



**UNIVERSITY
OF LATVIA**

FACULTY OF GEOGRAPHY AND EARTH SCIENCES

study field

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

study programme

CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HERITAGE

ACCREDITATION REPORT

Study programme director Dr.geol., docent Agnese Kukela

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I. INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDY FIELD

1. Aims and tasks of the study field

The study field “Environmental Protection” at the Faculty of Geography and Earth Sciences (further in the text – the FGES) of the University of Latvia (further in the text – the UL) provides three levels of studies. **The aim** of the study field “Environmental Protection” is to contribute to the sustainable development of Latvia, to provide the national economy with academically educated and for labour market-prepared environmental protection specialists not only in Latvia, but also for the labour market and research in the European Union (further in the text – the EU). The goals of the study field are determined by internationally recognized priorities in the offer of higher education and the actualities of Latvia’s national economy, namely: 1) to ensure the preparation of academically educated specialists in the fields of environmental protection, environmental technologies, cultural environment, emphasizing the natural scientific aspects of environmental science; 2) to improve the environmental education system in Latvia and ensure the development and competitiveness of environmental science internationally; 3) to provide further education opportunities for those working in the environmental protection system. Environmental science is an interdisciplinary science that develops at the mutual interconnection of social and natural sciences. It uses the methodology of these sciences to study the interaction of humans and nature, namely, the human impact on the environment and the impact of an anthropogenically modified environment on a human, to ensure the possibility of sustainable existence of natural resources, biological and genetic diversity, environment and society, and to protect humans from adverse effects of their own activities. Considering the relevance of education in environmental science, nowadays, the studies in this field of science serve as an integral part of Universities’ education system. Environmental science studies are based on education in natural sciences, integrating their methodology with approaches used in social sciences and humanities, promoting the significance of interdisciplinary and problem-oriented education development. The need for environmental protection studies is especially urgent, considering that sustainable development and a green economy have been defined among the development goals of the Republic of Latvia (further in the text – the RL). In Latvia, the education in the direction of environmental protection can be fully realized only within the UL, considering the high academic qualifications, scientific potential, established traditions of academic work and, on the other hand, practical work experience and close connection with the labour market and social partners.

To ensure the goals of the study field “Environmental Protection”, **the tasks** of the study programmes are as follows: 1) to provide the necessary theoretical and practical knowledge in environmental science, including the fields of nature protection, environmental management, environmental technologies, by developing the skills and abilities demanded by the labour market; 2) to develop students’ abilities to independently learn, critically analyse and practically apply the knowledge in solving current tasks in the labour market of Latvia and the EU member states in the direction of environmental protection; 3) to contribute to the research in natural sciences, including environmental protection.

The development of environmental protection studies at the UL is influenced by external factors and ongoing internal processes (within the field and within the study programme). Studies in environmental science are developing in the conditions of high competition, in contrast to other study fields and research sectors of natural sciences, in which the UL is the only one in Latvia capable of providing study opportunities as a low degree of competition with study offers that exist in other higher education institutions of the RL. Seven higher education institutions in Latvia offer environmental protection studies in various aspects, but there is a reason to believe that this number could significantly decrease soon. Among the internal influence factors, the qualifications and research directions of the existing academic staff, research directions in doctoral studies, and opportunities to attract project funding can be mentioned. The strategy of the environmental protection sector is definitely influenced by the situation and actualities in the labour market.

The strategic goal of the direction of environmental protection studies is to ensure that the environmental studies in the framework of the FGES at the UL become a leading study offer at the higher education level, covering the national demand for broad-profile environmental protection specialists at the level of fundamental studies in the RL. Simultaneously, specialization opportunities should be provided in higher-level studies and research in current directions in the labour market and science within the RL and the EU countries. The strategic development of the research aims to provide research-based education in environmental science and environmental technologies, ensuring the attraction of national funding for both - fundamental research and applied research and obtaining strong positions for ensuring a national level demand for the performance of environmental monitoring tasks. The research aims to use the possibilities of the EU structural funds to create a research capacity that would allow at least 30% of the research to be carried out using the EU funding for research.

The development strategy of the study field in environmental protection is in line with the direction of the UL development towards a university of science, the development of interdisciplinary education and research and ensuring a leading role in Latvia while being included in the network of excellent universities in Europe and in the world.

The UL has defined its mission, vision, and the UL Development Directions and Strategic Objectives indicated in the UL Strategy for 2021–2027. The strategy was created considering the vision of the UL management, employees, students and society representatives regarding the needs and trends in the development of the institution, society and national economy. The same principles and priorities set by the UL were applied in determining the goals of the study field. The goals of the study field have been created by following Latvian and international development trends in the corresponding scientific fields of the study field and the current international topical issues of the academic environment and higher education. The goals of the study field are structured according to the six UL Development Directions in the sections of core activities and institutional development. The goals emphasize the priorities of the study field in the framework of the UL Strategic Objectives, focusing on challenges to be solved at the level of the study field. The defined goals are compiled in Table 1.

Table 1.

The goals of the study field “Environmental Protection” and their compliance with the UL Development Directions and Strategic Objectives.

No	The UL Development Directions	The UL Strategic Objectives	The goals of the study field
Development of core activities			
1	Scientific excellence	University as an internationally recognized centre of science	To ensure the international recognition of the research and the international approval of the study programme
2	Study development	Unique study offer and high competitiveness of graduates	To implement individualized, inclusive, student-centred and science-based studies
3	Contribution to society	University’s activity as the basis for the growth of Latvia	To create the study field as a knowledgeable, reliable and supportive partner for Latvian society
Institutional development			
4	Talent development	Development and excellence-oriented personnel policy	To direct the staff to excellence and cooperation in science, industry, teaching and training of pedagogues
5	Environment and governance	Green thinking, an attractive, sustainable university environment and efficient administrative support	To provide an open, collaborative and creative study and research environment

6	Culture of the organization	Inclusive, collaborative and innovative culture	To promote innovations for the development of studies and research
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The interconnectedness of the study programs included in these six goals of the study field can be characterized by several aspects. From an administrative point of view, all programs are implemented within the framework of one basic structural unit of the UL – the FGES. It means that it is easier to connect the goals and development plan of the study field and its programmes with the goals and priorities of the faculty. The study field ensures continuity at all levels of studies, thus providing students with opportunities for consecutive studies up to obtaining a doctor’s degree. Regarding the doctoral level, it should be added that, due to the decision of the UL to consolidate doctoral programmes, the programme of doctoral studies “Natural Sciences” covering a more comprehensive range of topics is supervised in the framework of other study areas. However, the academic staff of the study field “Environmental Protection” and its capacity are also closely involved in their implementation.

Regarding the content, the programmes also have a significant connection as their initial part includes a series of common courses. The study programmes are closely related administratively, thematically, and content-wise, thus providing vast opportunities for effective, interdisciplinary and innovative implementation of the study field “Environmental Protection”.

2. Study programmes included in the study field

*Table 2.
Study programmes of the study field “Environmental Protection”.*

No	Name of the study programme	NQF/EQF	Awarded degree, professional qualification/degree, and professional qualification	Amount (CP; ECTS)
1.	Academic bachelor’s SP “Environmental Science”, code 43431	6	Bachelor of science degree in environmental science	120 CP 180 ECTS
2.	Academic master’s SP “Environmental Science”, code 45431	7	Master of science degree in environmental science	80 CP 120 ECTS
3.	Doctoral study programme “Environmental Science”, code 51431	8	Doctor degree in physical geography, earth sciences, environmental sciences	144 CP 216 ECTS
4.	Academic bachelor’s SP “Cultural and Environmental Heritage”, code 43431	6	Bachelor of science degree in environmental science	160 CP 240 ECTS

SP – study programme

One of these study programmes, the academic bachelor’s study programme “Cultural and Environmental Heritage” was created in the framework of project No. 8.2.1.0/18/A/015, “Creation of internationally competitive study programmes promoting the development of the national economy of Latvia at the University of Latvia” implemented by the UL in cooperation with the Art Academy of Latvia (further in the text – the AAL), and was licensed on August 24, 2022.

In the accreditation list of 2013, the doctoral study programme “Environmental Protection” is included in the study field “Environmental Protection” but it will be closed until the end of 2023 due to the creation of a new broader doctoral study programme “Natural Sciences” (which appropriately includes

the doctoral study programme “Environmental Science” as a subprogram) developed during the implementation of the project No. 8.2.1.0/18/A/015, “Creation of internationally competitive study programmes promoting the development of the national economy of Latvia at the University of Latvia”. The doctoral study programme has already successfully functioned in the study field “Environmental Protection” and significantly contributed to the development of environmental sciences at the UL.

3. Correspondence to the study field of the study programme to be included in the accreditation of the study field

The academic bachelor’s study programme “Cultural and Environmental Heritage” (further in the text – the study programme) is based on the goal of the development actions and tasks of the UL highlighted in the UL Strategy for 2021–2027, which is aimed at a unique study offer and high competitiveness of graduates, promoting the development of studies by offering international and interdisciplinary study programmes. Also, the development of this study programme takes place in accordance with subsection 2.10. of Regulation No.27 of January 9, 2018, of the Cabinet of Ministers “Regulations for the implementation of the first and second round of project submissions’ selection within the action programmes’ “Growth and employment” 8.2.1. specific support objective “To reduce the fragmentation of study programmes and strengthen the sharing of resources”” and Subsection 2.2. of the UL and the Ministry of Education and Science “Regulations of the Evaluation Commission for the Study Programmes Development and Consolidation Plans” (in accordance with the Meeting Minutes No.6 of November 30, 2018).

Cultural heritage studies have become an independent part of the European and world universities’ institutional structure, study content, and research interests. Cultural heritage study programmes ensure the heritability of research and professional experience and accumulate industry-proven investigation methods, knowledge and facts. The involvement of professional organizations in the work of universities is of great importance because the industry professionals provide direct information about the processes taking place in the industry and its current needs. Along with the organization of studies and research, universities are formed to exchange experience and determine the further directions of activities. The lack of cultural heritage studies in Latvia reveals an uncritical projection of the higher education space against the current state of art of the whole higher education field of the EU. Such situation delays the development of interdisciplinary research directions, limits the preparation of new specialists for work in the cultural heritage sector and, what is not less significant, degrades the prestige of the cultural heritage sector in the country.

Environmental science develops due to mutual interconnection of several sciences, such as natural sciences, social sciences and humanities, focusing on the study of the interaction between the human-made environment and the natural environment to ensure the sustainable coexistence of the environment and society. The expansion of the range of topics of environmental sciences in the direction of cultural heritage is justified, first of all, by the fact that the content of environmental sciences deals with issues related to research and conservation of natural sites and urban objects. Since these topics are also part of the study content of humanities, social sciences and engineering (architecture), an overlap of similar topics with the cultural heritage field appears, forming a common range of research and academic topics. Secondly, it is important to mention the fact that cultural heritage issues can be viewed more broadly, not only related to an individual object but also regarding the conditions surrounding the object, which potentially affect the sustainability of the object’s existence. This interdisciplinary attitude is also emphasized by the Faro Convention of 2005.¹ Thirdly, realising that cultural heritage is part of a deliberately cared for and maintained living space, and not only a set of individual artefacts, is not less important.

¹ Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention, 2005): <https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/faro-convention>

The development of the study programme of cultural and environmental heritage at the UL, combining the competences of environmental sciences, chemistry, geology, humanities and arts, is in line with the guidelines of the *OECD Frascati Manual* of 2015 recommending ‘preservation and restoration’ compliance with the concept of ‘research and development’ (*R&D*).² The research and technology studies provided by the courses in the field of environmental sciences form conditions that meet the requirements of the STEM (*Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths*) programmes’ group, significantly supplementing the knowledge provided by the courses in the fields of cultural heritage, humanities and arts.

In the EU countries, cultural and environmental heritage issues have been addressed since December 19, 1954, when the European Cultural Convention was adopted in Paris. Article 2 of the Convention emphasizes the need for cultural and environmental heritage studies in the European member states.

Study programmes related to the cultural and environmental heritage content are implemented practically in all UNESCO (*the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*) member states, ensuring the preparation of specialists for the local labour market and the education of researchers for scientific activities.

The name of the study programme, “Cultural and Environmental Heritage” adequately describes the complexity of the programme’s content, in which environmental research and conservation issues are studied alternately with art history, humanities, visual arts and the basics of restoration. The direct translation of the study programme’s name, “Cultural and Environmental Heritage”, in English was a bit complicated due to the term “kultūrvides” (literal translation ‘cultural environment’), which cannot be translated literally from Latvian to English. The closest meaningful translation would be “*Cultural and Environmental Heritage*”. Besides, a study programme with such a name already exists in Italy at the University of Bologna, yet, only in the doctoral studies cycle. The term ‘cultural environment’ is legitimized by its recurrent use in Order No.143 of the Cabinet of Ministers of March 1, 2022, “Cultural Policy Guidelines for 2022–2027 “Cultural State””.

In the higher education of the EU countries, the most common designations of cultural and environmental heritage study programmes are “Restoration and Conservation” and “Heritage Studies”; however, these names should not be used in this case, as they are content-based tied to specific disciplines or positions (restoration). On the other hand, the study programme “Cultural and Environmental Heritage” is designed as a set of interdisciplinary knowledge, which envisages a combination of knowledge from various origins, positioning environmental sciences as ‘*core knowledge*’. Exactly the environmental sciences precisely determine the uniqueness of the study programme. They have a codifying role in the content’s structure of the programme because the involvement of these elements of knowledge, first of all, fundamentally expands the scope of cultural heritage topics, providing the content with more significant contact with natural sciences and contemporary research technologies and, secondly, enabling the identification of the programme “Cultural and Environmental Heritage” as science-based and research-oriented studies. The study programme “Cultural and Environmental Heritage” was developed following Regulations No.240 (on May 13, 2014) of the Cabinet of Ministers “On the State Academic Education Standard”, considering the condition indicated in article 5 on ‘*achieving in science grounded broad-profile study results*’ (underlined by the applicant of the programme) and likewise the characteristics of the content orientation of the mandatory and limited elective part of the programme stated in article 10. Following these Regulations, the proportion of study courses in environmental sciences within the programme’s content justifies the name of the degree awarded at the end of the study programme, “Cultural and Environmental Heritage”, as “Bachelor of Natural Sciences in Environmental Science”.

For the time being, an unsolved problem is caused by the fact that Regulations No.322 (on June 13, 2017) of the Cabinet of Ministers “On the Classification of Education in Latvia” does not define cultural heritage or cultural and environmental heritage neither at the level of the thematic field of education nor

² OECD (2015), *Frascati Manual 2015: Guidelines for Collecting and Reporting Data on Research and Experimental Development, The Measurement of Scientific, Technological and Innovation Activities*, OECD publishing, Paris. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264239012-en> *Research on the arts*. 65 p.: “As far as preservation and restoration activities are concerned [...], it is recommended to identify the providers of such technical services as R&D performers (employing researchers, publishing scientific works, etc.)”

the group of educational programmes, although restoration has been taught for a long time in secondary education institutions and also in the first-level professional higher education programmes related to cultural education. In addition, since 2020, the Latvian Academy of Culture has served a licensed master's study programme, "Management and Communication of Cultural Heritage". Therefore, the bachelor's programme "Cultural and Environmental Heritage" is currently the only self-sufficient study programme in the country, providing students with continuity of the study process and the opportunity of succession.

The duration of the study programme (4 full-time study years) is based on the conclusion that a shorter period cannot ensure the learning of the interdisciplinary content planned in this study programme. Both 3-year and 3.5-year programme models were considered during the programme conceptualization. Significant gaps were identified when discussing the potential content capacity of these shortened study time models that cannot be compensated for in a shorter study time. For example, the content of the thematic modules "Humanities and Art" and "Theory and methods of Environmental and Cultural Heritage" of the study programme in the currently planned scope, provides only the basic knowledge elements that the graduates of the programme require to ensure general knowledge of the industry and understanding of processes.

The fact should be emphasized that the study programme at present does not have a direct continuation allowing the part of the content related to environmental sciences' research to be transferred to the master's study cycle. In the further development of cultural and environmental studies' content, a re-evaluation of the programme's duration is possible with the condition that a 2-year master's programme is created and approved, which content allows viewing the content of the programme "Cultural and Environmental Heritage" as arrangement for branch studies at the master's level.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. Characteristic parameters of the study programme

1.	Name of the study programme	Akadēmiskā bakalaura studiju programma "Kultūrvides mantojums"	
2.	Name of the study programme in English	Academic bachelor's study programme "Cultural and Environmental Heritage"	
3.	Code of the study programme according to the Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia	43431	
4.	Science branch of the study programme (applies to the doctoral study programmes)	<i>According to Regulations No.595 of the Cabinet of Ministers of September 27, 2022, "Rules on Groups of scientific branches, scientific branches and sub-branches in Latvia"</i>	
5.	Type of the study programme	<i>Academic bachelor's study programme</i>	
6.	Obtained qualification level (NQF/EQF)	NQF/EQF level 6	
7.	Volume of the study programme (CP, ECTS also recommended)	<i>160 CP (240 ECTS)</i>	
8.	Form, type, duration of implementation (if partial years, indicate in months) and language of implementation		
	full-time attendance	<i>4 years</i>	<i>Latvian, English</i>
	full-time correspondence studies	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>
	part-time regular studies	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>
	part-time correspondence studies	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>
	part-time distance learning	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>
9.	Place of implementation	Faculty of Geography and Earth Sciences of the University of Latvia, Jelgavas Street 1, Riga	
10.	Admission requirements	Secondary education For studies in English, language skills at least level B2	
11.	Awarded degree, professional qualification/degree, and professional qualification incl. specialisation (if applicable)	Natural Sciences Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science	
12.	Occupational Standard, year of its approval (if applicable)	<i>n/a</i>	

13.	The final examination scheduled at the end of the study programme	Bachelor thesis
14.	Study programme director	Dr.geol. Agnese Kukela

Amount in credit points	160 CP (240 ECTS)
Duration of studies in years	4 years
Awarded degree and/or qualification	Natural Sciences Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science
Admission requirements	Secondary education For studies in English, language skills at least level B2

Aim of the study programme

1. To provide the education of interdisciplinary study content in the field of cultural and environmental heritage rooted in environmental sciences for the preparation of students and graduates of the programme for research activity, professional activity and lifelong learning.
2. To ensure the ability to responsibly and safely choose and appropriately use the information technologies and other technologies relevant to the field.
3. To create prerequisites and promote the development of cultural and environmental heritage as a direction of scientific research in Latvia.

Tasks of the study programme

1. To prepare academically educated specialists for professional and research identification, evaluation, investigation and preservation of objects of cultural and environmental heritage, as well as participation in monitoring the sustainability of cultural and environmental heritage.
2. To create prerequisites for identifying and classifying the cultural and environmental heritage field in regulatory documents, to reflect the diversity and social importance of the content of this sector.
3. To create a common study and research environment for cooperation with educational and cultural institutions, institutions and professional organizations representing the sector of cultural and environmental heritage and environmental protection.
4. To involve in the learning process of the study content relevant contemporary digital documentation, research, data and information processing and communication technologies, in order to promote a comprehensive research of cultural and environmental heritage and the compatibility of the obtained information.
5. To promote the recognition of common practical or theoretical problems related to the organizations and cultural institutions of the field and involvement of cultural heritage specialists into international academic and professional areas.
6. To establish and constantly maintain during the study process the cooperation of the study programme with secondary professional and higher education study programmes of cultural education branches.
7. To create a complex understanding of the fundamental theoretical and practical manifestations in the field of cultural and environmental heritage, ensuring the full-fledged development of the individual abilities of students and the ability to continue research-oriented studies in the Master's study cycle.

Learning outcomes

Knowledge:

1. Understands the basic principles of the environmental sciences' theories, regularities, types of natural and environmental resources and orients in the problems of ecology and material science basics.
2. Knows the basic sets of facts, ideas and findings of art history, environmental history and social history in the context of cultural heritage theories.
3. Knows the requirements for evaluating and documenting cultural and environmental heritage and the basic methods of their visualization.

Skills:

4. Explains the properties and values of objects of environmental science and cultural heritage; defines the main research problems on a global, regional and local scale.
5. Applies stylistically and informatively appropriate forms of substantive and visual expression in solving research questions.
6. Is able perform a to public speech and reasoned discussion on issues of environmental science and the protection of cultural and environmental heritage in an audience of both specialists and non-specialists and is able to decide on the ways of solving cultural and environmental issues in changing natural and social environment conditions.

Competence:

7. Identifies and critically analyses the issues of sustainability of the resources related to natural, cultural and environmental heritage and environmental monitoring and revitalization questions in the context of natural and urban environment objects, performing a general assessment of the physical condition of natural and cultural and environmental objects.
8. Orients in the national and international regulation of the cultural heritage field and analyses the interrelationships of facts, data and observations by working independently at information repositories, cultural heritage and environmental heritage sites, and social institutions.
9. Initiates and engages in the research-oriented projects using imaging technologies and methods in accordance with the purpose of the research or professional activity.

2. Topicality of the study programme

2.1. Substantiation of the study programme creation and correspondence to the trends of the field in Latvia, European Union, and world

The need to create this study programme is caused by the lack of interdisciplinary study programmes rooted in the ideas and processes of the cultural and environmental heritage field in the higher education of Latvia and an insufficiently developed interdisciplinary research environment.

The content's analysis of the study programme was carried out, firstly, by identifying the study opportunities in Latvia in the field of cultural heritage, secondly, by identifying the possibilities of learning cultural heritage study content in the countries of the European Union and, thirdly, by comparing the content of the study programme with three other foreign study programmes.

Currently, in the area of higher education in Latvia, no individual Bachelor's study programme in the direction of cultural heritage knowledge is realized. An independent study programme in the field of cultural heritage – the first-level higher professional education programme – is implemented in Riga College of Construction, ensuring the restaurateur's professional qualification level 4. Since 2020, the Latvian Academy of Culture in cooperation with the Vidzeme University is implementing the Master's study programme "Management of cultural heritage and communication".

At the AAL, on the Bachelor's and Master's level, restoration can be studied as a sub-field of art science, while several topics of the field of cultural heritage can be studied within the sub-programmes of art history and theory. At Riga Technical University these subjects are available as separate study courses within the professional Master's programme "Architecture" and the academic Master's programme "Applied chemistry".

At the secondary special education level, restoration is taught at Riga Construction College, Rezekne Art and Design Secondary School, Professional Education Competence Centre "National Arts Secondary School", Riga Art and Media Technical School, Zalenieki Commercial and Vocational Secondary School. Although the study of the Latvian National Centre for Cultural Education in 2018³ indicates that the demand for this type of education is high, the number of graduates of restoration specializations and those who obtained the qualification of restaurateur-technician is small: in 2018 – 5, and in 2019 – 6 graduates. It should be noted that current study programme is not narrowly focused on the preparation of restoration specialists and within the framework of cultural heritage courses, it is intended to provide only the basic understanding of the principles and methods of restoration and 'preventive conservation'.

During the development of the study programme, the content of the study programme was compared with the study programmes realized in three EU countries. The study programmes selected for the comparison originate from the northern region's countries – **Finland** (Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, the name of programme: "Conservation Bachelor of Culture and Arts", duration of studies: 4 years, volume: 240 ECTS), **Estonia** (Estonian Academy of Arts, the name of programme: "Cultural Heritage and Conservation", duration of studies: 3 years, volume: 180 ECTS) and **Lithuania** (Vilnius Academy of Arts, the name of programme: "Architecture", duration of studies: 5 years, volume: 300 ECTS), justifying the selection with the consideration that the influence of comparable climatic conditions and historical events on cultural heritage objects and the cultural environment affects both the content of the studies and general academic and professional attitude.

A direct comparison of the studies' content is difficult because foreign study programmes are structured according to different standards and terminology. Also, the introduction of the ECTS system in the higher education of Latvia, starting in 2023, and the currently missing regulatory framework limits the

³ Dr. sc. soc. Ilona Kunda, Dr. art. Baiba Tjarve, Mg. soc. Gints Klāsons "Cultural education in Latvia: Availability, demand, quality", Report of research results, Latvian National Centre for Culture, Riga, 2018

possibility of direct quantitative comparison. Therefore, the thematically relevant courses of the study programmes at Estonia, Lithuania and Finland universities were arranged in groups similar in content to the current study programme. Such a solution partially destroys the original structure of foreign study programmes, however, creating a more accurate option for comparing qualitative and quantitative elements. On the other hand, the volumes of the UL study programme's parts in the comparison table are expressed using the ECTS system; thus, the numerical values describing the content are shown in the framework of the same system as foreign study programmes.

In the nearby region, studies in the field of cultural heritage at the Bachelor's level are offered in Lithuania (Vilnius Academy of Arts, Kaunas University of Technology) and Estonia (Estonian Academy of Arts). Studies in the field of cultural heritage are implemented in all Nordic countries, for example, in the University of Oslo in Norway, the University of Gothenburg in Sweden, the Royal Academy of Arts in Denmark, the University of Iväskylä and Metropolia University of Applied Sciences in Finland. In Poland, knowledge in the field of cultural heritage can be acquired in three universities: in the University of Warsaw, the University of Krakow and Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. In Europe, cultural and environmental heritage or restoration and conservation study programmes are implemented in the United Kingdom, Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Croatia, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Germany, Hungary.

*Table 3.
Comparison of other universities' programmes*

Criteria and Name of the higher education institution/college	University of Latvia	Estonian Academy of Arts, Estonia	Vilnius Academy of Arts, Lithuania	Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Finland
Name of the study programme	Cultural and Environmental Heritage	Cultural heritage and conservation	Architecture – integrated study programme	Conservation Bachelor of culture and arts
Duration of studies	4 years	3 years	5 years	4 years
Amount (CP and ECTS)	160 CP / 240 ECTS	180 ECTS	300 ECTS – students begin their studies with secondary school education and, during 5 years of full-time studies, obtain a master's degree in architecture. A separate master's programme in architecture is not offered.	240 ECTS
Comparison of study courses and their amount	The structure of the study programme's content meets the standard requirements of academic education. Students must write a Bachelor's thesis (15 ECTS) and pass study courses, the completion of which provides a set of interdisciplinary content consisting of the field of	The study programme consists of the following modules: General subjects – 6 ECTS; Humanities – 32 ECTS; Special subjects – 94 ECTS, including Theoretical module of the specialty (18 ECTS), General art history module (27 ECTS); Estonian art history module (18 ECTS); Practical module of the specialty (31	The integrated study programme in Architecture is designed with a vision of educating a qualified architect and a creatively-minded artist. The future architects take the following subject courses: The general university education subjects of aesthetics and philosophy of art, the history of art, mathematics and a foreign language;	Students are obligated to complete a bachelor's thesis (15 ECTS). The study programme courses include cooperation with museums, conservation companies and public administration. Project-related studies include the Innovation project (10 ECTS), implemented jointly with students from various professional fields.

	<p>environmental sciences, material sciences, humanities and arts.</p>	<p>ECTS); Optional subjects – 9 ECTS; Praxis – 15 ECTS; Bachelor’s thesis – 6 ECTS</p>	<p>- core subjects in the study field: foundations of construction techniques; building and finishing materials, the types of building construction and the building services equipment, construction physics, construction economics and law, basics of urban planning, principles of built heritage conservation, of urban ecology and sustainable architecture, the history of 20th – C. architecture and the contemporary architecture trends, computerized design methods and visual expression methods (drawing, painting, mixed media);</p> <p>- subjects in professional specialty: architectural composition and foundations of architecture, methodology of applied contextual/location research (investigation); design of buildings and complexes thereof, structural design of building construction, planning and design of the surroundings.</p> <p>Over the course of studies, students accomplish course applied research and design projects, whereby they strengthen and elaborate their contextual research and project development abilities and foster their skills of using required software, etc. Students are encouraged to approach research work as a starting point for their creative process, which underpins all of their solutions (scientific analysis + artistic creation = project).</p>	
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			<p>The study programme is concluded by a professional practice (18 ECTS) and the final project (30 ECTS), which represents student's creative/design qualification work founded on a thorough pre-project applied research. It is a quintessential expression of all the competencies graduating students will have acquired. Successful defence of the final projects leads to the Master of Architecture qualification degree and the qualification of architect as it is defined by the Lithuanian Law on the Recognition of the Regulated Professional Qualifications.</p>	
Study results	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understands the basic principles of the environmental sciences' theories, regularities, types of natural and environmental resources and orients in the problems of ecology and material science basics. 2. Knows the basic sets of facts, ideas and findings of art history, environmental history and social history in the context of cultural heritage theories. 3. Knows the requirements for evaluating and documenting cultural and environmental heritage and the basic methods of their visualization. 4. Explains the properties and values of objects of environmental science and cultural heritage; defines the main research problems on a 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understands the role of preservation of cultural heritage in society and the importance of the cultural heritage assessment and protection, as well as acquaintance with the related international and Estonian legislative documents to preserve the heritage. 2. Basic knowledge in the philosophy, theory and history of cultural heritage conservation, as well as the history of culture, art and architecture. 3. Knowledge of the principles and practices associated with the preservation, conservation and restoration of art and architecture treasures. 4. Knowledge of how to collect, select, analyze, synthesize and critically evaluate specialized information; 	<p>Knowledge and Its Application</p> <p>A1 General university knowledge, awareness of cultural (the arts, architecture) phenomena; knowledge in the fields of philosophy, aesthetics, the history of art and architecture, psychology and other, ability to use such knowledge and to perform its creative analysis and synthesis (broad erudition).</p> <p>A2 Command of the core knowledge of the study field and its use in the process of studies and professional practice, inclusive of architectural composition, methodology of building design and environment planning, of building technologies, construction structures, civil engineering systems, of legal acts regulating territorial planning and building design and other</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To identify questions and needs for development in the professional field and working life, and plan their solutions. 2. When developing works, to use reliable and versatile information from various sources. 3. To apply professional skills and knowledge, to use appropriate methods for the development of the final thesis. 4. Independently, responsibly and collaboratively, implement a study project that is useful for the professional life and work. 5. To communicate clearly, well-argued and illustrative with students and other audiences at various work stages. 6. To report on the work results, evaluate them and propose improve-

<p>global, regional and local scale.</p> <p>5. Applies stylistically and informatively appropriate forms of substantive and visual expression in solving research questions.</p> <p>6. Is able perform a to public speech and reasoned discussion on issues of environmental science and the protection of cultural and environmental heritage in an audience of both specialists and non-specialists and is able to decide on the ways of solving cultural and environmental issues in changing natural and social environment conditions.</p> <p>7. Identifies and critically analyses the issues of sustainability of the resources related to natural, cultural and environmental heritage and environmental monitoring and revitalization questions in the context of natural and urban environment objects, performing a general assessment of the physical condition of natural and cultural and environmental objects.</p> <p>8. Orients in the national and international regulation of the cultural heritage field and analyses the interrelationships of facts, data and observations by working independently at information repositories, cultural heritage and environmental</p>	<p>investigate architecture and art heritage; survey and document, as well as assess the technical condition of objects, assess their historical and aesthetic value.</p> <p>5. Knowledge of how to draw up specific cultural heritage requirements, restoration concepts, as well as to assess the quality of restoration projects and their compliance with regulatory documents related to heritage preservation.</p> <p>6. Knowledge of restoration and conservation of art works.</p> <p>7. Professional training that allows to apply for the professional qualification of a conservator or a permit for the preservation of cultural heritage.</p>	<p>knowledge; ability to employ it making professional solutions underpinned by informed argument</p> <p>A3 Knowledge in the methodology of pre-design research – methods of analysis used for architectural and natural structures, awareness of methods used in applied architectural research/investigation.</p> <p>Research Skills</p> <p>B1 Application of professional research methods – ability to apply a range of methods of scientific research to applied research situations; skills of information collection from primary and secondary sources and digital media; ability to process, analyse, synthesize and make judgments about results and to formulate conclusions.</p> <p>B2 Ability to autonomously conduct applied research, to draw substantiated conclusions and to use them in the development of a design programme, in the planning of and over the course of a design process.</p> <p>B3 Ability to conduct an autonomous analysis of the findings of research, to set social, artistic and economic priorities, to develop general cultural awareness (of arts and architecture) informed by the outcomes of scholarly research.</p> <p>Subject-Specific Skills</p> <p>C1 Ability of independent solutions of complex architectural</p>	<p>ment proposals in an appropriate way, both in writing and in speech, as well as visually.</p>
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	<p>heritage sites, and social institutions.</p> <p>9. Initiates and engages in the research-oriented projects using imaging technologies and methods in accordance with the purpose of the research or professional activity.</p>		<p>problems underpinned by the context established by research findings; ability to develop projects of buildings of different functions and complexity, of groups of buildings and open public spaces, to initiate joint projects and activities, to teamwork and to act as a leader a group.</p> <p>C2 Creative and artistic abilities, aesthetic stance and moral values, intellectual abilities to articulate and communicate artistic ideas in architectural projects – creative and critical reasoning, ability to see a broad field of problems, to make optimal solutions.</p> <p>C3 Abilities to realize creative ideas – capability of using contemporary methods of creation, ability of free and unhindered expression of ideas and of bringing them across to public in a powerful and expressive manner through the use of the contemporary media.</p> <p>Social Skills</p> <p>D1 Ability to operate in a collective environment, skills in communication and collaboration with specialists in other fields, a sense of professional commitment, criticism and self-criticism, taking a personal and collective responsibility to society (forecasting and assessment of long-term social consequences of architectural projects).</p> <p>D2 Ability to communicate information, understanding and ideas</p>
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			<p>in a compelling, unequivocal and clear manner to specialist and lay audiences; skills of written and oral communication, experience in digital communication and command of traditional media for visual rendition.</p> <p>D3 Ability to develop organizational skills, to be pro-active and seek leadership positions (motivate people to pursue common goals), determination and professionalism in completing assigned tasks and keeping to commitments made.</p> <p>Personal Skills</p> <p>E1 Ability of rational planning and organizing one's own activity (of professional practice, creative work and learning), ability to employ efficient methods of professional activity, to carry with professionalism and responsibility the assignments received and the commitments taken.</p> <p>E2 Ability to seek innovation and continuous professional development through perfection of skills indispensable for the architectural practice.</p> <p>E3 The sense of responsibility in one's practice and ability to forecast the consequences of one's own work assuming moral responsibility for the impact on the environment, on public welfare and on cultural and economic development.</p>	
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Final examinations	Development and defence of a Bachelor's thesis.	Development and defence of a Bachelor's thesis.	Development and defence of the final project work.	Development of a Bachelor's thesis.
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A direct comparison of the studies' content is difficult because the study programmes of foreign universities are structured according to diverse regulations and standards. Therefore, the thematically relevant courses of study programmes in Estonian and Finnish universities are arranged into groups with similar content of the study programme.

The programme at the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences in Finland is similar to the UL study programme in terms of study duration (4 study years). In contrast, the study programme at the Estonian Academy of Arts was selected because its content orientation corresponds to the characteristics of an academic-type and mixed-content study programme. The data of the study programme in the Estonian Academy of Arts presented for the comparison refer to one of the specialities of the programme, namely architecture, the content of which focuses more on the objects of the cultural environment and is, therefore, closer to the topics of the study programme in terms of thematic orientation. During communication with the colleagues at the Estonian Academy of Arts, also the attitude was adopted (embedded in the content of the "Academic Practice course") that it is desirable to focus students' practical-research activities on the investigation of cultural and environment objects of lower importance because such objects often remain outside the limits of the interests and opportunities of professionals. As part of the study tasks, students can identify, inspect, research and classify the objects of lower importance, adding the obtained information to the cultural heritage data sets maintained by state institutions. The benefits of such an attitude are double – for the students to access cultural and environmental heritage objects and the entire society to acquire additional information about potential cultural heritage objects and research tools for further studies. The content of the study programme in the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences is focused on specialities related to the restoration of paintings and is, therefore, comparable to the content of the study courses provided by the AAL in painting restoration and preservation of cultural heritage, included in the study programme. In turn, in the "Architecture" programme of the Vilnius Academy of Arts, students begin their studies with secondary school education and, in 5 years of full-time studies, reach the master's degree in architecture. The study content of this programme is most similar to the content of the study programme "Cultural and Environmental Heritage", with the difference that the core courses of the study programme offered at the Vilnius Academy of Arts are related to the field of architecture and construction. In contrast, the core courses of the study programme "Cultural and Environmental Heritage" are related to environmental science.

In general, it can be concluded that all three compared study programmes are united by a group of general (or basic sectors such as environmental sciences at the UL) courses, a group of courses in humanities, a group of courses in visual arts, a group of study courses in architecture, chemistry and material sciences, a group of courses related to the methods of visual research of the studied object (conservation, restoration), a group of content-supporting interdisciplinary courses, practice and/or project studies, a group of elective study courses and the final thesis of the programme.

During the implementation of the comparison, through the conversations with local and foreign colleagues, the information was confirmed that the study content based on environmental sciences offered by the UL does not have direct analogues to cultural heritage studies at the level of bachelor's study programmes.

2.2. Description of the study programme

The study programme's content is designed in accordance with the Action Programme's "Growth and Employment" specific support goal 8.2.1. undergone Project "Creation of Internationally Competitive Study Programmes Promoting the Development of the National Economy of Latvia in the University of

Latvia”, defining the requirements set out in the Law on Higher Education Institutions of the RL⁴ and Regulations on the Study Programmes and Continuing Education Programmes at the UL (Senate Decision No.102 on April 24, 2017) for academic bachelor’s programmes.

According to the Classification of Education in Latvia⁵, the study programme’s code is 43431.

Students acquire knowledge, skills and competence corresponding to level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF).

According to the Regulations “On the State Academic Education Standard”, the volume of the study programme is 160 CP, and the duration of studies is four years (eight semesters, students acquire 20 CP each semester).

The mandatory part of the study programme includes 43 study courses (including a Bachelor’s thesis, two course works and a practice course) with 116 CP in total, including study courses in accordance with the requirements of Civil Protection and Disaster Management Law and Environmental Protection Law. The number of CP of the limited optional part is 38, this part contains 15 study courses. In addition, the programme has a free choice part of 6 CP. At the end of the programme, students work out a Bachelor’s thesis corresponding to 10 CP.

The model of interdisciplinary content of the study programme has no direct analogues either in Latvia or in the higher education space of the Baltic region. The interdisciplinary orientation of the study programme is characterized by the name of the programme, which includes the key word ‘environment’ characteristic to environmental sciences and the words ‘culture’ and ‘heritage’ characterizing humanities and arts.

The implementation of the study programme is coordinated by the programme director. The quality of ensuring the learning of the study content is assessed by the study programme’s Council (hereinafter – the Council), which includes representatives of the structural units of the UL involved in the implementation of the programme, i.e., FGES, Faculty of History and Philosophy (hereinafter – FHP), Faculty of Humanities (hereinafter – FH) and a representative of the AAL. A specialist-expert in the field of cultural heritage may be involved in the work of the programme’s Council as a consultant. The programme’s Council will be established after the study programmes accreditation.

The Council discusses and evaluates issues related to the organization of the study process, study results and the information provided by student surveys. The task of the Council includes also discussing and summarizing the observations and opinions of the faculties involved in the implementation of the programme. The Council prepares an annual self-assessment report for the Department of Environmental Sciences and the Council of the FGES.

The description and interconnection of the scientific fields included in the content of the study programme

Environmental science and cultural and environmental heritage

Environmental science is an interdisciplinary scientific field that develops by interacting among social sciences, humanities and natural sciences in order to study the interaction between man and the natural environment, to ensure the sustainable existence of the environment and society. Important subfields of

⁴ Law on Higher Education Institutions: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/37967-augstskolu-likums>

⁵ Regulations No.322 (on June 13, 2017) of the Cabinet of Ministers “On the Classification of Education in Latvia”: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>

environmental science are environmental management, environmental philosophy and ethics, environmental economics, environmental policy, environmental communication, environmental engineering, sustainability science, nature protection⁶.

The subfields are united by a common ideological platform – the paradigm of environmental science, which means that research results must ensure the existence of humanity, its heritage, including cultural heritage. The main tasks of environmental science include:

- 1) Conservation (preservation) of resources, which means ensuring the availability of resources necessary for the development of humanity not only for existing but also for future generations. Within the framework of this task, the preservation of the existing material cultural heritage is of priority importance;
- 2) Balanced development of the human-created environment, including the cultural environment and the natural environment, which is connected, for example, with the need to preserve the traditional landscape, cultural heritage objects, optimize the use of territories;
- 3) Ensuring acceptable environmental quality for the development of society by restoring the degraded environment;
- 4) Ensuring social equality;
- 5) Ensuring public participation.

As an example of the scope of the issues indicated above can be mentioned a monograph “Environmental protection and sustainable development” (eds. M.Kļaviņš, J.Zaļoksnis, V.L.Filho) in which content of the chapter “Cultural environment of Latvia” (prepared by prof. O.Spārītis) is an essential part.

The creation of the study programme provides a significant contribution to the solution of these tasks, while at the same time expanding the range of environmental studies. Several important projects have been and still are being carried out in the sector of environment and cultural environment interaction at the UL, for example, on the interaction of environment and cultural environment in Engure county, the development of the cultural landscape of Burtnieki county, the “ForThem”⁷, project, the project of Latvian Science Council “Competing natural discourses in Latvia and ecological solidarity as a consensus formation strategy”. Doctoral theses have been developed on ecotourism in protected natural areas (E.Leitis, 2012), the importance of public science in achieving sustainable development tasks (B.Prūse, 2020) and many Bachelor’s and Master’s theses.

Description of the role of the humanities

The set of courses in humanities of the study programme provides the necessary knowledge for cultural and environmental heritage competencies in the directions of art and cultural history, philosophy, ethics, mythology, ethnography and language studies. The courses in humanities within the study programme are provided by the FHP and the HF of the UL; lecturers from the AAL and guest lecturers provide the content of humanities related to art history, restoration theory and visual arts.

The knowledge in humanities is necessary for the graduates of the study programme to form (jointly with the knowledge in environmental sciences, chemical sciences and visual arts), firstly, a fundamental understanding of the overall picture of cultural heritage issues and, secondly, to explain complicated cultural heritage issues in four essential aspects such as (1) meaning associated with historical memory, (2) historical facts, (3) property rights and (4) as management and protection attitudes.

An important role of humanities courses is related to identifying the truthfulness and ethical issues of assessing the cultural heritage objects and understanding the interrelationships of social relations, and

⁶ National Encyclopaedia (enciklopedija.lv), entry “environmental science”:
<https://enciklopedija.lv/skirklis/1555-vides-zin%C4%81tn> (viewed on February 20, 2023)

⁷ ForThem Alliance (forthem-alliance.eu)

attributing management attitudes that do not violate the principles of a gentle attitude towards cultural and environmental heritage.

The content and research methods of cultural and environmental heritage studies with an orientation in humanities ensure the competitiveness of specialists who, grounded in the guidelines and ideas of historical, philosophical and ethical issues, are critically thinking and are able to perform complex analyses of social and cultural problems as well as being able to participate in the research of cultural objects and the cultural environment and opens opportunities to continue education in master's study programmes in humanities.

Studies of languages, texts and cultures form analytical thinking, the ability to critically and objectively evaluate facts and processes locally and globally. In contact with foreign languages, the mastery of the native language and understanding of the nature of things and phenomena are improved, learning of which develops tolerance and the ability to stand up for one's values and explain them to others in a reasoned, convincing manner.

Language studies have a complementary role in the study programme, as they improve the ability to formulate opinions and communication skills and create prerequisites for researching historical documents and materials in Latvian and foreign information repositories. The function of language studies is flexible to support the interests of the student groups (according to needed and considering the different language knowledge acquired at the secondary education level) in learning a particular foreign language.

The subfield of art history and restoration

The lecturers of the AAL and guest lecturers provide courses and thematic directions related to the disciplines of art history, theory and restoration, thus, implementing its role in creating and strengthening the direction of cultural and environmental heritage knowledge in the higher education space of Latvia.

In cooperation with the Institute of Art History at the AAL, the lecturers of the art history and theory subfield of the AAL are preparing publications for the fundamental collection of articles "Latvijas mākslas vēsture" ("The History of Latvian Art"), which is being published since 2003 aiming to introduce the branch specialists and other interested parties in the cultural society of Latvia and abroad with the latest achievements in the field of art history and theory. The journal's articles are available internationally at the *Central and Eastern European Online Library (CEEOL)*. The collection of articles is indexed in the following databases: *Central European Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (CEJSH)* and *Kunstabibliotheken-Fachverbund Florenz-München-Rom (Kubikat)*, as well as in *Scopus*.

The continuance of the Institute of Art History of the AAL is justified by the need for fundamental research on the visual arts and architecture of Latvia and related regions and improving art science theories and methodologies. The strategic goal of the institute involves identifying, interpreting and popularizing the visual arts phenomena of Latvia's oldest and most recent periods, using traditional forms of publication (articles in proceedings, magazines, books, dissertations, papers at scientific conferences) and the opportunities provided by the latest technologies (Internet, electronic resources); to apply research facilities both in the implementation of AAL study programmes and the cooperation with other research and educational institutions in Latvia and abroad.

The role of the content of art history and theory in the study programme is to draw general ideas about the history of Western art and architecture in the context of different eras and directions, the most significant examples and the overall stylistic development over the history. The set of art history topics envisaged in the study programme corresponds to the basic knowledge of art history, which provides opportunities for further in-depth learning of particular topics.

The restoration subfield at the AAL functions since 1924, and certified specialists of the restoration field (such as restorers of portrait paintings and graphics) are involved in its activities. Accordingly, the AAL provides knowledge and practice-based understanding in restoring artworks for this study programme. Students acquiring restoration speciality at the AAL learn restoration skills by working with actual art

objects under the supervision of specialists of the field, proving a high degree of responsibility and discipline regarding the content of studies, the methods applied and quality monitoring.

In the context of the content of the study programme, the restoration subfield provides insight into the types, techniques and methods of restoration. Students of the study programme are not expected to apply for a restorer's qualification – the content orientation of the courses related to restoration skills mainly provides an introduction to the practical developments in the field of restoration – the basic methods of assessing the condition of artefacts, acquainting the technologies ensuring the processes and learning practical copying skills by studying technical types of artistic expressions. The restoration study course also includes the history of the restoration field, topics of the history of colour technologies and current issues that form ideas about the causes of the actual condition of artworks and possible types and methods of restoration.

Description of visual arts disciplines

Topics related to visual arts provide insight into the basic forms of expression, techniques and theoretical concepts of the culture of representation. Visual art competencies contribute to creating the content of the cultural environment by adding lasting ideas about the object of cultural heritage and formal qualities and aesthetic values of the environment. The role of visual art disciplines within the framework of cultural and environmental heritage studies has to be evaluated in four aspects, firstly, as methodically well-grounded abilities in observation and visual evaluation; secondly, as the skills to create images with precisely selected means of visual expression, techniques and methods that visually communicate the point of view of the image creator, thirdly, as an understanding of the types and opportunities of visual expression based on practical experience, fourthly, as a deeper understanding of the formal characteristics of styles and genres of art and architecture.

The part of the programme's content planned for visual media studies is relatively small; however, it ensures the formation of a comprehensive understanding of the forms and essential concepts of media expression. The programme includes the basic disciplines of visual arts – drawing, painting and figuration – called 'media studies' because of the decision to prevent them from being identified with the so-called 'creative self-expression'. The overarching goal of the cultural heritage field, as stated "to preserve cultural heritage as an important factor in the quality of human life – to identify, protect and include the tangible cultural heritage in modern life, to promote the understanding of cultural and historical values in society"⁸ determines the attitude that 'media studies' is an instrument promoting complete understanding on aspects of cultural heritage values and creates prerequisites for high-quality communication with means of visual expression.

Learning the forms of visual art expression within the study programme is focused on the interaction of practical lessons and theoretical lectures, creating a unified base of practical skills, theoretical concepts and terms for creating clear and effective academic communication. A bit larger number of CPs is planned for drawing, compared to painting and modelling. Such a choice is justified by the consideration that drawing is an efficient, operative and technically simple instrument of visual communication; moreover, the forms of drawing expression allow a relatively simple transition from analogue to digital format and match the technical image with the observed and imagined picture.

From the point of view of the content of cultural and environmental heritage studies, visual art skills contribute to the understanding of the visual characteristics and values of objects and space of cultural heritage. Basic knowledge in the field of visual media is necessary for methodological and rational evaluation of objects and space of the cultural environment and visualization of observations with analogue and digital technologies.

Structure of the programme

The structure of the study programme consists of study modules and study courses. Study modules are created following article 1, clause 13 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions – "study module –

⁸ The State Inspection for Heritage Protection (SIHP): <https://www.nkmp.gov.lv/lv/darbibas-jomas>

part of the study programme created by combining study courses or their parts, which have a common goal and achievable study results” and with the conditions of clauses 1 and 2 of article 56.²

The basic structure of the programme consists of **four thematic modules**:

1. Environmental Sciences and Cultural Heritage.
2. Environmental Sciences.
3. Humanities and Arts.
4. Theory and Methods of Cultural and Environmental heritage.

A detailed description of the study courses included in each thematic module and the amount of their credit points can be found in the full-time study plan of the Study Programme (Annex 8).

The modular structure of the study programme organizes the courses into groups of thematically related knowledge, thus improving the transparency of the interdisciplinary content of the programme as a whole and stimulating the mutual complementation of topics within the module competencies.

The thematic modules’ names reflect the programme’s interdisciplinary nature, indicating the main fields of knowledge and research directions. The names of the thematic modules are heterogeneous because ‘Environmental Sciences’ are classified as an educational programme group, but “Humanities and Arts” as an educational thematic group⁹.

The term ‘cultural environment’ is used in state planning documents¹⁰ to denote ‘both material formations and intangible spiritual values’¹¹. The name of the thematic module “Environmental Sciences and Cultural and Environmental Heritage” refers to the set of programme content in which environmental sciences explain issues related to the study of cultural and environmental heritage. In the programme, this module is added to the content section of environmental sciences because the content topics and methods that interpret cultural heritage issues correspond to the orientation of environmental sciences in a broader sense, including, for example, chemistry and geoarchaeology topics. The name of the thematic module, “Theory and Methods of Cultural and Environmental Heritage”, corresponds to the academic and professional topics of cultural and environmental heritage knowledge and practically applicable methods included in the programme’s content.

The study courses of the study programme can be both an independent “outline of the system of knowledge, skills and competence, which has defined study results, for the achievement of which credit points are awarded” (article 1, clause 11 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions¹), and also a part of a study module. The programme includes 58 study courses, of which the “Environmental Sciences and Cultural and Environmental Heritage” module includes 7 courses, the “Environmental Sciences” module includes 9 courses, the “Humanities and Arts” module includes 14 courses, the “Theory and Methods of Cultural and Environmental Heritage” module includes 15 courses (see Table 4). The rest of the study courses are grouped in the “General Education Courses” module and include both - foreign language and chemical and environmental sciences courses, as well as course works, an academic practice course and a bachelor’s thesis.

The bachelor’s thesis is defined as a separate part of the programme.

Annotation of the objectives and content of thematic modules

“Environmental Sciences”. The objective of the thematic module: to provide essential competencies in the field of environmental sciences.

⁹ Regulations No.322 (on June 13, 2017) of the Cabinet of Ministers “On the Classification of Education in Latvia”: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitiba-klasifikaciju>

¹⁰ Order No.401 (on July 29, 2014) of the Cabinet of Ministers “Cultural Policy Guidelines 2014–2020 “Creative Latvia”” (29.07.2014.), Annex 2: explanation of terms: https://www.km.gov.lv/uploads/ckeditor/files/KM_dokumenti/Radosa_Latvija.pdf

¹¹ The same.

Annotation of the thematic module: The courses' content of the module presents the ideas, operational methods and research problems of environmental sciences in a broad sense, including topics from chemical sciences and earth sciences. The topics of the courses included in the module generally define the basic types of knowledge related to the content of environmental sciences and form part of the proportion of environmental sciences in the study programme.

“Environmental Sciences and Cultural Heritage”. The objective of the thematic module: to contextualize cultural and environmental heritage topics from the perspective of environmental sciences.

Annotation of the thematic module: The courses' content of the module outlines the role of environmental sciences in the recognition, research and preservation of cultural and environmental heritage. Topics of the courses provide insight into the planning and management of research and professionally oriented projects. The topics of the module form part of the proportion of environmental sciences in the study programme.

“Theory and Methods of Cultural and Environmental Heritage”. The objective of the thematic module: to ensure the accessibility of basic information about the characteristics and functions of the cultural and environmental heritage branch.

Annotation of the thematic module: The courses' content of the module provides information on the operating principles of the cultural and environmental heritage field, sectoral guidelines, legal framework and methods of preservation of cultural heritage objects. The content of the courses included in the module focuses on gaining an understanding of the directions of activity of the cultural and environmental heritage field; therefore, a significant part of the module's content consists of acquiring the methods of restoration of cultural and environmental objects, analysis of visual culture issues and topics related to the learning of visual expression.

“Humanities and Arts”. The objective of the thematic module: to provide a set of knowledge in humanities necessary for understanding cultural and environmental heritage issues.

Annotation of the thematic module: The course's content of the module provides a broad context of knowledge in humanities for the study programme in the fields of philosophy, language studies, history, cultural history and, specifically – art history. The role of humanities in the programme is to build the foundations for general intelligence – the ability to understand the causal relationships of cultural and historical facts, to navigate the meanings of visual and written signs, as well as the essential ability to understand foreign language texts.

The study results achievable by learning the thematic study modules are summarized in Table 4.

*Table 4.
The study results achievable by learning the thematic study modules*

No.	Name of the thematic module	Number of courses in the module	The study results achievable as a result of learning the thematic study modules
1.	Environmental Sciences	9 28 CP	<p><i>Knowledge:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Knows the basic types of environmental science research activities, environmental monitoring methods and the range of contemporary research technologies. 2. Orients in the fundamental problems of ecology and material sciences. 3. Understands the operating principles of substance circulation cycles and types of natural and environmental resources. <p><i>Skills:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. At the general level, can make decisions on ways of solving issues of the cultural environment in changing working and social environment conditions. 5. Can select appropriate methods and technologies for the research task. <p><i>Competence:</i></p>

			<p>6. Is able to identify and critically analyze the sustainability resources of natural and cultural objects in the surrounding environment and their preservation potential.</p> <p>7. Understands the issues of environmental sustainability monitoring and revitalization in the context of natural and urban objects.</p> <p>8. Is capable to perform a general assessment of the physical condition of cultural and environmental objects.</p>
2.	Environmental Sciences and Cultural Heritage	7 13 CP	<p><i>Knowledge:</i></p> <p>1. Understands the basic principles and connections between environmental sciences and cultural heritage theories.</p> <p>2. Understands the diversity of the cultural heritage field and its operational principles.</p> <p><i>Skills:</i></p> <p>3. Is able to explain the essential interaction issues between environmental science and the cultural heritage sector.</p> <p>4. Is capable to define the current research problems on a global, regional and local scale.</p> <p>5. Arguments on his/her own point of view on environmental science issues, cultural environment and artefact protection in an audience of specialists and non-specialists.</p> <p><i>Competence:</i></p> <p>6. Understands the impact of risks caused by natural processes on the cultural environment and society.</p> <p>7. Orients in the general academic, professional and social relations of environmental science and cultural heritage fields.</p> <p>8. Orients in the national and international regulation of the cultural heritage sector and understands the field's broader impact on society on local and international levels.</p> <p>9. Initiates and joins national and international research-oriented projects in the environmental sciences and cultural heritage field.</p>
3.	Theory and Methods of Cultural and Environmental Heritage	15 38 CP	<p><i>Knowledge:</i></p> <p>1. Understands the basic methods of creating a planar or spatial image with analogue or digital visualization techniques.</p> <p>2. At a general level, orients in issues and methods of conservation of artefacts and objects of cultural environment.</p> <p>3. Orients in research methods of visual art and directions of modern art theory.</p> <p><i>Skills:</i></p> <p>4. Is able to develop stylistically and thematically appropriate images and visual schemes for implementing the research or information tasks.</p> <p>5. Contributes to the preservation of artefacts or objects of the cultural environment, promoting the activities of specialists.</p> <p>6. Evaluates the economic potential of projects related to preserving the objects of the cultural environment.</p> <p><i>Competence:</i></p> <p>7. Independently joins and maintains cooperation with the cultural heritage field's specialists, experts and social partners.</p> <p>8. Self-sufficiently can expand the range of knowledge and to continue the education in the second (master's) cycle of higher education in environmental sciences, cultural heritage or thematically comparable branches.</p>
4.	Humanities and arts	14 36 CP	<p><i>Knowledge:</i></p> <p>1. Knows the basic set of facts, ideas and insights from the history of culture, art and architecture in a local and global context.</p> <p>2. Orients in the problems of general, regional and local history.</p> <p>3. Orients in a broader range of ideas and attitudes of the humanities and the types of research activities.</p> <p><i>Skills:</i></p> <p>4. Is able to speak and discuss issues on identification, research and protection of the cultural environment and artefacts.</p>

			<p>5. Is capable to use terms and concepts of the cultural heritage field and principles of academic writing.</p> <p>6. Uses two foreign languages for the research work and interpersonal communication.</p> <p>7. Can perform data analysis and uses digital technologies for research.</p> <p><i>Competence:</i></p> <p>8. Is capable to select research objects and analyse the interrelationships of facts, data and observations, working independently in information repositories, cultural heritage and environmental objects, and social institutions.</p> <p>9. Self-sufficiently is able to determine and critically evaluate the directions of own activities, performing professional duties in the cultural and environmental heritage field.</p> <p>10. Respects special requirements set in the field, professional responsibility frameworks and theoretical and practical ethical principles.</p>
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2.3. List and justification of changes made in the study programme since the licensing of the study programme

Changes made in the study programme	Justification
Introduced changes in the staff of lecturers	After receiving the license of the study programme, lecturers who agreed to teach courses in this study programme at the beginning of the development of the licensing report were re-identified. Not all the approached lecturers could participate in teaching study courses when the licence was received, as it was planned; therefore, they were replaced by other lecturers with equivalent experience and competence. Some new lecturers expressed their desire to join the staff of lecturers with the supplemented or new study course. Changes in the staff of lecturers and the reasons for these changes are described in section 3.2 of the report.
Introduced changes to the study plan – combined courses, increased volume of CP	Changes in the study plan of the study programme were made for two reasons: 1) following the recommendations of the experts of the licensing commission, accordingly reducing the number of study courses by combining them; 2) taking into account the expected transition to the ECTS credit system, the study plan was corrected in such a way as to reduce the number of study courses with an odd number of credit points, still maintaining the total amount of the programme at 160 CP.
Introduced clarifications, additions and mistakes corrections in the descriptions of study courses	Additions and corrections in the descriptions of study courses were also made for two reasons: 1) combining study courses and changing their CP amounts due to the reasons described above; 2) following the instructions of the licensing

	commission experts regarding the mistakes and inaccuracies found in the descriptions of some study courses in English. The issues were prevented.
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Considering that the study programme was already started in the academic year of 2022/2023 and is currently in the process of implementation, its approbation will continue, and the study programme will be particularized, especially in the matters indicated in the opinion of the licensing commission and its recommendations.

2.4. Statistical data on students in the study programme

Although in the licensing report, it was planned that 35 students would start their studies in the first year of the study programme, only 11 students have submitted the documents for entering this study programme. At the beginning of the academic year, 8 students were matriculated. Budget places were not allocated for the study programme for this academic year; therefore, all students started their studies for a tuition fee. Considering that the decision on the license granting was received only on August 24, 2022, in the summer months, before the time when students usually choose potential study programmes and universities implement active measures to promote their study programs, the UL could not start special activities to promote the new study programme as the deadline for receiving the license was unknown at that time.

It is noteworthy that already in the first semester of the study programme implementation, potential new students showed great interest in the study programme. After receiving the license, opinion articles about the opportunities to study in this study programme were disseminated on the UL website and public media internet platforms. Also, the new study programme was introduced in two broadcasts, “Known in the Unknown” at “Latvijas Radio 1” (Latvia’s national public-service radio, channel No.1), mentioning both the uniqueness of the study programme and its novelty. Informative activities and promotion of the study programme also continue now. As proved by the promotion activities of the study programme at the study festival for pupils “L’Universss” organized by the UL, which took place on March 3-4, 2023, both pupils, as well as parents and teachers who attended this event, were surprised about such a truly unique study programme’s creation and availability in Latvia, and their support with quotes about the need for such a study programme was unambiguous.

At the time of the report’s preparation, only the 1st semester (autumn) of this study programme’s academic year has finished. 7 students successfully passed the session with good and excellent results, but 1 student has not passed the session due to stopping attending the lectures for unknown reasons.

2.5. Employment prospects of graduates

The labour market of graduates of the study programme is still made up of companies related to culture and cultural heritage field, real estate management enterprises, including the direction of property development, sectors of tourism and hospitality, environmental and cultural protection, and scientific research of cultural heritage. The main area of competencies that determines the competitiveness of graduates of the study programme in the labour market is the knowledge, skills and competencies required to manage and protect tangible cultural heritage, ensuring its sustainable and economically justified maintenance. It is necessary to emphasize that such a set of competencies is not provided by any other study programme offered in Latvia, which critically affects the existing practice in tangible cultural heritage management, resulting in degraded cultural monuments and sites. According to the opinion of the National Heritage Board of Latvia (further in the text – the NHBL), the range of specialists involved

in cultural and environmental heritage should be expanded, which is also confirmed by the letters of support from municipalities and regions.

The programme is planned to be implemented in Latvian, English, promoting the internationalization of the study environment. Although the study programme is expected to be academic, the theoretical knowledge and practical skills it provides will allow students to be better prepared for the demands of the labour market in the cultural and environmental management and research field. In implementing the study programme, lecturers who are also practitioners will be involved, providing a connection between education and practice and science, developing the knowledge base and competencies.

Since the study programme is implemented in cooperation with the AAL, part of the study courses is organized with the simultaneous participation of lecturers from both universities. Such cooperation opens vast opportunities for developing joint scientific research and applied projects – both as students' scientific works and as further cooperation projects whose direct goal is an application in practice. The purpose of practical studies and the involvement of branch specialists-experts is to introduce students to the requirements of the labour market during studies and promote employment after the end of studies.

The implementation of the study programme will also increase the number of study courses available in English at the UL, which will not only allow international students to perform full-time studies but also provide more excellent opportunities to attract students of the Erasmus+ programme who until now had a limited offer of courses.

During the implementation of the study programme, it is planned to develop cooperation with foreign universities (for example, the Estonian Academy of Arts, with which a Memorandum of Understanding has already been concluded, Aalto University (Finland) and other universities), which implement similar study programmes, possibly by introducing joint study courses, cooperating in matters of faculty staff and student mobility.

The main areas in which the employment of graduates of the study programme is possible:

- 1) Management of municipal and privately owned cultural heritage objects, development and implementation of projects for their restoration and development of new fields of application.
- 2) Management of cultural and historical centres of cities, development and implementation of projects for their renovation and development of new fields of application, and support of the tourism sector.
- 3) Management of parks, culture, landscape and other objects, development and implementation of projects for their restoration and development of new fields of application, and attraction of tourism.
- 4) Management of churches and other important cultural and historical buildings.
- 5) Development of new objects in the historical centres of cities.
- 6) Scientific research.
- 7) Development of the direction of cultural historical tourism, linking it with the hospitality field.

The data on the potential wage level was summarized in April 2022 and is included in the licensing report. Currently, the most relevant data are not yet available, but the summary of graduates' employment and professional qualifications has been made (see figures and descriptions below).

Employment and professional qualification of graduates of the study field “Environmental protection”.

Graduates monitoring data confirm the high employment potential of the study programme's degree holders. According to these data, in 2020, 79% of the graduates (at bachelor level) of the study field “Environmental Protection” provided by the FGES of the UL were employed (information available

about the graduates of 2018, 2019 and 2020, one year after completing their studies)¹², of which 57% are employed in the quaternary employment sector (professional scientists, education and public administration specialists) (Figure 1 and 2). The updated data also demonstrate that the total percentage of employment of graduates of the master’s study programme exceeds 90%, which only indicates that continuing studies at the second level is even more recommended from a professional point of view.

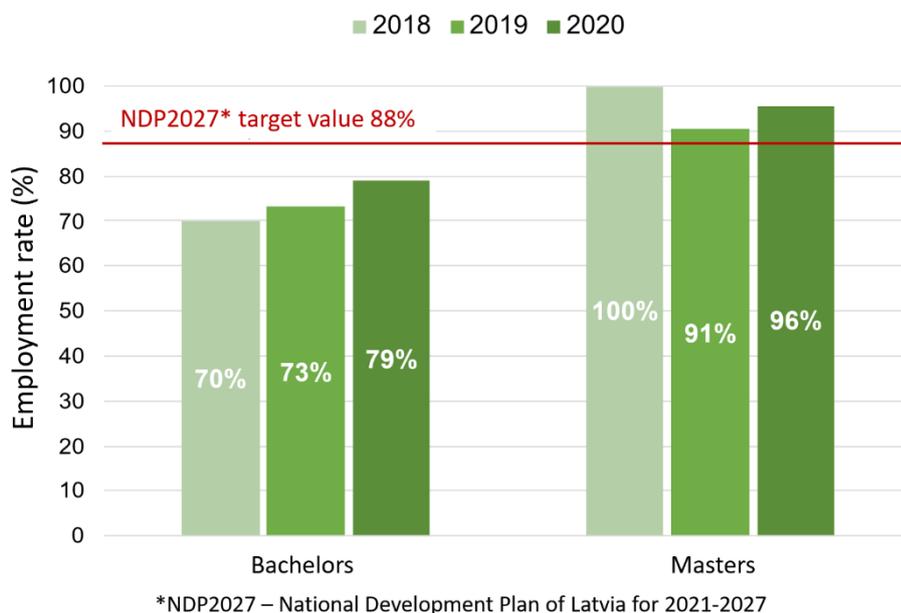


Figure 1. Employment indicators of graduates of bachelor’s and master’s study programmes of the study field one year after completing the studies (source: Graduates monitoring data).

The majority (34.3%) of graduates (N=67) of the bachelor’s study programme (graduated in 2018-2020) are employed in the field of professional scientific and technical services (NACE M), followed by the field of education (NACE P) (16.4%). 14.9% of bachelor’s study programme graduates work in the public administration sector (NACE O) (Figure 3).

¹² Data of the State Education Information System; available at the Latvian Open Data Portal: <https://data.gov.lv/dati/dataset/2017-2019-g-augstakas-izglitiba-iestazu-absolventi-2020-gada>

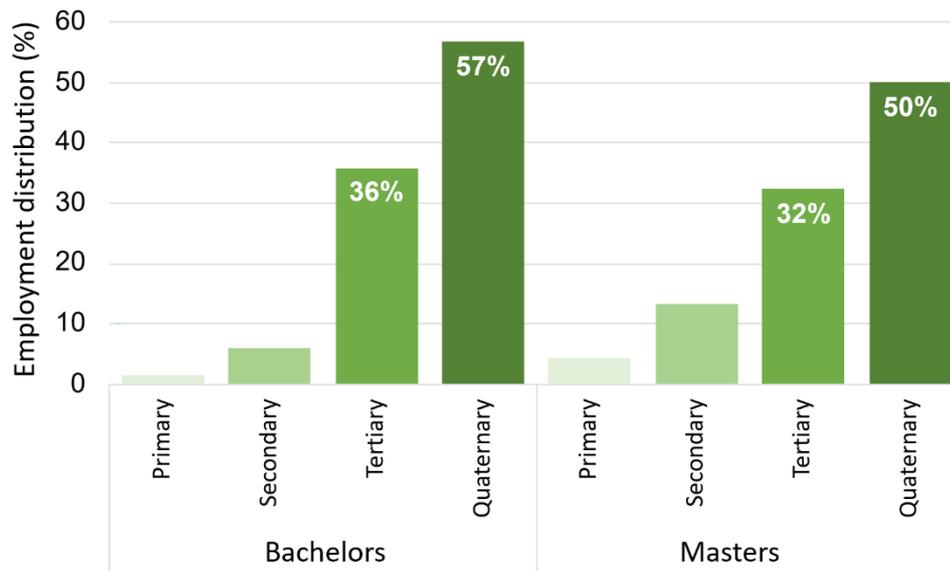


Figure 2. Employment of graduates of bachelor’s and master’s study programmes of the study field in 2018-2020 by type of economic activity, according to NACE classification (source: Graduates monitoring data).

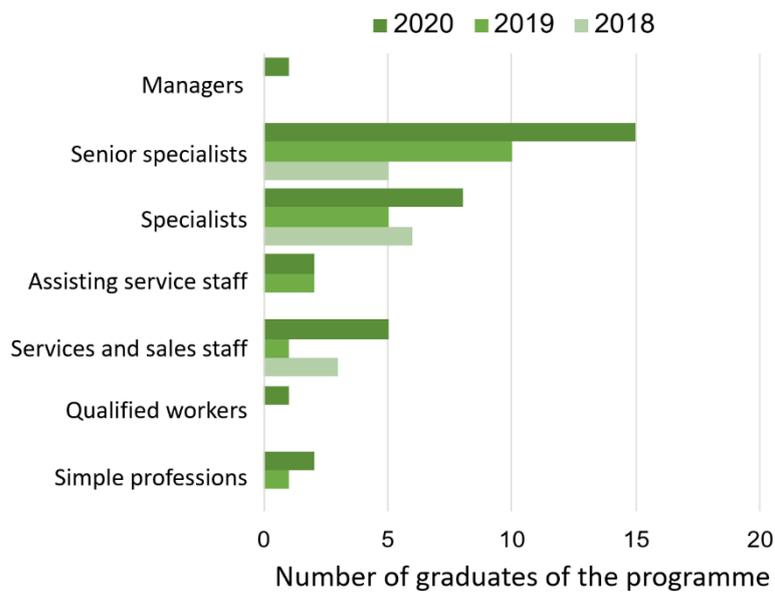


Figure 3. Professional classification of graduates of bachelor’s study programmes of the study field in 2018-2020 according to the basic groups of the profession classifier (source: Graduates monitoring data).

The majority (36.8%) of the total number of graduates (N=68) of the master’s study programme (graduated in 2018-2020) are employed in the field of professional scientific and technical services (NACE M), followed by the public administration sector (NACE O) (20.6%) (Figure 4).

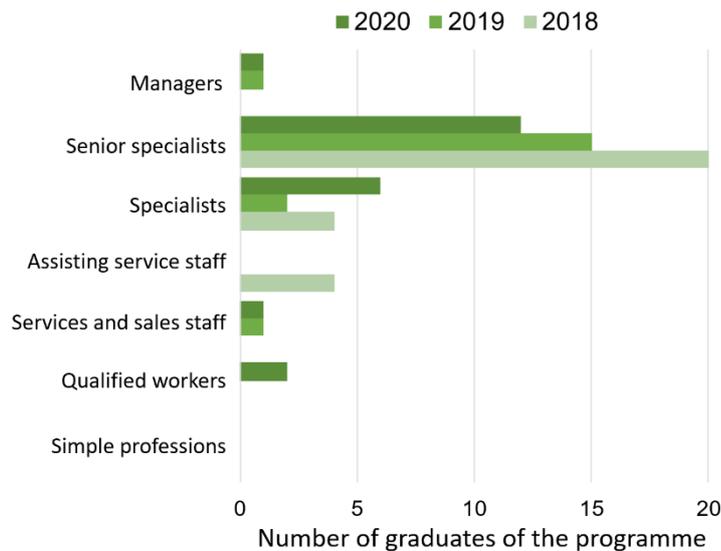


Figure 4. Professional classification of graduates of master’s study programme of the study field in 2018-2020 according to the basic groups of the profession classifier (source: Graduates monitoring data).

The labour market of graduates of the “Cultural and Environmental Heritage” study programme

In addition to graduates monitoring data, the information provided by the State Revenue Service on workplaces according to the profession classifier¹³ has also been summarized. As indicated by compiled data, according to the situation in December 2022, the number of workplaces in professions related to the knowledge, skills and competence of a specialist in the field of cultural and environmental heritage (some of the selected, but not all possible ones) exceeds 2000, while the average hourly wage rate amounts to approximately EUR 7.50. These data have not changed significantly compared to the one collected at the time of preparation of the licensing report, as only a few months have passed since that period.

As it was already mentioned in the licensing report, the opportunity of creating the profession of “curator of cultural and environmental heritage” has been discussed with the leadership of the UL, the AAL and the NHBL, which would create opportunities to plan and organize the labour market conditions for graduates of this study programme. In April 2020, the UL’s proposal with basic reasoning for creating such a profession was developed and submitted to the Ministry of Welfare. Curator’s profession is currently not classified in direct connection with the work of a cultural heritage specialist (2621 *Archivists and senior museum specialists*, separate group 2621 05 *CURATOR of exhibitions and exhibitions*¹⁴; however, the main tasks of the ‘separate group’ profession are consistent with the competencies of a cultural heritage curator in at least 5-6 positions and duties. The curator’s involvement in cultural heritage research and monitoring can partially replace the duties currently carried out by monument protection inspectors.

¹³ Information about workplaces in 2022 according to the classification of occupations in the Republic of Latvia: <https://vid.gov.lv/lv/informacija-par-darba-vietam-2022gada-atbilstosi-profesiju-klasifikatoram>

¹⁴ Regulations No.264 (on May 23, 2017) of the Cabinet of Ministers “On Classification of Occupations, Key Tasks of Occupations and Main Qualification Requirements”: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291004-noteikumi-par-profesiju-klasifikatoru-profesijai-atbilstosiem-pamatuzdevumiem-un-kvalifikacijas-pamatprasibam>

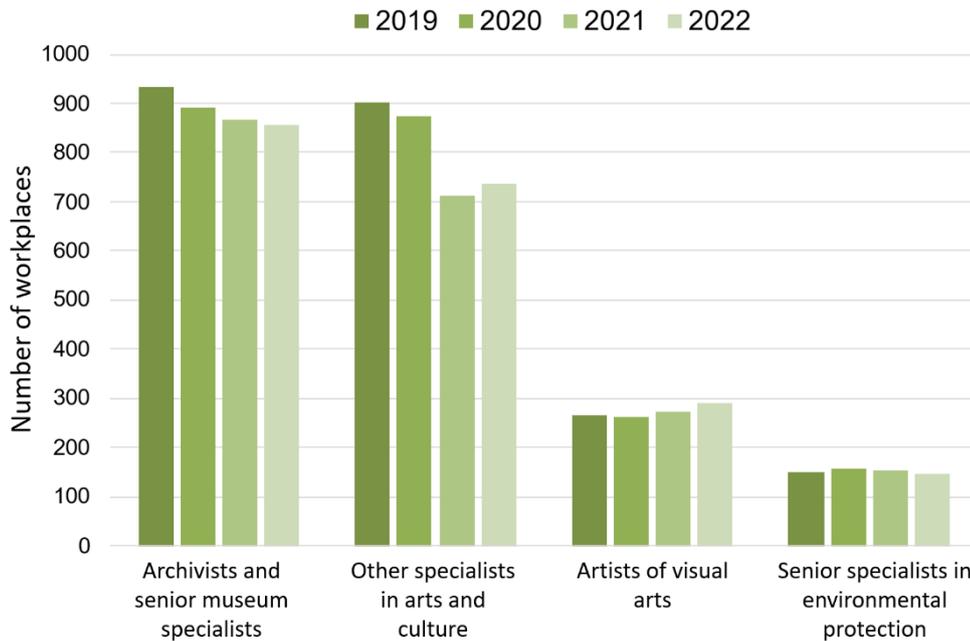


Figure 5. Dynamics of the number of workplaces for graduates of the study programme in the corresponding profession groups in 2019-2022 (source: the State Revenue Service’s data, at the beginning of January each year).

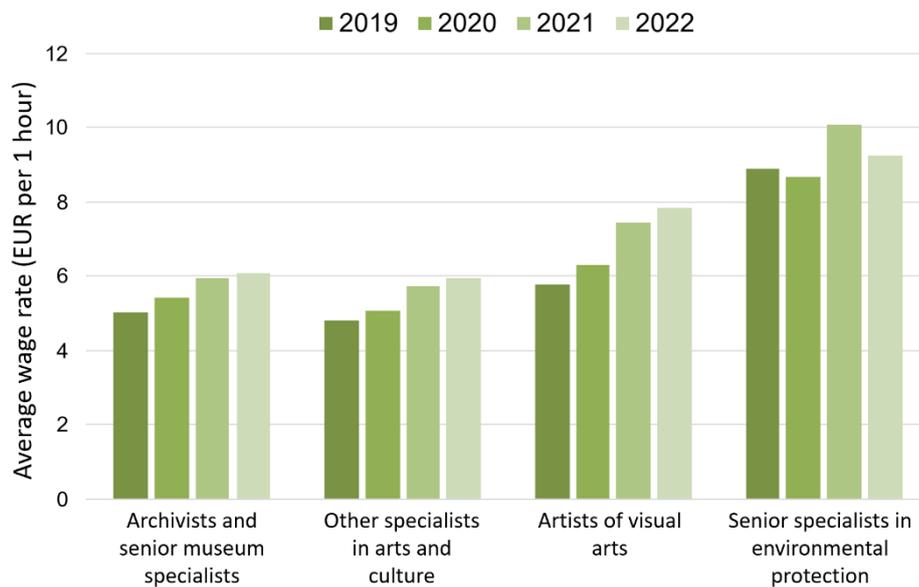


Figure 6. Wage rate dynamics for graduates of the study programme in the corresponding profession groups in 2019-2022 (source: data of the State Revenue Service data, at the beginning of January each year).

The support for the creation and implementation of the study programmes is still confirmed by the preparatory schools of the potential students – Rezekne Art and Design Secondary School and the Janis Rozentals Art School, as well as the potential employers of graduates – the NHBL, Latvian National Commission for UNESCO, Vidzeme planning region, Kuldīga county municipality, Grobina county council, Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre, Pedvāle Art Park. These letters of support, submitted as

an appendix to the licensing report, represent only a small part of the institutions that have expressed their support in writing. At the same time, other schools, companies and organizations have also expressed a positive attitude and readiness to support the new study programme for developing and improving the cultural and environmental heritage field. Also, the cooperation of the academic staff within the master's study programme "Spatial Development Planning" with the social partners of this study programme, such as local governments and territorial planning institutions, provides an opportunity to get acquainted with the goals, tasks and study content of the "Cultural and Environmental Heritage" study programme.

3. Resources and provisions

3.1. Characterization and evaluation of studies, science (if applicable), informative (including libraries), logistical and financial base

The study programme is implemented at the FGES of the UL. Teaching staff for the specific field courses is attracted from the Faculty of Biology, the Faculty of Chemistry, the FHP, the FH, and the AAL. In implementing the programme, the secretary and study methodologist of the FGES of the UL is involved in providing students with the necessary services (e.g., student registration for studies and study courses and student assistance in arranging formalities with other structural units). The existing and planned number of newly admitted students allows for providing student service without hiring additional secretaries/methodologists.

With Decision No.2-3/69 of the UL Senate (on May 31, 2021), *the Administration Statute of the University of Latvia* was approved, defining the functions, tasks, structure and basics of decision-making principles of the administration. Based on Paragraph 7 of this Statute, *the Administrative Regulations of the University of Latvia* (Order No.1-4/559 of the UL on November 15, 2021) have been issued, determining the work organization and competence of the UL management, officials, employees and departments.

The staff of structural units involved in implementing the study programme and their main tasks have not changed since the licensing report was prepared.

The study programme's essential methodological provision is still the developed teaching methodology and teaching aids available at the Direction of Environmental Protection Studies of the UL, including books, specific educational literature and developed laboratory work descriptions. The programme's implementation is also ensured by methodical training and teaching tools available at the FHP and the FH of the UL.

In material and technical terms, the implementation of the AAL programme is supported by access to the AAL library's resources. The part of the cultural heritage course of the programme is provided by the methodological tooling of the AAL lecturers and their experience gained in researching cultural objects.

Information provision

It is estimated that in 2023, 1.8 million units of information resources are available to the Library of the UL users. Following the UL's study and research infrastructure, the UL Library collection is located in 8 branch libraries and the Repository.

Compared to the data provided in the licensing report (regarding printed editions until December 31, 2019), during the last three years, the collection of printed editions at the UL Library has been supplemented with 364 copies of 214 titles, which corresponds to the implementation of the study programme (Table 5). The collection includes the most recent editions published between 2020 and 2022 (including the latter).

Table 5
Literature available in the UL Library for the implementation of the bachelor's study programme "Cultural and Environmental Heritage"

<i>Printed editions</i>	
<i>In the collection of the UL's Library, published from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2022</i>	
Type of editions (title/number of copies)	Distribution of editions by language (title/number of copies)

Books	Series editions <i>periodicals</i>	Books	Series editions <i>periodicals</i>	Books	Series editions <i>periodicals</i>	Books	Series editions <i>periodicals</i>
91/113	20/120	91/113	20/120	91/113	20/120	91/113	20/120
Total: 214 titles in 364 copies							

Among the latest editions (books) can be mentioned:

- 1) **Latvijas kultūras vēsture [Cultural History of Latvia, in Latvian]** / compiled by Ojārs Spārītis; authors: Zane Balčus, Dainis Bērziņš, Eva Eglāja-Kristsons, Pauls Daija, Eduards Dorofejevs [and 18 other authors]; scientific editors: Jana Dreimane, Anna Frīdenberga, Ieva Kalniņa [and 6 other editors]; literary editor: Sandra Skuja. Rīga: Jumava, [2021] 751 p.: facsimiles, illustrations, maps, plans, portraits. ISBN 9789934204791;
- 2) **Muižas Latvijā: vēsture, arhitektūra, māksla: enciklopēdija [Manors in Latvia: History, Architecture, Art: Encyclopedia, in Latvian]** / Mašnovskis, Vitolds et al. Rīga: DUE, 2018-2022. 5 volumes: illustrations, maps, plans, portraits. ISBN 9789934899911;
- 3) **Manifests. No futūrisma līdz mūsdienām [Manifesto. From Futurism to the Present, in Latvian, translated]** / compiler and author of the foreword: Artis Ostups; scientific editor: Stella Pelše. Rīga: Neputns, [2021] 452 p.: illustrations. ISBN 9789934601095;
- 4) **Kā saprast mākslu [How to Understand Art, in Latvian, translated]** / Benton, Rebold Janetta. [Rīga]: Jāņa Rozes apgāds, [2021] 175 p.: illustrations; (Basics of Art). ISBN 9789984238562;
- 5) **Krāsu slepenā dzīve [The Secret Life of Colours, in Latvian, translated]** / St. Clair, Kassia. Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, [2021] 319, [1] p.: illustrations. ISBN 9789934095108;
- 6) **Community Archives, Community Spaces: Heritage, Memory and Identity** / edited by Jeannette A. Bastian and Andrew Flinn. London: Facet Publishing, 2020. xxiv, 190 p.: illustrations. ISBN 9781783303502;

Therefore, it can be concluded that printed information resources in the UL Library's collection generally correspond to the implementation of the study programme in terms of their content and number.

Following the UL Strategic Plan, the LU Library continues to increase its share of e-resources and develops remote access to e-resources. By modernizing the availability of electronic resources, the latest technology web services, *Primo Discovery* and *SFX*, are operating in the UL Library.

In total, 42 e-resource platforms were available at the UL in 2022 (e-book platforms, e-journal databases and separately purchased e-journals, reference resources and tools, and mixed-format databases). 183 verified open-access databases with multi-format materials are available at the UL.

Every year, the UL Library offers 110 new electronic resources on average. As estimated on January 1, 2023, 1,676 e-books have been purchased in the UL Library, but 225,916 e-books are available in the subscribed *ProQuest Ebook Central Academic Complete* collection.

Twice a year, the UL Library evaluates and analyses the usability of the subscribed databases. Statistical data on subscribed e-resources by the UL for 2022 reveal that overall usability has grown by 12.37% compared to 2021. The individual increase in usability can be observed for foreign multidisciplinary databases, for example, significantly increased the use of *Sage Research Methods* (+74.47%), *Wiley Online Library E-Journals Full Collection* (47.95%) and a pronounced individual increase in usability is significant for some Latvian databases – *LETA* archive (+70.37%) and *LETA News* (+53.20%).

The UL Library regularly provides trial access to various databases; approximately 15 accesses to trial resources are organized annually on average. In 2022, trial access was organized to 8 databases. The summarized information on e-resources is available on the UL Library website <https://www.biblioteka.lu.lv/> in the sections *E-resources from A to Z* and *E-resources by Branches* and in the *Databases* section at *My Portal*.

Compared to the multidisciplinary e-resources subscribed by the UL, which included materials for the study programme and were mentioned in the licensing report, the following **e-resources have been added**:

Life Sciences – offers information resources in biology, biodiversity conservation, botany, palaeontology, zoology and ecology.

Nature – an international journal that releases quality peer-reviewed current research content in various sciences every week. The beginning of its publishing can be traced back to London in 1869. Currently, it is published by *Springer Nature*.

Taylor&Francis Social Science & Humanities Library – provides access to full texts from more than 1,100 scientific journals. The broad thematic coverage includes branches of behavioural sciences, occupational safety, business, education, media, politics, regional studies, health and social care, sociology, anthropology, arts, humanities, etc.

Still available open-access resources that include materials for the study programme:

[Ad*Access](#), [Artstor Digital Library Public Collections](#), [BioOne Complete](#), [BioRxiv](#), [Bookyards](#), [Cogent OA](#), [Directory of Open Access Books](#), [Directory of Open Access Journals \(DOAJ\)](#), [Environmental and Experimental Biology](#), [Europeana](#), [Eurostat Data](#), [F1000 Research](#), [Google Scholar](#), [HathiTrust Digital Library](#), [IGI Global Open Access Journals](#), [Open Humanities Press](#), [Periodika.lv](#), [Raduraksti](#), [Runivers](#), [Semantic Scholar](#), [SpringerOpen](#), [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#), [The Encyclopedia of Earth](#), [The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#), [World Digital Library](#), [World History Encyclopedia](#), [Zenodo](#).

The statistics of the use of subscribed databases by the UL for 2022 (data updated since the licensing report) are summarized in Table 6 (see next page).

Name of database	Period of subscription	Assessment and trends of usage
Centralized funds of the UL (order of the UL) – multidisciplinary databases		
EBSCO Central & Eastern European Academic Source Complete	01.01.2022.- 31.12.2022.	Substantiation for the database subscription: the database contains a large number of publications of the UL teaching staff. Dynamics of usage – decreasing (on average –33.80%) <i>Subscription for 2023.</i>
JSTOR	01.09.2021.- 31.08.2022.	Substantiation for the database subscription: high-quality scientific content, a unique database of archival articles. Dynamics of usage – decreasing (on average –13.02%) <i>Subscription for 2023.</i>
LETA Archive and Nozare.lv	01.01.2022.- 31.12.2022.	Substantiation for the database subscription: subscribed according to the needs of the UL within the KISC consortium. Dynamics of usage – increasing (on average +70.37%) <i>Subscription for 2023.</i>
LETA online news	01.01.2022.- 31.12.2022.	Substantiation for the database subscription: subscribed according to the needs of the UL, an essential source of Latvian news. Dynamics of usage – increasing (on average +53.20%) <i>Subscription for 2023.</i>
Letonika	01.01.2022.- 31.12.2022.	Substantiation for the database subscription: an essential source of information in the Latvian language on the Internet. Dynamics of usage – decreasing (on average –30.36%) <i>Subscription for 2023.</i>
Nature (e-ISSN 1476-4687)	01.09.2021.- 31.12.2022.	Substantiation for the database subscription: subscribed at the request of the UL representatives following the UL's Order No.1-4/182. Dynamics of usage – increasing (on average +65.43%) <i>Subscription for 2023.</i>
OECD iLibrary	01.01.2022.- 31.12.2023.	Substantiation for the database subscription: Latvia is a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and by subscribing to the database, the UL provides access to complete information about the organization and its activities. Dynamics of usage – decreasing (–20.86%) <i>Subscription for 2023.</i>
Oxford Journals Online	01.01.2022.- 31.12.2022.	Substantiation for the database subscription: an authoritative database of the world's high-quality scientific university publisher. Dynamics of usage – increasing (+37.85%) <i>Subscription for 2023.</i>

ProQuest Ebook Central Academic Complete Collection		01.01.2022.- 31.12.2022.	Substantiation for the database subscription: the e-book database providing access to approximately 225 916 publications from leading publishers in all branches, including many university presses. Dynamics of usage – increasing (on average +34.31%) <i>Subscription for 2023.</i>
SAGE Journals		01.01.2022.- 31.12.2022.	Substantiation for the database subscription: subscribed within the KISC consortium; access to peer-reviewed journal articles published by one of the world's leading publishers. Dynamics of usage – decreasing (on average –7.68%) <i>Subscription for 2023.</i>
SAGE Research Methods		01.01.2022.- 31.12.2022.	Substantiation for the database subscription: a unique research tool that helps navigate and find appropriate research methods and get acquainted with practical research projects; includes a library of information resources on research methods and case study materials. Dynamics of usage – increasing (on average +74.47%) <i>Subscription for 2023.</i>
SpringerLink Contemporary Journals		01.01.2022.- 31.12.2022.	Substantiation for the database subscription: the request of the UL's students and academic staff; one of the leading databases of peer-reviewed publications in the world in various scientific branches. Dynamics of usage- decreasing (on average –0.98%) <i>Subscription for 2023.</i>
Taylor & Francis Social Science & Humanities Library		01.01.2022.- 31.12.2022.	Substantiation for the database subscription: a valuable database of the world's high-class scholarly publisher in social sciences and humanities. Dynamics of usage – decreasing (on average – 7.33%) <i>Subscription for 2023.</i>
VLeBOOKS		01.01.2022.- 31.12.2022.	E-books purchase and access platform. Dynamics of usage – decreasing (on average – 36.69%) <i>Subscription for 2023.</i>
Wiley Online Library E-Journals Full Collection		01.06.2022.- 31.12.2023.	Substantiation for the database subscription: subscribed at the request of the UL representatives following the UL's Order No.1-4/182. Dynamics of usage – increasing (on average +47.95%) <i>Subscription for 2023.</i>
ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global Full Text		01.11.2021.- 31.10.2022.	Substantiation for the database subscription: the only database of its kind available. Costs – average. Dynamics of usage – decreasing (on average –33.36%) <i>Subscription for 2023.</i>

Financed by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia (within the national license)			
ScienceDirect		01.01.2022-31.12.2022.	Dynamics of usage – increasing (on average +1.01%)
SCOPUS		01.01.2022-31.12.2022.	Dynamics of usage – increasing (on average +4.53%)
Web of Science Core Collection		01.01.2021-31.12.2021.	Dynamics of usage – decreasing (on average – 34.42%)

The collection of the UL Library corresponds to the implementation of studies and the development of scientific research because it is supplemented with the most current information resources every year, following the informational needs of academic staff and students.

Material and technical base

The study programme, as it was planned, is implemented at the UL FGES in the “Dabas māja” (“House of Nature”) of the UL Academic Centre (further in the text – the UL-AC), which is located in Torņakalns’, neighbourhood of Riga.

All the material and technical supporting base necessary for the study programme’s implementation (described in detail in the licensing report) is still at the disposal of the lecturers and students of the study programme. In cooperation with the AAL, the UL provides the necessary conditions for practical studies. Also, for this purpose, on September 23, 2022, the UL concluded a Cooperation Agreement (Annex 13) with the Jana Rozentala Art School - Vocational Education Competence Centre “The National High School of Arts” (further in the text – the NHSA), intending to strengthen the development, excellence and quality of cultural education and higher education in Latvia, including promoting the succession of education. According to the lecturers’ suggestions and the students’ wishes, in some cases, the study process is carried out in restoration workshops or laboratories. The study of arts disciplines at a strategic level is planned in the “Rakstu māja” (“House of Letters”) of the UL-AC, but until the building is put into operation, the opportunities mentioned in the cooperation agreements also provide the use of the AAL and the NHSA premises to ensure the study process.

Financial base

Compared to the information regarding the financial base presented in the licensing report, only the data on the sufficiency of the financial base have been updated. Considering that the proportion of CP in parts A and C of the study programme has changed and minor changes in the structure of academic staff are made, recalculations have been made updating the information (Figure 7).

If unchanging the number of students estimated to be involved in the study programme and the amount of study tuition fees, the calculations reveal that the costs of teaching staff have decreased slightly, resulting in a reduction of total costs and an increase in the actual profitability of the study programme. Other parameters have remained unchanged.

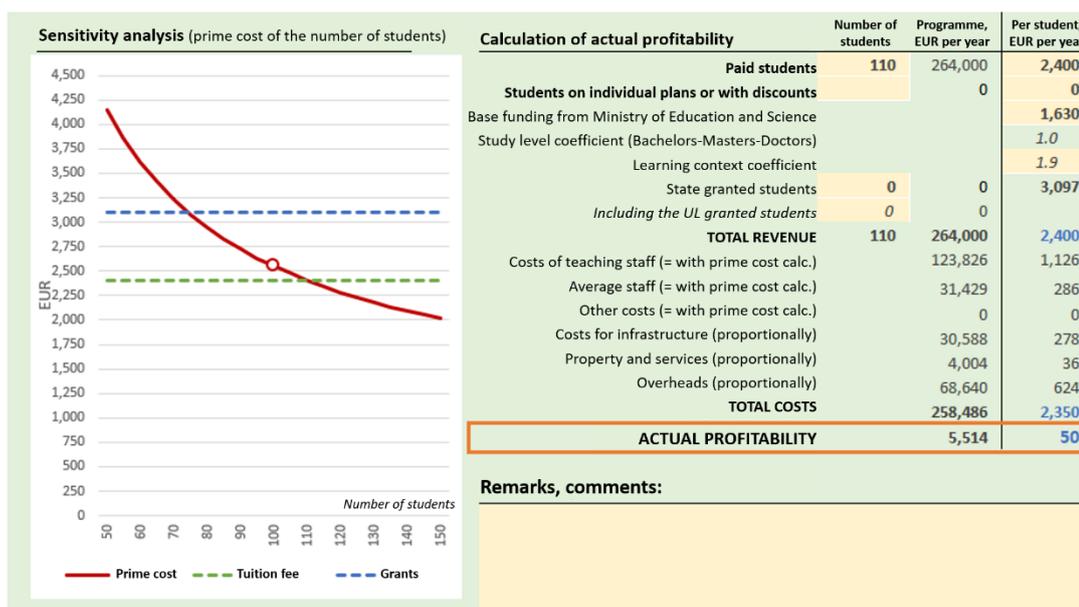


Figure 7. Cost of the study programme depending on the number of students.

3.2. Analysis of changes in composition and qualification of the teaching staff¹⁵ and evaluation of these changes during the reporting period

In the time since the submission of the licensing report, minor changes have occurred in the composition of the study programme's teaching staff and their qualifications. During the reporting period, the lecturer of the study course "Natural Monuments", Rūta Ozola-Davidāne, has obtained a Doctor of Science (PhD) degree in natural sciences, while the lecturer of the study courses "Basics of the History of Ideas" and "Philosophical and Mythological Thinking: Transformations of Thinking Patterns in European Culture" Raivis Bičevskis is appointed to the position of professor.

Unfortunately, the lecturer of the AAL, Olga Ceple, cannot participate in this study programme due to family circumstances; therefore, other AAL lecturers have taken over her courses' teaching. The course "Exploring the Optical Properties of an Object I" is taught by Mg. art. Maija Tirzīte, but the courses "Exploring the Optical Properties of an Object II, III and IV" by Mg. art. Ingūna Namiķe.

Also, in the study course "Biocorrosion and Biodegradation", the lecturer has been replaced and the current assoc. prof. Vizma Nikolajeva is substituted by Mg. biol. Māris Seņkovs, a student in the doctoral study programme in biology. In turn, the young scientist and leading researcher Dr. geogr. Olga Sozinova has joined as the second lecturer in the study course "Data Analysis and Vector Graphics in Cultural Heritage Field", while Dr. geogr. Oskars Purmalis – in the study course "Natural Monuments".

On his own initiative, the researcher Dr. geol. Jurijs Ješkins has also expressed a desire to join the study programme by offering a completely new study course, "Digitization Methods of Cultural and Environmental Heritage", corresponding to 4 CP. This study course aims to provide practical knowledge and skills in using methods such as laser scanning, photogrammetry and radiolocation in creating the monument's 'digital twin'. Currently, this course is added to the study plan within part B (limited elective courses).

¹⁵ The term "teaching staff" used in this document refers to the academic staff of the University of Latvia and visiting professors, associate visiting professors, visiting lecturers, guest lecturers and visiting assistants.

Considering the recommendations of experts, the study plan has been supplemented with the sub-module “German Studies” and two more study courses, intended as optional courses for students with prior knowledge of the German language, namely “German Language, Literature and Culture in the Baltics – Historical Heritage” taught by the lecturers prof. Dr. philol. Māra Grudule and assoc. prof. deputy acting Dr. philol. Dzintra Lele-Rozentāle, and “Specialization Course I: Acquisition of German Language” taught by the lecturer Mg. philol. Ieva Blumberga.

On December 19, 2022, the director of the study programme Agnese Kukela and the study programme’s concept developer and lecturer of several study courses, Atis Kampars, visited the Estonian Academy of Arts in Tallinn. During the visit, the study programme’s goals, tasks and content were introduced to Estonian colleagues. The visit successfully resulted in an agreement on closer cooperation in science and education, holding joint scientific events and cooperation regarding student exchange within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme. The inter-university Memorandum of Understanding was also signed (see Annex 14).

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

The recommendations given by the study programme licensing experts were re-evaluated and taken into account already in this short period of 6 months. By implementing the recommendations, changes were made to the study plan, namely, the number of study courses was reduced, the amount of CP regarding individual study courses was revised, additions were made to the descriptions of study courses, as well as technical corrections were made to the descriptions of some study courses in English, where the language mistakes were noticed. A detailed overview of the recommendations' implementation is attached in Annex 5.

As a result of the recommendations' implementation, the distribution of credit points between parts A, B and C of the study plan has slightly changed – namely, the amount of CP for mandatory Part A has increased and currently amounts to 116 CP, the amount of CP for limited elective Part B has remained unchanged, but the amount of CP for Part C has been reduced from 11 to 6 CP (see the study plan in Annex 8). Also, the changes have occurred in the distribution of CP by thematic modules (see Table 4).

Changes in the study programme and its improvements will also continue during the approbation process, as certain corrections can be implemented, taking into account the different amount and quality of the prior knowledge of new students. Also, following the suggestions and recommendations of students, field specialists and experts, work has been started on the creation of conceptual proposals for the master's study programme "Cultural and Environmental Heritage", which will not only provide a logical opportunity for graduates of the bachelor's study programme to continue their studies, but will also allow to reduce the implementation of the bachelor's study programme up to 3 years. In parallel with the continuation of the implementation of experts' recommendations, work is also underway on improving the study content in English in order to make it even more attractive to potential students from abroad (not only from Europe, but also from other countries of the world).