainability and student-centred management of the study field, particularly regarding the development vision of the Head of the Bachelor study programme and the overall effectiveness of administrative communication.

RTU has developed a comprehensive and logical system for student admission, recognition of study periods, professional experience, prior formal and non-formal education, and assessment of student achievements and learning outcomes. The procedures are well-documented, easily accessible, and comply with national regulations. The admission rules, available on the RTU website in both Latvian and English, are transparent and detailed, ensuring that applicants understand the requirements and processes. However, there is a discrepancy in the completeness of information available in English compared to Latvian, particularly regarding the RTU Study Regulations.

RTU has developed comprehensive and detailed regulations and procedures for assessing student achievements, covering formative and summative assessments. However, there is room for improvement in aligning course learning outcomes with study programme learning outcomes and enhancing teaching methods, particularly at the Bachelor level of studies. RTU has established a robust framework for ensuring academic integrity.

Overall, while RTU's study field and study programmes demonstrate significant strengths in strategic alignment, interdisciplinary integration, and technological focus, there are notable weaknesses in planning, stakeholder involvement, and administrative efficiency that need to be addressed to ensure continued success and development.

Strengths:

- 1) Integrating interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary methods enriches the academic and scientific work, promoting a comprehensive educational experience.
- 2) The recent reorganisation of faculties has been well-managed, resulting in a centralised location, unified infrastructure and enhanced technological capacity.
- 3) Strong support from RTU's highest management levels and clear development visions ensure the sustainability and growth of the study field.
- 4) Well-defined responsibilities and duties ensure efficient management and development. The dual role of the Head of the master study programme as the head of the Institute for Digital Humanities fosters strong connections between academic and research activities.
- 5) RTU has well-documented regulations and procedures for evaluating study results, ensuring transparency and clarity in the assessment process.
- 6) RTU has a well-defined Code of Academic Integrity available in both Latvian and English, ensuring accessibility and clarity for all stakeholders.
- 7) The integration of multiple anti-plagiarism tools, such as Turnitin® and CAPS, into RTU's information systems ensures rigorous and thorough checking of student submissions.
- 8) The low frequency of academic integrity violations in study programmes indicates the effectiveness of RTU's measures and the high level of integrity among students and faculty.
- 9) RTU's extensive efforts to raise awareness about academic integrity through webinars, conferences, and educational materials contribute to a strong internal culture.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Insufficient risk analysis in the SWOT and development plans may hinder competitive and effective development. Many key points from the 2014 SWOT analysis remain unresolved, indicating insufficient action to address identified weaknesses and threats.
- 2) The Development Plan of the Study Field "Translation" for 2024-2029 lacks specific actions and clear key performance indicators (KPIs), making it difficult to assess progress and implementation effectiveness.
- 3) The development planning process appears to be conducted within a narrow circle, lacking broader stakeholder involvement, which could slow development and reduce competitiveness.
- 4) There are issues with day-to-day communication effectiveness, including lesson planning and timely information dissemination, which impact both students and industry partners.
- 5) Concerns about the administrative and technical support, especially for foreign students and staff, highlight areas needing improvement for a quality study process.
- 6) The RTU Study Regulations and some other documents are not as comprehensively available in English as in Latvian, limiting accessibility for international students and staff.
- 7) There is a need for better alignment between course learning outcomes and study programme learning outcomes, ensuring that teaching staff are aware of the overall study programme objectives.
- 8) Stakeholders have suggested that teaching methods at the Bachelor level could be improved to include more student-centred approaches, hands-on activities, and modern industry technologies.

1.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System

Analysis

1.2.1.

RTU has specific procedures to support quality assurance on various levels from the study coordinator, the head of the study programme to central university bodies according to the RTU Quality Policy updated and approved at the meeting of RTU Senate on 25 September 2017, Minutes No 612 (available online: RTU Quality Policy) and the RTU Excellence Approach approved at the meeting of RTU Senate on 30 January 2017, Minutes No 606 (available online: RTU Excellence Approach). RTU maintains a quality assurance system at three levels: at the level of the Office of Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs (internal education quality assurance is performed by the Study Department), at the level of RTU faculties and the level of institutes (SAR, p.32). An emphasis is put on the study programme management level where, according to the SAR and Expert Group on-site visit meeting with the Study Field Committee and the Head of the Study Field, plays a decisive role in the process of internal quality assurance.

Based on the information provided in SAR and "Procedure for Application, Elaboration and Amendment of the Study Programs" approved at the meeting of RTU Senate on 4 April 2021 (Minutes No 649) (Annex P11), responsibilities for the development and approval of study programmes, student-centred learning, teaching and assessment, student admission, and ongoing monitoring of study programmes are clearly defined at the university level, faculty level, institute level and study programme level (SAR, p. 11-12, 15).

In addition, it should be commended that the Latvian version of the RTU website contains the RTU Study Regulations, which include information and links to other related internal and external normative acts regulating various areas of the study process. The material is very informative and freely accessible to both students and other interested parties. This practice is very positive and encourages the promotion of openness and accessibility of information. The information is available here: <https://www.rtu.lv/lv/studijas/studiju-reglaments>, but it should be noted that there is no equivalent in English and it would be advisable to consider creating one in English in the future. The English version of the website has a Documents section, which contains translations of the most important regulations, procedures and policies, but it is not as complete as the Latvian version.

The SFC (Study Field Committee) is the main body that monitors the quality of study programmes, e.g., by initiating, analysing and approving new study subjects proposed by the department, and by conducting ongoing monitoring of a study programme. During the on-site visit, a clear explanation of the different functions of the study field committee and the head of the study programme was provided.

Taking into account the information provided in the SAR and the "Description of Procedures for Submission, Preparation and Modification of Study Programme Applications" (Annex P11), as well as the insights gained during the on-site visit, it can be concluded that RTU has established and maintains a quality assurance system that contributes to the attainment of the objectives and learning outcomes of the field of study and the relevant study programmes. In the opinion of the experts, the created and implemented system ensures continuous improvement, and development and helps the study programme operate efficiently.

1.2.2.

According to the information provided to the Expert Group, revision of the study programme curricula is the responsibility of the Study Field Committee. The responsibilities and activities of the committee are regulated by the "Regulation on the Study Field Committee" (approved by the RTU Senate on 26th of April 2021, Minutes No 649 with amendments on 27th March 2023 (Minutes No

671)) (Annex P11). The procedure for the development and review of the study programme is presented in the SAR.

RTU uses the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) quality model to collaborate with students, staff, and external partners for continuous improvement. Based on SAR (SAR, p. 10) and the information provided during the on-site visit, RTU has implemented a multi-stage feedback cycle using electronic surveys administered via the ORTUS portal. This process helps to gather insights from students and employers at key stages of the academic experience. Data is collected on: enrollment: enrolled students provide feedback on expectations, availability of information and the admission process; study programme evaluation: each semester, students evaluate the lecturers and the overall study programme. The results are communicated to lecturers, heads of department and relevant committees to allow for continuous improvement of the study programme; completion: post-graduation surveys inform the development of curricula for specific study fields and are discussed in methodological seminars; employer involvement: feedback from employers is currently sought after placements and during study programme development. A regular centralised survey system is planned. They gather feedback through dialogue and surveys to enhance quality across all aspects of the university. This approach ensures everyone is aligned towards achieving common goals. In close cooperation with social partners, some feedback is also received during the examination of practical placements (internships) and accreditation. During the on-site visit, and meeting with the members of the group responsible for the preparation of SAR, the Expert Group were informed that students' feedback is regularly received and analysed, the results of which are discussed with teachers by the director of the Institute of Digital Humanities. The students, as stated by one lecturer during the meeting, are informed about the results at the beginning of a new semester, during the introduction of a study subject course. The meeting with students did not confirm this fact. Though the feedback system has been developed at the university, there are still some gaps left, one of them is graduates' feedback evaluation in terms of quality improvement and very little or very informal employers' feedback to further develop the content of some particular study subjects or introduce some very innovative teaching methods to catch up with the reality in the labour market. All the stakeholders admitted the fact that they either don't provide feedback or they are not aware of the analysis of the feedback provided (on-site meetings with stakeholders).

Taking both positive and negative aspects into account, 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 and efficient. However, the availability of feedback to graduates and employers is still missing and should be further developed.

1.2.3.

RTU prioritises continuous quality improvement through a structured student feedback mechanism. Implemented in 2019, the system allows students to submit complaints and proposals regarding the learning experience. It is worth noting that the system was implemented in compliance with Procedure for Submission and Examination of RTU Students' Proposals and Complaints <https://www.rtu.lv/en/university/proposals-and-complaints> and should have been implemented in 2019, however, the data is provided only from 2022.

From March 2022 to March 2024, RTU received 76 submissions, primarily from students (SAR, p. 36), addressing a variety of study-related concerns. This data facilitates informed decision-making to enhance the academic environment for all. The Expert Group has considered the list of complaints and the measures taken as provided in the SAR. Based on the SAR (SAR, p. 39), some measures,

e.g. "Discussions were held with respective academic staff members. Students were provided an opportunity to discuss all unclear issues," do not appear to be effective or their effectiveness is questionable. It is therefore recommended to look deeper into the measures, to envisage some concrete actions, and not to leave only formal solutions. During the on-site visit, the Expert Group was informed that students or lecturers are not always willing to report or disclose negative experiences. The complaint handling mechanism should be complemented by a follow-up monitoring phase, where progress is tracked after certain decisions have been taken.

1.2.4.

Based on the SAR (SAR, p. 39-40), RTU employs a solid quality management system centred on measurable performance indicators. This data, meticulously collected and analysed annually, offers a comprehensive picture of academic activities across all levels - from admissions to graduation. Faculty performance in areas like student enrolment and retention is compared against university averages, facilitating targeted improvement initiatives. All the team from the dean of the faculty, and the director of the institute to quality management specialists work collaboratively to implement these enhancements based on the data analysis. Furthermore, RTU goes beyond internal monitoring by submitting annual statistical reviews to national education entities, demonstrating transparency and accountability in its pursuit of academic excellence. This regular process of evaluation, action, and reporting ensures continuous improvement for the benefit of both students and faculty. The documents and all legislation clearly describe the mechanism for receiving and providing feedback, including from students, graduates and employers, although these mechanisms are not fully operational at all levels, according to interviews with these target groups during the on-site visit. Although analysis of the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers (Annex P18) states that "The results show that the graduates of the Master's degree study programme in Technical Translation are well prepared to work in the industry", the employers have slightly different preferences and suggestions, which are not reflected in the report. According to feedback from employers (on-site visit with the stakeholders), not all students have sufficient competencies to translate texts professionally. Employers do not provide continuous feedback, do not monitor the qualitative change in the graduates' competencies, and do not provide suggestions for improving the quality of the study programme. Closer cooperation with employers is recommended, asking them to continuously contribute to improving the quality of the study programme. One of the comments made was that the students lacked knowledge of the Latvian language (this was also confirmed by the graduates during the on-site visit). The Expert Group's opinion is that the information provided by the employers during the on-site visit ought to be taken carefully into account. It suggests RTU elaborates a timely strategy to meet the needs pointed out by the employers.

1.2.5.

RTU provides comprehensive information on its study programmes and available languages of instruction across its website. This information on the study programmes under evaluation is accessible in both Latvian and English through various resources, such as dedicated sections for Latvian and English study programmes, interactive study programme web pages with detailed descriptions, a website focused on English-language study programmes for international students, etc. This multi-channel approach ensures prospective students can easily find the information they need in their preferred language.

The information available in the e-platform of the Higher Education Quality Agency (AIKA) and the database of the State Education Information System (VIIS) needs to be updated; currently, there are

discrepancies with the information submitted for accreditation - type and name of study programmes, implementation forms and languages, indication of credits after the transition to the ECTS system, qualifications obtained, etc. Moreover, this information needs to be reconciled with the information available on the RTU website (<https://www.rtu.lv/lv/studijas/visas-studiju-programmas/atvert/HCT?department=33000&type=P> and <https://www.rtu.lv/lv/studijas/visas-studiju-programmas/atvert/HGT?department=33000&type=A>), where the old information on the study programmes is currently listed and needs to be updated according to the changes after accreditation.

In general, the information on these platforms is available in Latvian and English, which are also the languages of study programme implementation, but after accreditation, this information needs to be updated according to the changes made in the study programme parameters.

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

Conclusions:

The review of five key areas shows RTU's strong work in building a quality assurance system for its "Technical Translation and Textuality" and „Technical Translation and Terminology“ study programmes. They have a clear quality policy and use internal evaluations with stakeholder involvement to regularly assess study programme quality. This system has helped improve and maintain the program's effectiveness.

However, there are areas for improvement, especially in stakeholder feedback. While RTU has procedures for planning new study programmes and tools for student complaints, the feedback mechanisms could be clearer and more consistently used. Despite already existing data collection within the study programme, further improvements are needed to ensure all stakeholders can easily participate in providing feedback.

Overall, RTU has made significant progress in quality assurance. By strengthening feedback mechanisms and stakeholder engagement, they can take their study programme quality to the next level.

Strengths:

1) Clearly defined responsibilities for the development and approval of study programmes, student-centred learning, teaching and assessment, student admission, and ongoing monitoring of study programmes.

Weaknesses:

1) While feedback mechanisms are in place, there is potential for more active and diverse feedback collection methods, such as focus group discussions, to inform the continuous improvement of teaching and assessment methods.

2) The communication of all stakeholders' feedback analysis is missing at some levels.

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: Fully compliant

RTU ensures continuous improvement, development, and performance of the study field in the implementation of its internal quality assurance system. The shortcomings highlighted in the section should be understood as recommended steps for further improvement of the quality

assurance of studies.

- 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

RTU has a quality assurance system with clear responsibilities at different levels (university, faculty, study programme). The Study Field Committee (SFC) plays a key role in monitoring study programme quality. The procedures for assuring the quality of higher education have been developed and are being implemented at the moment.

- 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

RTU uses a clear procedure for revising study programmes, following the EFQM quality model. They gather feedback from students, staff, and partners to continuously improve. This ensures that everyone works towards shared goals.

- 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 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 provided to stakeholders.

- 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

The procedures for assuring the qualifications of the academic staff and the work quality have been developed and are followed by RTU. The development and improvement of internal procedures and mechanisms for assuring the qualifications of the academic staff and the work quality have been described in detail in SAR (p. 13). The Centre for Academic Excellence (CAE), a teaching and learning centre, was set up at the end of 2018, the aim of which is to develop a strategy for the professional advancement of academic staff, in line with Article 16 of Cabinet Regulations No. 569 <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/301572#p16>).

- 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

RTU uses a data-driven quality management system to track performance and implement improvements across all academic activities. They collaborate with faculty and external entities to ensure transparency and continuous improvement. Feedback within study programmes is received through every semester student polling, regulated by the Regulation on the Student Surveys Used in the Assessment of the Educational Process (approved by the resolution of RTU Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs No 02000-1.1-e/8 as of 1 February 2021, Annex P11).

However, during the on-site visit meetings with graduates of Bachelor and Master study programmes and representatives of the employers, Expert Group learned that the feedback system does not always work as intended. Whilst information is collected by the University, graduates and employers rarely receive any updates about the surveys they have participated in. Thus Expert Group considers, that RTU should advance in closer cooperation with employers and graduates.

- 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

Continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field
"Translation" is ensured and described in SAR, p. 31.

1.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field

Analysis

1.3.1.

According to the SAR (pages 45-47) and the findings from stakeholder interviews, the Expert Group concluded that RTU's funding for the study field and its study programmes comes from the number of study places financed by the state budget and income from tuition fees from the local and foreign students. The determination of state-funded study places is regulated by sections 51 and 52 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions. At RTU, basic state budget financing includes funds allocated according to the list of study programmes and the number of students. This financing is used to cover utilities, taxes, infrastructure maintenance, staff remuneration, and research expenses. The allocation of study places is decided in consultation with the Ministry of Education and Science. Analysis of the annexe: *Finansējuma sadalījums_Distribution of funding_HCT_HGT.xlsx* shows that personnel-related costs are the highest, as well as significant investments in educational resources and administrative overheads.

The cost coefficients for study programmes in the thematic areas of education for Bachelor and Master study programmes are specified in Annex 1 of the Cabinet Regulations of 12 December 2006 "Procedures for Financing Institutions of Higher Education and Colleges from the Funds of the State Budget" (SAR, page 44). RTU management informed the Expert Group that the Ministry of Education and Science calculates the basic cost of a study place for the following budget year by November 1st of the current year, coordinating these calculations with the Ministry of Finance and the ministries to which the universities and colleges are subordinated (on-site visit meeting with the management).

Funds from the basic state budget for the provision of study places in the current academic year are distributed by the decision of the RTU Senate, named "Methodology for the Allocation and Use of Funding for the Organisational Units of RTU in Academic Year 2020/2021." This methodology is reviewed annually and approved in a new edition, considering necessary changes (SAR, page 45).

RTU operates with a decentralised budget, where each organisational unit manages its budget. The income and expenditure of RTU are governed by principles approved by the Senate or as determined by the Vice-Rector for Strategic Development and Finance and subsequently approved by the Senate (SAR, page 45). According to the methodology, funds are allocated to organisational units either for the financial or budget year or upon receipt of funds. The financial or budget year for RTU organisational units runs from October to September of the following year.

At the beginning of each financial or budget year, the head of each organisational unit plans the

unit's activities, including remuneration for academic staff, and develops a procurement plan for the following year to support the implementation and development of study programmes or courses (SAR, page 45).

Tuition fee revenue at RTU is divided into two subgroups: revenue from local fee-paying students and revenue from foreign fee-paying students. Starting from the 2022/2023 academic year, RTU has implemented one "Methodology of Funding Distribution and Utilisation for RTU Structural Units," approved by the rector (SAR, page 46). This document outlines the distribution and utilisation of funding from state funds, local student fees, and foreign student fees.

During the on-site visit, the Head of the professional Master's study programme explained to the Expert Group that this year, RTU made significant changes to the Methodology to align the distribution principles for foreign fee-paying students with those for local fee-paying students. This adjustment aims to streamline the work process for managing study programmes by synchronising the funding distribution periods and principles.

In determining the amount of funding, RTU considers the study cost coefficients of thematic areas and the values of these coefficients according to the level of the actually documentable study programme, as well as the number of students enrolled and the study courses implemented within the study programme.

During the on-site visit interviews, the Expert Group found that to guarantee the efficacy and long-term viability of professional study programmes, RTU has refined its methodology on an annual basis, responding to shifts in the external and internal environment. This approach also serves to mitigate potential risks associated with the implementation of the study programme or its constituent courses. The transition process engages all relevant stakeholders, thereby ensuring transparency and a transparent decision-making process. The requisite alterations are initially initiated by the RTU Vice-Rector for Strategic Development and Vice-Rector for Finance, and supplementary alterations may be initiated by any RTU employee by submitting a request to the aforementioned Vice-Rector or the Finance and Budget Committee of the RTU Senate. The Finance and Budget Committee of the RTU Senate comprises 20 senators (the number may vary), including deans, heads of organisational units of faculties, professors, and student representatives who have the right to vote. Additionally, nine advisors of the RTU Senate represent various administrative units such as vice-rectors, heads of departments, and so forth. Once the RTU Senate's Finance and Budget Committee has examined and evaluated the proposals, it proposes changes to the methodology or develops a new version for the next academic year for approval by the RTU Senate's 35 senators. Following this, the Rector approves the methodology. It is important to note that in the past, changes to the methodology were proposed following a comprehensive analysis, including the mitigation of any potential negative impact on the implementation of study programmes.

During the on-site visit, the Vice-Rector informed the Expert Group that the financial break-even point for each Bachelor's study programme is 12 students, while for the Master's study programme, it is 8 students per group. RTU's management recognizes substantial economic potential in developing language study programmes in the future and plans to implement more multidisciplinary courses in this field. This will involve replacing existing basic IT courses with more complex ones, aligning with RTU's priorities.

The Expert Group also examined the financing of research base funding. As stated in the SAR (page 47), this funding is allocated among faculties based on performance-based output indicators such as the number of publications (weighted by impact and citation), money attracted from research

projects and industry events visits. The calculation is made using a transparent methodology approved by the Science Council on 20 November 2018, detailed in the document "Methodology for Allocation of Research Base Funding to RTU Organisational Units." Decisions regarding the allocation of the budget among faculty institutes are made within the faculties by the Faculty Councils. RTU also has its own Research Support Fund, designed to support research activities that promote the development of strategically important research fields. Each year, 10% of the research base funding (state budget funding) is allocated to the RTU Research Support Fund.

Based on the data provided by RTU and the information gathered during the interviews, the Expert Group concluded that RTU has established and implemented a system and has well-documented regulations and procedures in place for planning and effectively using financial resources, which corresponds to the specifics of the study field. The use of financial resources is transparent and linked to academic excellence, achieved results and the number of students on the faculty.

1.3.2.

During the on-site visit, the Expert Group found that RTU had identified the necessary infrastructure resources, material, and technical support for the successful realisation of the study field, as listed in the self-assessment report (SAR point 2.3.2). Since June 2024, the study field has been realised at the modern RTU Ķīpsala Campus. All campus buildings are equipped with advanced climate control technology, which is remotely controlled and allows for monitoring energy consumption. This technology creates a comfortable environment for students, academic staff, researchers, and guests. RTU has been recognized as the 45th greenest university in the world. To reduce the impact of human activity on the environment and combat climate change, RTU introduced the concept of Green Ķīpsala at its campus (SAR, page 48). This initiative has involved infrastructure improvements based on sustainability principles, changes in the habits of students and staff, and the use of innovative green products and technologies developed by RTU researchers integrated into the Ķīpsala campus infrastructure. For students' needs are available equipped modern laboratories and work rooms for collaborative and scientific project development.

Based on SAR chapter 2.3.2 and observations during the tour of the facilities, the Expert Group concluded that the material and technical support necessary for the study field is sufficient. The RTU Ķīpsala Campus currently includes 54 classrooms, 187 laboratories, 19 special training rooms, 10 computer classrooms, 12 workshops, and several research centres of national significance. The campus also features a hostel (with two buildings) offering 950 beds and a special area for people with disabilities to ensure a comfortable living environment (SAR, page 49). During the on-site visit, Exterp Group was informed that since May 2024 students and management of the study field work only in RTU Ķīpsala Campus, premises of Kronvalda Boulevard 1 are not used any more. The students of the study programmes within the study field can use any classroom on the campus, for example, they can train and work in the large conference rooms for interpreting and public speaking training, for project work use computer rooms, use any laboratory if it is sufficient and even organise small private events with the support and help of the RTU Student Council. C-part courses can be chosen from any faculty, which is only a 5-minute walk away. It is very advantageous for students to be on one campus with the rest of the RTU students, as it gives many more opportunities to develop other skills rather than languages.

Bicycles and automobiles can be parked on campus, and water is available at drinking points at no cost. The infrastructural developments at the RTU Campus are designed to accommodate the needs of all individuals, including those with disabilities. Each building is equipped with dedicated parking lots, accessible entryways to classrooms, laboratories, and other facilities, and Braille signage to

facilitate navigation. Additionally, all sanitary facilities meet the relevant standards. The Association of People with Disabilities and their Friends (APEIRONs) commends RTU for its achievements in addressing infrastructure-related issues for people with disabilities (SAR, page 49).

During the on-site visit and meetings with RTU stakeholders, the Expert Group observed a unified and well-functioning system and procedure for updating the material and infrastructure resources (especially technical equipment and library resources) at RTU.

1.3.3.

The Scientific Library of RTU, a library of national importance, is situated on the RTU Ķīpsala Campus and serves as the primary repository for materials also related to the humanities. During the on-site visit, the Head Librarian confirmed to the Expert Group that the library provides students and teaching staff with both free and paid access to high-quality information relevant to their study field. The library offers resources for study and research purposes and allows for the booking of materials from other libraries. It holds a collection of over 1.3 million printed documents and e-resources in RTU industry-specific databases. Additionally, portions of the library's holdings are accessible at the RTU Study and Research Centers in Daugavpils, Liepāja, Cēsis, and Ventspils. The library occupies a total area of 6,393 m², with 3,417 m² designated for reader services, and provides 713 workspaces for users.

The Scientific Library features four group rooms, six individual booths, a rare book reading room, and a conference room. It is also accessible to users with disabilities. Over the reporting period, more than 100 books published by leading international publishing houses were purchased to support the bachelor's and master's study programmes in the study field. These books are published in English, ensuring access to information for both local and international students (SAR, page 50). Between 2013 and 2023, the library purchased 104 new books on translation studies, terminology, terminography, applied linguistics, semiotics, discourse analysis, stylistics, and related fields (Annex: Grāmatu saraksts_RTU_Zin.bibliotēka_List of books_RTU Scientific Library.pdf). Students and teaching staff have access to e-books and e-journal databases, including ScienceDirect Freedom Collection, SCOPUS (Elsevier), Web of Science (Clarivate), LETA, Letonika, and others.

The Primo Discovery search tool supports the library's resource search, allowing users to search the library catalogue, subscribed databases, and RTU Scientific Library-created databases in a single search. The electronic joint catalogue search provides simultaneous information on resources available in 13 Latvian libraries. Both the electronic catalogue and the RTU portal ORTUS permit remote reservation of library resources and remote access to databases. The library offers individual and group training opportunities in information literacy tailored to varying levels of expertise. If a publication is not available in the Scientific Library, it can be obtained via interlibrary loan or international loan. The library offers internet access throughout its premises and provides services such as copying, scanning, printing, binding, and a self-service dining room. The reading room is accessible 24/7.

The Expert Group found that RTU has developed a system to support students and teaching staff with the latest scientific resources and publications, effectively meeting the needs of the study field (SAR, pages 51-52). The library has a wide range of specialised literature, and explanatory dictionaries in the technical sciences, which are the primary source of terminology for scientific research in terminology and technical translations. The Scientific Library actively works with its target audiences – students at all study programme levels, academic, research and general staff – to promote information literacy and to provide in-depth knowledge and skills at working with electronic

resources that are a main source of the scientific resources for study and research needs.

The Expert Group confirms that the handbooks, textbooks, monographs, dictionaries and other teaching and learning material available, as well as the journals and library databases subscribed by the Library are up-to-date and meet the needs of the study programmes.

1.3.4.

According to the SAR and provided information during the on-site visit (SAR, pages 52-56) the IT Department at RTU provides students and teaching staff with the necessary information and communication technology solutions for the successful implementation of the study field. Each individual using IT resources at RTU is assigned a unique electronic identity, valid across all university information systems. All IT users have access to the centralised RTU portal, ORTUS, which serves as a single digital gateway. ORTUS combines information from all RTU information system components and provides users with an easy way to access the directory of all IT services in one place. It is used for the efficient administration of the study process, including course registration, grade recording, qualification conferral, payment administration, and dormitory information publication. Expert Group's opinion, proves that IT solutions are sufficient and fully correspond to study field needs.

The Moodle e-learning system is used to ensure effective study process implementation, compiling all relevant information automatically (study courses, users, groups, access rights, etc.). Academic staff upload electronic materials, assessment tests, homework assignments, and course information into the system. Access to previous e-learning materials and recordings is available throughout the study programme, allowing second-year students to read first-year materials at any time. This practice distinguishes RTU from most other Latvian universities. Additionally, students can view their financial information on the ORTUS portal and request documents such as references, transcripts, and copies of learning agreements. For distance learning, RTU academic staff can use video conferencing platforms like Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

The RTU has developed an online learning platform too, <https://mooc.rtu.lv/>, it was created as part of the ESF project No 8.2.3.0/18/A/012 and offers free online courses that students can take independently. One of these courses, "Introduction to Linguistics," was developed for the needs of students in the "Translation" study field (SAR, pages 53-54).

Classroom and schedule digitalisation ensures efficient management of premises. Each RTU student and staff member can access their schedule, which provides information on the venue, time, instructor, room, lecture title, and type. This system greatly facilitates lecture planning and scheduling, optimising the efficiency of premise occupancy and use. However, during the interviews stakeholders mentioned that despite the very modern technological support, day-to-day communication could be improved, as important notifications about cancelled classes are published at the very last minute. A digital student survey system is implemented for quality assurance in the study field, enabling quality control of study courses and study programmes each semester (SAR, page 54). Surveys for the students are mandatory, here the Expert Group would like to point out that mandatory surveys even if they are anonymous do not always show the real students' opinion, because not always students have the time and interest to answer the questions.

Regarding productivity software and IT ecosystem, all IT users at RTU have access to the Microsoft Office 365 cloud computing platform, which provides one terabyte of storage space and various collaboration and productivity tools, including Microsoft Teams, SharePoint Online, Forms, OneNote,

OneDrive, and Outlook. All students, academic staff, and general staff have access to the university's email system. RTU has developed the Centralised Research Support System to facilitate research activities, recording all pertinent information on publications, patents, commercialisation applications, doctoral theses, scientific journals, research personnel, and other relevant data. (SAR, pages 54-55, presentation of Moodle and other IT solutions).

RTU offers a high-speed fibre optic internet connection and an extensive wireless network infrastructure, with over 400 access points, including the international Eduroam service. Desk phones and mobile communications facilitate rapid and convenient communication. Further details can be found in the Security Awareness Report (SAR) on page 55. A policy on information systems security has been developed and implemented.

In the view of the Expert Group, the information and communication technology solutions employed by RTU are appropriate and sufficient not only for full-time studies, but also for online studies, distance learning, and hybrid forms of study. However, during stakeholder interviews, it was discovered that students are not provided with TRADOS or any other translation and terminology tool licences. Instead, students must use free trial versions valid only for 30 days. The Expert Group believes that this is an insufficient way of teaching CAT tools and language technology solutions to students and recommends that RTU secure special offers or free licences for students through collaborative agreements with language technology solution providers. The labour market expects graduates to possess technical proficiency with CAT tools, AI language solutions, and large language models.

As a supplement to the well-organised e-learning environment Moodle, modern video equipment in media space is also available in the RTU facility. Media space with its technological tools allows for the creation of educational, informative, and advertising video materials. Right now this possibility to use media equipment is only for teaching staff, however, the Expert Group recommends RTU consider allowing the use of the media space also to students, who during their studies might work on video content production for scientific and educational needs.

1.3.5.

The Expert Group concluded that RTU has an internal system and recruitment procedures in place to regulate the recruitment and employment of teaching staff. According to the SAR (page 56), the implementation of RTU's personnel policy is outlined in the Human Resources Development Plan, focusing on three main goals for the professional development of academic staff: renewing academic staff by promoting PhD students' academic work, improving the professional competence of existing academic staff, and attracting foreign academic staff.

The election of academic staff at RTU adheres to the stipulations in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the regulations established by the Cabinet, based on the recommendations of the Council of Higher Education. This process aligns with the RTU Constitution and Senate-approved regulations, specifically "On the Procedure of Electing Professors and Associate Professors" and "On the Procedure of Electing Assistant Professors, Lecturers, and Assistants." The Personnel Recruitment and Diversity Guidelines website provides information on submitting applications, the election procedures for various academic positions, and the selection process for scientists and tenured professors. Detailed information can be found at: <https://www.rtu.lv/lv/universitate/vakances-rtu/personalatlates-dokumenti>, where one can familiarise oneself with the RTU Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy, Gender Equality Plan, Personnel Policy, and Anti-Corruption Action Plan for 2023-2024.

Competitions for elected academic positions are announced openly, allowing anyone to apply. The Personnel Department announces public calls for applications on the RTU website, the Euraxess vacancy portal: <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/> and at least one widely distributed Latvian medium. Minimum requirements for academic positions include knowledge of the state language as per laws and regulations, proficiency in foreign languages necessary for academic duties, and continuous improvement of academic and scientific qualifications. Other requirements vary by position. Applicants must submit signed application documents personally or by email within one month of the competition announcement.

Visiting academic staff are employed in compliance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions, Cabinet Regulations No 568 “Regulations Regarding the Procedure by which a Research Institution Concludes and Terminates Employment Agreements with a Foreign Researcher” (as of 21 July 2008, in Latvian), RTU’s internal regulations “Procedure of Involvement and Employment of Visiting Academic Personnel at RTU” (as of 26 November 2018, see Annex P11), and other relevant internal laws and regulations.

New academic staff members receive a comprehensive briefing upon commencing employment at RTU. This includes an overview of the University's rules and regulations, the assessment methodology for learning outcomes, and other materials. They are also introduced to the most important aspects of the RTU e-learning environment, ORTUS, the study process, and the planning of study work.

Expert’s Group after review of the available evidence indicates that RTU has defined, implemented and followed procedures and recruitment procedures for the study field and the corresponding study programmes for attracting qualified teaching staff. Observing all provided data and SAR, as well as RTU web page the Expert Group confirms that these procedures are open and the stakeholders involved are informed about them.

1.3.6.

According to the SAR, pages 59-61, all study programmes within the study field have been developed with consideration of the academic staff's needs and their professional development requirements. The Expert Group understands that professional development may include international mobility and participation in relevant conferences and seminars. During on-site visits, academic staff indicated that there are constant opportunities for teaching staff to develop and expand their knowledge in their areas of personal interest, participate in conferences, prioritise their projects, and freely choose conferences they want to participate in. Since 2024, RTU has implemented a Performance Management System for academic staff, which helps create individual career development plans, more fully assess each staff member's contribution to the university's overall development, and determine corresponding remuneration.

In late 2018, RTU established the Centre for Academic Excellence (teaching and learning centre) to support academic staff in areas such as pedagogy, intercultural communication, and self-development. Each semester, the centre offers activities tailored to the professional competence and needs of the academic staff, identified through surveys where lecturers indicate topics and areas for improvement. The RTU IT User Support Centre also regularly organises training on IT systems and the latest technology tools for both academic and general staff (SAR, page 59).

Since 2019, RTU has been running a qualification advancement project in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia. This project provides for the training of

academic staff from leading Latvian universities at the University at Buffalo in the United States of America (SAR, page 60).

Based on data provided by the institution and information gathered during interviews, the Expert Group concluded that the professional and didactic development needs of RTU teaching staff are purposefully determined and appropriate improvement measures are effectively implemented. However, there is a concern regarding the English language proficiency of instructors of a second foreign language other than English. According to the RTU Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, the confirmation letter states that the teaching staff involved in the study field "Translation," as approved in the self-assessment report by the RTU Senate on 29 January 2024, must have at least B2 level proficiency in a foreign or official language if the study programme or any part of it is conducted in a foreign language, or at least C1 level proficiency if it is conducted in the official language.

The SAR, pages 120 and 158, describes an exception for instructors of a second foreign language other than English (French, Spanish, and German). For native German or French speakers, English proficiency is required. Based on the information provided in the annexe P20_2.3.7_Academic Staff CV.zip, some instructors have B1/B2 level proficiency in English, and in some CVs, it is not possible to determine the level of foreign language proficiency at all. The Expert Group recommends that all instructors, including those of a second foreign language other than English, must have at least B2 level proficiency in English. This is important because the study programmes are conducted in English, and all tutors must be able to explain grammar rules and word meanings without language barriers.

Therefore, it is recommended to revise the teaching staff's CVs to add missing or correct outdated information on language proficiency levels. It is also suggested to use a unified template for all CVs, as some are written descriptively and lack important details. The exception rule should be changed so that all instructors have at least B2 level proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

1.3.7.

During the on-site visit, the Expert Group observed high engagement from the academic staff. Based on statistical data in SAR as of January 2024, 48 members of academic staff are involved in the study field of "Translation." Of these, 37 (approximately 77%) have been elected to academic positions at RTU, 10 (approximately 21%) are employed temporarily in academic positions, and the remaining 1 (approximately 2%) are in other types of employment relationships or work in positions that do not require election (SAR, page 61). A significant portion of the academic staff comprises professors, associate professors, and assistant professors, collectively making up more than half of the academic staff. About 46% of all academic staff are lecturers, visiting lecturers, and readers (SAR, p.61-62).

All elected members of the academic staff have both academic and research workloads, and in some cases, administrative work, as RTU does not strictly delineate between academic and research workloads. Latvian regulations allow academic workload to include academic, research, and methodological work and plan a systemic synergy between academic and research activities in HEIs in the long term perspective. However, the SAR does not provide information on whether individuals in such situations must undergo two separate election procedures, which essentially may not be an efficient process.

During the on-site meeting with teaching staff, it was confirmed that the standard workload at RTU is 160 hours a month, with teaching staff attempting to balance it based on priorities. The academic and research workload includes publications and scientific conferences. During the interviews, all members of the academic staff confirmed to the Expert Group that they were participating in scientific activities. However, the information provided to the Expert Group (SAR and its annexes, RTU web page) on the scientific achievements of the faculty members and their impact on the development of the study field is very general, which makes it very difficult for the Expert Group to objectively assess the existing progress of scientific achievements, by what criteria they have been measured, next it is difficult to conclude targeted and strategic planning of scientific activities, rather the scientific work has more of a one-off project character.

As stated in SAR, Academic work includes contact hours in auditoriums and computer rooms, tutorials, supervision and review of study and graduation papers, participation in examination committees, methodological work, and activities that enhance the quality of studies. Administrative (organisational) work includes the management of study programmes, participation in councils/committees/Senate, and management of organisational units. Research (scientific) work involves attracting and managing projects, conducting research tasks funded by development funds or third-party funding (including contracts with legal entities in Latvia and abroad), developing publications, supervising and reviewing PhD theses, and working with PhD students and tutoring (SAR, p. 62-63).

However, the SAR and its annexes do not provide sufficient information for the Experts Group to ascertain how the career of the academic staff progresses when their workload combines academic duties such as professor, associate professor, lecturer, assistant, and research duties as a leading researcher or researcher (many representatives of RTU academic staff indicated they have combined roles)

To specify the information provided in section 2.3.6 of the self-assessment report and during the on-site visit meetings with teaching staff, which states: “To promote the career development of academic staff at Riga Technical University, purposefully manage the execution of individual work, and ensure the full use of the professional potential of academic staff to achieve RTU’s strategic goals, from 2024, RTU will fully implement a Performance Management System for academic staff”, RTU was addressed with the following request: Please provide additional information on whether a regulatory document for the Performance Management System has been developed and approved, as this was mentioned during the on-site visit. If such a document exists, please attach it to the procedural documents.

The document titled “RTU Procedure for Academic Staff Performance Management”, which also includes the evaluation of scientific work carried out by the academic staff, was received. However, the document lacks information on which indicators are assessed, what the performance evaluation methodology is, and how the performance correlates with academic workload.

During the on-site visit, it was observed that industry specialists (guest lecturers) are involved in the implementation of some study courses. For example, a translation agency representative leads the CAT tool study course, and elected academic staff have improved their knowledge in coding with Python. This confirms that Faculty members have regular opportunities to learn from the industry and stay updated on modern IT solutions.

Overall, during the on-site meeting, the teaching staff confirmed that their workload is well-balanced and that the faculty listens to their needs and possibilities. However, the Expert Group would like to

emphasise on very general information provided for the assessment and that in the current AI and digitalisation age that takes over humanities adapting study course content to the rapidly changing language technology landscape requires significant preparation time. Therefore, constant workload monitoring and satisfactory interviews should be in place to ensure that teaching staff can manage this ongoing adaptation effectively.

1.3.8.

As stated in the SAR (pages 65-67), students at RTU have access to academic, career development, and psychological support. The RTU Career Support and Services Department is located on the RTU Campus, making it easily accessible to everyone. The RTU International Cooperation Department has academic consultants who advise foreign students on their studies and practical issues. Additionally, foreign students have a contact person who facilitates the immigration process, organises immigration seminars, and reviews documents at the beginning of the semester. The International Cooperation Department also arranges appointments for students with the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs of the Republic of Latvia.

The Student Self-Government of the study field regularly organises gathering events. During an on-site visit, it was clarified that in recent years, there have been no students with special needs requiring specific tools or assistance in the study process. It is commendable that the Ķīpsala Campus is fully equipped to accommodate students with reduced mobility. RTU is actively building relationships with various employers in both the public and private sectors to facilitate student recruitment and provide internships, and it maintains an active Alumni club. RTU has signed various cooperation agreements (Annex: P02_2.5.1_Sadarbības līgumi_Cooperation_Agreements (updated).zip).

Students specified that they have the necessary access to library resources, databases, career support, and academic support in almost all situations. However, some students mentioned that important information for example on cancelled classes or changes in scheduled courses is not always sent out or published on Moodle in a timely manner. They suggested that the speed and effectiveness of student information could be improved.

Graduates noted that various changes have been implemented based on their recommendations. For example, the German language instructor was changed, which demonstrates that the faculty cares about student well-being and provides a good teaching process.

The Expert Group concluded that RTU has identified the necessary support for students and established a functioning support system to meet their needs. However, there is a need to increase both the amount and number of scholarships available in this study field and improve day-to-day communication effectiveness, including lesson planning and timely information dissemination.

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

Conclusions:

In general, the material, informative, technological, and financial provisions at RTU meet the needs required for the successful implementation of the study field. RTU boasts a modern campus, excellent study premises, and advanced technologies that cater to both the educational and leisure needs of students. However, the choice of language information and communication technology solutions and tools should be improved, considering stakeholders' expectations and the desire to learn various CAT and AI tools.

There are various opportunities for academic staff to develop themselves through participation in

seminars, and conferences and expand their knowledge on topics of their interest. Students are provided with academic, career and psychological support when needed. However, the faculty could find ways to financially support their students more.

A separate concern is that RTU's vision for integrating and developing language study programmes into more technical studies currently lacks specific and measurable short-term goals in the development plan for the study field until 2029 (Annex: P13_2.1.2_Study_Field_Translation_Development_Plan_EN.pdf). The plan does not clearly outline how RTU intends to leverage its technical expertise to transform the existing study field into modern language studies that meet Latvian and European standards and labour market needs.

Strengths:

- 1) Essentially updated and improved infrastructure and excellent working conditions for teaching staff when the move to new premises will be completed.
- 2) Study Courses from previous years are accessible on the Moodle e-learning system throughout a student's studies.
- 3) High potential to develop modern unique study interdisciplinary study programmes and study courses, joint research projects with industry.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Insufficient Student Support with Language Technology Tools. Students lack sufficient support with essential basic language technology tools such as TRADOS, AI solutions, and Large Language Models.
- 2) Students of the Bachelors and Masters study programmes, that the Experts Group met during the on-site visit, could not confirm that they use the RTU Media Space facilities (outside of the lectures). However, in Experts' opinion, the ability to create video and audio content has become a fundamental skill for language professionals today. Therefore Experts Group would suggest informing and motivating students about the activities available in the RTU Media Space.
- 3) The instructors' CVs provided to the Expert Group should be revised to include missing information or to correct outdated details regarding language proficiency levels.
- 4) English Proficiency Requirement for All Instructors. The exemption for non-English language instructors should be changed so that all teachers have at least a B2 level of English proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.
- 5) High risk of teaching staff burnout due to unbalanced workload distribution between lectures and research work and a lack of sufficient time for learning rapidly changing language technologies.
- 6) Delays in communicating day-to-day topics, such as class cancellations and schedule changes, to students.

1.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation

Analysis

1.4.1.

Providing basic information on the higher education institution and its strategic development fields (SAR 1.1.) RTU states that "RTU carries out active study and research work, acquiring new partners worldwide, working together on project implementation, student exchange and the development of joint study programs" (SAR, p. 4). The internationalisation and cooperation in the field of research and science are also mentioned as important pillars of RTU: "Many research and scientific projects are being carried out in cooperation with RTU partners, which result in both new patents and successful business activities" (SAR, p. 4).

Highlighting the importance of scientific components in the university's activities, RTU reports that

"The basis for the activity of RTU is the study process built on science, innovation, and cooperation with the industry, which ensures the preparation of specialists required by the Latvian national economy, thus serving as a foundation for the sustainable growth of Latvia" (SAR, p. 6).

To implement RTU's vision to become an internationally competitive, dynamic, and modern university of science and technology, the RTU's Strategy 2023 - 2027 defines four main objectives for the next programming period; one of the objectives links to scientific research - "excellent science" (Annex: RTU STRATEGY 2023-2027, Riga, 2023, https://www.rtu.lv/writable/public_files/RTU_rtu_strategy_2027_eng.pdf).

Another objective in the Strategy Chapter "Goal: Research excellence" (SAR, p. 20) envisages promoting international competitiveness and quality of research, improvement of the support system, and increasing investment in equipment to ensure increased research performance and international excellence. Objective No. 1 of this goal envisages: "Emphasis on high-level, internationally recognised (cited) publications". To measure this, RTU has applied the indicator "Number of Q1-Q2 scientific publications in SCOPUS/Web Of Science (hereinafter: WOS) databases" and the indicator "Normalised citation rate (Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI). SCOPUS, 3-year average)" (SAR, p. 20).

Objective No. 2 of this goal "Research excellence" envisages enhancing the competitiveness of academic staff and promoting the growth of scientific results committing to "promote the growth, motivation and career development of RTU researchers. Develop RTU internal projects as a tool for competitiveness and skills development. Promote the development and professionalism of research support staff" (SAR, p. 21). To measure this, RTU has provided the indicator "Attracted research funding to one full-time equivalent of the research staff" and the indicator "Number of joint publications with foreign partners" (SAR, p. 21).

Objective No.3 envisages excellence as "Orientation towards projects that align with RTU's strategic, study and scientific priorities". This objective implies enhancing research funding, including increasing the number of projects awarded in international competitions, budget funding, funding from agencies, research funding competitions, industry partners, and philanthropic organisations. Development of clearer research priorities in collaboration with academic personnel and other stakeholders will support identification of key research areas and potential sources of research funding" (SAR, p. 21).

In RTU's strategic document "RTU Excellence Approach" (see: <https://www.rtu.lv/en/university/strategy/rtu-excellence-approach>), under the section "Excellence in Research," it is stated that "RTU implements high-quality fundamental and applied research, providing research intensive services to the public and creating innovations, which yield internationally significant results." (SAR, p.14).

"RTU Strategy 2023-2027" and "RTU Excellence Approach" outline the determination of key research areas and the achievement of excellence in priority scientific fields. The attainment of these goals is cascaded to the appropriate structural units and study field, identifying that "a decentralised management system has been provided at a high level at RTU, with a certain degree of autonomy for each academic unit." (SAR, 1.2., p. 9).

The analysis of strategic scientific documents of RTU shows that high scientific requirements are set for study fields. "Development Plan of the Study Field "Translation" for 2024-2029" (Annex: P13) does not indicate the connection with the university's scientific research goals, it does not identify

specific research and scientific directions. “Development Plan of the Study Field “Translation” for 2024-2029” integrates certain aspects of scientific research.

The SAR identifies that the establishment of the “Development Plan of the Study Field ‘Translation’ 2024–2029” was based on the results of the SWOT analysis (SAR, p. 20-22). RTU notes that the SWOT analysis made it possible to identify specific activities. A working group was established for the development of the activity plan, which included Heads of both study programmes who are personally responsible for the implementation of the activities. Following the goals and objectives of the study field and study programmes, as well as the results of the SWOT analysis, an initial set of activities was created and subsequently refined through discussions within the Study Field Commission. Scientific research was highlighted in the SWOT analysis under the aspects of “Challenges and External Cooperation”. In the SWOT analysis, the section “Challenges” – “Curriculum” states: “The necessity to ensure a tighter connection between the study curriculum and the scientific research areas of the Institute of Digital Humanities”; and the section External Factors - External cooperation: “Opportunities to perform interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary research and implement projects” (SAR, 2.1.2.).

“Development Plan of the Study Field “Translation” for 2024 – 2029” includes also an intention to intensify cooperation in research areas, thereby enhancing the scientific impact of the study field and the development of research-oriented studies. Responsible party: Head of the study field; Time frame: Continuously) (P13, SAR 2.1.2).

The “Development Plan of the Study Field “Translation” 2024–2029” (SAR, 2.1.2 and Annex: P13) does not identify the strengths established in the previous study field activities that define the field’s excellence, such as its “key research areas” on which scientific excellence is to be focused. It does not highlight themes that successively continue previous scientific work and the establishment of a scientific school, consolidating the capacity of the teaching staff and students. The scientific research tasks in the “Development Plan of the Study Field “Translation” for 2024-2029” are defined very generally, their regularity is unspecified, and the monitoring of the plan’s implementation is not detailed.

The structure of the management of the study field and the relevant study programmes (SAR, 2.1.3.) provides a detailed overview of academic management, but the management of science and research is not covered in it.

The general description of the scientific component, along with unsystematic management and monitoring, hinders the provision and intensification of scientific research activities.

The study field “Translation” is implemented at the Institute of Digital Humanities; however, the SAR does not provide a report on how scientific collaboration occurs between the study field and the institute. During the on-site visit meeting with the Expert Group, the management of the faculty, institute and study field indicated that the new structural reforms of RTU are a big challenge, however, they will update the direction of the digital component. In the interview with the teaching staff, it was found out that the department staff has not yet gotten used to the new location and management structure, and it is not certain that each staff member is aware of the goals set for the further development of the study field in general and the specific strategic goals of scientific research.

Additionally, scientific activity has not been analysed in the SWOT analysis, and the SAR lacks a document outlining themes of the institute’s scientific activity and planned outcomes according to

RTU guidelines. These factors contribute to a comprehensive listing of forms of scientific activity in SAR section 2.4.2 but do not offer strategic themes and expected outcomes for the academic staff, researchers, and visiting lecturers of the field in alignment with “RTU Strategy 2023-2027” and “RTU Excellence Approach.”

The Expert Group has concluded that RTU has established an effective system to regulate and monitor scientific activities, comprising strategic documents such as “RTU Strategy 2023 - 2027” and “RTU Excellence approach”.

On the other hand, the Expert Group cannot fail to notice that the monitoring documents for the study field, such as the SWOT analysis and the “Development Plan of the Study Field ‘Translation’ 2024-2029”, are not aligned with RTU’s guidelines.

“Development Plan of the Study Field ‘Translation’ for 2024 - 2029” envisages a general task “To intensify cooperation in research areas, thereby enhancing the scientific impact of the study field and the development of research-oriented studies. Responsible party: Head of the study field; Time frame: Continuously” (SAR, 2.1.2 and Annex: P13). According to the Expert Groups’ opinion, for the successful implementation of the aforementioned development plan, a more detailed plan aligned with the scientific research strategy and activities of the Institute of Digital Humanities is required.

Also, the “Development Plan of the Study Field ‘Translation’ for 2024 -2029” does not identify the study field’s previous strengths that determine its excellence, such as key research areas to focus on for scientific excellence, thematic continuity in research initiatives, establishing scientific schools, consolidating the capacity of teaching staff and students, and teaching staff renewal. The tasks are outlined in a very general manner, lacking specificity in their regularity, and the monitoring of the plan execution is not detailed.

1.4.2.

The relationship between the scientific and applied research of the study field and the content of the study field “Translation” is defined in the “Development Plan” of the study field. The academic staff of the field of study and the students should be systematically informed about it. Integrating scientific and applied research into the study content to ensure the modernization and competitiveness of the program.

The SAR provides information regarding several research areas (e-studies, sustainable development in the humanities and Language technologies) of the Institute of Digital Humanities, which is a scientific umbrella for the study direction, and it should ensure the implementation of research and projects, the results of which can be integrated into the content of study courses.

During meetings with the academic staff of the field, it was observed that there is a lack of awareness among academic personnel, not in administrative roles, but regarding how research projects are initiated in collaboration with the institute. There is also a lack of understanding of the scientific research strategic goals, thematic clusters of research in the study field and the institute, leading methodological approaches, specific themes, science transfer activities, “Citizen Science” concept, and their potential in disseminating scientific results to the broader audience and laying the foundation for students’ first scientific experiences.

During the visit, RTU students noted that some study courses have integrated the results of current applied research in the field of translation studies, but some courses have not systematically updated the latest scientific research findings. The Expert Group concludes that study courses use

the results of academic staff research. The literature on the study courses shows that while studying the study courses, the students become familiar with the latest scientific research findings in translology. During the meeting with the academic staff, one example of good practice was mentioned about a jointly developed publication by a member of the academic staff and a student.

The Expert Group suggests that a more detailed plan aligned with the scientific research strategy and activities of the Institute of Digital Humanities ought to be developed in the short term and with a considerate hiring policy in the long term.

1.4.3.

“Development Plan of the Study Field ‘‘Translation’’ for 2024 – 2029” envisages “To promote the engagement of academic staff in academic and scientific research, motivate them to present papers and reports at international and local conferences, forums and round-table discussions. Responsible party: Head of the study field/ Faculty management incl. Head of the institute; Time frame: Regularly” (SAR, 2.1.2 and Annex: P13). Based on this strategic objective, collaboration has been initiated with the main international cooperation organisations, which during the previous reporting period were primarily used as resources for pedagogical development: “Academic staff of the study field is active in cooperation with various non-governmental organisations. The main international cooperation organisations: European University of Technology (EUT) – united technical universities of EU countries for the development of joint research and study programmes (Université de Technologie Européenne); Alliance of Digital Humanities Organisations (ADHO) unites the world associations and organisations in the field of digital humanities; European Association of Digital Humanities (EADH) united European professionals and researchers in the field of digital humanities (including in data processing and digitalisation, interdisciplinary research, archive/corpus management, etc.); The Association for Researching and Applying Metaphor (RaAM)”. (SAR, 2.5.2.) Cooperation with higher education institutions in other countries and other fields in Latvia mainly serves as a source for diversifying the study content, improving pedagogical methods, as well as enriching scientific thought.

Table 2.4.3.1. in SAR section 2.4.3., titled “Activities Promoting Inter-Institutional Cooperation of the Academic Staff of the Institute of Digital Humanities on a National and International Scale” demonstrates that several faculty members of the field hold respected memberships in international scientific organisations or committees - totalling 19. Meanwhile, Table 2.4.3.2. “Research projects” indicates that the field has experience with 4 project implementations. The Expert Group found that there is no information available regarding which projects are currently active or the specific scientific roles of the field’s faculty members in these projects (SAR, p. 73-76). Regarding research projects, the SAR lists both scientific projects and capacity-building projects aimed at fostering academic growth. For example, project “Language Technology Initiative” 2.3.1.1.i./0/1/22/I/CFLA/002 LU reg. No. ESS2023/453 focuses on developing the study module “Language Technologies for Multimodal Information Processing” (SAR, p. 70).

The impact of the institutional capacity-building project “Development of Effective Management of Riga Technical University, 01000-3.1.2.-e/118| 8.2.3.0/18/A/012 | 3783/2018, 01.11.2018 - 30.04.2023, ESF, 8.2.3. “Ensure Better Governance in Higher Education Institutions” (Annex: P23) on the capacity of the field, including its scientific capacity, is not specified.

The Expert Group noted that no information has been provided regarding whether the project “Support for RTU’s international cooperation projects in research and innovation 03000-3.1.2.- e/30 | 1.1.1.5./18.I/008 | 3664/2018, 01.07.2018 - 30.11.2023, ERAF, 1.1.1.5. “Support for International

Cooperation Projects in Research and Innovation” (Annex: P23)” is related to the study field of “Translation”, or whether a Horizon programme project developed by the academic staff of the study field has been developed and submitted within the framework of this project.

The connection of the project “Creation of interactive learning tools and programmes “Programming II’ and ‘Design and Technologies II”. 03.2023 - 11.2023” (Annex: P23) to the scientific research activities of the study field “Translation” or its transfer of results to society is not provided.

The SAR states that “Every year, the academic and scientific staff of Institute of Digital Humanities (hereinafter: IDH) publish the results of their research in various local and international scientific publications and present more than 20 reports at local and international scientific conferences” (SAR, 2.4.2.), although this quantitative indicator is not analysed in the context of “RTU Strategy 2023 - 2027” and “RTU Excellence approach”, which envisage “Emphasis on high-level, internationally recognised (cited) publications” (RTU Strategy 2023-2027 available https://www.rtu.lv/writable/public_files/RTU_rtu_strategy_2027_eng.pdf p. 11); “Number of Q1-Q2 scientific publications in SCOPUS/WOS databases”; Normalised citation rate (Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI). SCOPUS, 3-year average)” (RTU Strategy 2023-2027 available https://www.rtu.lv/writable/public_files/RTU_rtu_strategy_2027_eng.pdf p. 20).

Students and researchers collaborate on various projects, in the implementation of which the academic and scientific staff of the Institute of Digital Humanities participate. Projects and project objectives are listed in Annex P23 (SAR, 2.4.3., Annex P23).

It is stated in the SAR that “The academic staff of the study field ‘Translation’ actively promote international cooperation in scientific research by participating in international scientific activities - international projects, publishing research results in internationally indexed scientific journals and conference proceedings, international conferences, working on editorial boards of scientific journals and scientific conference programme committees, reviewing PhD theses in foreign universities” (SAR, p. 73). The measures listed have not been evaluated for effectiveness, quantity, intensity, student engagement, or knowledge transfer within the context of “RTU Strategy 2023 - 2027”, “RTU Excellence approach”, “Development Plan of the Study Field “Translation” for 2024 - 2029”.

The study field’s scientific capacity and progression towards excellence are positively characterised by one of the most important events on an international scale, which is regularly organised by the structural unit implementing the study field “Translation” - the Institute of Digital Humanities (formerly - the Institute of Applied Linguistics) international scientific conference “Meaning in Translation: Illusion of Precision”, which is dedicated to various theoretical and practical topics, incl. the rendering of pragmatic, semantic and grammatical aspects of meaning in translation; the study of scientific and technical discourse; standardisation and harmonisation of terminology; problematic issues of text/corpus linguistics; digital aspects of translation; e-learning and digital humanities. The conference gathers scientists, terminologists, translators, language policymakers, specialists in the field of e-studies, and students, creating a platform for dynamic and constructive debates, exchange of experiences and initiation of research. The conference enables the study field to identify further areas of scientific development, thematic clusters and methodology (SAR, 76).

In Annex P23, titled “Data Compilation on Scientific and/or Applied Research and/or Artistic Activities Relevant to the Study Field During the Reporting Period”, 6 projects and 5 conferences or meetings are listed. The direct impact of these projects on the scientific performance of the study field’s teaching staff and students is not described. However, from the titles of these activities, it can be inferred that they contribute to strengthening the scientific capacity of the study field.

To summarise, given the Expert Group has noted that some relevant information has not been provided, the suggestion is to react to the issues raised and provide the highlighted information in a timely manner. The Expert Group concludes that the internationalisation priorities of the study field "Translation" should be determined in the documents of the study field and the priority thematic areas of internationalisation should be determined. IDH, which the study field emphasises as a priority, is only one aspect of translation studies.

1.4.4.

RTU has developed all necessary regulations for evaluating scientific research of the teaching staff: "On Periodic Evaluation of Professors and Associate Professors", "Riga Technical University Regulations on the Procedure for Election of Docents, Lecturers, and Assistants", and "Procedure for the Appointment of Research Assistants, Researchers, and Senior Researchers in Academic Positions at Riga Technical University". Additionally, a document titled "RTU Procedure for Academic Staff Performance Management" has been developed, which also includes an evaluation of scientific work carried out by the academic staff. However, the document lacks information on which indicators are assessed, how the scientific activity plan is made, and how it is approved by the RTU management.

The academic staff is familiar with the content of the mentioned regulations, although, during the on-site visit meeting with the academic staff, Expert Group found that scientific activity is driven by the necessity to be re-elected rather than other elements stimulating scientific careers. At the same time, the academic staff pointed out the possibility of receiving support for professional business trips; however, such regulation was not included in the SAR.

"Development Plan of the Study Field "Translation" for 2024 - 2029" envisages promoting the engagement of academic staff in academic and scientific research, motivating them to present papers and reports at international and local conferences, forums and round-table discussions. (Responsible party: Head of the study field/ Faculty Management, Head of the institute; Time frame: Regularly" (SAR, 2.1.2 and Annex: P13).

The SAR does not provide a definitive understanding of a well-functioning and efficient mechanism for involving teaching staff in scientific research. To specify the information provided in section 2.3.6 of the self-assessment report, which states: "...to promote the career development of academic personnel of Riga Technical University, to purposefully manage the performance of the individual work of the employees and to ensure the full use of the professional potential of academic personnel for the joint achievement of

strategic goals of RTU, starting with 2024 RTU will fully implement the Performance Management System for the academic staff", RTU on the 5th of July of 2024 was addressed with the following request: "Please provide additional information on whether a regulatory document for the Performance Management System has been developed and approved, as this was mentioned during the on-site visit. If such a document exists, please attach it to the procedural documents".

The document titled "RTU Procedure for Academic Staff Performance Management", which also includes the evaluation of scientific work carried out by the academic staff, was received. However, the document lacks information on which indicators are assessed, what the performance evaluation methodology is, and how the performance correlates with academic workload.

During a visit to RTU and meetings with the academic staff of the study field, it was confirmed that they recognise the necessity of scientific research and its positive impact on the study content. However, no clear understanding was gained that the academic staff are aware of the key directions of scientific activity and how their research topics can be integrated into these directions. The report

does not indicate groups of the teaching staff that work on certain research topics, nor does it describe how synergy in scientific research is formed among the academic staff and between the academic staff and students.

Some doctoral students involved in project implementation are mentioned in the SAR; however, the study field does not implement a doctoral study programme, and there is a lack of explanation that these doctoral students are those working within the study field and are doctoral degree candidates.

SAR section 2.4.3. highlights the most significant scientific publications of the study field since 2016; the articles prepared for the conference were published in the journal "Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences", edited by Professor Marina Platonova and Professor Larisa Iljinska. 40 journal articles are indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection. Two journals related to the field and one journal related to another field (Education Sciences) are mentioned where the study field's staff have published between 2018-2022. The number of publications and authors is not specified (SAR, p. 77).

Over the past 10 years (2013-2023), the academic staff of the study field have published 130 publications in scientific journals or conference proceedings (Annex: P23). The SAR does not include ranking or analysis of these publications according to "RTU Strategy 2023 - 2027", "RTU Excellence approach", or "Development Plan of the Study Field "Translation" for 2024 - 2029". A chronological overview is provided, separately highlighting publications indexed in WoS and Scopus, without specifying their proportion out of the total number of publications.

During each meeting with RTU management and academic staff representatives, the Expert Group asked a question about science and research challenges to find out whether each member of the academic staff is aware of RTU's strategic excellence plans and understands what the contribution of each member of the academic staff will be to the achievement of RTU's excellence. The received answers show that the teaching staff are aware of the plans of the higher management levels, but they are not sufficiently informed about their role and tasks in them.

The Expert Group concludes that RTU needs to develop a regulation that determines the inclusion of scientific research work in the accounting and evaluation system of academic staff and researchers, as well as to explain it to the staff.

1.4.5.

"Development Plan of the Study Field "Translation" for 2024 - 2029" indicates that "Within the framework of the study field, students are motivated to get involved in research work. [...] Students have an opportunity to submit their research results for evaluation and publishing in RTU conference proceedings. All reports are independently developed by students, their reports, term papers, and projects of different types contain research elements. Bachelor and Master Papers are focused on topical research challenges and solutions to empirical contextual tasks. (SAR, 2.1.2 and Annex: P13).

Referring to the "RTU Excellence approach", the study field envisages dimensions of excellence in the synergy between studies and scientific research. Meanwhile, the "Development Plan of the Study Field "Translation" for 2024 - 2029" projects excellence as a goal: "Developing courses that can be offered to outstanding students to motivate them to engage in scientific research and academic activities as part of their professional development". Responsible party: Head of the study field, Time frame: At least once a year (SAR, 2.1.2 Annex: P13). Specific modules or parts of study programmes where courses would be offered, as well as detailed forms of student motivation, are

not described. There has been no assessment of whether internships provide students with an opportunity to gain scientific research experience.

During the visit to RTU, a meeting with the student representatives confirmed that the students were not informed about the possibility of participating in the biennial conference “Meaning in Translation: Illusion of Precision” organised by the study field teaching staff. They have not had such experience.

Students are integral to activities involving the transfer of scientific knowledge. During the visit, students indicated that they have not had the experience of participating in such events that shape their understanding of the importance of the scientific process.

SAR section 2.4.5. states that students are actively involved in research projects and joint publications. During the visit, when meeting with undergraduate and Master’s level students, confirmation was not received that any of these students had participated in such projects, or that they were aware of such opportunities and of the mechanisms for student involvement in research projects. Examples of such collaboration are not mentioned in the self-assessment report.

SAR section 2.4.5. describes 8 activities that are implemented in the study programme “RTU Innovation Grants for Students”, which are considered most useful for students in the study programmes within the study field “Translation” (SAR, p 80). However, effective indicators or examples of this strategic objective are not mentioned in the SAR. During the visit, when meeting with students in the study field, no examples were obtained of students who had implemented innovation grants. It is possible that this statistic pertains to the university as a whole.

The Expert Group considers the involvement of students in research activities carried out by the RTU faculty as a vital step to be taken in order to achieve strong scientific outputs and engage students with early experiences in carrying out research.

1.4.6.

In the SAR section 2.5.1. the Expert Group found identification regarding the innovative pedagogical solutions applied in the study field, which has a significant positive impact on the study process: internationalisation of scientific and pedagogical activities; development of students’ international experience; attraction of international students and academic staff with the aim of improving study and scientific activity processes, as well as establishing long-term cooperation with foreign organisations; improvement of the study content in the areas characteristic of the field (SAR, p. 85). Elsewhere in the SAR, investigations in the study field of “Translation” within the study field of “Education” are not mentioned. For such an ambitious innovative goal linked to another study field “Education”, justification based on research data, methodological conclusions, and an attached action plan would be necessary.

Wide innovation opportunities for the direction were indicated already during the previous evaluation of the direction.

Based on the self-assessment report, the Expert Group concluded that RTU’s IDH has a high potential to drive scientific innovations within the study field of “Translation”. However, the SAR lacks details on the IDH’s strategic activities, and the institute does not have an official website where information regarding its collaboration with the study field “Translation” and joint scientific research initiatives can be accessed. The RTU website features only a brief profile of the IDH:

The Expert Group also noticed that the division of responsibilities between the study field and RTU IDH are not clearly defined. During the visit to RTU, the institute was positioned as the main driving force of the study direction "Translation".

The Expert Group concluded that the management group of the study direction must define the forms and areas of innovative solutions, include them in the direction's development plan, and coordinate with RTU's strategic goals.

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

Conclusions:

RTU has established an effective system to regulate and monitor scientific activities, comprising strategic documents such as "RTU Strategy 2023 - 2027" and "RTU Excellence approach". The monitoring documents for the study field, such as the SWOT analysis and the "Development Plan of the Study Field "Translation" 2024-2029", are not aligned with RTU's guidelines. The "Development Plan of the Study Field "Translation" for 2024 -2029" does not identify the study field's previous strengths that determine its excellence, such as key research areas to focus on for scientific excellence, thematic continuity in research initiatives, establishing scientific schools, consolidating the capacity of teaching staff and students, and teaching staff renewal. The tasks are outlined in a very general manner, lacking specificity in their regularity, and the monitoring of the plan execution is not detailed.

Given the cutting-edge state of the art of computational humanities, the Expert Group concludes its analysis by pointing out that substantial efforts have been made to align RTU research in digital humanities with current trends and to increase the potential for high-quality publication. The Expert Group suggests that a more detailed plan aligned with the scientific research strategy and activities of the Institute of Digital Humanities ought to be developed in the short term and with a considerate hiring policy in the long term.

The Expert Group concluded that the internationalisation priorities of the study field "Translation" should be determined in the documents of the study field and the priority thematic areas of internationalisation should be determined. DH, which the direction emphasises as a priority, is only one aspect of translation studies.

The Expert Group concludes that RTU needs to develop a regulation that determines the inclusion of scientific research work in the accounting and evaluation system of academic staff and researchers, as well as to explain it to the staff.

The Expert Group considers the involvement of students in research activities carried out by the RTU faculty as a vital step to be taken to achieve strong scientific outputs and engage students with early experiences in carrying out research.

Based on the self-assessment report, the Expert Group concluded that RTU's IDH plays a pivotal role in driving scientific innovations within the study field of "Translation". However, the SAR lacks details on the IDH's strategic activities, and the institute does not have an official website where information regarding its collaboration with the study field "Translation" and joint scientific research initiatives can be accessed.

Strengths:

- 1) RTU has established an effective system to regulate and monitor scientific activities, framed by strategic documents such as "RTU Strategy 2023 – 2027" and the "RTU Excellence approach".
- 2) The study field "Translation" is implemented at the Institute of Digital Humanities and it is an opportunity to strengthen the Digital Humanities component in both study programs of the study field in the further operation of the study field.
- 3) Several field academic staff are authors of important applied research and publications, as well as perform important representative functions in various international scientific commissions and committees. Once every two years, the study field academic staff organises an international scientific conference.
- 4) The academic staff of the department is aware of the need for synergy between scientific research work and study work.
- 5) Students of the study field demonstrate an understanding of scientific research and show an interest in being engaged in scientific research and project implementation together with academic staff, particularly in the activities of science transfer to wider societies.
- 6) The development potential of the study field is digital humanities and innovative cooperation projects with other RTU study fields.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The "Development Plan of the Study Field "Translation 2024–2029" does not identify the strengths established earlier in the study field that determine the excellence of the direction, such as its key research areas to focus on for scientific excellence, thematic continuity in research initiatives, establishing scientific schools, consolidating the capacity of teaching staff and students.
- 2) The tasks in the Development Plan of the Study Field "Translation 2024–2029" are defined very generally, they are not verifiable and measurable, the regularity of actions is not clear, and detailed monitoring of the plan implementation is lacking. The "Development Plan of the Study Field "Translation" for 2024 – 2029" is currently in scientific terms a set of instruments that requires substantive fulfilment. The unsystematic management and monitoring of scientific components are hindering factors for intensifying scientific research activities.
- 3) The Expert Group concluded that the strategic goals of scientific research of the study field "Translation", the thematic groups of the study field and research of the institute, leading methodological approaches, specific topics, and science transfer activities have not been formulated in the direction's strategic documents. They do not identify the principles of transferring the scientific research results obtained by the academic staff to the content of study courses.
- 4) RTU IDH lacks identifiable regulations, a strategic action plan, and priority research directions and topics.
- 5) Only a small part of the study field academic staff is involved in active scientific activities.
- 6) Students of the study field are not involved in the development of joint publications together with the teaching staff or included in the development and implementation of projects. Students are not involved in organising science transfer activities but demonstrate an interest in working in this area.

Assessment of the requirement [2]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The correspondence of scientific research to the level of scientific research development is partial because in the study field development strategy, scientific research is not put forward as one of the important pillars of the direction, and the contribution of academic staff to scientific

research is not systematic (it is significant only for part of the academic staff)

1.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation

Analysis

1.5.1.

During the on-site visit, the Expert Group observed that RTU maintains close contact with numerous cooperation partners, forming a well-developed network for collaboration. According to SAR, pages 83-84, this network includes public, private, and community organisations, for example, the news agency LETA, the State Language Center, Latvian Association of Translators and Interpreters, Tilde Ltd, the National Library of Latvia, where students were working on manuscripts and digitalisation of books, Latvian State Historical Archives, etc. That contributes to achieving the aims and learning outcomes of the study field. The Expert Group was convinced that representatives of partner organisations actively participate in the study process. They provide internships, assess student competencies, supervise and review Bachelor and Master theses, participate in final defences, engage in individual conversations with the heads of study programs, offer guest lectures and seminars, and take part in student career days (full cooperation partner list can be seen in Annex: P02_2.5.1_Sadarbības līgumi_Cooperation_Agreements (updated).zip). However, the criteria for selecting local partners are not clearly defined in the SAR and were not clarified during on-site meetings.

Based on SAR (page 83) and provided information during discussions with the teaching staff Expert Group conducted that cooperation with other Latvian universities who are provided similar language and translation study programmes is organised via joint conferences and seminars, scientific collaboration, and discussions on industry development, including necessary changes and improvements in the education system. The academic staff from the study field work closely with several Latvian universities and scientific institutions on educational and scientific matters, including the University of Latvia, Daugavpils University, RTU Liepāja, and Ventspils University of Applied Sciences (VUAS). This demonstrates that RTU selects its cooperation partners based on the specific features of the study field and the relevant study programs.

Moreover, during interviews, students who had completed their internships noted that they were informed about the procedure quite late, leaving insufficient time to prepare and find the best company for their internship. They expressed a preference for receiving a list of potential companies at least a month before the internship is due to start, rather than the current system, which provides this information only a week or two beforehand.

Cooperation with the industry might be enhanced by organising more informal meetings and initiating joint scientific projects to better tackle the challenges of the present-day sector, which would help bridge the gap between academic learning and industry expectations, providing students with more practical experience and exposure to real-world applications.

The Expert Group believes that face-to-face meetings with business enterprise representatives would be more beneficial for all stakeholders than employer surveys. Additionally, while there is cooperation between the university and non-academic institutions, particularly those interested in students as interns, local cooperation partners, especially business enterprises, could be encouraged to develop joint research projects with RTU. Currently, local research cooperation is primarily carried out with state or academic institutions, but the potential for collaboration with local business enterprises is not fully exploited.

1.5.2.

The Head of the Master's study programme during the on-site meeting with Expert Group confirmed that the range of cooperation partners is expanding regularly. The faculty is proud that the professional Master's study programme in Technical Translation and Terminology has been included in the EMT (European Master's in Translation) network, attesting to the high quality of the study programme. According to SAR, the EMT network was established to enhance the quality of training and facilitate the integration of new graduates into the translation labour market. It currently comprises over 150 universities in Europe offering high-quality Master's study programmes in translation. The EMT network also facilitates the mobility of students and academic staff, offering students opportunities to participate in internship programmes provided by the European Union DGT (Directorate-General for Translation) (SAR, p. 85). The teaching staff can participate in any event, for example, a seminar, or conference, organised by EMT network universities, during the on-site visit also mentioned visited conferences in Poland, and Estonia, as well as close cooperation with such organisations as the European Association of Digital Humanities, Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations, etc.

The Expert Group was able to gather evidence that in the 2017/2018 academic year, the project "Seven-Year Experimental Latvian Language Training Programme for BISU Chinese Students" was initiated. Twenty students from Beijing International Studies University (BISU) undertook a comprehensive programme of study in Latvian, English, Latvian history, and other subjects as part of the Bachelor of Science in Technical Translation degree study programme. The project successfully concluded in the 2021/2022 academic year, with 12 students completing the professional Bachelor's degree study programme in Technical Translation. Several graduates from the study programme have pursued further studies at the Master's level at RTU, and many have secured employment with major language service providers in Latvia and the Baltic States, for example, Skrivanek. (SAR, p. 86 and Expert Group meeting with graduates).

As evidenced by the data presented in Annex P02 Sadarbības līgumi_Cooperation_Agreements (updated), RTU signed an agreement with King's College London (ranked 40th best university in the world) in 2021 and with the Catholic University of Leuven (ranked 61st best university in the world) in 2023. This demonstrates that RTU selects its cooperation partners from abroad based on the specific features of the study field and the relevant study programs.

The Expert Group concluded that RTU has a network of cooperation partners from abroad, selected to align with the specific features of the study field and its study programmes.

1.5.3.

According to annexe P26 The statistical data on the outgoing and incoming mobility of students over the reporting period presented separately for each study programme the overall mobility for outgoing students shows more variability, with a significant decline after the peak in 2018/2019, showing a relatively small number of students who want to take advantage of study or internship mobility in other countries.

RTU has a separate department (International Cooperation Department) for attracting foreign students to all the university's study programmes. The department is responsible for the communication strategy, channels and activities that reach the best target audience for each field of study, e.g. social media activities, paid advertisements in portals, etc. According to the SAR (page 87), the best marketing channels to reach foreign students are participation in various education fairs and seminars organised by education agencies in the target markets. RTU also promotes its

study programmes through graduates, sending newsletters and using social media platforms to inform about study opportunities in English. The staff of the International Cooperation Department continue to work with potential students who have provided RTU with their contact details but haven't made a final decision in previous years. To make RTU and its study programmes more attractive to foreign students, RTU invites guest professors.

Regarding students' mobility, there is quite a bit of international research cooperation (e.g. international conferences, joint conference proceedings, Erasmus+ exchange trips etc.), but in general, the visibility of the RTU on the international scene pertinent to the translations and terminology studies remains low. The Expert Group believes that international projects and cooperation in the study field must increase in number and quality.

Regarding visiting guest lecturers from abroad, it was explained to the Expert Group during the on-site visit that the main difficulties in attracting foreign visiting professors are related to obstacles in establishing working relationships and a lack of resources to offer competitive salaries to foreign experts. One possible solution is to give guest lecturers the opportunity to lecture remotely in online classes. The strategy for communication with the foreign lectures is the same - social media platforms, event marketing, meetings at conferences etc.

Regarding teaching staff mobility, the SAR (p. 63) states "is considered to be quite high, and it has taken place in various forms." Annex P27 provides detailed information. The mobility of the academic staff in the study field is considered good, taking various forms. Many academic staff members have improved their qualifications by participating in international exchange programmes for academic staff (e.g., ERASMUS+, EEA, and others). According to Annex P27, 32 mobility trips were carried out, involving 17% of the academic staff (SAR, p. 63).

Based on the information provided, the Expert Group concluded that RTU has developed a system and procedures for attracting teaching staff and students from abroad. However, there is room for improvement in increasing international collaboration and enhancing the university's visibility in the field of translation and terminology studies.

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

Conclusions:

The desk analysis and interviews organised during the on-site visit revealed that RTU cooperates with the local businesses, governmental organisations, potential employers and other social partners from Latvia and several Latvian HEIs. The Expert Group opinion study field generally meets the criteria related to cooperation and internationalisation. The Expert Group has verified the volumes of teaching staff and students mobility and found them encouraging. Although there is room for improvement in strengthening and bordering existing collaboration, the Expert Group judges the study field to be fully compliant with this set of criteria, but RTU must work on improvements described in the Expert Group assessment report.

Strengths:

- 1) Participation of the faculty in international networks and projects that provide opportunities for both outgoing and incoming mobility and scientific cooperation projects.
- 2) Wide EMT (European Master's in Translation) network.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The research cooperation with the local business enterprises is not fully exploited.

- 2) Students are informed about internship possibilities too late during the semester.
- 3) Low visibility of the RTU on the international scenes pertinent to the translations and terminology research.
- 4) Encouraging the number of teaching staff mobility that can be improved.
- 5) Small number of outgoing students mobility.

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

Cooperation and internationalisation activities are systematically developed with numerous institutions from Latvia and abroad. Participation in the European Master's in Translation and network and cooperation with King's College London ensures a solid basis for strategic projects in the study. However, RTU should make a few minor improvements described in the Expert Group report.

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

Analysis

1.6.1.

During the previous assessment procedure of the RTU's study field "Translation" eight (8) recommendations were given by the Expert Group. As stated in the annexe P03_2.6.1_Implementation_of_recommendations.pdf, 4 of the recommendations have been fully implemented, 2 of them have been partially implemented and the other 2 of them are still in the process of being implemented.

Based on the SAR and the ideas communicated during the on-site visit, the experts' group concludes that recognizing the critical shortage of LSP translators in the labour market, the university has prioritised expanding its translation programs.

Recommendation No. 1:

Efforts to increase the number of publicly funded study places are underway. Currently, 5 budget-funded study seats are allocated annually at the BA and 2 at the MA study programs.

Recommendation No. 2:

To enhance the learning environment, new computer classrooms equipped with translation software have been established, and a mobile simultaneous translation booth has been acquired. However, during the on-site visit, the Expert Group was informed that the software TRADOS is not a licenced version as it is very expensive and students practise only for quite a short period using a demo version which gives only a possibility to be introduced with such kind or other types of software. The employers also noted that students come to the internship lacking this competence.

Recommendation No. 3:

One more improvement that has been made after the previous accreditation is the curriculum. It has been refined to include specialised editing courses and expanded access to academic resources through database subscriptions. As stated in the SAR (SAR, p. 117), RTU Modern Scientific Library (which has been growing since 2016.) provides access to more than 20 databases and is available to

students and teaching staff.

Recommendation No. 4:

Building strong ties with alumni and industry is essential for the success of both study programmes in the study field "Translation". An alumni association has been formed to foster connections with graduates and gather valuable feedback. Industry collaboration is maintained through a committee that advises on curriculum development and approves changes in both study programmes of the study field. To further strengthen industry engagement, an advisory board has been established, including representatives from key industry players. This recommendation is partially met as during the on-site visit the Expert Group was informed that closer cooperation with graduates could be established asking them to provide feedback on the quality of the studies and expressing their opinion on the competencies they still lack after graduation.

Recommendation No. 5:

RTU self-assessment report states, that cooperation with the employers is maintained along several lines, such as the advisory board with employer representatives and changes in study curriculum based on employers' suggestions. However, during the on-site visit meeting with employers Expert Group learned that still closer cooperation with employers is also a further step to be taken in the future, especially in terms of their feedback on students' skills and perspectives that the study programme could benefit from.

Recommendation No. 6:

The university is committed to providing a high-quality education and has invested in faculty development through staff mobility programs and the recruitment of talented academics. Students are actively involved in research, conferences, and collaborations with other universities, both domestically and internationally. These initiatives aim to equip graduates with the necessary skills to excel in the translation field and contribute to the ongoing development of the industry.

Recommendation No. 7:

According to the SAR (p. 92), students are actively integrated into the academic community by participating in research projects, conferences and publications. By providing opportunities to collaborate with lecturers and colleagues, the study programmes foster students' research-oriented thinking. The inclusion of invited lectures by national and international experts further enriches the academic environment by exposing students to different perspectives and research methodologies. The high rate of study programme graduates pursuing PhD studies is a testament to the program's success in preparing students for advanced research careers. However, during the on-site visit, the Expert Group discovered that still very little cooperative research is being carried out. Therefore, it is recommended to further address this issue in a more serious manner.

During the on-site visit, the expert group concluded that RTU, as proposed, is continuously working to recruit both highly professional academic staff and translation and localisation industry experts to participate in the implementation of the study programmes.

Recommendation No. 8:

In the previous accreditation of the study field, a recommendation was received to establish a common Baltic States database for academic staff research in translation theory and practice. The SAR developers explain in the clarification of recommendation implementation that "a network of experts working in the field of translation and/or terminology management at the Baltic States level has been established". However, the Expert Group found that there is no response provided regarding the recommendation component pertaining to research and recommending to further continue the study field's scientific collaboration among the Baltic States in subsequent phases of its activities.

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

Conclusion:

While progress has been made, opportunities for further improvement exist, particularly in expanding cooperation with Estonian universities and establishing a network of LSP translation experts as well as closer cooperation with graduates and employers.

Strengths:

- 1) Management and faculties (professors) have reacted proactively to the recommendations in terms of the introduction of new study courses;
- 2) New budget-funded study seats have been allocated.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The software used for translators should be employed in the study programme more actively to develop students' competencies;
- 2) Closer cooperation with graduates and employers should be established to receive feedback on students' skills and perspectives that the study programme could benefit from.

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

The above analysis indicates both strengths and weaknesses. The experts note that the SAR and the on-site visit prove a significant qualitative leap has been made in the implementation of the study programme. The recommendations from the previous accreditation in 2013 are reflected in the study area, some of them are still being implemented, and some of them - cooperation with employers, and finding new forms of cooperation with alumni - remain recommendations for the future, until the next accreditation. The experts' comments do not undermine the quality of the study programme and the implementation of the recommendations complies with the requirements.

1.7. Recommendations for the Study Field

Short-term recommendations

1. Supplement the "Development Plan of the Study Field "Translation" for 2024 – 2029" with specific actions and activities that align with the objectives outlined in the SAR. Develop clear and measurable KPIs to track progress and ensure accountability in achieving these goals. Involve a wider range of stakeholders, including students, graduates, academic staff, RTU authorities, and employers, in the development of plans and SWOT analysis.
2. Improve the efficiency and quality of day-to-day communication with students and industry stakeholders. Ensure timely updates on changes in lecture schedules, study plans, internships, and other relevant information. Ensure that all critical information is available in English on RTU's internal information systems (ORTUS).
3. Consider assessing the communication skills and development vision of the Head of the Bachelor study programme to ensure alignment with the study programme's goals, especially in the context of delivering the study programme in English.

4. Encourage the adoption of more student-centred teaching methods, including meaningful group work, hands-on activities, and the integration of modern industry technologies.
5. Provide professional development opportunities for teaching staff to learn and implement innovative pedagogical approaches.
6. Introduce more diverse feedback collection methods, such as focus group discussions, to gather comprehensive and actionable insights from students, alumni, employers, and teaching staff. Use this feedback to make informed improvements to study programmes, teaching methods and assessment practices.
7. Find a solution for supporting students with free essential basic language technology tools such as TRADOS, AI solutions etc. The existing approach is not sufficient.
8. Unify English Proficiency Requirements for All Instructors, as well as for non-English language instructors.
9. Allow students to use the media space for their study and research projects.
10. Improve feedback mechanisms by making them clearer and use them more consistently. Make some improvements to ensure that all stakeholders can easily participate in providing their feedback.
11. Define the research directions of the study field “Translation” for the next 6 years according to the capacity of the academic staff, outline strategic priorities for international collaboration, specify measurable scientific achievements and outcomes that characterise the excellence of the study field, and include these indicators in the “Development Plan of the Study Field “Translation” for 2024 – 2029”.

Long-term recommendations

1. Promote a culture of pedagogical excellence by encouraging continuous professional development and innovation in teaching methods among faculty members. Consider recognizing and rewarding teaching staff who demonstrate excellence and innovation in their teaching practices.
2. Develop a strategy and action plan for achieving a leading university status that promotes the development of digital humanities in Latvia and Europe.
3. Assess the academic staff capacity of RTU IDH and the study field “Translation”, since both study programmes of the field are relatively small in size. The research focus must be on topics that enable the formation of strong scientific groups involving students. This approach aims to enhance and consolidate the scientific activities of the field in line with the indicators and academic staff performance assessment indicators outlined in the “RTU Strategy 2023 – 2027” and “RTU Excellence approach”.
4. Develop an IDH document regulating scientific activities, including a research action plan. Scientific research directions must be defined and the institute’s scientific activities should align with the scientific research in the study field “Translation”. A document or methodology that specifies collaboration between the study field and RTU IDH, clearly delineating roles, needs to be developed.

5. Inform regularly the teaching staff and researchers about the scientific research strategy, outcomes to be achieved, and assessment principles in the study field "Translation".

6. Incorporate into the development plan collaboration with doctoral study programmes, envisioning mechanisms to attract doctoral students and candidates from the academic staff to the study field "Translation". This ensures the renewal of scientific personnel and the establishment and maintenance of a research school in the study field "Translation".

7. Establish a mechanism for involving students in research synergistically with the academic and scientific staff of the study field. The Head of the study field and study programmes should consider information campaigns and examples of best practices.

II - "Technical Translation and Textuality" ASSESSMENT

II - "Technical Translation and Textuality" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1.

Professional Bachelor study programme "Technical Translation and Textuality" is the only first cycle (Bachelor level) study programme of RTU in the field of study "Translation". The name of the study programme, the degree to be obtained - Professional Bachelor Degree in Technical Translation, as well as the qualification to be obtained - Translator, correspond to the study field. Referring to the SAR (p. 102), technical translation is the largest segment of the world market for translation services and therefore represents a significant part of the translation field. RTU has the necessary resources for the successful implementation of the study programme, providing specialisation in different areas of technical translation, attracting specialists and academics in the field to ensure the achievement of the study programme learning outcomes and to prepare competitive specialists for the field.

2.1.2.

Upon successful completion of studies and defence of the Bachelor thesis, students of the Professional Bachelor study programme "Technical Translation and Textuality" obtain the professional qualification "Translator", following the professional standard "Translator" approved on 15.02.2012. (<https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/ps0102.pdf>).

The study programme code - 42227, is established following the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 322 of 13 June 2017 "Regulations on the Classification of Latvian Education" (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524>). The digits "42" stand for - second-level professional higher education (sixth-level professional qualification and professional bachelor's degree) obtained after general or professional secondary education. The duration of full-time studies is four years. The third, fourth and fifth digits of the code '227' indicate the affiliation of '2' to the thematic group 'Humanities and arts', and '227' to the educational programme group 'Language studies and programmes'. The aim, objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme are clearly defined and interrelated. They are developed following the objectives set out both in the professional standard and in point 5 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 305 of 13 June 2023 "Regulations on the National Standard for Professional Higher Education" (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/342818#p5>).

The study programme is implemented only as full-time studies in English. Full-time studies lasts 4 years, 240 ECTS. The admission requirements are general secondary education or professional secondary education based on and compliant with external legislation (SAR, study programme parameters) and, given that the study programme is conducted in English, proof of at least a B2 level of English is logical and reasonable.

Overall, the study programme parameters - title, degree and qualification to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes, duration and scope of studies, delivery format and language - are justified and interrelated.

2.1.3.

Several changes have been made to the parameters of the study programme (SAR, p. 99):

1) The title of the study programme has been changed from "Technical Translation" to "Technical Translation and Textuality ", which was adopted taking into account RTU's accumulated experience in academic work and feedback from the industry.

2) Taking into account the changes in the external legislation, the education classification code was changed from "42222" (thematic study programme group - Language and Culture Studies) to "42227" (thematic study programme group - Language Studies and Programmes), the change is logical and justified.

3) The language of the study programme has been changed to English only, justified by the low demand for studying this study programme in Latvian in the past years.

4) In addition, the study programme has been changed to 240 CP, based on changes in the national legislation - the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the Regulations on the National Standard for Professional Higher Education. This is related to the transition from the Latvian credit point system to ECTS. In the transition from the Latvian CP system to the ECTS credit system, RTU has determined that one credit point corresponds to 28 hours of study work, and students have 40 hours of study work per working week (SAR, p. 111).

5) It should be noted that the study type and form have also been changed, leaving only full-time studies and removing the part-time studies. No detailed justification for this change is given in the SAR.

6) A comparison of the historical information available in the State Education Information System (VIIS) and the Higher Education Quality Agency (AIKA) E-platform database shows that the professional qualification to be awarded has also changed from "Technical translator-rapporteur" to the professional standard "Translator", qualification to be awarded "Translator" (approved on 15.02.2012). The SAR does not provide a more detailed explanation of these changes, but it is pointed out that the process of harmonising the new version of the professional standard has been delayed (SAR, p. 99).

In addition, it should be noted that taking into account the requirements of the professional standard, changes in the external legislative framework, industry trends, students expectations and needs, several changes have also been made to the curriculum design and content during the assessment period, which is described in detail in the SAR, p. 100-101.

In summary, the Expert Group finds the changes to the parameters of the study programme to be

justified, and supportable and have been agreed upon and approved by the RTU decision-making bodies.

2.1.4.

The Bachelor study programme "Technical Translation and Textuality" prepares professionals with a wide range of skills and knowledge in the translation sector (proficiency in several languages, thematic competence (ability to identify relevant/relevant information), socio-cultural competence, digital skills, use the possibilities offered by computer-assisted translation and machine translation tools, work in language technology-related projects, provide conference translation and various localisation services), in addition, the uniqueness of the study programme in Latvia should be highlighted - RTU is the only university that trains translation specialists specialising in technical translation (SAR, p. 104). According to the information available on the AIKA E-platform, in the summer of 2024, only 5 higher education institutions in Latvia offer study programmes at the undergraduate level (1st professional level or Bachelor's level) in the study field "Translation" (<https://eplatforma.aika.lv>), and only RTU specialises in technical translation.

RTU indicates that graduates of the study programme are in high demand in the Latvian and international labour market, the SAR mentions specific cases of employment of graduates, thus highlighting selected positive cases of employment, but does not provide more detailed statistical data on the overall employment picture of graduates.

The expert Group noted with interest that one of the Bachelor study programme graduates mentioned that they started to work at Tesla company after graduating. Similarly, information on the RTU study programme and study field management's cooperation with alumni and the types of cooperation is rather scarce. This indicates that the management of the study programme and study field could improve the current approach to communication with its graduates to accumulate data on their employment patterns, as well as to more actively offer them opportunities to engage in the implementation and improvement of the study programme, for example, through proposals, guest lectures, other formats of cooperation. The alumni Expert Group met during the on-site visit and also confirmed their openness to closer cooperation with RTU.

The analysis of the data published by the Ministry of Education and Science on the employment of graduates of higher education institutions (source: https://data.gov.lv/dati/lv/dataset/2017_2021-g-latvijas-augstakas-izglitiba-iestazu-absolventi-2020-2022-monitoringa-gados/resource/9d832cef-818f-48ac-8a58-e36ecc9a65f6) provides a more complete picture of the information available in the national information systems on the employment paths of RTU Bachelor study programme graduates from 2017 to 2021 in 2022 (latest publicly available data). Comparing these data with the statistics on students and graduates provided by RTU (Annex "Statistics on students in the reference period"), slight differences in the number of graduates (+/- 1 graduate) are visible. According to the data available in the monitoring tool, a total of 78 students graduated from this study programme between 2017 and 2021, of whom 38 (48.7%) were reported as employed in the State Revenue Agency (VID) systems in November 2022, while 14 (17.9%) were reported as unemployed and economically inactive according to the State Employment Agency (NVA). These data still do not fully reflect the employment situation of graduates, as there is a lack of information on the employment paths of 26 graduates. When interpreting these data, several aspects should be taken into account: graduates may have been employed abroad and thus do not appear in the registers of Latvian public institutions, graduates continue their studies at higher levels or incomplete information on graduates' employment is available to the VID, e.g. foreign students and their post-graduation pathways. This is therefore an

even more important indication that RTU would benefit from collecting and monitoring this type of data on their graduates.

Analysing the data provided by RTU on the dynamics of the number of students during the reporting period, it can be seen that the Covid-19 pandemic had a negative impact on the number of students enrolled, especially the proportion of students from abroad, the number of enrolled students decreased by 35-40% (SAR, p. 105) and is slowly starting to increase compared to the pre-pandemic figures. Consequently, the number of graduates is also decreasing. RTU has analysed the dynamics of the student population, looking into the aspects that have an impact on the decline in the number of students, although the main factors for this have been identified as aspects that RTU cannot directly influence, such as the demographic situation in the country, the low ability of the population to pay, state support in the form of budget places for the STEM sector. RTU should more actively assess the possibilities and ways to support existing students of the study programme, as well as organise more targeted marketing activities among the target audience of Latvian and foreign applicants. During the visit, it was confirmed by the stakeholders and it is also the opinion of Expert Group, that RTU could be more actively positioning itself as a place where studies in the humanities, translation and not just engineering are available.

2.1.5.

Not applicable.

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

Conclusions:

The Professional Bachelor study programme "Technical Translation and Textuality" at RTU is unique in Latvia, specialising in the growing field of technical translation. The study programme has undergone significant updates to align with industry demands, legislative changes, and professional standards, ensuring its relevance and compliance.

The reorganisation of faculties has been well-managed, leading to a unified infrastructure and enhanced technological capacity, faculty have dedicated computer classrooms and laboratories for specialised courses as well as a well-established e-study environment.

Despite challenges such as limited delivery formats, incomplete graduate employment data, and the impact of COVID-19 on enrollment, the study programme remains strong due to its specialised focus, comprehensive resources, and market relevance.

Strengths:

- 1) This Bachelor study programme stands out as the only one in Latvia dedicated exclusively to technical translation, catering to a significant market segment and addressing a growing industry need.
- 2) Recent changes to the study programme, including its title, credit system, and language of instruction, have been thoughtfully implemented based on industry feedback and compliance with evolving legislation, ensuring the study programme remains current and effective.

Weaknesses:

- 1) While there are several successes, there is a lack of comprehensive statistical data on the employment outcomes of graduates, which limits understanding of the study programme's full impact on career trajectories.

2) The pandemic has negatively affected student enrollment numbers, particularly among international students, resulting in a noticeable decline in the student body.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1.

As regards the interconnected and complementary content of the study courses/modules is interconnected and complementary, the Expert Group finds that the content of the study programme and its study courses provides excellent general and specific connections to state-of-the-art research and innovation trends in translation and Language Service Providers. As regards its correspondence to the objectives of the study programme and its ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes. Given the mission of RTU, the content enhances field-specific approaches to terminology in the Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics domain. The ongoing process of updating the study programme relying on the interaction among registered students, graduates, and instructors fosters its fine-tuning for the achievement of learning outcomes. Finally, regarding meeting the needs of the industry, labour market and scientific trends. It complies with national regulations (state education standards, professional (occupational) standards or professional qualification requirements. The Expert Group notes that the content of the study programme while providing opportunities to the Latvian teaching and research environment, effectively meets the demands of the local and international market thus transferring innovation.

As regards mixing or keeping apart traditional (all human) translation methods, automatic machine-generated translation, and machine-enhanced human translation, students can rely on two different study courses “Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) Tools” and “Machine Translation” that revolve around understanding and utilising technology to enhance and automate the translation process. While the course on CAT tools focuses on assisting human translators by providing resources and automation for repetitive tasks, the course on machine translation deals with the automation of translation itself and the role of human post-editing in ensuring quality. All study courses in translation involve the use of hybrid translation techniques, both human and computer-assisted. However, it is not clear to the Expert Group which role the Latvian language plays in the interaction of students, instructors, and employers.

2.2.2.

Not applicable.

2.2.3.

The study programme is implemented in English, which makes it more readily available for all students (national and international) to study while relying on equal opportunities. The Expert Group finds this in line with current trends. Following the information provided in the SAR, p. 110, it could be claimed that the Bachelor's study programme “Technical Translation and Textuality” at RTU is designed to prepare highly skilled translation professionals equipped with advanced theoretical knowledge and practical competencies. The Expert Group concluded that the curriculum is structured to align with the evolving demands of the translation industry, emphasising IT skills, terminology management, and a strong foundation in translation theory.

Based on the SAR, the Bachelor study programme "Technical Translation and Textuality" at RTU effectively demonstrates a strong commitment to student-centred learning and teaching principles.

Students have a degree of choice in coursework and learning methods. Professors use the most up-to-date pedagogical tools that complement and reinforce traditional teaching methods such as Moodle, all Ortus tools, MS Teams, Office 365, Mentimeter, Padlet, Soovle, Hemingway App, Formative, Kahoot, Socrates, etc. (p. 110). The study programme offers various learning paths and methods to accommodate different learning styles. Though it is stated in the SAR, that the study programme uses formative assessment and feedback to support student progress, during the on-site visit the Expert Group was informed that students' feedback and its monitoring still need to be improved. Students' feedback is not analysed and discussed together with students.

Based on the SAR, a key feature of the study programme is its student-centred approach, which fosters independent learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. By integrating industry collaboration, practical training, and state-of-the-art technology, the study programme ensures graduates are well-prepared to excel in diverse translation roles. The interdisciplinary nature of the curriculum, combined with a focus on cross-cultural competence, provides students with a comprehensive understanding of the translation landscape.

The study programme's adherence to European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) standards and its emphasis on student feedback should contribute to a dynamic and responsive learning environment. That is why, to further enhance the student-centred approach, the study programme could consider the following: expand student choice: offer more elective courses or specialisation options; implement project-based learning; increase opportunities for students to work on real-world projects; utilise technology for personalised learning -explore adaptive learning platforms or tools; enhance intercultural competence by providing more opportunities for cross-cultural learning experiences.

2.2.4.

The study course "Desk-officer Practice" requires students to carry out internships at Latvian and some foreign establishments such as national agencies, field-specific companies that work in translation such as Skrivanek Baltic, Hieroglifs, NordText, Polyglot and Rigas Tulki as well as public and private companies. RTU states in its self-assessment report, that the study course management provides students with a comprehensive comparative introduction to internship opportunities. However, meeting with students during the on-site visit the issue was raised that students are informed about internships too late during the semester when the internship is supposed to start. Therefore, the Expert Group suggests monitoring how the information is distributed to the students during the semester and making sure that students receive important information in a timely manner.

Students have the freedom to choose from three different internship scenarios, each designed following several student-centred educational principles. These principles include the introduction of a problem-solving model for various challenges, the application of different learning styles, and the consideration of students' interests. The available internship scenarios are:

Pedagogical (including study content development)

Editorial (including reviewing)

Terminological (including applied research activities related to terminography)

These scenarios provide opportunities for both local and international students to select internships that align with their professional and personal skills. RTU supports this process through various mechanisms such as internship coordinators, the RTU Career Centre, and internships offered in collaboration with the Prakse.lv portal. Additionally, internship offers come from cooperation partners, including international companies that use English or other EU languages as their working language

From the information provided by the RTU's self-assessment report and on-site visit meeting with teaching staff and student representatives, Expert Group concludes, that the tasks of the internship are related to the learning outcomes achievable. The internship complies with the requirements of regulatory enactments as it has been proved in several cases by reports of the private language Service Providers.

2.2.5.

Not applicable.

2.2.6.

The choice of topics is a prerogative of the students who independently apply what they have learned in a critical way. Students choose their topic in the spring of their senior year. Two advisors supervise the thesis work (SAR, p. 114). The list of exemplary topics refers to the topical issues in translation studies, applied linguistics, rhetoric, stylistics, cognitive science, terminology and terminography, machine translation is both comprehensive and scientifically challenging. The Expert Group noted with appreciation that themes such as gamification and holistic ecosystems are included among the competencies of students and teaching staff (examples from student Bachelor thesis, provided during the on-site visit).

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

Conclusions:

The content description is comprehensive and well-balanced. In Expert Group's opinion the specific content in relation to the criteria of its topicality, its being centred on student needs, the students' ability to carry out content-related internships and the array of final thesis subjects all testimony of successful effort, with only two weaknesses regarding the permanence of traditional approaches and the role to be played by the Latvian language.

Strengths:

- 1) The content of the study course provides excellent general and specific connections to state-of-the-art research and innovation trends in translation and - Language Services Providers (hereinafter: LSP). Given the mission of RTU, the content enhances field-specific approaches to terminology in STEM domains.
- 2) The attention is given to student needs because, in the current situation of data science taking the overhand in translation studies, students feel a need for counselling about the future of their professional careers. The interactions enabled by the study programme with instructors and employers help students make choices that are the result of mature reflection.

Weaknesses:

- 1) It is not clear which role the Latvian language plays in the interaction of students, instructors, and employers.

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.

The "Technical Translation and Textuality" study programme offers a modern learning environment with well-equipped classrooms across two campuses. In recent semesters, most classes have moved to the Kipsala Campus for better student convenience. The study programme utilises various online platforms and software for instruction, including translation tools and databases accessible through the RTU library. During the on-site visit, the Expert Group was reassured that e.g. computer-assisted translation software tool Trados is used as a translation tool to train future translation professionals. Discussions with lecturers and students have shown that the University does not supply a paid membership of the programme, only the demo version is used during the lectures for a very short period, and it only provides an introductory course in the use of this tool. The administration of the faculty and the head of the institute should think about investing in the most up-to-date translation tools, as well as in books as teaching/learning materials. SAR states that "for example, in the academic year 2022/2023, we could have purchased books in the field of translation for EUR 300", which is very low for the study programme (SAR, p. 117). The library and other facilities shown during the visit are suitable for any study programme and are not specifically designed for translation studies.

2.3.2.

Not applicable.

2.3.3.

The study programme is funded by the state budget and student fees. Funds cover staff salaries, equipment updates, and library resources. The study programme strives to be cost-effective by offering courses to students from multiple study programmes and combining local and foreign students when possible. During the on-site visit (as well as in the SAR, p. 118-119) the Expert Group were told that a decline in student enrollment, including a decrease in foreign students due to pandemic restrictions, has resulted in reduced funding for the Technical Translation and Textuality study programme. Additionally, state prioritisation of other fields and rising energy costs have compounded the budgetary challenges. The study programme has utilised accumulated reserves to offset the shortfall.

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

Conclusions:

The "Technical Translation and Textuality" study programme offers a modern learning environment with well-equipped classrooms across two campuses. Having moved to the Kipsala Campus and having joined a large faculty, the study programme has the potential to grow and prove its uniqueness. The study programme runs on a combination of government funding and student tuition. To manage costs, they offer classes to students in various study programmes and combine local and international students whenever possible.

Strengths:

1) A unique study programme with growing potential and a strong focus on technical language and terminology, with the opportunity for intra-faculty collaboration as part of the Faculty of Informatics, Information Technology and Energy, i.e. with access to highly qualified professors in the technical

field. The study programme has the potential to develop a strong programme in the ESP field (English for Specific Purposes) with a strong focus on industry-specific terminology (energy, aeronautics, engineering, etc.).

2) A well-developed learning management system "Moodle" is an additional resource for the implementation of the study programme.

3) Different optimisation activities are carried out to ensure the implementation of the study programme.

Weaknesses:

1) Limited access to professional translation tools and outdated library resources. During the on-site visit, the Expert Group found that students don't have access to licensed CAT tools and have to use and work with free or trial CAT tools during their studies.

2) Budgetary constraints due to declining enrollment and state funding priorities.

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

The study provision, informative provision, material, and technical provision are compliant with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes. The indicated weaknesses: Limited access to professional translation tools and outdated library resources. During the on-site visit, the Expert Group found that students don't have access to licensed CAT tools and have to use and work with free or trial CAT tools during their studies; budgetary constraints due to declining enrollment and state funding priorities do not make the study programme weak but are rather shortcomings of the study programme that are recommended to be dealt with. The issue of decreasing number of students is being dealt with. "Finansējuma sadalījums_Distribution of funding_HCT_HGT_Atjaunots_Updated" in the Section "Other Annexes").

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.

The implementation of the study programme is carried out by highly qualified academic staff from Latvia, foreign visiting lecturers and industry representatives. The qualification of all members of the academic staff complies with the requirements of the regulatory enactments, which are set for the Bachelor level study programmes. All teaching staff of the study programme hold a PhD or Master's degree in the respective research field. A total of 39 lecturers are involved in the implementation of the study programme, 15 (38%) of them have a Doctoral degree, 3 (8%) lecturers completed Doctoral studies and are PhD candidates, while 21 (54%) lecturers (including industry representatives) have a Master degree(SAR, p. 120).

The teaching staff involved in the study programme implementation are members of professional associations, as well as the European Association of Digital Humanities, the Latvian Association of Interpreters and Translators, the European Master's in Translation (EMT) network, and the Association for Researching and Applying Metaphor (RaAM) (SAR, p. 120).

The SAR provides information that some of the teaching staff participate in RTU projects focused on capacity building, and increasing teaching competence, it is also stated that some of the study programme lecturers participate in projects focused on digital humanities.

The Expert Group found that the internationalisation of the academic staff is realised through participation in international scientific conferences in Latvia and abroad, involvement in the work of scientific committees of international conferences, and international scientific conferences. At the same time, the Expert Group noted that, against the backdrop of some proactive teaching staff representatives, there are teaching staff members with relatively small contributions to scientific research (from on-site visit during the meeting with the teaching staff of RTU).

In the reporting period (since 2014), visiting professors and lecturers have delivered courses, lectures, and seminars totalling 160 contact hours (SAR, p. 123). The SAR does not provide an overview of the proportion of foreign teaching staff and practitioners in the study programme, which is a very important indicator for a professional study programme conducted in English. The study programme has not established a systematic strategy for attracting foreign visiting lecturers, nor has it developed a robust mechanism for involving labour market representatives in teaching certain study courses or course topics, which would be a significant benefit for a professional study programme linking the study programme content with the work environment.

In Expert Group opinion foreign language proficiency of the academic staff in the Bachelor study programme is attested by the Resolution of RTU Senate from 17th of June 2019 (Minutes No 631) "Procedure for Certification of Foreign Language Proficiency of RTU Employees".

This regulation stipulates that the teaching staff must have at least a B2 level proficiency in the respective foreign language if the study programme or part of it is to be conducted in a foreign language, or at least a B2 level proficiency in the Latvian language if the study programme or part of it is to be conducted in Latvian and the teaching staff did not obtain their secondary or higher education in Latvian. ("Regulations on Licensing of Study Programmes" (Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 795) <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/303957-studiju-programmu-licencesanas-noteikumi>

The SAR indicates that upon starting work at RTU, the employee's foreign language proficiency must be recognized following the European common language proficiency levels. If the employee's foreign language proficiency level is not certified, the foreign language proficiency level check is carried out by representatives of the RTU Riga Business School or the Institute of Applied Linguistics of the Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities (SAR, p. 120).

The SAR includes a confirmation from the RTU Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs dated 2024-02-29 stating that the foreign language proficiency of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programmes of the study field "Translation", as approved in the self-assessment report by Riga Technical University Senate on 29 January 2024, corresponds to at least B2 level proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (SAR, p. 123).

In appendix P19 "Basic Information on the Teaching Staff Involved in the Implementation of the Study Programme" submitted by RTU, it is indicated that 8 teaching staff members have English language proficiency at the B1/B2 level. During the visit to RTU, it was explained that B1 is the result of an internal test provided for in the "RTU Employees' Foreign Language Proficiency Certification Procedure". However, in this RTU document, it is noted that the recognition of employees' foreign language proficiency follows the European common framework of reference for language skills.

Thus, it must be concluded that RTU employees' foreign language skills were assessed according to the "Common European Framework of Reference for Language Skills". Expert Group found that 1 Bachelor study programme teaching staff member has English language proficiency at B1 level and 7 teaching staff member English language level is at B1/B2, which does not completely comply with the "Regulations on Licensing of Study Programmes", according to which teaching staff working in a study programme must have English language proficiency at least at B2 level.

Describing the impact of the teaching staff's competence and potential on study and scientific work outcomes, RTU is moving towards an effective management system of the staff performance: "To promote career development of the academic personnel of Riga Technical University, to purposefully manage the performance of the individual work of the employees and to ensure the full use of the professional potential of the academic personnel for the joint achievement of strategic goals of RTU, starting with 2024 RTU will fully implement the Performance Management System for the academic staff." (SAR, p. 59-61). Having reviewed the regulation "Riga Technical University Academic Staff Performance Management Procedure", Expert Group concludes that it does not mention specific indicators for how scientific research is evaluated and ranked, or how contributions to strengthening the lifelong learning pillar are assessed. From the SAR, a clear understanding cannot be obtained regarding how the teaching staff workloads are formed. During the Expert Group on-site visit, in meetings with the teaching staff, the information was received that the teaching staff simultaneously holds two positions: academic and scientific.

The SAR does not provide information on whether individuals in such situations must undergo two separate election procedures, which essentially may not be an efficient process. Latvian regulations allow academic workload to include academic, research, and methodological work and plan a systemic synergy between academic and research activities in higher education institutions in the long term.

During the on-site visit meeting with the teaching staff, Expert Group asked the question: "How is your workload formed?" An answer was received from some representatives of the teaching staff that they were elected both as teaching staff and as researchers. Experts asked the question: "Do you have two election procedures for each position?" No specific response was received. Such answers make it necessary to recommend RTU to analyze the scientific research component of the teaching staff load, how it is divided between the academic load and the researcher's load, and what are the criteria of the researcher's load. The Expert Group after the on-site visit together with other documents also asked the RTU to provide the load planning and assessment methodology, but no response in this regard was received.

The Expert Group is of the opinion that the teaching staff need information on how individual scientific, academic, and methodological achievements are evaluated in terms of hours, to be able to plan their academic and scientific activities in the long term. This would allow them to use their strengths and respect the employer's needs, mutually developing an optimally effective workload based on an agreement.

2.4.2.

In the reporting period, the composition of the academic staff was renewed taking into account the changes in the realisation language of the study programme from the Latvian language to the English language. These changes were determined by the learning outcomes, students and graduates' feedback, recommendations and the necessity to establish closer cooperation with RTU organisational units, Latvian and foreign higher education institutions, as well as industry (SAR, p.

123).

In the SAR, it is noted that during the reporting period, there was “an increase in the number of professors and associate professors” (SAR, p. 124). The Expert Group agrees that this positive trend indicates the study programme’s capacity to enhance scientific indicators, form teaching staff research groups, develop research projects, evaluate suitable methods for the study programme internationalisation, and involve students in research using interactive approaches to collaboration and engagement.

Analysing the minutes of the Institute of Applied Linguistics Council meeting, Protocol No. 23200-2/2 dated 31 March 2021, the deviations from “Riga Technical University Regulations on the Procedure for Election of docents, lecturers, and assistants” (Annex: P11, document 47) have been detected, as, based on point 3.6 of the Regulations “If the Personnel Department finds non-compliance with the candidate’s documents, it shall not forward them and shall send an explanatory letter to the candidate.” The protocol indicates that discrepancies in the documents of the job applicants were identified by the chairperson of the council, rather than by the Personnel Department, as stipulated in the Regulations on the Procedure for Election of docents, lecturers, and assistants.

Protocol No. 23200-2/2/ dated 31 March 2021 indicates that several points regarding the Voting procedure specified in the Procedure were not observed: “4.1. The issue of elections to academic positions at a council of the faculty or institute meeting has the right to be considered if at least 2/3 of the voting council of the faculty or institute members participate. The chairman may invite candidates for academic positions to a meeting of the council of the faculty or institute. During the meeting, the secretary of the council of the faculty or institute shall report on each candidate for the position. The discussions may follow. The meeting minutes shall be recorded. 4.2. After getting acquainted with the documents and discussions with the candidates for the respective position, the council of the faculty or institute, by secret ballot, shall decide on the election or not. 4.3. Before a secret ballot with a simple majority of the present members of the council of the faculty or institute, a counting committee consisting of not less than 3 (three) members shall be elected by open voting” (Annex: P11, document 43).

The minutes of the Institute of Applied Linguistics Council No. 23200-2/2/ dated 31 March 31 2021, Agenda Item 1, indicate that the nomination of student representatives to the study field committee occurred following the “Regulations of the Study Field Committee” (Annex: P11, document 7), which states in point 3 that “The Committee consists of a minimum of five members”, while point 3.5 specifies that representatives of students’ self-governments of the relevant faculties participate in the committee as observers. The protocol notes that the student representatives were nominated by one of the council’s professors, rather than by the faculty’s student self-government.

The Expert Group concludes measures were taken so that changes in the composition of the teaching staff do not negatively affect the quality; it suggests that all recommendations expressed by the search committees are taken into serious consideration during the votes at faculty meetings.

2.4.3.

Not applicable.

2.4.4

SAR section 2.4.3. highlights the most significant scientific publications of the study field since 2016; the articles prepared for the conference were published in the journal “Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences”, edited by Professor Marina Platonova and Professor Larisa Iljinska. 40 journal

articles are indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection. Two journals related to the field and one journal related to another field (Education Sciences) are mentioned where the study field's staff have published between 2018-2022. The number of publications and authors is not specified (SAR, p. 77).

Over the past 10 years (2013-2023), the academic staff of the study field have published 130 publications in scientific journals or conference proceedings (Annex: P23). The SAR does not include ranking or analysis of these publications according to "RTU Strategy 2023 – 2027", "RTU Excellence approach", or "Development Plan of the Study Field "Translation" for 2024 – 2029". A chronological overview is provided, separately highlighting publications indexed in WoS and Scopus, without specifying their proportion out of the total number of publications.

The information provided by SAR does not indicate that each member of the academic staff has published scientific articles in peer-reviewed publications, in addition to international publications, in recent years.

During the on-site visit meeting with the management and teaching staff representatives, the Expert Group asked questions about the contribution of teaching staff in writing publications included in the Scopus and Wos indexes. Information was obtained that only a few members of the teaching staff have such contributions. At the same time, it should be noted that the RTU had to conduct an analysis of publications (section 2.4.4. of the SAR provides for this). Since this information was not received by the Expert Group during the on-site visit. Expert Group (to the list of additional requested information after the on-site visit) added a request to submit a summary of quantitative data and to sort the submitted list according to the importance of the indicators. The Expert Group also asked RTU to highlight publications included in WoS and Scopus databases separately. No response regarding this request was received.

Since many study courses have a large number of lecturers, it is not possible to accurately determine the connection between each member of the academic staff and his publications in peer-reviewed editions, including international editions or five years of practical experience (except for experience in the implementation of the study program) in the last six years.

Annex P20_2.3.7_"Academic Staff CV" does not always indicate each academic staff member's practical experience (except for experience in the implementation of the study programme). The Expert Group finds that many staff members have practical experience corresponding to the content of the study programme.

Given the cutting-edge state of the art of computational humanities, the Expert Group concludes its analysis by pointing out that substantial efforts have been made to align RTU research in digital humanities with current trends and to increase the potential for high-quality publication.

2.4.5.

The SAR identified vertical and horizontal cooperation between the teaching staff members, but possible forms of cooperation were named; however, examples of activities from the previous period were not provided.

The proportion of the number of students to teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report) was 1 per 1.5 students (SAR 3.4.5).

During the on-site visit, the Expert Group did not obtain information from the teaching staff about how they evaluate the mechanism for cooperation of the teaching staff in the implementation of the study program. The expert group suggests using examples of good practices for intensification of teaching staff cooperation, for example, the exchange of experience on effective use of the e-study environment (during the visit, experts were introduced to the good practice of one teaching staff member). Adoption of good practices can be done through the development of a mentoring program.

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

Conclusions:

RTU has established an effective mechanism for enhancing, systematically maintaining, and promoting staff competence. However, it is necessary to effectively adapt the mechanisms offered by the university to meet the specific academic, scientific, and organisational needs of the study field's staff. This includes initiating new forms of inter-faculty cooperation and utilising the potential of each academic staff member: interactive and innovative teaching forms and methods, development of relevant scientific research, project management and international cooperation competence, and the preparation of high-quality scientific publications, either individually or within the study field's research group.

In the Expert Group's opinion, the teaching staff need information on how individual scientific, academic, and methodological achievements are evaluated in terms of hours, to be able to plan their academic and scientific activities in the long term. This would allow them to use their strengths and respect the employer's needs, mutually developing an optimally effective workload based on an agreement.

By examining the annexes provided by the RTU, Expert Group found that 1 Bachelor study programme teaching staff member has English language proficiency at B1 level and 7 teaching staff member English language level is at B1/B2, which does not completely comply with the "Regulations on Licensing of Study Programmes", according to which teaching staff working in a study programme must have English language proficiency at least at B2 level. During the on-site visit meeting with the teaching staff and Heads of both study programmes, Expert Group inquired about the issue with the language levels and asked for a formal explanation, which they received in written form.

Overall, by examining the CVs of the teaching staff, and from the information received during the on-site visit meetings, the Experts Group concludes the qualification of all members of the academic staff complies with the requirements of the regulatory enactments, which are set for the Bachelor level study programmes.

Strengths:

1) The number of teaching staff in the study programme is sufficient, and their formal qualifications exceed the legal requirements.

Weaknesses:

- 1) A system for inviting leading researchers and professors, visiting specialists from the translation-related industry, and also from abroad, to fill part-time consulting positions and enhance the competence of academic and research staff could be improved.
- 2) Inconsistencies have been found in the assessment of the level of English language knowledge of

the teaching staff.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The qualification of all members of the academic staff complies with the requirements of the regulatory enactments, which are set for the Bachelor level study programmes.

8 teaching staff members have English language proficiency at the B1 level, which does not comply with the "Regulations on Licensing of Study Programmes", according to which teaching staff working in a study programme must have English language proficiency at least at the B2 level.

RTU has established an effective mechanism for enhancing, systematically maintaining, and promoting staff competence. However, it is necessary to effectively adapt the mechanisms offered by the university to meet the specific academic, scientific, and organisational needs of the study field's staff. (CVs, SAR, Latvian legislation, RTU regulations)

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

The study programme complies with the State Education Standard (Annex P06_3.2.1_HCT(47222)_AtbilstibaValstsStandartam_ProfBak_EN.pdf) and confirms that the study programme complies with Cabinet of Ministers Regulation of 13 June 2023 No 305 "Regulations on the State Standard for Professional Higher Education" - <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/342818> (Available only in Latvian).

- 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

The study programme complies with the occupational standard "Translator" of 2012 - <https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/ps0102.pdf> (available only in Latvian).

- 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 descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in the English language in which the Bachelor study programme is implemented, and it complies with the requirements set forth in corresponding legal documents. The library resources are

recommended to be reviewed and updated.

- 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 supplement (Annex: P28_3.1.2_HGT0(47227)_DiplPielik_LV_DiplSupplemt_ENG.zip) overall comply with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued according to Cabinet Regulation No. 202 "Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību apliecinošus dokumentus".

However, the provided Diploma has a technical issue - the qualification awarded after finishing studies has not been updated to a new name. And the diploma supplement lacks page numbering. However, those are minor details that can be fixed from the RTU's side in a short manner of time.

- 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

This is identified in the annexe Confirmation - knowledge of the state language.edoc and it can be concluded that the state language proficiency is compliant with Cabinet Regulation Nr. 733 "Regulations Regarding the Extent of the Knowledge of the Official Language, the Procedures for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language and the State Fee for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language".

- 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: Partially compliant

As this study programme has implementation language English, it is required for the teaching staff to have at least B2 level English and this is identified in the annex Confirmation - knowledge of the foreign language.edoc.

The only exception is allowed for instructors of a second foreign language other than English – French, Spanish, and German. These instructors have had to attest language proficiency of their first foreign language at level C1 according to CEFR and English language proficiency at level at least B1/B2. (SAR, p. 120). According to the data provided in CVs, it was confirmed that the knowledge of a related foreign language (German, Spanish etc.) is at least B2-level and higher.

- 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

The sample of the attached study agreement (Annex P17_2.1.4_Study_agreements.zip) complies with Cabinet Regulation. Nr. 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

RTU has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another higher education institution if the implementation of the study programme is terminated. The agreement is specified in the annex

P15_2.1.4_Vienosanas_VeA+un+RTU_Tulkošana.pdf

It is specified that in case of discontinuation of this study programme, students are to be able to continue their studies at Ventspils University of Applied Sciences.

- 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

RTU Rector Tālis Juhna confirmed that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's licence is revoked. It is ensured based on the annexe Confirmation - on compensation for losses.edoc according to paragraph 13.4 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 795 "Regulations Regarding Licensing of Study Programmes".

- 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

The study programme is compliant with the requirements outlined in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments. provided Diploma has a technical issue - the qualification awarded after finishing studies has not been updated to a new name. However, the Diploma supplement lacks page numbering, but those are minor details that can be fixed from the RTU's side in a short manner of time.

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

The professional Bachelor study programme "Technical Translation and Textuality" is assessed as good, based on the desk study of the documentation provided, the interviews with different internal and external stakeholders and examining the infrastructure during the on-site visit. The concept of the study programme and its content, teaching and assessment methodology, teaching staff qualification and competencies (their education, pedagogical, research and professional experience), student services and infrastructure ensure good quality teaching and learning.

The expert group identified the following strengths and weaknesses (The relevant recommendations are presented below in the special section).

Strengths:

- 1) A unique study programme with growth potential.
- 2) Dedicated computer classrooms and laboratories for specialised courses.
- 3) Well-established e-study environment (Moodle).
- 4) Students of the Bachelor-level study programme have the opportunity to participate in ERASMUS+ internships in foreign companies.
- 5) Qualified Teaching Staff: The teaching staff are well-qualified, with their formal qualifications exceeding legal requirements.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Not enough cooperation with the Bachelor-level study programme leads to a decline in demand for the study programme.
- 2) A low number of publications in highly ranked international journals published abroad.
- 3) Limited access to professional translation tools and outdated library resources. During the on-site visit, the Expert Group found that students don't have access to licensed CAT tools and have to use and work with free or trial CAT tools during their studies.
- 4) Stakeholder Involvement: The development planning process lacks broader stakeholder involvement, potentially slowing progress.
- 5) Communication Issues: Day-to-day communication, including lesson planning and timely information dissemination, needs improvement.
- 6) Teaching Methods: Stakeholders suggest that teaching methods could be improved to include more student-centred approaches and hands-on activities.

The professional Bachelor study programme "Technical Translation and Textuality" is implemented in the English language, full-time studies at the RTU campus in Riga, Latvia. The study programme

complies with the requirements of Latvian higher education and quality assurance legislation, as well as local, university and faculty regulations. - The Panel did not identify any shortcomings that could not be addressed within the 2-year accreditation period. There are also no serious shortcomings that may prevent the fulfilment of the requirements of the accreditation standards. The recommendations are not made to meet the requirements but rather for further development and improvement.

Evaluation of the study programme "Technical Translation and Textuality"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Technical Translation and Textuality"

Short-term recommendations

1. Develop more targeted marketing campaigns to attract local and international students, highlighting the unique strengths and career advantages of the study programme.
2. Update the contents of the study programme constantly due to the fast-changing pace of the state of the art.
3. Obtain full versions of modern language tools for students to use during the study period.
4. Update library resources since the study programme is currently underfunded and many of the books are outdated.
5. Correct all technical issues in the Diploma - the qualification awarded after finishing studies has to be updated to a new name, and page numbering added to the Diploma supplement.
6. Clarify the actual English language proficiency level of the teaching staff listed as "B1/B2" in Appendix P19, identifying the specific proficiency level by the Common European Framework of Reference for Language Skills and point 3 of the "RTU Employees' Foreign Language Proficiency Certification Procedure". Additionally, RTU should evaluate the involvement of teaching staff with a B1 level of English language proficiency in the implementation of the study programme following the "Regulations on Licensing of Study Programmes".
7. Develop a strategy for the study field, that would motivate the teaching staff to develop and publish scientific articles in peer-reviewed publications.

Long-term recommendations

1. Increase efforts to engage alumni in study programme activities, such as guest lectures, mentorship, and curriculum development to enhance the educational experience for current students and provide valuable networking opportunities.
2. Consider developing a robust system for tracking graduate employment outcomes and maintaining regular communication with alumni to gather comprehensive data.
3. Review budgetary constraints to steadily renew study programme resources at the faculty level.
4. Take up the chance of starting an initiative for securing the role of high-quality translation services from and in Latvian as regards the content.

5. Be more proactive in establishing international research proposals or projects that involve students and work to increase international co-authorship in published papers.
6. Develop and implement a strategy for systematically attracting foreign visiting lecturers and representatives from the labour market to teach specific study courses and course topics.
7. Consider the possibility of making amendments to the "Regulations of the Study Field Committee" to stipulate that students must be included in the direction committee as full-fledged members rather than as observers, recommending at least one student representative from each study programme and that student representatives are nominated by the student self-government.
8. Supplement "Riga Technical University Academic Staff Performance Management Procedure" with a methodology for evaluating individual scientific, academic, and methodological achievements in terms of hours, so that the teaching staff can plan their academic and scientific activities in the long term. This would enable them to leverage their strengths and respect the employer's needs, mutually developing an optimally effective workload based on an agreement.
9. Intensify opportunities for interdisciplinarity and ensure the potential for efficient curriculum design, consider evaluating the possibilities offered by inter-faculty cooperation.

II - "Technical Translation and Terminology" ASSESSMENT

II - "Technical Translation and Terminology" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1.

The Professional Master's study programme "Technical Translation and Terminology" is the only RTU second-level (Master's) study programme in the study field "Translation". The name of the study programme, the degree to be obtained - Professional Master's Degree in Technical Translation and Terminology, as well as the qualification to be obtained - Translator and Terminologist. It is positive that RTU has also taken into account the development trends and availability of this type of higher education in Europe (SAR, p. 136) when developing the study programme, as well as analysing its strengths in providing this study programme, such as interdisciplinary cooperation with other fields of engineering, the various specialisation options offered, the student-centred approach, etc. In addition, RTU has strategically assessed how the study programme relates not only to RTU's development strategy but also to national-level planning documents, such as the National Language Policy Guidelines 2021-2027. In Expert Group opinion the study programme "Technical Translation and Terminology" corresponds to and complements the study field "Translation" and its Bachelor study programme.

2.1.2.

Upon successful completion of studies and defence of the Master's thesis, students of the Professional Master's study programme "Technical Translation and Terminology" obtain the Professional Master's degree in Technical Translation and Terminology, as well as the professional qualification "Translator and terminologist", according to the professional standard "Translator and terminologist" approved on 12.12.2023. (<https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-284.pdf>).

The study programme code - 47227, is established following the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation of 13 June 2017 No 322 "Regulations on the Latvian Classification of Education" (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524>). The digits "47" stand for - second-level professional higher education (professional Master's degree or seventh-level professional qualification), to be implemented after obtaining a Bachelor's degree, professional Bachelor's degree or sixth-level professional qualification. The duration of full-time studies shall be at least one year. Total duration of full-time studies: five years. The third, fourth and fifth digits of the code '227' indicate the affiliation '2' to the thematic group 'Humanities and arts', and '227' to the thematic group 'Language studies and programmes'. The aim, objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme are clearly defined and interrelated. They are developed following the objectives set out both in the professional standard and in point 5 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 305 of 13 June 2023 "Regulations on the National Standard for Professional Higher Education" (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/342818#p5>).

The study programme is implemented only as full-time studies in English. The study programme has two variants of implementation - study duration 1 year and 5 months, study programme volume 90 ECTS. The entry requirements for this study programme option are a professional Bachelor's degree in translation or equivalent education and a professional qualification as an interpreter, sign language interpreter or translator, and English language skills equivalent to C1 level. The second option of the study programme is 2 years of study, 120 ECTS. The admission requirements for this study programme option are a Bachelor's degree in Humanities, Journalism and Communication, Teacher Education (Foreign Languages), or equivalent, and proficiency in English equivalent to C1 level. The Expert Group discerns that the admission requirements are in line with the external legal framework and, given that the study programme is conducted in English to prepare highly qualified translation and terminology specialists, the requirement of a C1 level of English is logical and justified.

In Expert Group's opinion, the study programme parameters - title, degree and qualification to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes, duration and scope of studies, delivery format and language - are justified and interrelated.

2.1.3.

Several changes have been made to the study programme parameters (SAR, p. 132):

1) The title of the Professional Master study programme has been changed from "Technical Translation" to "Technical Translation and Terminology", which was adopted taking into account RTU's accumulated experience in academic work and feedback from the industry-professional associations and employers' representatives.

2) Taking into account the changes in the external legislation, the education classification code was changed from "47222" (thematic study programme group - Language and Culture Studies) to "47227" (thematic study programme group - Language Studies and Programmes), the change is logical and justified.

3) The language of the study programme has been changed from Latvian to only English to increase the international competitiveness of graduates.

4) The length and duration of the study programme have been changed from 18 months (60 CP) to 1 year and 5 months (17 months in total), 90 CP/ECTS. In the 2-year option, the volume changes from 86 CP to 120 CP/ECTS. The change in the amount of credits is based on changes in national

legislation - the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the Regulation on the State Standard for Professional Higher Education. This is due to the transition from the Latvian credit system to ECTS. In the transition from the Latvian CP system to the ECTS credit system, RTU has determined that one credit point corresponds to 28 hours of study work and students have 40 hours of study work per week (SAR, p. 111).

5) Comparing the historical information available in the State Education Information System (VIIS) and the E-platform database of the Higher Education Quality Agency (AIKA), it can be seen that the professional qualification to be awarded has also changed from "Technical translator-rapporteur" to the professional standard "Translator and terminologist", the qualification to be awarded is "Translator and terminologist" (approved 12.12.2023). This change was made to ensure that graduates of the study programme will be able to continue to successfully and effectively enter the Latvian, European Union (hereinafter: EU) and global labour markets, following the guidelines and requirements of the EU Directorate-General for Translation regarding education and the range of competencies (with particular emphasis on special language of use (SLV) and industry terminology), as well as taking into account the current academic and labour market situation in the field of translation science in Latvia and the EU (SAR, p. 131-132). Also in light of the call from industry partners for a review of the professional standard for Master's level students in translation studies.

6) Furthermore, it should be noted that in the light of the recommendations received in the previous accreditation, the requirements of the new professional standard, changes in the external legal framework, industry trends, and students' expectations and needs, significant changes have been made to the content of the study programme during the assessment period, as detailed in the SAR, p. 134-136. The changes to the curriculum have been gradual and logical, with the most significant changes taking place in preparation for accreditation at the end of 2023. Expert Group considers it to be positive that industry and alumni were involved in the development of the changes.

Key changes to the structure and content of the study programme:

- Reduction of the number of credits for compulsory courses from 24 to 20 CP (36 to 30 ECTS).
- Several existing study courses have been improved and clarified and new ones have been introduced.
- The list of restricted elective courses has been expanded in line with the principles of student-centred education.
- Professor Marina Platonova was confirmed as the Head of the Master study programme.
- The possibility to choose free elective study courses of 4 CP (6 ECTS) was provided.

7) Given the changes in the content of the study programme, the aims, objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme were updated, as well as the admission requirements were clarified.

Expert Group opinion is that the changes to the study programme parameters are justified and supportable, and have been agreed and approved by the RTU decision-making bodies.

2.1.4.

The usefulness of the Professional Master's study programme "Technical Translation and Terminology", as RTU points out, is evidenced by the growing demand for interdisciplinary translation and terminology specialists with appropriate professional qualifications in the Latvian and international labour market (SAR, p. 139). As RTU points out in the SAR and graduates and employers' representatives confirmed during the Expert Group's visit, graduates of this study

programme - specialists in interdisciplinary translation and terminology science - are in demand in state and local government institutions, translation companies, media centres, publishing houses, higher education institutions, lifelong learning projects, private companies, representative offices of foreign companies in Latvia, as well as wherever excellent knowledge of translation and terminology theory is required (SAR, p. 139).

According to the information available on the AIKA e-platform, in the summer of 2024, only 3 higher education institutions in Latvia offered Master's level study programmes in the study field "Translation" (<https://eplatforma.aika.lv>), and only RTU specialises in technical translation and offers such a wide range of courses in terminology studies.

RTU indicates that graduates of the study programme are in demand in the Latvian and international labour market. The SAR mentions specific cases of graduates' employment, thus highlighting specific positive cases of employment, but does not provide more detailed statistical data on the overall employment picture of graduates. On the positive side, some graduates continue their studies at the doctoral level, with their PhD thesis related to translation studies. In addition, RTU indicates that some graduates continue to work at RTU in academic and administrative positions, as well as through other collaborative formats such as thesis supervision/review, etc. (SAR, p. 149). Expert Group notes that such practices are positive and can actively contribute to academic staff renewal and more active engagement with the industry.

An analysis of the data published by the Ministry of Education and Science on the employment of graduates of higher education institutions (source: https://data.gov.lv/dati/lv/dataset/2017_2021-g-latvijas-augstakas-izglitibas-iestazu-absolventi-2020-2022-monitoringa-gados/resource/9d832cef-818f-48ac-8a58-e36ecc9a65f6) provides a more complete picture of the information available in national information systems on the employment pathways of RTU Master's graduates from 2017 to 2021 in 2022 (latest publicly available data). A comparison of these data with the statistics on students and graduates provided by RTU (Annex: P05_3.1.4_HGT0(47222)_StatistikaparStud_LV_StatisticsonStudents_ENG.pdf) shows that they match. According to the data available in the monitoring tool, a total of 17 students graduated from this study programme between 2017 and 2021; however, it is not possible to analyse their employment rates, as the number of graduates has been less than 5 each year since 2018 and, following the monitoring tool's methodology, to protect the data of individuals, they are not presented in detail in such situations.

Therefore, the Expert Group thinks that it would be useful for RTU to collect and monitor this type of data on their alumni, e.g. through periodic alumni questionnaires or telephone interviews, since currently, the number of alumni is relatively small and telephone interviews could be a viable way of communication in such a situation.

An analysis of the data provided by RTU on the dynamics of the number of students and graduates during the reporting period shows that the dynamics of student enrolment during the reporting period is variable, but in recent years it has been on a downward trend. Consequently, the number of graduates is also decreasing, which generally raises concerns about the long-term sustainability of the study programme with such low enrolment rates.

RTU has analysed the dynamics of the student numbers, examining the aspects that influence the decline in student enrolment, although the main factors have been identified as aspects that RTU cannot directly influence, such as the regulation of employment of foreign students in Latvia, the declining role of Master's level education in the international labour market.

It is positive that RTU and the direct management of the study programme, being aware of these challenges, have already proactively reacted and made significant changes in the parameters and content of the study programme to make it more internationally competitive and attractive for local and foreign students. In this context, it is only recommended that active and targeted marketing be further developed to make the potential target group of applicants aware of the study opportunities in this study programme.

2.1.5.

Not applicable.

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

Conclusions:

The Professional Master study programme "Technical Translation and Terminology" at RTU stands as a unique offering in Latvia, tailored to meet both national and international demands for skilled professionals in translation and terminology. The study programme's alignment with industry trends, national standards, and interdisciplinary collaboration underscores its relevance and strategic value. Key changes to the study programme, including adjustments in its title, classification code, obtained degree and professional qualification, scope and volume, and language of implementation and its content, have been well-justified and effectively implemented to maintain compliance with evolving legislation and to enhance the study programme's competitiveness.

Despite its strengths, the study programme faces several challenges, particularly in student enrollment. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these issues, especially among international students, leading to a decline in student numbers. Moreover, while the study programme boasts strong success in graduate employment, the Expert Group finds that there is a noticeable gap in comprehensive statistical data to fully validate these outcomes.

Strengths:

- 1) The study programme's exclusive focus on technical translation and terminology positions it as a distinct and valuable educational offering in Latvia, meeting specific market needs.
- 2) The study programme has undergone significant and well-justified updates to its parameters and content, aligning with industry feedback, legislative changes, and academic standards.
- 3) Conducting the study programme entirely in English and aligning it with EU standards boosts its appeal and utility for both local and international markets.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The study programme is only available in a full-time format, limiting access for potential students who require more flexible study schedules.
- 2) The COVID-19 pandemic and other factors have led to a significant decline in student enrollment, threatening the study programme's long-term development.
- 3) Because of the small number of students the Master's study programme groups have not reached the financial break-even point, which is a concern also for the financial sustainability of this study programme.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1.

Based on the SAR, the Expert group claims that the content of the study programme provides

general and specific connections to state-of-the-art research and innovation trends in translation and LSP. Given the mission of RTU, the content enhances field-specific approaches to terminology in the STEM+ knowledge domain. The curriculum has been carefully designed in consultations with industry experts to make sure the skills, competencies, and attitudes of the Master graduates are in line with the current labour market demand and that graduates are professionally equipped to efficiently account for the industry trends, address the developmental needs of the national economy, and meet topical societal needs. The study programme is carefully designed to equip graduates to work in the dynamic field of translation and language services. Considering the information presented in the SAR, as well as the Mapping of Learning Outcomes of the Study Programme, presented in Annex P08, the study programme combines theoretical foundations and practical application in a balanced way, giving students a solid understanding of the field while developing the skills they need to excel in real-world situations.

The focus on the relevance of the industry is a cornerstone of the study programme. The curriculum incorporates insights from industry experts and keeps abreast of the latest research so that students gain the knowledge and skills to tackle today's challenges and seize emerging opportunities. The integration of ICT and language technologies is key, reflecting the industry's increasing dependence on digital tools and automation.

The study programme develops not only technical skills but also a holistic set of skills. Students are encouraged to develop critical thinking, problem-solving and decision-making skills in order to creatively and innovatively address complex issues. In addition, there is a strong emphasis on ethical behaviour, social responsibility and lifelong learning, preparing graduates to become not only skilled professionals but also active citizens. To ensure a comprehensive education, the curriculum offers a balance of core and elective subjects, allowing students to specialise according to their interests and career goals. Practical experience is integrated throughout the study programme, culminating in practical projects and internships. In essence, the curriculum is designed to ensure that graduates are not only technically competent but also adaptable, ethical and prepared to be leaders in their field.

The Expert Group concluded that the Professional Master's study programme "Technical Translation and Terminology" complies with the national professional (occupational) standard "Translator and Terminologist", adopted at the meeting of 12 December 2023, Minutes No. 6 <https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-284.pdf> (available only in Latvian). A detailed alignment of the study programme courses with the professional (occupational) standards is given in Annex 7: P07_3.2.1_HGT0(47227)_Relevance_to_Prof_Standard.pdf.

2.2.2.

The stated goal is to educate hybrid specialists who meet the demands expressed by the labour market and can become change leaders. The study programme proposes a range of approaches: (1) cognitive (development of cognitive skills in the study process), (2) pragmatic (training of translation and term creation skills in practical work), (3) communicative (obtaining knowledge in the interaction of different lingo cultures), (4) personified (integration of student-centred education principles), and last but not least (5) creative (searching for non-standard solutions). This range of models is meant to make it possible for students to integrate into the academic and research environment, providing a significant contribution to the development of the national economy. Most importantly, the study programme requires students to proactively engage in scientific publishing and participate in competitive research projects allocated to their professors (SAR, p. 146).

2.2.3.

The study programme is implemented in English, which makes it possible to give all students (national and international) equal opportunities. Since the Master study programme is implemented in two study lengths (1.5 and 2 years) it is worth noting the difference between the two implementation methods and how they are giving opportunities to students who have finished a different bachelor study programme in humanities. The SAR claims and talks to teachers, administration as well as employers during the on-site visit confirm that the translation industry is undergoing significant transformation, marked by increased demand for IT proficiency, specialised terminology, and practical skills. The Master's study programme in Technical Translation and Terminology at RTU is designed to address these evolving market needs by offering a student-centred curriculum that balances theoretical knowledge with hands-on experience.

The study programme emphasises practical training through an additional semester focused on translation, localization, editing, terminology management, and digital text processing. Students gain proficiency in industry-standard tools and tackle real-world tasks, often in collaboration with industry partners.

By combining theoretical grounding with practical application and fostering a strong connection between academia and industry, the study programme aims to equip graduates with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in the dynamic field of technical translation.

A core principle of the study programme is interdisciplinarity, incorporating expertise from various fields to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the translation landscape. The curriculum is designed to be flexible, accommodating diverse learning styles and offering students opportunities to shape their learning paths, thus ensuring the learner-centred principle. Based on the SAR, p. 149 and on-site visit, the Expert Group concludes that it is not easy to implement the principle of student-centred learning in terms of an opportunity to choose a study course due to a very low number of students in the study programme. Some innovative methods are also difficult to apply because of the small number of students in the group. The on-site visit lets the experts make a conclusion that students' feedback is not properly analysed and discussed with them, the decisions that have been made based on their feedback are not communicated to students either.

2.2.4.

The study course requires students to carry out internships at Latvian and some foreign establishments such as national agencies, and field-specific companies that work in translation. Students can freely select one of the three possible internship scenarios. The latter is developed by observing several student-centred education principles, including the introduction of the problem-solving model for diverse challenges, the application of different learning styles, and the observation of students' interests (SAR, p. 150). The following curricula are available: pedagogical (including the study content development), editorial (including reviewing), and terminological (including applied research activities related to terminography). Based on the SAR "Technical Translation and Terminology" study programme at RTU integrates a one-month internship to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application. This practical component allows students to solidify their understanding of core concepts while gaining valuable industry experience.

The study programme boasts a wide range of internship placements at Latvian and international institutions. Students can intern at leading translation agencies, government bodies, international company representatives, universities, and even e-learning institutions. This diversity ensures students encounter practical scenarios relevant to their chosen specialisation area.

RTU actively supports students in finding suitable internship placements. The study programme offers dedicated internship coordinators who advise students on both the internship organisation process and navigating the search for potential placements. Additionally, collaboration with partner institutions through established agreements opens doors to internship opportunities aligned with study programme goals. Students can also leverage resources from the RTU Career Center, which not only provides consultations on internship prospects in Latvia and abroad but also maintains a job vacancy board and offers career development guidance.

Before the internship, students receive comprehensive orientation on the internship documentation and procedures. Throughout the experience, they maintain communication with both the university study programme coordinator and the company supervisor. Upon completion, students submit a report outlining their internship experience, which is then evaluated by the supervisor and a university commission using a 10-point grading scale.

The internship programme has demonstrably connected students with relevant industry players. Past internships have taken place at esteemed organisations like the Latvian Ministry of Finance and translation agencies such as Skrivanek Baltic Ltd. Notably, some students even secure internship placements at their current workplaces, highlighting the program's alignment with real-world industry needs and its ability to enhance employability. Based on the information provided during the on-site visit, taking into account the language in which the internship takes place, the institute assures that students get the necessary competence in the place of internship and the level of the English language is assured.

By integrating a well-structured internship programme, the Technical Translation and Terminology study programme equips students with the practical skills and industry exposure necessary to thrive in the professional translation landscape.

2.2.5.

Not applicable.

2.2.6.

The choice of topics is a prerogative of the students who independently apply what they have learned in a critical way. Students choose their topic in the spring of their senior year. Two advisors supervise the thesis work (SAR, p. 114). The list of exemplary topics in translation studies, applied linguistics, rhetoric, stylistics, cognitive science, terminology and terminography, and machine translation is both comprehensive and scientifically challenging. Particularly interesting is the fact that the mention of a topic on "The evolution of Neural Machine Translation Systems in LSP Text Translation" testifies to the readiness of the current faculties (professors) to engage themselves in keeping their expertise updated to a very rapidly growing state of the art.

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

Conclusions:

The content description is comprehensive and well-balanced. The expert group agreed on its full compliance of the content with the current fast-changing state of the art of research and innovation in the Language Services Provider sector. The Master's study programme "Technical Translation and Terminology" at RTU aims to produce hybrid specialists equipped with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills to address the evolving needs of the translation industry. The study programme

focuses on STEM+ terminology and incorporates industry insights to ensure graduates are prepared for the job market. A strong emphasis is placed on practical training, including an additional semester focused on industry-specific skills and a mandatory internship. The study programme promotes interdisciplinarity and offers flexibility in curriculum to cater to diverse student interests. The study programme directly responds to the transformation of the translation industry, addressing the increased demand for IT proficiency, specialised terminology, and practical skills. Collaboration with industry experts and internships ensures that the study programme stays relevant to industry trends. The study programme provides adequate support to students throughout the internship process. Internships have proven to be successful in connecting students with industry professionals and enhancing their employability.

Strengths:

- 1) The Master's study programme in Technical Translation and Terminology at RTU demonstrates a strong commitment to preparing students for the translation industry.
- 2) The study programme effectively combines theoretical knowledge with practical experience.
- 3) The content provides very good general and specific connections to state-of-the-art research and innovation trends in translation and LSP. Given the mission of RTU, the content enhances field-specific approaches to terminology in STEM domains.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The low number of students makes it difficult to implement innovative teaching methods and offer a wide range of elective courses.
- 2) The study programme does not seem to effectively analyse and implement student feedback, leading to a disconnect between student needs and study programme improvements.
- 3) While the study programme emphasises student-centred learning, the limited course selection options due to small class sizes restrict students' ability to tailor their education to their specific interests.

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

Despite the shortcomings in the content of the study programme, the content of the study programme meets the requirements for study programmes of this type and is based on the latest research and achievements in the humanities.

The SAR and related documentation confirm that RTU provides the study programme with the necessary tools and resource material, technical as well as informative base for successful implementation of the study programme.

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1.

The "Technical Translation and Terminology" study programme offered a modern learning environment across Riga campuses, recently the study process has been implemented solely in Ķīpsala Campus. Classrooms are well-equipped with multimedia technology and software for various

translation and analysis tasks. The study programme utilises online platforms and libraries to provide students with the latest resources. The Expert Group confirms that most of the available textbooks, manuals and other teaching and learning materials, as well as the library's subscriptions to journals and the library's databases, are up-to-date and meet the needs of the study programmes. Some of the materials, especially those on the Library shelves, are outdated and in need of revision. The online platform developed by RTU lecturers provides up-to-date teaching/learning materials. RTU has also developed an online learning platform <https://mooc.rtu.lv/>, which was developed within the framework of ESF project No 8.2.3.0/18/A/012 and offers free online courses that students can take independently. One of these courses, 'Introduction to Linguistics', has been developed to meet the needs of students in the 'Translation' field of study (SAR, pp. 53-54). The course "Consecutive Translation (Practical Sessions)" (VIA615) uses a multilingual translation booth. During the on-site visit, the Expert Group was informed that the booth is not used very often and that the students would like to practise their practical skills at the university more often. Therefore the Experts Group suggests motivating students to use the translation booth more often for training or university projects.

2.3.2.

Not applicable.

2.3.3.

The Master's study programme in Technical Translation and Terminology leverages a combined funding model, utilising both state budget allocations and student tuition fees. These resources are strategically allocated to support faculty salaries, equipment updates, library acquisitions, and ongoing study programme development initiatives. While the study programme maintains a limited number of state-funded seats, a commitment to cost-effectiveness ensures their efficient utilisation. This is achieved through shared coursework across study programmes and the strategic co-enrollment of local and international students in compatible courses, whenever feasible. Such measures optimise resource allocation without compromising the study programme's academic quality. During the meetings, the Dean of the Faculty, the Vice-Rector of Studies and the members of the self-assessment team stated that, despite the currently very low number of students in the study programme, they want to maintain this field of study and see the perspective of the study programme and the financial burden it imposes. The profitability of the study programme with so few students (8 students is the minimum amount of students for the study programme to be profitable) is non-negotiable, so the resources of the study programme, with the support of the faculty management, have been considered and responsibility taken. The study programme promoters and faculty leaders see a niche and a future for this study programme.

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

Conclusions:

Despite a recent consolidation to the Ķīpsala Campus and featuring well-equipped classrooms and online resources, the "Technical Translation and Terminology" study programme faces challenges. While the study programme prioritises cost-effectiveness through shared courses and international student co-enrollment, the low number of students raises concerns. However, the faculty remains committed to this field of study, acknowledging its long-term value despite the current financial strain.

Strengths:

- 1) Online platforms and libraries, providing students with access to the latest resources.
- 2) Access to a multilingual translation booth for practical translation exercises.
- 3) Dedication to maintaining the study programme despite the low student numbers.

Weaknesses:

- 1) A very low number of students, which may impact its financial viability and potentially the quality of studies.
- 2) The translation booth, while available, is reportedly underutilised.

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

The study of provision, informative provision etc, materials are compliant with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes. Information on the distribution of funding between cost items, cost per student for each of the study programme implementation variants (90CP and 120CP) and other data are provided in the section Other annexes to the study field self-assessment report in the annexe "Distribution of Funding"

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.

The implementation of the study programme is carried out by highly qualified academic staff from Latvia, foreign visiting lecturers and industry representatives. The qualification of all members of the academic staff complies with the requirements of the regulatory enactments, which are set for the Master level study programmes. All teaching staff of the study programme hold a PhD or Master's degree in the respective research field. A total of 39 lecturers are involved in the implementation of the study programme, 15 (38%) of them have a Doctoral degree, 3 (8%) lecturers completed Doctoral studies and are PhD candidates, while 21 (54%) lecturers (including industry representatives) have a Master degree.

The teaching staff involved in the study programme implementation are members of professional associations, as well as the European Association of Digital Humanities, the Latvian Association of Interpreters and Translators, the European Master's in Translation (EMT) network, and the Association for Researching and Applying Metaphor (RaAM).

The SAR provides information that some of the teaching staff participate in RTU projects focused on capacity building, and increasing teaching competence, it is also stated that some of the study programme lecturers participate in projects focused on digital humanities.

The internationalisation of the academic staff is realised through participation in international scientific conferences in Latvia and abroad, involvement in the work of scientific committees of international conferences, and international scientific conferences. At the same time, it should be noted that, against the backdrop of some proactive teaching staff representatives, there are teaching staff members with relatively small contributions to scientific research.

In the reporting period (since 2014), visiting professors and lecturers have delivered courses, lectures, and seminars totalling 160 contact hours. The SAR does not provide an overview of the proportion of foreign teaching staff and practitioners in the study programme, which is a very important indicator for a professional study programme conducted in English. The study programme has not established a systematic strategy for attracting foreign visiting lecturers, nor has it developed a robust mechanism for involving labour market representatives in teaching certain study courses or course topics, which would be a significant benefit for a professional study programme linking the study programme content with the work environment.

Foreign language proficiency of the academic staff is attested in accordance with the Resolution of RTU Senate of 17 June 2019 (Minutes No 631) "Procedure for Certification of Foreign Language Proficiency of RTU Employees" (SAR, p. 158).

This regulation stipulates that the teaching staff must have at least a B2 level proficiency in the respective foreign language if the study programme or part of it is to be conducted in a foreign language, or at least a B2 level proficiency in the Latvian language if the study programme or part of it is to be conducted in Latvian and the teaching staff did not obtain their secondary or higher education in Latvian. ("Regulations on Licensing of Study Programmes" (Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 795) <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/303957-studiju-programmu-licencesanas-noteikumi>

The SAR indicates that upon starting work at RTU, the employee's foreign language proficiency must be recognized following the European common language proficiency levels. If the employee's foreign language proficiency level is not certified, the foreign language proficiency level check is carried out by representatives of the RTU Riga Business School or the Institute of Applied Linguistics of the Faculty of E-Learning Technologies and Humanities.

The SAR includes a confirmation from the RTU Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs dated 2024-02-29 stating that the foreign language proficiency of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programmes of the study field "Translation", as approved in the self-assessment report by Riga Technical University Senate on 29 January 2024, corresponds to at least B2 level proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

In appendix P19 "Basic Information on the Teaching Staff Involved in the Implementation of the Study Programme" submitted by RTU, it is indicated that 8 teaching staff members have English language proficiency at the B1/B2 level. During the visit to RTU it was explained that B1 is the result of an internal test provided for in the "RTU Employees' Foreign Language Proficiency Certification Procedure". However, in this RTU document, it is noted that the recognition of employees' foreign language proficiency follows the European common framework of reference for language skills. Thus, it must be concluded that RTU employees' foreign language skills were assessed according to the "Common European Framework of Reference for Language Skills" <https://europa.eu/europass/en/common-european-framework-reference-language-skills> and 8 teaching staff members have English language proficiency at the B1 level, which does not comply with the "Regulations on Licensing of Study Programmes", according to which teaching staff working in a study programme must have English language proficiency at least at the B2 level.

Describing the impact of the teaching staff's competence and potential on study and scientific work outcomes, RTU is moving towards an effective management system of the staff performance: "In order to promote career development of the academic personnel of Riga Technical University, to purposefully manage the performance of the individual work of the employees and to ensure the full use of the professional potential of the academic personnel for the joint achievement of strategic

goals of RTU, starting with 2024 RTU will fully implement the Performance Management System for the academic staff.” (SAR 2.3.6.). Having reviewed the regulation “Riga Technical University Academic Staff Performance Management Procedure”, it can be concluded that it does not mention specific indicators for how scientific research is evaluated and ranked, or how contributions to strengthening the lifelong learning pillar are assessed. From the SAR, a clear understanding cannot be obtained regarding how the teaching staff workloads are formed. During the visit, in meetings with the teaching staff, the information was received that the teaching staff simultaneously holds two positions: academic and scientific.

The SAR does not provide information on whether individuals in such situations must undergo two separate election procedures, which essentially may not be an efficient process. Latvian regulations allow academic workload to include academic, research, and methodological work and plan a systemic synergy between academic and research activities in HEIs in the long term. The teaching staff need information on how individual scientific, academic, and methodological achievements are evaluated in terms of hours, to be able to plan their academic and scientific activities in the long term. This would allow them to use their strengths and respect the employer’s needs, mutually developing an optimally effective workload based on an agreement.

2.4.2.

In the reporting period, the composition of the academic staff was renewed taking into account the changes in the study programme. These changes were determined by the learning outcomes, students' and graduates' feedback, recommendations and the necessity to establish closer cooperation with RTU study and management units, Latvian and foreign higher education institutions, as well as industry (SAR 3.4.2.).

In the SAR, it is noted that during the reporting period, there was “an increase in the number of professors and associate professors” (SAR 3.4.2.). This positive trend indicates the study programme’s capacity to enhance scientific indicators, form teaching staff research groups, develop research projects, evaluate suitable methods for the study programme internationalisation, and involve students in research using interactive approaches to collaboration and engagement.

Analysing the minutes of the Institute of Applied Linguistics Council meeting, Protocol No. 23200-2/2 dated 31 March 2021, the deviations from “Riga Technical University Regulations on the Procedure for Election of docents, lecturers, and assistants” (Annex 43) have been detected, as, based on Article 3.6 of the Regulations “If the Personnel Department finds non-compliance with the candidate’s documents, it shall not forward them and shall send an explanatory letter to the candidate.” The protocol indicates that discrepancies in the documents of the job applicants were identified by the chairperson of the council, rather than by the Personnel Department, as stipulated in the Regulations on the Procedure for Election of docents, lecturers, and assistants.

Protocol No. 23200-2/2/ dated 31 March 2021 indicates that several points regarding the Voting procedure specified in the Procedure were not observed: “4.1. The issue of elections to academic positions at a council of the faculty or institute meeting has the right to be considered if at least 2/3 of the voting council of the faculty or institute members participate. The chairman may invite candidates for academic positions to a meeting of the council of the faculty or institute. During the meeting, the secretary of the council of the faculty or institute shall report on each candidate for the position. The discussions may follow. The meeting minutes shall be recorded. 4.2. After getting acquainted with the documents and discussions with the candidates for the respective position, the council of the faculty or institute, by secret ballot, shall decide on the election or not. 4.3. Before a

secret ballot with a simple majority of the present members of the council of the faculty or institute, a counting committee consisting of not less than 3 (three) members shall be elected by open voting" (Annex 43).

The minutes of the Institute of Applied Linguistics Council No. 23200-2/2/ dated 31 March 31 2021, Agenda Item 1, indicate that the nomination of student representatives to the study field committee occurred following the "Regulations of the Study Field Committee" (Annex 7), which states in point 3 that "The Committee consists of a minimum of five members", while point 3.5 specifies that representatives of students' self-governments of the relevant faculties participate in the committee as observers. The protocol notes that the student representatives were nominated by one of the council's professors, rather than by the faculty's student self-government.

2.4.3.

Not applicable.

2.4.4.

SAR section 2.4.3. highlights the most significant scientific publications of the study field since 2016; the articles prepared for the conference were published in the journal "Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences", edited by Professor Marina Platonova and Professor Larisa Iļinska. 40 journal articles are indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection. Two journals related to the field and one journal related to another field (Education Sciences) are mentioned where the study field's staff have published between 2018-2022. The number of publications and authors is not specified (SAR, p. 77).

Over the past 10 years (2013-2023), the academic staff of the study field have published 130 publications in scientific journals or conference proceedings (Annex: P23). The SAR does not include ranking or analysis of these publications according to "RTU Strategy 2023 - 2027", "RTU Excellence approach", or "Development Plan of the Study Field "Translation" for 2024 - 2029". A chronological overview is provided, separately highlighting publications indexed in WoS and Scopus, without specifying their proportion out of the total number of publications.

Expert Group concludes that the information provided by SAR and annexes does not indicate that each member of the academic staff has published scientific articles in peer-reviewed publications, in addition to international publications, in recent years.

From the study course descriptions, Expert Group found out that some of the study courses have more than one lecturer shown as the main implementer of the study course. The Experts Group were informed, that course descriptions include all lecturers eligible to implement the study course. However, it is still not clear (from the course descriptions alone) to the Expert Group which of those lecturers are realising lectures and who is the author of the study course description. Thus experts can not accurately determine whether they should assess each of those lecturers' publications in the last 5 years. The connection between each member of the academic staff and his publications in peer-reviewed publications, including international ones or five years of practical experience (except for experience in the implementation of the study program) in the last six years.

Annex P20_2.3.7_"Academic Staff CV" does not always indicate each academic staff member's practical experience (except for experience in the implementation of the study program). The expert group finds that many staff members have practical experience corresponding to the content of the

study program.

Given the cutting-edge state of the art of computational humanities, the Expert Group concludes its analysis by pointing out that substantial efforts have been made to align RTU research in digital humanities with current trends and to increase the potential for high-quality publication.

2.4.5.

The SAR identified vertical and horizontal cooperation between the teaching staff members, and possible forms of cooperation were named. The Expert Group has noted, however, that examples of activities from the previous period were not provided.

Regarding the proportion of the number of students to teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report), the Expert Group has verified it was 1 per 1.5 students (SAR 3.4.5).

During the visit, the expert group did not obtain information from the teaching staff about how they evaluate the mechanism for cooperation of the teaching staff in the implementation of the study program. The expert group suggests using examples of good practices for intensification of teaching staff cooperation, for example, the exchange of experience on effective use of the e-study environment (during the visit, experts were introduced to the good practice of one teaching staff member). Adoption of good practices can be done through the development of a mentoring program.

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

Conclusions:

RTU has established an effective mechanism for enhancing, systematically maintaining, and promoting staff competence. However, it is necessary to effectively adapt the mechanisms offered by the university to meet the specific academic, scientific, and organisational needs of the study field's staff. This includes initiating new forms of inter-faculty cooperation and utilising the potential of each academic staff member: interactive and innovative teaching forms and methods, development of relevant scientific research, project management and international cooperation competence, and the preparation of high-quality scientific publications, either individually or within the study field's research group.

The qualification of all members of the academic staff complies with the requirements of the regulatory enactments, which are set for the Master level study programmes.

The teaching staff need information on how individual scientific, academic, and methodological achievements are evaluated in terms of hours, to be able to plan their academic and scientific activities in the long term. This would allow them to use their strengths and respect the employer's needs, mutually developing an optimally effective workload based on an agreement.

8 teaching staff members have English language proficiency at the B1 level, which does not comply with the "Regulations on Licensing of Study Programmes", according to which teaching staff working in a study programme must have English language proficiency at least at the B2 level.

Strengths:

1) The number of teaching staff in the study programme is sufficient, and their formal qualifications exceed the legal requirements.

Weaknesses:

2) A system for inviting leading researchers professors and visiting specialists from the translation-related industry, also from abroad, to fill part-time consulting positions and enhance the competence of academic and research staff could be improved.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The qualification of all members of the academic staff complies with the requirements of the regulatory enactments, which are set for the Master level study programmes.

8 teaching staff members have English language proficiency at the B1 level, which does not comply with the "Regulations on Licensing of Study Programmes", according to which teaching staff working in a study programme must have English language proficiency at least at the B2 level.

RTU has established an effective mechanism for enhancing, systematically maintaining, and promoting staff competence. However, it is necessary to effectively adapt the mechanisms offered by the university to meet the specific academic, scientific, and organisational needs of the study field's staff (CVs, SAR, Latvian legislation, RTU regulations).

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

The study programme complies with the State Education Standard (Annex P06_3.2.1_HCT(47222)_AtbilstibaValstsStandartam_ProfBak_EN.pdf) and confirms that the study programme complies with Cabinet of Ministers Regulation of 13 June 2023 No 305 "Regulations on the State Standard for Professional Higher Education" - <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/342818> (Available only in Latvian).

- 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

The study programme complies with the occupational standard Translator and Terminologist, adopted at the meeting of 12 December 2023, Minutes No. 6 - <https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-284.pdf> (available only in Latvian).

- 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 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 outlined in corresponding legal documents. (Annex P10_3.2.1_HGT0(47227)_StudyCoursesdescr_ENG.zip and annex P10_3.2.1_HGT0(47227)_StudijuKursuapraksti_LV.zip)

- 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 samples (P28_3.1.2_HGT0(47227)_DiplPielik_LV_DiplSupplemt_ENG.zip) comply with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued according to Cabinet Regulation No. 202 "Kārtība, kādā izsniedz valsts atzītus augstāko izglītību apliecinošus dokumentus". The diploma supplement has a minor technical mistake: the abbreviation "ECTS" has been written as ECTA, however, this is something that can be changed in the short term.

- 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

This is identified in the annexe Confirmation - knowledge of the state language.edoc and it can be concluded that the state language proficiency is compliant with Cabinet Regulation Nr. 733 "Regulations Regarding the Extent of the Knowledge of the Official Language, the Procedures for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language and the State Fee for Examining the Proficiency in the Official Language".

- 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

As this study programme has implementation language English, it is required for the teaching staff to have at least B2 level English and this is identified in the annex Confirmation - knowledge of the foreign language.edoc.

The only exception is allowed for instructors of a second foreign language other than English – French, Spanish, and German. These instructors have had to attest language proficiency of their first foreign language at level C1 according to CEFR and English language proficiency at level at least B1/B2. (SAR page 158).

According to the data provided in CVs, it was confirmed that the knowledge of a related foreign language (German, Spanish etc.) is at least B2-level and higher. The expert group has verified this and found it in line with current trends.

- 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

The sample of the attached study agreement (Annex P17_2.1.4_Study_agreements.zip) complies with Cabinet Regulation. Nr. 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

RTU has confirmed that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another higher education institution if the implementation of the study programme is terminated. The agreement is specified in annexe

P15_2.1.4_Vienosanas_VeA+un+RTU_Tulkošana.pdf

It is specified that in case of discontinuation of this study programme, students are to be able to continue their studies at Ventspils University of Applied Sciences.

- 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

RTU has provided Rectors T. Juhnas confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's licence is revoked. It is ensured based on the annexe Confirmation - on compensation for losses.edoc pursuant to paragraph 13.4 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 795 "Regulations Regarding Licensing of Study Programmes",

- 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

The study programme is compliant with the requirements outlined in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

However, the Diploma supplement has a minor technical mistake: the abbreviation "ECTS" has been written as ECTA, but this is something that can be changed in the short term.

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

The Professional Master's study programme "Technical Translation and Terminology" is assessed as good, based on the desk study of the documentation provided, the interviews with different internal and external stakeholders and examining the infrastructure during the on-site visit to the RTU University Campus. The concept of the study programme and its content, teaching and assessment methodology, teaching staff qualification and competencies (their education, pedagogical, research and professional experience), student services and infrastructure ensure good quality teaching and learning.

The expert group identified the following strengths and weaknesses (The relevant recommendations are presented below in the special section).

Strengths:

- 1) Unique Focus: The programme's exclusive focus on technical translation and terminology makes it a distinct and valuable offering in Latvia
- 2) Dedicated computer classrooms and laboratories for specialised courses.
- 3) Well-established e-study environment (Moodle).
- 4) Practical Training: The programme offers strong practical training, including ERASMUS+ internships in foreign companies and industry-specific skills.
- 5) The number of teaching staff in the study programme is sufficient, and their formal qualifications exceed the legal requirements.
- 6) Alignment with Industry and EU Standards: Conducting the programme entirely in English and aligning it with EU standards boosts its appeal.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Declining Enrollment: The programme faces challenges in student enrollment, which threatens its long-term development.
- 2) Financial Sustainability: The low number of students has not reached the financial break-even point, raising concerns about the programme's sustainability. Since the current number of students is below the break-even point (8 students).
- 2) A low number of publications in highly ranked international journals published abroad.
- 3) Limited access to professional translation tools and outdated library resources. During the on-site visit, the Expert Group found that students don't have access to licensed CAT tools and have to use and work with free or trial CAT tools during their studies.
- 4) Limited Flexibility: The programme is only available in a full-time format, which limits access for potential students with other commitments.
- 5) Outdated Resources: There is limited access to licensed professional translation and terminology management tools and outdated library resources. There were only 100 books on the list provided to the Expert Group for both study programmes. In Experts' opinion, the list is not sufficient, especially

taking into account that the previous assessment of the study field was in 2013.

6) Student-Centred Learning: The limited course selection due to small class sizes restricts students' ability to tailor their education to their interests.

The professional Master's study programme "Technical Translation and Terminology" can be implemented in English, in full-time studies at the RTU University Campus in Riga, Latvia. The study programme fulfils the requirements of the Latvian higher education and quality assurance legislation, as well as the local, University and Faculty regulations. There are no deficiencies identified by the Expert Group which cannot be eliminated during the 2-year accreditation period. And there are no serious weaknesses which may prevent fulfilling the requirements of the accreditation standards. The recommendations are provided not for fulfilling the requirements, but for further development and improvement. Having identified the above main strengths and weaknesses, the Expert Group assesses the study programme as good.

Evaluation of the study programme "Technical Translation and Terminology"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Technical Translation and Terminology"

Short-term recommendations

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| 1. Evaluate the possibilities and need to introduce part-time study options to cater for a wider range of students, including those with professional or personal constraints. |
| 2. Make the translation booth operational and more accessible to the use of students. Although it is available, it is not being used to its full potential. |
| 3. Support students with free modern language technology tools, for example, TRADOS, and Artificial intelligence (AI) solutions during all studies. |
| 4. Change the exemptions for non-English language instructors and ensure that all teachers have at least a B2 level of English according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. |
| 5. Correct a technical mistake in the Diploma supplement - the abbreviation "ECTA" has to be written as ECTS. |
| 6. Clarify the actual English language proficiency level of the teaching staff listed as "B1/B2" in Appendix P19, identifying the specific proficiency level by the Common European Framework of Reference for Language Skills and point 3 of the "RTU Employees' Foreign Language Proficiency Certification Procedure". Additionally, RTU should evaluate the involvement of teaching staff with a B1 level of English language proficiency in the implementation of the study programme following the "Regulations on Licensing of Study Programmes". |
| 7. Develop a strategy for the study field, that would motivate the teaching staff to develop and publish scientific articles in peer-reviewed publications. |

Long-term recommendations

1. Launch targeted marketing campaigns to attract more students, emphasising the unique strengths and international competitiveness of the study programme.
2. Explore new recruitment strategies, including partnerships with international institutions and cooperation with industry, to boost enrollment numbers.
3. Improve RTU scientific visibility on the international scenes pertinent to the translations and terminology research.
4. Be more proactive in establishing international research proposals or projects that involve students and work to increase international co-authorship in published papers.
5. Develop and implement a strategy for systematically attracting foreign visiting lecturers and representatives from the labour market to teach specific study courses and course topics.
6. Consider the possibility of making amendments to the “Regulations of the Study Field Committee” to stipulate that students must be included in the direction committee as full-fledged members rather than as observers, recommending at least one student representative from each study programme and that student representatives are nominated by the student self-government.
7. Supplement “Riga Technical University Academic Staff Performance Management Procedure” with a methodology for evaluating individual scientific, academic, and methodological achievements in terms of hours, so that the teaching staff can plan their academic and scientific activities in the long term. This would enable them to leverage their strengths and respect the employer’s needs, mutually developing an optimally effective workload based on an agreement.
8. Intensify opportunities for interdisciplinarity and ensure the potential for efficient curriculum design, consider evaluating the possibilities offered by inter-faculty cooperation.

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

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Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation	Comment
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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:	Fully compliant		RTU ensures continuous improvement, development, and performance of the study field in the implementation of its internal quality assurance system. The shortcomings highlighted in the section should be understood as recommended steps for further improvement of the quality assurance of studies.
R2 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the level of development of scientific research and artistic creation (if applicable)		Partially compliant	The correspondence of scientific research to the level of scientific research development is partial because in the study field development strategy, scientific research is not put forward as one of the important pillars of the direction, and the contribution of academic staff to scientific research is not systematic (it is significant only for part of the academic staff)
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		Cooperation and internationalisation activities are systematically developed with numerous institutions from Latvia and abroad. Participation in the European Master's in Translation and network and cooperation with King's College London ensures a solid basis for strategic projects in the study. However, RTU should make a few minor improvements described in the Expert Group report.

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			The above analysis indicates both strengths and weaknesses. The experts note that the SAR and the on-site visit prove a significant qualitative leap has been made in the implementation of the study programme. The recommendations from the previous accreditation in 2013 are reflected in the study area, some of them are still being implemented, and some of them - cooperation with employers, and finding new forms of cooperation with alumni - remain recommendations for the future, until the next accreditation. The experts' comments do not undermine the quality of the study programme and the implementation of the recommendations complies with the requirements.

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	Technical Translation and Textuality (42227)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Good
2	Technical Translation and Terminology (47227)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Good

The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts