Expert group joint opinion

Evaluation Procedure: Assessment of Study Field

Higher Education Institution: University of Latvia

Study field: Health Care

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

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The study field Health Care is developed by improving the already existing study programmes and developing new ones; the SWOT analysis of the study field is carried out and its results are analyzed every year. The LU has identified and analyzed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the study field Health Care and integrated them in the document: Objectives of the development plan of the study field Health Care for 2022-2027, where two strategic goals of the field's development are indicated – the improvement of the student-centered training process and the reorganization of the infrastructure of the study field Health Care by consolidating the acquisition of study courses within one infrastructure. The management structure of the study field Health Care and the corresponding 14 study programmes is well organized and focused on the development of the study field. The study field uses an interdisciplinary approach in the implementation of the study programmes, which provides wider opportunities for the improvement and development of the study field and the programmes included in it.

The quality assurance (QA) system is working well enough. University of Latvia (LU) has a system in place on how the QA process is implemented, reviewed and improved at every structural level of the university and the individual. The aim of the QA system and Quality Policy is to contribute to the achievement of the mission, strategic objectives and sustainable development of the LU strategy, which is planned in 6 year increments. All 14 programmes in the study field adhere to all legal and professional requirements of the Republic of Latvia. All Programmes have been developed and delivered from a moderate to excellent standard. The delivery methods and assessment practices are consistent across all programmes. There is an annual review of each programme within the study field, however the overarching goals are set for the 6 year accreditation period. Students have the opportunity to submit their feedback in a standardized format anonymously at the end of each semester and in other forms during the semester as LU study field Health Care has a very personal and 'hands on' approach to solving problems, which in many cases is an effective approach, however, in certain situations anonymity should be ensured to protect the student and make them feel safe. That anonymity helps students to express themselves better was one of the lessons that the study field learned during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, this should be incorporated further in the feedback and complaint mechanism. The LU has established a well functioning system for data storage and are able to access the date when and if required. The information is gathered mostly using Moodle and LUIS systems. The information available on LU website regarding the study field and its programmes is accurate and up to date.

Scientific research skills are integrated in learning outcomes of the study programmes of all levels. The degree of integration depends on the level of the study programme and specific requirements of the European Qualification Framework (EQF). Academic staff members of the majority of the study programmes, as they confirmed during the meetings, are involved in the international scientific research projects, which comply with the currently relevant trends in the world in the Health Care study field. In the Health Care study field, 14 study programmes are implemented. Consequently, the majority of lecturers are involved in the provision of the study process - teaching, administration. Most lecturers are also involved in scientific work. In parallel with the study process, lecturers work in science and participate in achieving project results. Each lecturer then incorporates their experience, results, methods into their study courses, thus ensuring the continuous acquisition of the latest knowledge and skills for students. Students have also participated in the achievement of scientific project results in cooperation with the lecturers of the Health Care study field. The development of e-learning and the introduction of new forms for part-time or distance studies

became particularly relevant during the COVID pandemic when all study programmes had to be provided remotely and new forms had to be sought. During the reporting period, curriculum changes have been made in all study programmes of the Health Care study field, so that the study programmes comply with the updated or new professional standards and students acquire all the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies specified in these documents. The positive aspects when assessing the scientific research part of the Health Care study field implemented in the LU, were: multidisciplinary approach towards the integration of the latest outcomes of scientific research leads to the sufficient and effective involvement of the staff and students of the study programmes of different levels to the scientific research activities; effective international collaboration in the scientific research led to the significantly increased number of the scientific publications and projects, as well as growing scientific research competencies in the doctoral study programme of Medicine and Pharmacy; successful and purposeful application of the innovations to the study process increases students‘ satisfaction with the quality of the studies and ensures the preparedness for the states of emergency in the future.

I - Assessment of the Study Field

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1.1 Management of the Study Field

Analysis

1.1.1. The LU study field Health Care comprises 14 study programmes of different levels:
- two academic bachelor’s study programmes:
ABSP Pharmacy, 43725
ABSP Optometry, 43722
- two professional bachelor’s study programmes:
PBSP Nursing, 42723
PBSP Radiography, 42722
- three second level professional higher education programmes:
PHESP Medicine, 49721
PHESP Dentistry, 49724
PHERSP Medicine, 50721
- five academic master’s study programmes:
AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics, 45726
AMSP Pharmacy, 45725
AMSP Nurse Studies, 45723
AMSP Sports Science, 45813
AMSP Nutrition Science, 45722
- one professional master’s study programme:
PMSP Clinical Optometry, 47722
- one doctoral study programme
DSP Medicine and Pharmacy, 51721.
The development of all the study programmes is based on the aim to educate proficient health care specialists for the needs of Latvia’s national economy, as well as attracting students from the European Union and other countries, harmonizing the learning outcomes with the corresponding requirements of the European Union, the labor market, human and public interests. Within the study filed, an interdisciplinary approach to cooperation with other faculties of the LU is ensured, research programmes in the fields of medicine and life sciences are implemented, close cooperation with health care institutions in Latvia is established, and the cooperation between universities (University of Latvia, Riga Stradiņš University and Latvia University of Life Sciences) is also functioning in the

implementation of the joint study programme.
The interconnection of the study programmes included in the study field is clear and logical, because the development of all study programmes is based on the goal of preparing competent health care specialists for the needs of the Latvian economy, as well as attracting students from the European Union and other countries, coordinating study results with the relevant requirements of the European Union, labor market, personal and public interests.
In the informative report on mid- and long-term labor market forecasts, it is indicated that according to the supply and demand forecasts for the labor force with higher education, health care and social welfare is the thematic educational group where the demand will exceed supply (by 7%) in 2022. According to the forecasts, the majority of the 9.5 million new jobs in the EU labor market by 2025 will be created in the service sector, including the occupational groups of healthcare specialists (SAR, p. 22).
The aim of the study field Health Care is to ensure the acquisition of quality education based on high-quality learning outcomes, providing graduates with the necessary knowledge, skills and competence, introduction of innovative methods in the study process and preparing highly qualified professionals after graduating from study programmes of the relevant level, educating knowledgeable professionals in demand of the labor market both in Latvia and abroad, providing the opportunity to obtain subsequent education corresponding to the European Qualifications Framework, beginning with bachelor's, continuing with master's and ending with doctoral level studies (SAR, p. 20).
The aim of the study field Health Care meets the needs of the society and the national economy – to promote Latvia's economic breakthrough with qualified and educated workforce in the field of health care, providing highly qualified, professional teaching staff who are active not only in their professional work, but also contribute to scientific research thus promoting the development of the science.
The aim of the LU study field Health Care is clearly defined, achievable and in line with the strategic direction and goals of the LU – the LU combines diverse studies and scientific activities to provide world-renowned higher education, create new knowledge and apply it to the Latvian economy and society in solving important issues, as well as to support the successful development of the Latvian state, economy and society by transferring the rigorous competence of the LU.

1.1.2. In SAR (p. 27) it is stated that the study field is developed by improving the existing study programmes, developing new study programmes, and the SWOT analysis of the study field is carried out and its results are analyzed every year. The directors of the study programmes within the study field Health Care regularly follow the current affairs in the field and consult with the representatives and experts of the relevant field on the conformity of the content of the study programme with the labor market demands and the possibilities of its improvement. SAR (p. 27 – 29) provides an opportunity to get acquainted with the SWOT analysis of the study field Health Care, which indicates the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the study field.
The strengths and opportunities of the study field Health Care (for example: the study field is implemented in a classical type university; high professional and academic qualification of the teaching staff; diversity and multidisciplinary study programmes; a further attraction of structural funds and other financing; a further attraction of high-quality guest lecturers in the study field programmes; extensive opportunities to develop interdisciplinary study programmes etc. (SAR, p. 27-29)) indicate the high quality of programs of the study field and further development opportunities. In the SWOT analysis (SAR, p. 29) eight threats that may affect the development of the study field Health Care at the LU were identified.
In order to reduce the influence of weaknesses on the development of the field, certain measures have been developed and are being implemented (the popularization of study programmes to the audience of future students, involvement of students in scientific research; foreign students are

additionally given the opportunity to acquire the Latvian language in Part C; integration of foreign students in the study process; increasing the number of clinical bases; increasing the number of state-financed budget places within the limits of possibilities).
The LU has identified and analyzed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the study field Health Care and integrated them in the document: Objectives of the development plan of the study field Health Care for 2022-2027 (Annex. Development plan of the Health Care study direction for 2022-2027), where two strategic goals for the development of the field are indicated – the improvement of the student-centered training process and the reorganization of the infrastructure of the study field Health Care by consolidating the acquisition of study courses within one infrastructure.

1.1.3. The decision-making bodies of the LU take the collegial responsibility in the management of the study field; these are the Senate, the Quality Assessment Commission of the LU Study Programmes (which consists of Vice-Rectors, Chair of the Academic Commission of the Senate or their authorized person, Director and the representatives of the Academic Department, the representative of the Student Services Department, the quality manager, the internal auditor, a representative the LU Library, delegated representative of the Student Council and delegated representative of the LU Alumni Club), Faculty Councils and Councils of Study Fields, which assess the quality of studies and make decisions on measures to ensure the quality of studies (SAR, p. 35).
The Study Programme Quality Assessment Commission evaluates the performance results of the study fields and study programmes of the LU, as well as makes proposals to the Faculty Council and the LU management regarding the further development of the programmes.
The Council of the Study Field Health Care approves the development strategy of study programmes in Health Care, evaluates and submits for approval to the Study Programme Quality Assessment Commission concepts of the new study programmes of all levels in the relevant field, evaluates and submits for approval to the Faculty Council the annual review of the study field, as well as changes to be introduced in the study programmes.
The management and development of the study field Health Care is ensured by the Head of the study field Health Care. The area of responsibility of the Head of study field is the supervision of the study programmes of one study field, the compliance of the study field with the Development Strategy of the LU, ensuring the relevance and development, as well as the implementation of coordinated management and cooperation of the study programmes included in the field. The Head of the study field organizes the work of the Study Field Council, organizes the development of the annual report of the study field. Each study programme in the field of Health Care is led by a study programme director who manages the development and implementation of the study programme. The field of responsibility of the Director of study programme is related to ensuring the development, management and implementation of the study programme, review, evaluation and improvement of the study programme (SAR, p. 36, figure 2.1.3.2. Management scheme of the study field of the University of Latvia and the study programmes included in it).
The Council of the Faculty of Medicine decides on the issues of the faculty's academic work, as well as economic, financial and other activities, which are within the competence of the faculty or should be forwarded to the Senate. Within the framework of the study field Health Care, several programmes are implemented in close cooperation with other faculties of the LU – LU Faculty of Physics, Mathematics and Optometry and LU Faculty of Biology, because the ABSP Optometry, PMSP Clinical Optometry, AMSP Nutrition Science and AMSP Sports Science are under the supervision of the aforementioned faculties, and the lecturers of these faculties, who ensure a high-quality study process, are involved in the implementation of other programmes of the study field. Thus, the study field acquires an interdisciplinary approach in the implementation of study programmes, which provides a greater range of possibilities for their improvement and development. Heads of departments and units of the faculties are involved in the development and implementation of study

programmes according to the fields and subfields of science under their supervision, including the development of the content of the study programmes, as well as ensuring cooperation with heads of departments and units of other faculties, planning, evaluating and developing the academic staff, ensuring and evaluating the quality of methodological work.
Cooperation with the student self-government of the faculty, which represents the students' interests in the activities of the faculty, including solving issues of the academic, social and cultural environment, plays an important role in the management of studies. The members of the student self-government are represented in the LU Student Council, thus participating in the management of the LU.
In the implementation of the management of the study field, support functions are provided by the LU Administration, which consists of several structural units, including the Academic Department, which has the most important role in the management of the study field.
The management structure of the study field Health Care and the corresponding 14 study programmes is well organized and oriented towards the development of the study field. The study field also has an interdisciplinary approach in the implementation of the study programmes, which provides wider opportunities for the improvement and development of the study field and the programmes included in it.

1.1.4. The admission process at the LU and, therefore, also in the existing study programmes of the study field Health Care is governed by the Admission Regulations (https://www.lu.lv/gribustudet/normativie-dokumenti/uznemsanas-noteikumi-latvijas-universitate/) and subordinate orders thereto prescribing procedures for a given academic year (SAR, p. 41). Admission to undergraduate studies is centralized through the "Unified Admission to Undergraduate Programmes"; admission to master's level study programmes is decentralized, the procedure may be different in each faculty, but it is implemented within the same time period.
Admission conditions for PHERSP Medicine (50721) are defined in the LU Admission Regulations; the competition is organized in accordance with the Cabinet Regulations of August 30, 2011 No. 685 "Regulations for the distribution of residents and residency funding rules". Since the study year 2019/2020, in the PHERSP Medicine (50721), the Unified Admissions Commission has been established, the regulations of which were developed by a working group of managers involved in the residency study process of LU and RSU, as well as students nominated by the student self-governments of both universities (SAR, p. 42).
Admission to the doctoral programme is centralized. The applicant has to submit the theme of their Doctoral thesis and agree with the supervisor. The applicant's suitability is evaluated by the Doctoral Council of the field.
The LU also provides the opportunity to begin studies in later stages in accordance with the procedure for starting studies in later stages of studies at the University of Latvia (https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Zinas/2020/Februaris/Studiju_uzsaksanas_kartiba_velakos_studiju_posmos.pdf). During the accreditation period, 11 study programmes of the study field Health Care admitted students to the later study stages (the opportunity has been taken by 1,628 students) (SAR, p. 43). The possibility to recognize the results of studies obtained in previous education or professional experience is less often used (LU has a corresponding regulation; SAR, p. 44); this could be explained by the relatively complicated process that must be carried out by both a person who wants to perform the recognition of results obtained in previous education or professional experience, and the commission so that they could recognize the knowledge, skills and competences acquired outside of formal education or in professional experience (this opportunity has been used by two students).

1.1.5. The LU has developed the "Procedure for Development and Updating of University of Latvia Study Courses", which stipulates that information on the conditions for starting the acquisition of

each study course, its aim, objectives, requirements for obtaining credit points, content of the study course, organization of the study process in contact classes, organization and assignments of students' independent work, planned learning outcomes, methods of their assessment and the assessment criteria are to be included in all study course descriptions available to students in the LU Information System (LUIS) and the LU e-learning environment.
The organization of study course examinations and the assessment of students' achievements are carried out in accordance with the "Procedure for Organizing Study Course Examinations at the University of Latvia", which is applicable to the assessment of the learning outcomes of full-time and part-time students registered in the LU study programmes of all levels.
At the beginning of the studies, the students are informed about the organization and implementation of studies in the relevant study programme, but when starting the acquisition of each individual study course, the lecturers inform students about the organization of the course, its content, learning requirements, envisaged learning outcomes, testing and assessment criteria, as well as explain the essence of the study course in achieving the overall learning outcomes of the programme. Students can familiarize themselves with the criteria and conditions for assessment of student performance and the binding procedures in the study course descriptions and in the e-learning environment, as well as at the beginning of each study course during the first class, when each lecturer introduces the students to the organization and the requirements of the course, describe the requirements of mid-term tests and final examinations, assessment criteria and examination procedure, which are not to be changed during the semester.
The basic criteria for the evaluation of final theses are determined by the "Requirements for the development and defense of final theses (Bachelor's, Master's, Diploma and Qualification Thesis) at the University of Latvia". Additional criteria for the evaluation of the Final Thesis can be determined, which are approved by the Faculty Council upon the proposal of the department council. The descriptions of the study programmes in the study field Health Care indicate the specific requirements for the organization and assessment of final examinations (SAR, p. 48).
For certain study programmes included in the study field Health Care, different procedures for the assessment of the learning outcomes achieved by students have been developed; e.g., the assessment system in the sub-programmes of the SP Medicine is different for each speciality, however, there is a unifying factor: a test of theoretical knowledge in the form of multiple-choice questions and/or special questions at the end of each study course, analysis of clinical cases, mandatory (100%) performance of practical work assignments, which requires the acquisition of a certain minimum of practical skills; on completing the residency, there is a State examination (testing of theoretical knowledge in a written test, analysis of clinical cases, etc., depending on the sub-programme of the relevant speciality) and the defense of the scientific research work (diploma thesis in the residency)(SAR, p. 46).
The conformity of assessment methods and procedures to the achievement of study programme aims and students' needs is analyzed and improved, taking into account the lecturers' experience, analyzing the learning outcomes achieved by students and comparing the student survey results in several academic years. In surveys, students admit that for their studies it is very important to have clearly formulated envisaged learning outcomes and defined assessment criteria, as well as receiving regular feedback on student achievements during the study process. To ensure this, lecturers systematically analyze their experience, cooperate with colleagues, analyze student achievements and improve course descriptions and the e-learning environment by developing assessment criteria corresponding to the envisaged learning outcomes, thus ensuring the substantiation of assessment (SAR, p. 48).
In the LU as a whole and in the study field Health Care, the methods, principles and procedures for the assessment of student achievements have been developed and clearly defined. The relevance of assessment methods and procedures to the achievement of the aim of the study programme and students' needs is analyzed.

1.1.6. In its activities, the LU observes the principles and norms of honest and responsible conduct, which are described in the Code of Academic Ethics of the University of Latvia and the Regulations on Academic Integrity at the University of Latvia, these regulations are publicly available to every LU employee and student. In order to prevent violations of the principles of academic integrity, the LU has established the Unified Computer Plagiarism Control System (hereinafter - the System). With the help of the System, the examination of students' final and doctoral theses is performed. A procedure has also been developed describing the further actions to be taken in cases when signs of plagiarism are detected (SAR, p. 49).
Considering the fact that the study process in the study field Health Care involves also the representatives of employers who act as academic staff or guest lecturers, participate in delivering study courses or parts thereof and are members of the Final Examination Commission, experts can conclude that employers are also made aware of the observance of the principles of academic integrity in the study process.
The LU has developed and follows certain procedures aimed at ensuring the observance of the principles of academic integrity and provides that the involved stakeholders are informed about the performance of academic work by observing the highest standards of professionalism and accuracy, objectivity and truthfulness, moral and ethical principles, and integrity. The LU students and academic, general, scientific and administrative staff are equally responsible for both the observance of the principles of academic integrity and the consequences of their violation.

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

The aim of the LU study field Health Care is clearly defined, achievable and complies with the LU strategic direction and goals – the LU combines diversified studies and scientific activities to provide world-renowned higher education, create new knowledge and apply it to the Latvian economy and society in dealing with important issues, as well as to support the successful development of the state, economy and society of Latvia by transferring the rigorous competence of the LU.
The study field Health Care is developed by improving the already existing study programmes and developing new ones; the SWOT analysis of the study field is carried out and its results are analyzed every year. The LU has identified and analyzed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the study field Health Care and integrated them in the document: Objectives of the development plan of the study field Health Care for 2022-2027 (Annex. Development plan of the Health Care study direction for 2022-2027), where two strategic goals of the field's development are indicated – the improvement of the student-centered training process and the reorganization of the infrastructure of the study field Health Care by consolidating the acquisition of study courses within one infrastructure.
The management structure of the study field Health Care and the corresponding 14 study programmes is well organized and focused on the development of the study field. The study field uses an interdisciplinary approach in the implementation of the study programmes, which provides wider opportunities for the improvement and development of the study field and the programmes included in it.
In the LU as a whole and in the study field Health Care, the admission requirements for study programmes of all levels have been developed and published, and the methods, principles and procedures for the assessment of student achievements are clearly defined.
The LU has developed and follows certain procedures aimed at ensuring the observance of the principles of academic integrity and provides that the involved parties are informed about the performance of academic work by observing the highest standards of professionalism and accuracy, objectivity and truthfulness, moral and ethical principles, and integrity.

Strengths:

1. The aim of the LU study field Health Care is clearly defined and achievable; the LU has identified and analyzed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the study field Health Care and integrated them in the document: Objectives of the development plan of the study field Health Care for 2022-2027.
2. The management structure of the study field Health Care and the corresponding 14 study programmes is well organized and oriented towards the development of the study field. The study field uses an interdisciplinary approach in the implementation of the study programmes, which provides wider opportunities for the improvement and development of the study field and the programmes included in it.
3. LU has developed and follows certain procedures aimed at ensuring the observance of the principles of academic integrity and ensures certain procedures for checking plagiarism in the students' final theses.

No weaknesses have been identified.

1.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System

Analysis

1.2.1. LU has established a quality policy approved at 27.01.2020. (https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_LV/2._POLITIKAS/LU_Kvalitates_politika_1_.pdf) that is publicly available. Three main focus points for this policy are scientific excellence, study development and contribution to society, to ensure a consistently high quality performance of the university (SAR section 1.3. p. 15). The aim of the Quality Policy is to contribute to the achievement of the mission, strategic objectives and sustainable development of the LU strategy. The quality policy is part of the quality management system in LU that is responsible for monitoring and ensuring the policy at all levels of the university. During the site visit QA system representatives highlighted that they do not want to be described as a separate unit or structure in LU, but as a team that is working together to ensure quality. To establish and maintain the quality management system university administration members and faculty deans are obliged to carry out and monitor QA processes. LU has described quality as a measure of excellence that characterizes the ability of the LU to meet and exceed the foreseeable and future needs of its stakeholders and that they are working according to requirements set in legislation (SAR section 1.3. p. 15). LU also has developed their own Quality Management System Manual (sent as additional document as link to the manual in SAR, page 17 is not working). The manual in detail describes the information about LU QA system, the QA standards and the internal control system. The development strategy for the study field is mapped within a 6 year time frame in accordance with the values set by the QA manual (Annex of II - Description of the Study Field - 2.1. Management of the Study Field, Development plan of the Health Care study direction for 2022-2027.docx and QA manual p. 31). During the onsite meeting with the study field director (11.08.2022) he described his role as strategic. He was very knowledgeable, a pleasure to interact with and could answer most of the expert questions, but more from the perspective of his study programme.

1.2.2. LU has set and described study programme development processes in accordance to Regulations of Study Programmes and Continuing Education programmes (https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_LV/3._STUDIJU_UN_ZINATNES_PROCESU_REGLAMENTEJOSIE_DOKUMENTI/Latvijas_Universitates_Studiju_programmu_un_talakizglitibas_programmu_nolikums.pdf). Regarding analysis of the study programmes, head of the study field together with study programme directors annually are preparing self-assessment report of the study field. These reports are approved at each faculty council and submitted to the academic department for evaluation and data collection. To decrease bureaucratic workload these reports are

required to be short and precise, this helps to better monitor changes, improvements and problems in each study programme. Also, these reports are used in creation of SAR for accreditation purposes. This information was provided by the head of the Academic department. Information provided in these reports helps to track development and implementation of study field improvement plan (SAR section 2.2.4. p. 65.) Also, the university gathers, stores and analyzes data on student, graduate and employer surveys (Annex II - Description of the Study Field - 2.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System, Survay_results_ENG (2).zip) These processes also are supported in the LU QA manual. Another important aspect of feedback from the study process is derived from student overall achievements during each study course and study programme as whole. During the site visit and interviews with students and academic staff members experts found out that university do not practice second marking or team-based approach for developing and delivering courses and assessments as LU strives for academic freedom. Experts feel that the university could further improve student experience and the approach to how students are evaluated, for example, introduce double grading of 5-10% for each submission, especially in the new programmes where staff might have less academic experience. This is an achievable task taking into account the amount of involved academic staff members into the study process. This will ensure that marking of students is even more objective and complies with the best standards, especially during the practical assessments where standard setting is very important. That such practice would be advantageous became evident during the on site visit when interacting with one of the SP Dentistry staff members (SP Dentistry has been adapted from the University of Tromso so the programme was not developed from a scratch and had some cornerstones already, however, the understanding of why double marking and standard setting is important is beneficial. It is not sufficient to just say that marking standards were developed based on international guidelines). Overall feedback to students is provided by internal LU IT systems based on previous student survey results. Academic staff members during the interviews confirmed that regarding significant changes in the study course they are informing students at the first lecture. Such an approach is logical and efficient. Regarding feedback to the employers they usually are looking at how well students are prepared to start work in the relevant industry and receive such feedback also from final thesis defense. Graduates could not confirm a unified approach on how they receive feedback about the study programme, but could name some examples that they have provided input on what should be changed. Regarding joint study programme Nutrition Science (45722) three universities - Riga Stradins university, Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies and LU have created a unified approach to how they review and develop this particular study programme. For example All HEI involved have agreed on how they survey students creating unified survey after each study semester. The technical support for this is also ensured by LU systems. Programme has a Council where all stakeholders are involved, in this Council all issues raised from students, academic staff members, partner institutions are discussed, and student comments from surveys are reviewed and in form as feedback provided back. During the site visit academic staff members mentioned that this is the first joint study programme in Latvia and LU together with the partner institutions has a long history on how to develop such a programme. From each partner the best study courses that are specific to each university are provided to ensure high study quality - students also confirmed such an approach during the onsite visit. For example, Riga Stradins University provides medical background, Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies provide input on food chemistry, biochemistry and toxicology and LU provides basic knowledge to base all other study courses.

1.2.3. The university has developed a procedure for submission of student complaints and suggestions. This procedure “Procedure for Submission and Review of Student Proposals and Complaints” (see Order No. 1/21 of 18 February 2002) is publicly available : https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_LV/3._STUDIJU_UN_ZINATNES_PROCESU_REGLAMENTEJOSIE_DOKUMENTI/6_STUDJO_1.PDF. Unfortunately this document

has not been revised since 2002 and this casts doubts about importance and actual possibility for students to write complaints and proposals. Additionally, this regulation does not support the opportunity to write anonymous complaints, if the writer does not fill in contact information the recipient has the right to decline the complaint without evaluation. University has to revise this policy and also include different communication opportunities via student email, LUIS system, for example. During the site interviews students did know about the possibility of writing complaints, but no one could confirm that they have used this procedure. They also said that students have the possibility to raise and resolve issues through student council representatives in appropriate decision making bodies. Also “Procedure for Organizing Study Course Examinations at the University of Latvia” has been developed and implemented, which sets out the right of students to submit complaints about the procedural or assessment procedures. Regardless of the content of the complaint, the university QA system requires that every complaint has to be registered and is included in annual reports from department leaders or faculty dean. Regarding suggestions for improvements students and graduates during the interviews mentioned surveys as one of tools how to write suggestions. These surveys are carried out after finishing each study course and analyzed by respective staff members that implemented the study course. Staff members demonstrated that they can provide feedback from these surveys to students, for example, within the moodle system. During the on-site visit the study field director was able to explain the hierarchy of student complaint procedure, which in more serious cases can be escalated to the Dean of the faculty, however, does not provide any anonymity to the students. From all the on-site meeting with the HEI administration (HEIA) staff, students and graduates alike, it was clear that study programmes in the study field Health Care prefer to deal with the complaints, suggestions and problems rapidly and with a personal communication, which may be applicable in some cases (e.g. problems with lecture materials, lecture that has not started on time), however, cannot always be used in others, more serious ones (e.g. problems with a staff member, program director, head of department etc.). Therefore, as mentioned above, a more robust mechanism that provides students’ anonymity should be considered.

1.2.4. LU has created data collection mechanism, this mechanism is efficient and collects different types of data, for example: data regarding new applicants and matriculated students (each semester), calculates and collects data for student weighted average marks (each semester) to track acquisition of new skills, plagiarism cases (each year), surveys for 1-st year students about their satisfaction with studies (each year), survey for students who decide to leave studies to determine main drop out reasons etc. such surveys are usually collected at least annually to track certain progress. (SAR page 56.). These surveys, information collection tools from internal systems, help to maintain quality assurance in the university and provide an information base for improvements in different dimensions of the university. The feedback after analysis of self evaluation is done, is given to the teaching staff. For example, the Radiology programme director indicated that if there are more serious issues they also can invite association representatives to discuss problems raised in the self evaluation. Feedback to the students is provided through different channels, for example - at the beginning of each study course, in written way in the Moodle system. Also, the study programme council is working and discussing the analysis from the Academic department. This system is efficient and helps to track study programme development progress and compare it throughout the years. Another example during the interviews was given where during the student orientation day graduates of the specific programme are invited to give an informal lecture about the industry and study process to the new students. Not all employers could confirm that they are involved in surveying of study programmes but they could name examples how they have influenced or helped to improve study programme, usually via study programme directors. It could be beneficial to create simple procedures to track and recon what changes the employers have suggested, for example using an online system similar to Moodle or LUIS or give

specific employers access to the existing systems for surveys. Similar situation can be observed among graduates - the most active students usually are the most active graduates who provide input on how to improve study programme or become lecturers themselves and implement some changes.

1.2.5. Section of study programmes in the Webpage of University of Latvia (https://www.lu.lv/en/admission/study-programmes/) is the main information dissemination platform for potential student applicants. It includes information about each study programme level in each faculty in both - Latvian and English languages (Courses (lu.lv)). There is information also about admission and information provided in the website does not contradict information provided in e-platform or SAR. There is even information for specific requirements for international students divided by different countries (https://www.lu.lv/en/admission/for-international-students/degree/country-specific-requirements/).

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

The QA system is functioning well enough. There are clear guidelines stipulated in the QA manual on each and every requirement at every level of the QA system. However, the student suggestions/complaint mechanism (the online form) is outdated and should be updated, providing the students with more opportunities to provide anonymous feedback when and as needed, not only at the end of every module/semester. A more structured way that would be easier to be monitored on how to gather feedback from the employers and graduates could be implemented. Also, university should consider introducing a more team-based approach when developing and delivering courses and assessments, especially when new programmes are first delivered as this will enhance student experience and will ensure objectivity.

Strengths:
1. A university-wide functioning QA system, in which everyone at the university is involved either as an individual or a structural unit.

Weaknesses:
1. An outdated suggestions form (last update: 2002) and the limited availability for students to raise anonymous complaints cast doubt on how often documents are revised.
2. LU strives for academic freedom and the main principle where courses and assessments are mainly developed and delivered by one person. A more team based approach and second/double marking (select amount of submissions, e.g. 5-10%) should be considered, especially when new programmes are being delivered.
3. With the current set up of QA it is hard to track which stakeholder has suggested certain changes in each specific study course or study programme.

Assessment of the requirement [1]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

All criteria are fully compliant, LU is ensuring continuous development and improvement of study field and study programmes based on data obtained and analyzed from all stakeholders.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

There are different procedures available publicly to ensure different aspects of Quality assurance system, additionally LU also has created QA assurance handbook which contains guidelines and procedures for writing self-evaluations, collecting and analyzing different data inputs.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Establishment and internal approval of study programmes are stipulated in the “Regulations of the University of Latvia on Study Programmes and
Continuing Education Programmes” UL Senate Decision No 102 of 24.04.2017 (https://www.ppmf.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/lu_portal/projekti/ppmf/Studijas/Nolikumi/LU_studiju_programmu_un_talakizglitibas_programmu_nolikums.pdf). Study programme supervision is regulated by "Procedure for Preparation of Annual Reports on the UL Study Fields" UL Order No.1/290 of 14.07.2020. and can be found in universities home page under document section (https://www.lu.lv/par-mums/dokumenti/).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Information about evaluation procedure, learning outcomes is provided in study course descriptions and in the Procedure for the Organization of Examinations of Study Courses at the University of Latvia nr_211_parbaudijumu_organizesana_eng.pdf (lu.lv). LU also collects information about average weighted marks of students that allows to track overall performance of students. Ethical norms and academic conduct is stipulated and ensured by Academic Arbitration Court and Academic Ethics Committee (Quality Management System Manual, Section 3.2., Sub-section 2.1).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The principles of personnel management at the University of Latvia in the areas of personnel selection, labour relations, motivation system and personnel development are defined in (https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_LV/2._POLITIKAS/Latvijas_Universitates_Personala_vadibas_politika.pdf). Information also confirmed from academic staff members during the interviews.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The data is collected in the LUIS information system and analyzed within the framework of course delivery (usually end of module/semester when students receive their grades and provide their feedback via surveys). Graduates (meetings on-site) are invited to fill in a graduate survey after the completion of the programme, as well as several years later. Procedure for the

Organization of Regular Surveys to Evaluate the Study
Process at the University of Latvia (UL Order No.1/334 of 23.08.2016, SAR Table 1.4.5. page 19). Employers could not confirm a unified approach regarding surveying, but named examples how they have improved study programmes. This issue is raised in section 1.2.4. and is not significant enough to lower evaluation as partially compliant.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The strategy of the study field is planned in a time frame of 6 years. There are concise annual self-assessment reports. There are internal grants (e.g. (University of Latvia Study Quality Improvement Fund) to promote quality and growth (SAR, Table 1.4.6. page 20).

1.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field

Analysis

1.3.1. The system of LU for financing the study field and the corresponding study programmes are based on the Law on Higher Education Institutions, 12.12.2006 Regulations No. 994 “Procedures for Financing Higher Education Institutions and Colleges from the State Budget”, Cabinet of Ministers 05.07.2016. to Regulation No. 445 “Regulations on Teachers' Remuneration” and other external and internal regulatory enactments (SAR, p. 68).
The funding of the study field Health Care comes from budget resources allocated by the Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia and student tuition fees for studies.
The amount of state budget funding for a particular academic year is determined in accordance with the agreement between the Ministry of Education and Science and the LU. The amount of funding is affected by:
- the number of study places financed from the state budget in the study programme;
- base costs of the study place in the given year;
- level of the study programme;
- cost ratio for the thematic area of education (SAR, p. 69).
Tuition fees for each programme at the LU are determined annually based on the planned cost of the study place (which includes all projected costs – remuneration of teaching staff, material and technical support, infrastructure maintenance and administration costs), tuition fees offered by other universities. The tuition fee for a specific student for each academic year is determined for the entire study period (SAR, p.69).
Both the state budget funding and tuition fees are summarized in the total budget of the LU for the specific financial year. The budget of the University of Latvia is formed in accordance with the general principles of budgeting and the budget procedure established for each year.
The costs of the study field, as well as the costs of each study program are shown in the tables 2.3.1.1; 2.3.1.2; 2.3.1.3; 2.3.1.5 in the self assessment report (SAR).
Based on the projected budget and the number of paid students and the expected income, the faculty, in cooperation with the Finance and Accounting Department of the LU, draws up the budget for the specific financial year. At the beginning of the year, the Chancellor of the LU submits the total budget of the LU for approval to the Finance and Budget Commission and for approval to the Senate of the LU (SAR, p.74).
After approving the budget for the current year, the faculties act within the framework of their approved budget. The dean and executive director of the faculty are responsible for the rational use of financial resources, who perform operational financial management, monitor the compliance of actual income and expenses with the planned ones and, if necessary, make adjustments in the financial activities of the faculty or department (SAR, p.74).

The expert commission believes that the allocation of the budget is well understood and transparent, based on the regulations of the Latvian state and internal regulatory acts of the LU.
Research activity at the LU study field Health Care is financed from several sources: LU, as the basic and operational funding allocated to the scientific institution, contract research attracted by the faculty, state research program funds, as well as the faculty's own income and state grants. Research funding in the study field Health Care at LU is stimulating and regulated by regulatory documents.
Research funding at the LU is granted in accordance with 12.11.2013. Cabinet Regulation No. 1316 "Procedures for Calculating and Granting Basic Funding to Scientific Institutions", while the internal regulatory enactments of the LU determine the amount of funding for each structural unit; order no. 1-4 / 235 "On the Use of the Funding and Performance Funding of a Scientific Institution Granted at the University of Latvia for 2021". Also, the research staff of the faculty can apply for centralized support in accordance with 20.04.2018. order no. 1/148 "On Approval of the Procedure for Supporting the Development of Scientific Activity at the University of Latvia", in accordance with this procedure, support may be received for: participation in international events, publication of scientific articles, preparation of international project applications, organization of scientific events at the LU. In order to facilitate the preparation of international project applications, 29.11.2019. LU order no. 1/435 "On approval of the use of unit costs", which provides additional funding for the development of international project applications (SAR, p.75).
The expert commission considers that scientific funding, which comes from various sources, is conducive to scientific activity and is transparently and comprehensively distributed.
The expert commission highly appreciates the financing of student self-government. Students' self-government is financed from the centralized funds of the LU in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions, while the faculty provides self-government with the necessary premises (infrastructure) (SAR, p.75).

1.3.2. The infrastructure and material and technical support required for the implementation of the existing study programmes in the study field Health Care envisages the involvement of a wide range of LU faculty premises and modern equipped laboratories, using the material and technical base, sports premises, as well as the lease of premises outside the LU, like in study programme “Medicine” and “Nursing” in P. Stradins University clinical hospital. The study process in the study field Health Care mainly takes place in the House of Nature and the House of Science. The buildings are accessible to people with disabilities – the building has several elevators, appropriate sanitary facilities. The first two floors of the House of Nature are available to students 24 hours a day (SAR, p.76).
The expert commission thinks that classrooms, auditoriums, laboratories, libraries and other spaces necessary for learning are well equipped with modern digital technologies and hardware, according to the learning profile and are easy to use. Rest areas and self-study areas and modules are equipped with wireless Internet, comfortable, ergonomic furniture and promote high-quality self-study of students. At the present moment and with the current number of students, the material and technical base and facilities are sufficient and well equipped to implement training programs in the study field Health Care.

1.3.3. Library of the LU is included in the Register of Libraries of the Ministry of Culture (BLB1000); on 22 June 2017, it received a library accreditation certificate and was repeatedly granted the status of the State significance library for five years (SAR, p.78).
The Library of Natural Sciences and the Library of the House of Science is available for the LU staff - students, academic, scientific and general personnel – 7 days a week, 24 a day. In the Library of Natural Sciences, the LU staff has the opportunity to use the following services all day: open-access collection, a self-service device for receiving and handing in books or extending the use period, as

well as access to computers and mobile device chargers. By acquiring copying cards in the Library of Natural Sciences, the user can use the copying device at any time of the day. In the Library of the House of Science, the staff of the LU has 24-hour access: an open-access collection, two self-service devices for issuing and handing-in of books, the extension of the term of use, as well as a selfservice wall for the use of laptops (SAR, p.78). The collection of the LU Library is created in accordance with the study and research fields of the University, requirements of study programmes, thus providing information for all study levels of the LU – bachelor's, master's, doctoral, as well as scientific research areas. When replenishing the collection with information resources, the purchase of e-resources has been set as a priority (SAR. p 81). In 2020, there are 1.7 million information resources available for the users of the Library. In accordance with the LU study and research infrastructure, the collection of the LU Library is located in 8 sectoral libraries and the Repository. In SAR table 2.3.3.1 summarizes information on the number of printed publications available at the LU Library in the study programmes in the study field Health Care.
In 2020, the University of Latvia subscribed to 34 e-resource platforms (with e-books, e-journals, information resources, tools, multimedia, statistics, as well as mixed-format databases), of which 13 are directly intended for Health care programs. In these platforms, there are 17 592 full-text e-journals (including individually subscribed), 2.5 million fulltext global dissertations and master's theses, 4 statistical databases, 2 research tools, 9 information databases, and 2 research platforms. There are 122 tested open access databases with multi-format materials available at LU. Every year, the Library offers an average of 110 new electronic resources. In total as of 01.01.2020, the LU Library has purchased 1328 e-books, and there are approximately 160 000 e-books available in the subscribed ProQuest Ebook Academic Complete collection. At the same time, the LU Library regularly offers its users trial access to various databases. Within the scope of granted co-funding, the number of databases is evaluated and the usability of subscribed databases is analyzed (SAR, p.83).
The commission of experts states that the LU library in the House of Nature and the House of Science is in good premises, well equipped with technological devices, computers that provide quick access to many internet databases, which are necessary for students and employees in teaching and scientific work. Access to library funds and Internet databases is extensive and adequate to the needs of students and staff. Based on the SAR report (pages 77-82), the library resources are updated and supplemented every year. Acquisition of new resources to the collection is carried out in accordance with the centrally allocated funding of the LU, which is approved annually by the order of the LU (SAR, p. 81).

1.3.4. The expert commissions got acquainted with the Moodle environment used in the e-learning environment within the Health Care study field. All study courses are active in this E-University environment, including lecture materials, descriptions of laboratory and practical works, final evaluations of works, seminars, tests and courses, as well as various additional materials. The improvement of these courses is considered effective and important for the development of courses in the field of studies. Increasingly, e-tutorials are used to test students' knowledge (multiple-choice tests, open-ended questions, essays, correspondence questions, orientation in pictures and diagrams, etc.). The e-learning study environment Moodle is easy to understand and use for both students and teaching staff. Therefore, it can also be used in distance learning, as it happened during the Covid pandemic.

1.3.5. At the University of Latvia, there are three groups of teaching staff: teaching staff that work in elected academic positions, teaching staff that work as substitutes of elected academic positions (acting positions and guest lecturers), as well as lecturers. In regards to elected academic positions, as well as acting positions, the selection and hiring take place in accordance with the Regulation regarding academic and administrative positions at the LU. In accordance with the Regulations,

there are the following academic positions at the University of Latvia: professor, associate professor, assistant professor, leading researcher, lecturer, researcher, assistant, scientific assistant (SAR, p.93).
The selection of candidates for each position is described in SAR 2.3.5 and is regulated based on legislation of Latvia state and university regulatory documents. The expert committee, after familiarizing itself with SAR and meeting with the employees of the study field Health Care, recognizes that the selection of candidates is carried out on the basis of regulatory documents, which allow to ensure the direction of the study field Health Care with highly qualified, competent and motivated teaching staff and scientific forces.
In the Development Strategy of the LU, one of the main aspects in the direction of development "Development of Human Resources" is the advancement of the LU academic staff professional improvement system. The LU is aware of how the role of the docent changes, which is important to ensure the quality of studies in order to promote the acquisition of students' knowledge, skills and competences, therefore a unified professional development system of the LU academic staff is implemented in all LU in accordance with the LU Strategy, by amending internal regulations and offering the academic staff professional development opportunities. Professional development of the LU academic staff is carried out in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia Regulation No. 662 of 11.09.2018 "Regulations Regarding the Education and Professional Qualifications Required for Pedagogues and the Procedure for the Improvement of the Professional Competence of Pedagogues, in which the Paragraph 16 determines that: "Pedagogues of higher education institutions and colleges must complete professional development programmes on innovations in the higher education system, higher education didactics or educational work management in the amount of 160 academic hours (including at least 60 contact hours) by the end of the term of election). Professional development may include international mobility and participation in conferences and seminars, corresponding to the aim of professional development, which is certified by submitted documents.", as well as the Cabinet of Ministers 25.02.2021. Regulation No. 129 "Procedure for Evaluation of the Scientific and Pedagogical Qualification or Artistic Creativity of a Candidate for the position of Professor or Associate Professor and Professor or Associate Professor in Position". The qualification requirements and tasks of the academic staff of the LU are included in the regulations on academic and administrative positions at the LU, in turn, the quality/ performance of the work of the academic staff of the LU is assessed in connection with the LU Academic Remuneration Regulations (Decision No. 14 of the Senate of the LU of 30.05.2016) and the Regulations on Remuneration of Research Staff of the LU (Decision No. 71 of the Senate of the LU of 27.01.2020) (SAR. p.95).
The lecturers working in the study programs of study field Health care are elected to academic positions in accordance with the legislation of the Cabinet of Ministers and LU, and are conducive to developing an academic career. The election process is in accordance with the existing legislation in the country.

1.3.6. The evaluation of academic staff growth promotion (didactic skill improvement) and professional development and defended doctoral dissertations of the teaching staff of the study field Health Care in the reporting period is reflected in section 2.3.6 of the SAR.
During the meetings with the employees of the study field Health Care, the expert commission established that the LU is doing extensive work in the further training of its employees, improving knowledge and stimulating scientific work, attracting its own funds and European Union funds, however, insufficient students and employees take advantage of various opportunities of exchange programs (like ERASMUS) for international further education.

1.3.7. Based on SAR, several meetings with staff expert commissions think the academic, research and administrative workload of teaching staff is balanced. In the programs of the study field Health

care, the teaching staff is sufficient in terms of number and highly qualified to realize the requirements of the programs. With the resources of their lecturers, the departments of the LU implement training in many study programs, for example, anatomy, physiology is included in the program of medicine, dentistry, nursing, according to the requirements of the programs. It promotes efficient and professional use of personnel.

1.3.8. The LU students have access to academic support, career development support and psychological support. The academic support for students regarding academic matters is provided centrally by the LU Student service department and responsible persons at the faculties: director of the study programme, curator, mentor, study course docents, and the Student Council and student councils of faculties (SAR, p.104).
Examples of main tasks of student support structural units/staff that have to be done are shown in the SAR table 2.3.8.1. The expert commission thinks that the academic support provided to students is sufficient and well organized.
Regarding career development support which is provided by the Career Center of the LU Student Service in cooperation with the faculties, there are numerous services to the students, like individual consultations on the choice of further studies and profession, development of career plan, support in transition between various education levels and from education to labor market; seminars for the development of career planning skills ("Improvement of Career Planning and Development Skills", "My First Job Interview", "Stress Management", etc); Internet resource – website of the Career Centre (information is available in Latvian and English) https://www.karjera.lu.lv/ and https://www.karjera.lu.lv/eng/ provides up-to-date information on career planning matters, information on professions and labor market; Electronic resource "E-karjera" https://ekarjera.lu.lv/lv/login provides the opportunity for students to find apprenticeship placements and work in a short time by placing their personal CV in the database, and for employers to find employees by placing information on vacancies in the company in the database (SAR. p105).
Psychological support is provided by the Department of Student Services. Psychologist-consultant provides psychological support to students in solving any personal and study problems that arise during their studies (relationship problems, conflict resolution, emotional difficulties). The psychologist provides individual consultations and consultations by phone (SAR, p.106).
There is wide support for foreign students to integrate into society and university life.
In addition to the academic, psychological and career development support, the financial support that can be obtained during studies is also very important. Students of the study field have access to various financial support, for example, from scholarships granted from state funds, scholarships of patrons or local governments (information on patron and local government scholarships, and scholarship recipients is available at www.fonds.lv/en/) (SAR, p.106).
The expert commission states that LU does a lot to support students in various forms and improves this support according to the requirements of students.

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

The resources and proper distribution of them ensure the successful implementation and development of the study field Health Care. The material and technical base of the LU is modern and well equipped and meets all the requirements to implement all study programs in the study field Health Care. Staff are highly qualified and motivated to do high quality teaching and scientific work.
The good and modernly equipped classrooms and auditoriums, the good library with available books and internet databases, comprehensive support from the LU student service and administration provide students with a good and fruitful environment for studies and research work.

Strengths:

1. Modern, well equipped premises for studying.
2. Highly qualified, motivated employees.
3. Well-developed programs for the attraction, motivation, further education and career development of new employees.
4. Highly developed and implemented IT solutions for the realization of the teaching, research and scientific processes.

Weaknesses:
1. Only several students and employees have been involved in international education and science exchange programs from the funds of the European Union or other funds.

1.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation

Analysis

1.4.1. The directions of scientific research of the Health Care study field are focused on the fields and sub-sectors of basic medical sciences, including pharmaceuticals, clinical medicine, health and sports sciences and medical biotechnology. The LU research programme for 2015-2020 determined clearly defined research goals in the field of medicine and health sciences. They are based on the identification of existing trends in Latvian medicine and health science sectors, European Union Innovation Index 2015 insights and identification of global research trends and innovations. The research programme in the field of medicine and health sciences is subject to the LU Scientific Activity Development Strategy 2015-2020, which provides the overall strategic framework and outlines the vision to develop the LU as a national university of sciences.
The research programme in medicine and health sciences focuses on three areas (SAR, p. 116):
a. fundamental research – research in basic medical sciences, including pharmacy;
b. research representing the public interest – research in clinical medicine, health and sports sciences (disease control and prevention, public health, health care organization, management and policy development);
c. applied research work, helping to link applied research with innovation – research in the field of development of new medicinal substances and forms, as well as clinical research in the development and approbation of new treatment and diagnostic methods and tools.
The LU has clearly defined objectives, key performance indicators and values. Objectives in the Health Care study field are distributed in accordance with the four future development directions determined by the LU, one of the directions is the relevance of research to the needs of the economy and the transfer of knowledge. Within the development direction “Research to the Needs of the Economy and the Transfer of Knowledge”, the LU has set the objectives to increase the potential and revenue from knowledge transfer and improve the understanding of the society on scientific achievements.
As a provider of study programmes in the Health Care study field, the LU is a strong national player and the main investor of human capital in medicine and health sciences in Latvia, with very good international recognition and strong cooperation with the main institutions abroad and partners in several significant international projects (SAR, 2.4.3. page 119), for example, implementation of the Latvian-Ukrainian project "Optimization of the Algorithm for Determining the Biochemical Characteristics of Tumor Progression and Treatment Efficiency with Biosensors" (Science Technology Programme of the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) of Latvia and Ukraine) No FP-20322-ZF-N-840, in the period of 2015-2018 or during the same time period the Horizon 2020 project “Towards the elimination of iodine deficiency and preventable thyroid-related diseases in Europe - Euthyroid” No A-20080N-ZF-N-840 and No A-20080-ZF-N-840 was implemented. The LU occupies a respected place in the international scientific community and is considered a respected and recognized center of competence, with national research centers focusing on cardiology,

pharmacology, innovative medical technologies, regenerative medicine and biobank centers (SAR, p. 107).
Significance of the doctoral study programme (DSP) Medicine and Pharmacy is reflected by the significantly (36%) increased number (from 67 publications in 2013 to 105 in 2020) of the scientific publications in the DSP Medicine and Pharmacy. During the reporting year, the number of projects in the DSP Medicine and Pharmacy has also increased (SAR, p. 109, Table 2.4.1.1).
Work experience of the students in some cases gives the possibility and the impulse to develop the master theses on the basis of work in the industry, it was confirmed during the meeting with HEI management. Most of the academic master study programme students are already involved in the labor market, so they have the opportunity to develop theses on the basis of practical experience, and surely, it complies with the industry interests. Multidisciplinarity in studies and research, as well as efficient collaboration with the industry, were recognized as the main strengths of the Health Care study field.

1.4.2. Scientific research skills are integrated in learning outcomes of the study programmes of all levels. The degree of integration depends on the level of the study programme and specific requirements of the European Qualification Framework (EQF). For example, the content of the professional bachelor study programme (PBSP) Nursing complies with level 6 of EQF, indicating the learning outcomes should develop the advanced skills, ability to demonstrate mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialized field of work or study. There is also a requirement of the Educational standard (SAR, Annex 10. Compliance of PBSP Nursing with the state education standard) for the learning outcomes “The content of bachelor study programmes ensures that the results of a wide-ranging study are achieved on a scientific basis’’. This requirement is fulfilled with Competence No 8 in PBSP Nursing (SAR, Annex 8. Nursing Study Programme Mapping Study Courses): “The student uses research methodology, norms of professional ethics and legal liability in implementing evidence-based care, provides emergency medical care to individuals of all ages in critical and emergency situations, uses critical thinking in the process of obtaining and interpreting information in order to find out the learning needs of an individual, to create, implement and evaluate the educational plan’’. This competence is being developed by the study subjects Methodology of Research in Nursing, Public health and medical statistics.
The content of academic master study programme (AMSP) Nurse studies ensures the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for the performance of professional activities in accordance with the required knowledge, skills and competencies of level 7 of the Latvian Framework for Classification of Education (Cabinet Regulation No. 512 of 26.08.2014, Paragraph 21). Learning outcomes of the AMSP Nurse studies comply with the national academic education standard (SAR, Annex 10. Compliance of AMSP Nursing with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 240 of 13 May 2014), integrating more deep knowledge (understand the importance of research in nursing and health care; characterize the research methods and the organization of the research work), skills (develop and conduct scientific research in accordance with the objectives set) and competencies (analyze research findings based on nursing practice and draw conclusions) (SAR, p. 586) which address the scientific research integration in the study process.
Upon completion of the DSP Medicine and Pharmacy (SAR, Annex 8. Mapping of DSP Medicine and Pharmacy study courses), the graduates must be able to demonstrate the highest level of knowledge (understands the latest scientific theories and knowledge in the fields related to medicine and health sciences; understands modern research methodologies and techniques; focuses on interdisciplinary opportunities), skills (is able to independently evaluate and choose appropriate methods for scientific research; is able to carry out significant original research and summarize the results in internationally cited publications) and complex competences (scientific research is carried out in accordance with ethical standards; carry out independent, critical analysis,

synthesis and evaluation that will address important research or innovation challenges in medicine and health sciences) that comply with level 8 of the EQF. While implementing PHERSP, the integration of the scientific research skills in the learning outcomes is obvious in the examples of the close cooperation with Riga East University Hospital (SAR, 2.4.2., page 116), where PHERSP is being implemented. Studying in the clinical environment provides a unique possibility to use the scientific evidence-based outcomes, for example the biobank for further research and studies.
Students confirmed during the meetings, they felt being involved in the scientific activities by preparing bachelor, master or doctoral theses, or by participating in the projects, implemented by the LU and partner institutions. For example (SAR, p. 116), the Department of Pharmacology attracts and actively involves students in the projects (for example, the project EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanism funding, “Enhancing human capital and knowledge in health science by institutional cooperation and mobility between the LU and three Norwegian universities”, EEA/NFI/S/2015/019.) and implements student mobility to partner institutions such as the University of Oslo. During the meetings, the teachers of numerous study programmes explained the ways how they integrate the outcomes of the scientific research in the study programmes: (1) by recommending the newest scientific publications; (2) by updating teaching material according to the latest scientific findings (in some cases the outcomes of the scientific research performed by the academic staff members); (3) by encouraging the students to use the trustful scientific publications databases for their studies on the daily basis. The majority of the students during the onsite visit meetings confirmed they have all the possibilities to get involved in the scientific activities and use the possibilities.
Integration of many fields of sciences (interdisciplinarity) was mentioned as the main strength by the director of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics, since 5 faculties and 3 research institutes are involved into implementation of the programme. Teaching staff of the PBSP Nursing and AMSP Nurse studies also demonstrated a very progressive approach towards interprofessional teaching, combining education of different specializations, however many of the teachers (who participated in the meetings) had no nursing / nursing researcher background. The Director of the study programme Pharmacy emphasized the strength of the study programme - research facilities (used in the study process) can carry out different types of research activities and follow up latest trends in scientific research. The teaching staff of the study programmes ABSP Optometry and PMSP Clinical Optometry confirmed that the teachers are applying the scientific research results into the study courses on a regular basis. They develop new outcomes as the result of the project implementation and integrate them in their study subjects. Very common practice is to recommend the students the latest scientific sources on e-learning platforms, making sure they are up to date with the newest scientific data. Teachers are supported to participate in the scientific conferences (2 conferences per year), there is a certain procedure at the University regulating the ways of participating in the scientific events, however, the teachers would be pleased to get more support from the LU for open access publications (fees).

1.4.3. International cooperation in the field of scientific research within Health Care study field and the relevant study programmes is ensured by the mechanisms (SAR, p. 119):
a. Academic staff members of the majority of the study programmes, as they confirmed during the meetings, are involved in the international scientific research projects, which comply with the currently relevant trends in the world in the Health Care study field, including: "open science" for the general public, which includes the concept of knowledge transfer, access to scientific information, and the pursuit of "open science for open innovation"; results-oriented environment; interdisciplinary, inter-institutional, and international cooperation; open access to research infrastructures.
b. By planning the certain activities (8 activities are planned, it proves that international cooperation is purposefully developed) to be implemented at the LU, including in the Health Care study field, aiming to increase international competitiveness and successfully take part in the European Union

(EU) research and innovation support programmes and technology initiatives, in accordance with the Development Strategy. The activities include creation of an Institutional International Research Programmes Contact Point, attracting financial resources to ensure the operation of the International Research Programmes Contact Point, expansion of international cooperation networks, including (membership in international research cooperation organizations, including European Network for Avant-Garde and Modernism Studies), the motivation of staff and establishment of a support system for participation in EU research and innovation support programmes, active participation in (a) calls for proposals under EU research and innovation support programmes, including Horizon 2020 sub-programmes, participation in various support events, including events organized by the National Contact Point, MES, Contact Point of the LU, creation of profiles in EU information databases on priority groups for research areas, strengthening research capacity.
In the faculty of Biology there is the intent to increase the number of international cooperation in the research area (Meeting with the HEI Management). The strengths of the study field identified by the SAR preparation group members - interrelations among life, social, humanitarian sciences, it makes an extraordinary ground for developing healthcare field research. Students are involved in research projects at national level and international level. There are many international partners. Director of the PBSP Nursing mentioned there is a current ongoing cooperation with the Nursing association, Poland, Lithuania (Vilnius University), and Finland (Tampere University).

1.4.4. The teaching staff of the Health Care study field is being involved in the scientific research by (SAR, p. 122; SAR, Annex List of publications in the field of study Health Care) implementing the development Strategy of the LU, which includes a human resources development plan and special attention is paid to the renewal and succession of academic staff. The LU takes the following measures to renew the academic staff and ensure succession: 1) development and implementation of criteria for the gradual renewal of existing academic and scientific staff; 2) development and implementation of a communication plan on the criteria for the gradual renewal of the academic staff of the LU; 3) creation of a succession system for academic and scientific staff; 4) development of criteria for the assessment of the risks of renewal and succession of academic staff; 5) identification of specific academic positions to ensure succession; 6) identification of candidates for the succession of the academic staff, taking into account the career development plans and the results of the performance evaluation.
Secondly, the personnel management policy of the LU plays an important role in the research staff development strategy; the aim of the policy is to ensure a modern and effective practice of solving personnel management issues in the organization in accordance with the strategy, vision, mission, and values of the LU. The personnel policy is focused on the sustainable development of the LU, which means the career development of every member of the LU family so that any member of the LU staff can implement the vision of the University of Latvia – to be one of the leading universities in the Baltic region and a recognized European and global research and innovation centre.
Thirdly, the development strategy of academic and research staff is inextricably linked to a number of internal and external regulations. The LU observes and applies the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia and the Regulations on academic and administrative positions at the LU with regard to the determination of academic, scientific, and administrative positions, qualification requirements, tasks, election procedures and approval.
In the Health Care study field, 14 study programmes are implemented. Consequently, the majority of lecturers are involved in the provision of the study process - teaching, administration. Most lecturers are also involved in scientific work. In parallel with the study process, lecturers work in science and participate in achieving project results. Each lecturer then incorporates their experience, results, methods into their study courses, thus ensuring the continuous acquisition of the latest knowledge and skills for students. The LU has a policy that associate professors and professors have to provide reports after each 2 years regarding the research activities performed.

This is mobilizing more staff members, not just to get re-elected after each 6 years. This 2 year period makes staff members more agile (Meeting with the Management of HEI). Academic staff is being supported for being successful to get external funding for research / research groups (Meeting with the Management of HEI). Approximately 4-5 years ago a project support unit was created to help with grant applications. The teaching staff are having the possibility to attend the courses for language training, business training, digitalization and IT skill development for staff. The teaching staff of the ABSP Pharmacy and AMSP Pharmacy stated that the LU provides many courses to raise academic teaching quality, for paper writing, leadership courses, grant application writing courses. They have to set short and long term goals for their career. The teachers (meeting with the teaching staff of the AMSP Nutrition Science, Epidemiology and statistics, AMSP Sports Science, PBSP Radiography) confirm they are actively involved in the scientific activity, they are having different targets (goals) set for the results, however some of them they could not explain in a detailed way about the planning process.

1.4.5. Participation of the students in scientific research and creative activity is an integral part of the study process (SAR, p. 124). Under the guidance of lecturers in the Health Care study field, the students develop bachelor's, master's theses, diploma works or doctoral dissertations that are often part of research projects; the works are then published in journals or presented at international conferences. Both students and graduates have the opportunity to present the results of the research at the annual International Conference organized by the LU.
In order to expand knowledge and improve both research and practical skills in the specific fields, students of the Faculty of Medicine of the LU lead and participate in interest groups or scientific circles. The number of scientific groups has increased during the accreditation period and in the 2020/2021 academic year the Faculty of Medicine has 23 scientific circles. Students also have the opportunity to get involved in faculty research projects as volunteers or as paid employees (SAR, p. 124).
Also, interdisciplinary cooperation - within the framework of inter-faculty cooperation of the LU with the best specialists in the respective field. The Faculty of Biology, Faculty of Chemistry, and Faculty of Physics, Mathematics and Optometry of the LU ensure the involvement of students in research work. The active involvement of the teaching staff of the PBSP Pharmacy and AMSP Pharmacy and ABSP Optometry study programmes in research projects of Latvian and international significance gives students (SAR, p. 125, Table 2.4.5.1) the opportunity to develop research papers under the guidance of high-quality scientists, ensuring the sustainability of research.
It was mentioned by the LU management that they have certain criteria that students have to be involved in research projects. All of the staff are also researchers and bring the opportunities to the study process. However, they don't have to include a certain percent of the students, the amount is based on each specific project. Students have to do their bachelor or master theses, so this also is scientific research (especially in academic study programmes), students also are having the courses for writing research papers, grant applications, especially in master academic programmes (Meeting with the Management of LU).
Doctoral students confirm they have great support from the LU, the research is mostly based on collaboration at the national and international level. Regarding the funding, doctoral students can apply for a grant each year, 1000 EUR per month. Additional support is provided by the LU for participation in the conferences, publishing scientific papers. Doctoral students can obtain the data from the patients for the clinical research (Meeting with students of the ABSP Pharmacy and AMSP Pharmacy).
One of the criteria why the students chose LU for their studies – the LU provides the latest scientific research approaches, while other universities focus more on practical implementation (Meeting with students of the AMSP Nutrition Science, AMSP Sports Science, AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics, PBSP Radiography).

1.4.6. New solutions introduced during the reporting period (SAR, p.126):
a. The development of e-learning and the introduction of new forms for part-time or distance studies became particularly relevant during the COVID pandemic when all study programmes had to be provided remotely and new forms had to be sought. Therefore, the LU additionally trained lecturers as well as students to be able to use e-environment (Moodle) and other remote tools, such as Microsoft Teams, Microsoft Stream, etc. During the state of emergency declared by Latvia, online lectures were provided following the lectures timetable. During the online lectures, just like during the face-to-face classes, it was possible to ask questions to the lecturer, create student workgroups, discussion classes in which students actively communicated, presented their work. The e-environment contains the study materials needed by the student, as a minimum, the presentation materials of the lessons and the assessment book. Some lecturers also use the e-environment to control students' knowledge - self-tests, tests, submission of homework and feedback, as well as placement of compulsory reading materials. Every lecturer has an obligation to create and improve an e-course and, if necessary, the lecturer can receive IT assistance in developing the course, applying new forms. Moodle is also designed as a handy tool for lecturers to communicate with students or vice versa (Presentation of the Moodle during the onsite visit).
b. Unified database of students and lecturers LUIS and its daily application. This solution enables every employee and student of the LU to see the current information related to their field of activity; lecturers can also use this environment to apply for new books, circulate electronic documents, for example, when applying for business trips, vacations. For study methodologists, it is an environment in which to obtain all the necessary information for preparing statements, gathering statistics for study needs, as well as to see all current information related to students' study contracts, payments, grades, ordinances. LUIS is an environment in which the directors of study programmes can obtain various statistical data on study programme students, graduates, grades, study plans, and survey results. It is the duty of each student to complete the evaluation of the study courses at the end of each semester, respectively this evaluation and comments are seen anonymously by both the director of the study programme and the lecturer of the respective course.
c. The LU has introduced a 1st-year curator system, a mentor system that helps and supports junior students to settle into the study environment, as well as to find a helping hand and advice from senior students in solving problematic issues. Students have access to current information on the LU portal, which is constantly updated in accordance with changes in study programmes. Here a student can find all the necessary information about studies - study academic calendar, study plans, descriptions of study courses, lecture timetables.
d. The state-of-the-art technologies, mannequins, and simulators have been purchased for the implementation of practical classes, allowing students to both polish individual actions in various clinical situations in a simulated environment and to improve teamwork skills. For example, BSP Optometry and PMSP Clinical Optometry students can practice examining the “human” retina with the simulation of indirect ophthalmoscopy, carry out eye refraction assessment on artificial eye models, or, for example, second level professional higher education study programme Medicine, PBSP Nursing, and AMSP Nurse studies students have SimMan 3G patient simulator, created for high-quality simulation training, thus providing a possibility to master patient care and a variety of medical procedures. Responds to programmed clinical interventions, instructor control, and pre-programmed scenarios.
e. A foreign student's guide Electronic guide of the Faculty of Medicine has been developed; it includes information about the study process in stages that are possible during the student's university studies. A respective internal regulatory document (if applicable), infographics, links to other information resources are available in each section.
Innovations in the Health Care study field are evidenced by the nine patents obtained by associated prof. Ivanovs of the Department of Surgery and his team; 3 of these patents are international.
The innovative solutions, applied during the reported period, especially e-learning environment

introduction and development, are especially appreciated by the students (Meeting with the students of the study programmes of AMSP Nutrition Science, AMSP Sports Science, AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics, PBSP Radiography), they accept the recorded lectures as the possibility to review the learning material repeatedly during the studying period.

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

Coherence among the directions of scientific research of the study field, development goals of the LU, and the relevance for the study field and industry ensures the possibility to develop the LU as a national and internationally recognized university of sciences. The integration of scientific research skills and competencies in the study programmes of all levels is ensured (a) by the compliance of the learning outcomes with the requirements of EQF; (b) by the students‘ participation in the international projects; (c) teachers are using the outcomes of the latest scientific research to update their teaching material. International cooperation in the field of scientific research, as confirmed by the SAR material as well as witnessed during the meetings with the LU management and directors of the study programmes, is wide enough, developed systemically and complies with the scientific interests of the relevant study programmes in the Health Care study field. Teaching staff confirm they are actively involved in the scientific activities, besides inner motivation, they are motivated by efficient means, such as helping to get the funding and giving the possibility to gain the specific skills required to perform the scientific research at the relevant level. Students are sufficiently, in their opinion, involved in the scientific research, and it leads them to the wish to continue their education. Doctoral students are really engaged in the study process, therefore the academic re-growth could be sufficient. Students confirm the positive effect of the innovation applied during the reported period, it gives added value to the studies in the field of Health Care.

Strengths:
1. Multidisciplinary approach towards the integration of the latest outcomes of scientific research leads to the sufficient and effective involvement of the staff and students of the study programmes of different levels to the scientific research activities.
2. Effective international collaboration in the scientific research led to the significantly increased number of the scientific publications and projects, as well as growing scientific research competencies in the doctoral study programme of Medicine and Pharmacy.
3. Successful and purposeful application of the innovations to the study process increases students‘ satisfaction with the quality of the studies and ensures the preparedness for the states of emergency in the future.

No weaknesses identified.

Assessment of the requirement [2]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Scientific research implemented in the Health Care study field is compliant with the required level of development of scientific research in the different level Health care study programmes implemented in the LU. It is justified by the compliance of the learning outcomes with the requirements of EQF, active involvement of the teaching staff and students in the international scientific projects, implementation of the outcomes of the latest scientific research in the study process and complying with the needs of industry and society. The students of the different

study programmes confirm they are sufficiently involved in the scientific research, it leads them to get engaged in the study process and continue their studies in the doctoral study programmes.

1.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation

Analysis

1.5.1. LU cooperates with various institutions from Latvia to achieve its aim in the Health Care study field. LU collaboration with Latvian institutions is constantly being developed (meeting with Management of HEI; SAR, Annex: List of cooperation agreements in the field of study Health Care; List of LU MF cooperation agreements). LU creates the cooperation with research organizations – higher education institutions and scientific institutions include the following aspects of knowledge partnership: participation of leading researchers of scientific institutions in the supervision of qualification works and doctoral theses and promotion councils work at the LU, as well as participation in the councils of study programs or study fields of the LU, involvement of the LU leading researchers or professors in the scientific council of scientific institutions (SAR, p. 127). One of the most multi functional partners in the study field "Health Care", focused on all 14 study programmes of different levels, is the Ministry of Health (SAR, p.129) with whom LU cooperates at various levels, for example by providing key specialists in the health sector, fulfilling research orders, and participating in the development of professional standards. For example, in the development of the standard of the physician profession prof. G.Latkovskis, prof. A.Krams, assoc.prof. I.Ivanovs, assoc.prof. A.Jezupovs, in the development of the profession of general care nurse lect. D.Gulbe, lect. I.Mežiņa-Mamajeva, in the development of the profession optometrist prof. G.Krūmiņa, assoc.prof. A.Švede (SAR, p.130).

LU interaction with the public sector/society is broad and dynamic and includes open seminars, conferences, science cafés, summer schools for researchers, professional associations, health care administrators, students, patient organizations, popular science articles, interviews with leading media and specialist media experts and concrete projects that study public awareness of the importance of biomedical research.
The researchers of the study field Health Care are also involved as experts in various working groups at the ministerial level, in joint projects with state agencies and commissioned research that has a significant national impact, such as the cooperation project of the LU and the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control "Development of a public monitoring system for the quality and efficiency of health care" launched in 2017 within the framework of the LU Effective Cooperation Project programme. Project scientific supervisor: Juris Bārzdiņš, associated professor of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Latvia, Head of the MF Health Management and Informatics Centre (SAR, p.128).
LU has a partnership for a common goal, which is seen in practice as the development of joint study programs “Nutrition Science” with Riga Stradiņš University and Latvia University of Life Science and Technologies (SAR section 2.5. Annex).
Very often cooperation partners are looking among professionals in the Health Care study field, very often on a corporate and personal level, because Latvia is a small country and potential cooperation partners are often well-known in the field of professionals (meeting with study field director). Many agreements with partners from Latvia are widely available for clinical practice in University hospitals, regional hospitals, outpatient clinics, general practitioners’ praxis, and cooperation agreements with different other Latvian enterprises (SAR section 2.5. ; Annex: Cooperation and practice agreements.zip/ List of cooperation agreements in the field of study Health Care on the provision of practice places). The most recent contracts are concluded in the Sports science Master program (SAR section 2.5. Annex: Cooperation and practice agreements.zip/List of cooperation

agreements in the field of study Health Care).
Cooperation with employers takes place both by providing clinical practice places and by employers defining their actual needs (meeting with employers). Employers support modern technology in some study programs, especially in optometric study programs. Employers representatives are involved in every study program Council (Meeting with study programs directors and employers).

1.5.2. LU cooperates with international universities and scientific institutions for research organization and achievement of the goals defined in the LU Strategy.
LU international cooperation projects include the following aspects: implementation of research cooperation projects, participation in EU research and innovation support programs, and partnership on resources: providing access to higher education and research infrastructure and partnership on human resources, including attracting visiting researchers for the implementation of research and other activities to ensure (SARsection 2.5.2, page 132).
LU collaboration with international institutions is constantly being developed and increases the number of applied international projects in study programs, as well as increases the number of international projects with the coordinating role of the LU (meeting with Management of HEI).
The lecturers of the Health care branch of LU are actively involved in many international research projects corresponding to the specifics of the study programs in connection with P. Stradiņš Clinical University Hospital (additional information requested and received: Latvijas Universitātes Veselības aprūpes virziena docētāji ārvalstu pētījumos)
Many international research projects and cooperation has been established with the world's leading centers in the development of technologies and methods in the field of research, for example for such topicality as oncological research: An agreement has been concluded with the IARC - the International Agency for Research on Cancer on the international coordinating role of the University of Latvia for the population cancer prevention research GISTAR. In Latvia, most research has been carried out in the field of cost-effectiveness of cancer prevention, in cooperation with internationally leading partners in this field (SAR, p 119).
Erasmus+ Study Mobility is available for all level students (Bachelor, Master, Doctoral), who are registered for studies at the LU. Students have an opportunity to experience up to 12 months long Erasmus+ Study and/or traineeship mobility during one study cycle. Erasmus+ Study Mobility is based on Erasmus+ bilateral agreements. Erasmus+ traineeship is available for all level students (Bachelor, Master, Doctoral), who are registered for studies at the LU. Erasmus+ traineeship can be undertaken in foreign companies, training or research centers, as well as other organizations. Each faculty has Coordinators of International Affairs. The list of partner universities is available https://www.lu.lv/en/cooperation/international-cooperation/erasmus/erasmus-outgoing-study-mobility Within the framework of the study field, 28 cooperation agreements have been concluded on the implementation of ERASMUS+ exchange programs. Agreements have been concluded with the universities of Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Italy, Germany, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, and other countries. The choice of students in favor of Italian and Swedish universities is mainly determined by the compatibility of the study plans, which allows the student to successfully integrate into the study process after completing the ERASMUS+ program, as well as by student feedback and sharing of positive experiences. Students are relatively active in using the ERASMUS+ internship program, most often it is used by the students of the residency study program Medicine, mainly going to Germany, Italy, and Sweden, as there are recommendations from other residents or residency supervisors for successful internship experience in these countries.
However, the majority of residency students who choose to do residency abroad are international students (SAR section 2.5.3, p. 134; meeting with Management of HEI). The mobility of outgoing students in the last academic year is lower than the incoming one (1 and 5, respectively, 2020/2021 academic year), but this could be the effect of the pandemic (SAR, Annex: Incoming_outgoing_Student_Mobility.xlsx).

1.5.3. Several study programs in the study field are implemented in English and attracting foreign students is a very important aspect. In order to attract foreign students, cooperation with foreign student agents takes place, but most students find information on the website of the University of Latvia. The students are mostly from 133 EU member states - Finland, Germany, Italy, Czech Republic, Spain, Estonia, Lithuania, and Greece, there are also students from Norway, India, Brazil, Iran, USA, Romania, and other countries. During the reporting period, the largest number of foreign students is in the second-level professional higher education Study programs in Medicine, Dentistry, and Optometry (Annex: Statistics on the number of foreign students in the field of study Health Care).
Although international student numbers are growing and improving every year, the integration of international students with local students is not at a high level. International students have noted that they did not feel integrated with the LU student community during their studies. It was pointed out that greater integration of international students in the learning process would benefit both local and exchange students, as this would introduce them to the culture of different countries. Students cite the situation of COVID-19 and distance learning as obstacles to closer integration of exchange students (SAR section 2.1.2 page 30; meeting with students).
Visiting lecturers are attracted to the programs of the study field, who acquaint students with the current events in the field in the host lecturer's home country, as well as in the world overall. Most of the visiting lecturers are attracted to the study programs: Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, and Optometry (SAR 2.5.3, p.133; Annex: Health care guest lecturer statistics). Within the framework of the study field, 28 cooperation agreements have been concluded on the implementation of ERASMUS+ exchange programmes. Agreements have been concluded with the universities of Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Italy, Germany, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, and other countries (SAR , p.133)
The outgoing mobility of the teaching staff is not very active The mobility of outgoing teaching staff in this academic year (2021/2022) is four persons, last academic year (2020/2021) only one person 3 times and 2019/2020 - 4 persons participated, but this could be the effect of the pandemic (Annex: Teaching staff un general staff MOBILITY in the study field Health Care (outgoing).
The Covid-19 pandemic affected both the attraction of guest lecturers and the outgoing mobility of teaching staff (meeting with Management of HEI).

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

The study field has well-developed cooperation and internationalization at the Latvian and international levels. There is active participation in various directions. The specific joint Nutrition Science study program of several universities is very positive. The number of international students has increased.Cooperation and internationalization are well developed in the Study field, however, could wish for more outgoing mobility among students and teaching staff.

Strengths:
1. Cooperation with Latvian and international partners.
2. A joint program of 3 universities established.
3. The growing number of international students.

Weaknesses:
1. Limited outgoing mobility of students and teaching staff.

Assessment of the requirement [3]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Cooperation and internationalization are well developed in the field of study, however, could wish for more outgoing mobility among students and teachers (Annex: Teaching staff un general staff MOBILITY in the study field Health Care (outgoing)).

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

Analysis

1.6.1. The recommendations received during the previous assessment procedures included the three (3) following recommendations (SAR, pp. 136-149): 1) Funding needs to be increased, including public funding for doctoral studies, 2) Co-operation with the Faculty and employers must be strengthened, 3) The workload of the academic staff needs to be reduced.
1) Funding needs to be increased, including public funding for doctoral studies:
According to SAR (p. 136) the number of granted budget study places has decreased. Only in PBSP Nursing the number of budget places has increased by 207 (2020:52, 2021 155) budget places (SAR, p.136). Receiving more budget places for the Health Care study field programmes is an on-going process with LU and Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia (SAR, p. 136). The interviews of the LU health care management emphasized the need for more budget places, because of the need of health care professionals in the Latvian society. The University supports the academy staff for getting external research funding for scientific research by organizing training for researchers on writing the research proposals and in preparing the budget for research funding applications. Thus, this recommendation can be considered as partly fulfilled.
2) Co-operation with the Faculty and employers must be strengthened:
Cooperation of the Faculty with employers has been strengthened both at Faculty management and at each programme levels by organizing meetings with employers to discuss the study curricula, internships, topics of the master's and doctoral theses. Representatives of employers also participate in the Council of Study Field. (SAR, pp. 136-137). The interviews with management, academic staff, students, graduates and employers showed several good practices of co-operation with LU Health Care study field and employers such as curricula development, joint research projects, students' placements and national mentorship programme. This recommendation has been fulfilled.
3) The workload of the academic staff needs to be reduced:
The SAR (pp.102-103) indicates that the number of elected academic staff has increased within the last 8 years from 126 (2013/2014) to 208 (2020/2021) total elected academic staff. In particular, the number of elected lecturers' positions (2013/2014: 22 , 2020/2021: 68) has increased. In the Health Care study field the total number of academic scientists is rather small; 16 in 2020/2021. The interviews find out that, for example in nursing study programme, it is challenging to allocate time for research work due to teaching and other responsibilities. This recommendation has been partly fulfilled.

Implementation of the recommendations given in the previous evaluation.
Licensing of study programmes:
During the reporting period, PSP Dentistry (2014), MSP Sports Science (2019) and MSPv Epidemiology and Medical Statistics (2020) have been licensed.
Evaluation of changes to the study programmes:
PSP Dentistry, the only recommendation for a "Clinical Dentistry" course on the 6th semester to locate it earlier in the curriculum is fulfilled, by introducing a Preclinical Dentistry course starting from the 3rd semester and the course "Preventive Dentistry, Diagnoses and Treatment Planning"

starting in the 5th semester. Recommendation fulfilled.

MSP Sports Science (45813), five recommendations for long term development: Fulfilled as far as possible (SAR, 610-611).
1) Recommendation: When admitting applicants with bachelor's degrees in other sciences, it is recommended to inform them about the job opportunities in the field of sports after graduating from the program. Fulfillment: Annually, at the entrance meeting with the students, the students are informed about different possibilities for master's theses as well as diverse professional career opportunities after graduation of the SP. Recommendation fulfilled.
2) Recommendation: In the 1st semester, it is desirable to include elective courses (in part B or C) and to provide more basic courses in the field of sports for students without prior education in sports. In turn, students with higher education in sports could be offered to choose other study courses. Fulfillment: Part C selection course is included in the 3rd semester, but not in the 1st semester, which contains Part A courses to give necessary knowledge for further studies. Recommendation partly fulfilled.
3) Recommendation: The study program should include various elective study courses related to sports, including practical sports activities, including study courses in which the latest fitness equipment, technologies, software, fitness tests, etc. are acquired. Fulfillment: The courses contain up-to-date knowledge, practical sports activities and equipment / technologies. No information about new elective courses. Recommendation partly fulfilled.
4) Recommendation: It is desirable to start the development of the master's thesis in the 3rd semester in order to avoid a situation where the student does not complete the study program during 4 semesters because he / she is unable to complete the master's thesis. Fulfillment: The different phases of the master's thesis process has been logically included in different phases of the SP. Recommendation fulfilled.
5) Recommendation: If the planned number of students is not admitted to the program, then it is desirable to review the possibilities to reduce costs and improve profitability, including the reduction of contact hours to the requirements of the state academic education standard. Fulfillment: The SP have made a plan how to manage if the planned number of students do not enroll. Recommendation fulfilled.

MSP Epidemiology and Medical statistics (45726), six recommendations for long term development: Fulfilled as far as possible (SAR, 651-652).
1) Recommendation: It is necessary to evaluate the number of graduates required as close as possible to the potential labor market of the Latvian state and, consequently, to review the number of applicants for training in the Latvian language. Fulfillment: Analyses of the needs of the Latvien labour market for graduates of the SP and activities to disseminate information about the SP for potential applicants have been taken. Recommendation fulfilled.
2) Recommendation: Make a separate course program as neutral as possible regarding the prioritization of specific nosologies (association of infections with oncological diseases, Helicobacter pylori infection, celiac disease, autism spectrum disorders, Asperger's syndrome, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). Fulfillment: The content of the current courses has been specified including the knowledge about specific nosologies in the Latvian and global contexts. Recommendation fulfilled.
3) Recommendation: To find an opportunity to conclude an agreement on the possibility for students to continue their studies at another higher education institution in Latvia, in case the implementation of the study program is terminated. Fulfillment: An agreement has been made with the RSU for students' possibility to continue their studies. Recommendation fulfilled.
4) Recommendation: To find an opportunity to look at the study courses acquired in the mobility programs in the overall evaluation of the study program. Fulfillment: Students' studies during

mobility are approved according to the LU processes. Recommendation fulfilled.
5) Recommendation: To find an opportunity to attract appropriate teaching staff to the study program, taking into account the risk associated with the currently high workload of teaching staff outside the study program. Fulfillment: Quest lecturers from Latvia and abroad have given lectures in the SP. Recommendation fulfilled.
6) Recommendation: Discuss study quality assessment questionnaires with students and, based on the proposals provided by students, improve the questionnaires, as well as, review the mechanism for providing feedback to students.Fulfillment: this is an ongoing activity in the SP. Recommendation partly fulfilled.

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

The recommendations received during the previous assessment procedures have been sufficiently implemented and some long term recommendations are in the process of implementation such as the need to increase the funding and reducing the workload of the academic staff.
Concerning the SPs, the MSP Sport Sciences needs to continue the development of 1st semester courses by including elective courses for students with sports education background and basic courses for students without previous sports education.

Strengths:
The recommendations received in the previous assessment procedure have been implemented or are in the process of implementation.

No weaknesses have been identified.

Assessment of the requirement [4]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The recommendations received during the previous assessment procedures have been sufficiently implemented and some long term recommendations are in the process of implementation.

1.7. Recommendations for the Study Field

Short-term recommendations

To ensure that QA system is being revised and updated, internal documents that are involved in QA system should be revised at least once in 3 years, or university can lead by example and revise this documentation annually. For example, students should be given an opportunity to give anonymous feedback not only at the end of each semester but at any time during their studies, current regulations from 2002 “Procedure for Submission and Review of Student Proposals and Complaints” are outdated and does not support a system for giving anonymous complaints also raises doubts about effectiveness of document revision process.
A more team based approach and second/double marking (select amount of submissions, e.g. 5-10%) should be considered, especially when new programmes are being delivered.
To motivate and encourage students and employees in International educational and scientific exchange programs from the funds of the European Union or other funds.
To increase the outgoing mobility of the teaching staff and students for the improvement of internationalization.
Create system which can track and pinpoint each suggestion that has been provided and implemented in specific study courses or study programme. This would help to track how actively graduates, employers, academic staff members are striving to improve study programmes.

Long-term recommendations

II - "Radiography" ASSESSMENT

II - "Radiography" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The PBSP Radiography complies with the aim of the study field Health Care to prepare competent health care specialists for the needs of the Latvian economy. The inclusion of the PBSP Radiography in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and the degree and qualification to be awarded.

2.1.2. The 2nd level professional higher education bachelor’s study programme Radiography (PBSP Radiography) is a full-time study programme with the implementation duration of 4 years and the amount of 160 Latvian credits (CP). The language of instruction – Latvian. The degree to be acquired – professional bachelor’s degree in radiography, and the qualification to be obtained – radiographer.
The code of the study programme according to the classification of education in Latvia – 42722, where the first part of the code 42 indicates that the type of the PBSP Radiography is professional higher education programme (Level 5 professional qualification and professional bachelor’s degree) and the digits of the second part of the code 722 indicate that the thematic area of education is Health Care, but the group of educational programmes is Medical Services.
The aim of the PBSP Radiography – to prepare competent, modern, multi-professional specialists in radiography to work with modern digital technologies and with skills in patient care in radiology and radiotherapy, working in various medical care institutions in Latvia. The specialist training takes place in accordance with the standard of the radiographer’s profession, ensuring the development of students’ personalities and the opportunity to obtain a second-level professional higher education –

is coordinated with the learning outcomes of the study programme.
The learning outcomes of the bachelor's study programme (results of the study programme - 17) correspond to Level 6 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF), which is described in the Cabinet Regulations No. 322 "Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia" (June 13, 2017), but the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.
Admission requirements of the PBSP Radiography – secondary education.
The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PBSP Radiography are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation as well as the language of implementation, are reasonable and justified. Despite the fact that the programme duration is four years and can be entered if one has acquired secondary education, the PBSP Radiography is mostly studied by persons who have already obtained a first-level higher education with the qualification of radiologist assistant, and therefore the studies last only one year.
The content of the PBSP Radiography is harmonized with the professional standard Radiographer PS-202 (agreed upon at the meeting of the Tripartite Sub-Council for Cooperation in Vocational Education and Employment on December 15, 2021).

2.1.3. Since the previous accreditation some changes have been made in the aim (the aim of the programme is more specific and more appropriate to the specifics of the radiography specialists to be trained in the field of health care) and the learning outcomes (they have been reformulated, taking into account the requirements of the latest study programme parameter formulation in the regulations of the LU, as well as are binding with the requirements of the professional standard Radiographer) of the PBSP Radiography.
These corrections introduced into the PBSP Radiography parameters within the assessment of the study field are analyzed, justified and would be supported. The only remark: learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.

2.1.4. The economic and social justification of the PBSP Radiography is based on the fact that with the continuous development of the field of radiology/ radiography, Latvia also needs trained specialists whose knowledge complies with the guidelines developed by the European Federation of Radiographer Societies. The study programme is based on the guidelines developed by the European Federation of Radiographer Societies for Level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework for radiographers regarding the content of the programme (SAR, p. 248). The demand for radiography specialists is continuous, employers also promote studies at the PBSP Radiography by covering tuition fees. All graduates work in the profession, almost all work in Latvia.
In consultation with the professional association and employers, it was discussed that the programme can enroll graduates of the college's Radiology Assistant programme. They can choose to either continue their studies to qualify as radiographers to work with more complex radiology technologies, or to work predominantly with X-ray equipment. During the accreditation period, the number of students tends to remain above 14 matriculated in Year 4, even with the relatively low number of college graduates. Persons who have already obtained a first-level higher education with the qualification of radiologist assistant decide for themselves or are recommended by the employer to continue their studies in Semester 7 of the PBSP Radiography. In addition, there are a number of employers (MFD Health Group, Vidzeme Hospital) who pay tuition fees to those choosing to study.
The dynamics of the number of students and employment indicators of the graduates of the PBSP Radiography in the period 2013 - 2021 shows that the study programme is economically and socially justified.

2.1.5. N/A

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

Conclusions
The inclusion of PBSP Radiography in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and the degree and qualification to be awarded.
The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PBSP Radiography are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation as well as the language of implementation, are reasonable and justified.
In consultation with the professional association and employers, it was discussed that the programme can enroll graduates of the college's Radiology Assistant programme. This provides graduates with the possibility to choose either to continue their studies to qualify as a radiographer to work with more complex radiology technologies, or to work predominantly with X-ray equipment.
The dynamics of the number of students and employment indicators of the graduates of the PBSP Radiography in the period 2013 - 2021 shows that the study programme is economically and socially justified.

Strengths:
1. The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PBSP Radiography are interrelated.
2. For more effective implementation of the programme, the PBSP Radiography accepts students who have graduated from the college study programme Radiologist Assistant.

Weaknesses:
1. 17 results of the study programme are indicated in the PBSP Radiography, but the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. The content of PBSP Radiography is topical and relevant (SAR p. 251). The programme has been developed in accordance with the Cabinet Regulation No 481 of 20 November 2001 and adheres to the European Qualifications Framework (Level 6) (SAR p. 251, Annex 9: Compliance of PBSP Radiography with national education standard, Annex 10: Compliance of the PBSP Radiography with the professional standard, Annex AA: PBSP Radiography compliance with the sector-specific regulatory framework). The courses within the programme are interlinked and complementary, thus helping achieve the aimes, objectives and learning outcomes of the programme (SAR p. 251-254, Annex 11: Radiography Mapping of study Courses, Annex 12: Radiography Study Plan, Annex CC: Radiography Course descriptors). The study programme is built in such way that students are first introduced to basic knowledge, which is later built up to a more in-depth knowledge (SAR p. 251). Two main blocks of courses are offered: Part A and Part B (SAR p. 251 -254). The course descriptors are clear, concise and standardized (Annex CC: Radiography Course descriptors). The completion of the programme grants students the professional status of a radiographer (qualification of a radiographer) (Annex: Diploma & Diploma Supplement). The need for radiographers as there is a shortage of them was justified during the onsite visit (10.08.2022.) in meetings with programme director, staff and employers.
In the opinion of Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia, some literature sources are outdated (Annex AIKA annexes VM opinion) - the course descriptors should be revised to see if newer editions or alternative textbooks are available. Consider including current publications and guidelines. Experts reviewed the literature and overall it is up to date, however, the review should be done

annually.

2.2.2. N/A

2.2.3. PBSP is implemented as a full-time programme in Latvian language (SAR p. 257). The main forms of implementation for teaching are lectures, seminars, clinical placements and independent work (SAR p. 257). The virtual learning environment (Moodle) has been incorporated in the teaching process (SAR p. 258). The student-centered learning has also been demonstrated by use of small group work, individual consultations with staff members, problem-based learning, reflective tasks and role play exercises, as well as considering individual learner's needs (SAR p. 258). Accommodations have been made to address the problem with the limited access to the patients - simulations are widely used (SAR p. 258). This was also confirmed during the meeting with the programme director during the onsite visit (10.08.2022). The assessment criteria, aims, objectives and intended learning outcomes are explained to the students at the beginning of the learning process and is freely available via Moodle and LUIS systems (SAR p. 258). Both staff and students are involved in the review and improvement process of the programme (SAR p. 258). The assessments are designed and conducted in accordance with LU policies and the legislation of the Republic of Latvia (SAR. p. 258). There are both mid-term assessments and final assessments (SAR p. 258). The development of the bachelor's thesis is described sufficiently (SAR p. 259). All assessments are graded using a uniformly accepted 10-point scale (SAR p. 259).

2.2.4. Students have to do internships, they usually are held in clinical placement places (hospitals), hospitals can provide real input about what sort of skills students have to develop during the internship. During the internship students are allocated to a mentor that supervises their work in the hospital (SAR section 3.2.4. page 259). There are no issues for students to find potential internship places because as indicated from university members, employers and students during the interviews radiology specialists are highly demanded in the labour market. During onsite visit (10.08.2022) the programme director highlighted the fact that difficulties to arrange clinical placements are one of the reasons why they are not able to enroll students in Year 1 but only Year 4 of the programme. However, they have found alternatives to provide students with the practical experience required for the profession by introduction of simulations and other tools.

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6. Student Bachelor theses each year are revised and are chosen based on topicality in the radiology field. The State Inspection Commission has recognised that the topics of bachelor's theses chosen by students are modern, up-to-date in the labour market and are in line with the objectives of the study programme. For example, topics cover issues about the development and quality control of image quality criteria, the development or furthering of radiological exam methods protocols (SAR section 3.2.6. page 260).

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

Conclusions
The programme is topical and relevant and adheres to all legal and professional requirements of the Republic of Latvia and helps to reduce the shortage of specialists in the field. Students are exposed to clinical skills from early on and have a pre-existing knowledge as they enroll in the programme after completing a college degree. The clinical skills practice is enhanced with simulations and they are assigned a mentor during their clinical placement. Assessment criteria are clear and known to the students in advance. The weak point for this programme under these criteria is the inability to

enroll students in the programme from Year 1 rather than Year 4 due to the lack of placement providers. This could be solved by arranging more collaboration agreements with medical institutions and also making provisions for a ‘Radiography’ clinic in the House of Health which is planned as a wide access medical center where students could undergo their placements partly or in full. Course reading list should be reviewed annually to see more current editions of books or newer alternative text books are available. Current papers with clinical guidelines should also be used.

Strengths:
1. A programme that is relevant, topical and adheres to the all legal and professional requirements of the Republic of Latvia and helps to reduce the shortage of qualified professionals in the field.
2. Practical work is not only done by interaction with real patients but also enhanced using simulations.

Weaknesses:
1. The fact that students are only enrolled in Year 4 of the programme and one of the burdens identified for not running a full 4 year programme, alongside the lack of state funded study places, is the availability of clinical placements and accessibility to real patients. This could be solved by arranging more collaboration agreements with medical institutions and also making provisions for a ‘Radiography’ clinic in the House of Health which is planned as a wide access medical center where students could undergo their placements partly or in full.
2. Review the course reading lists to see if more current editions of books or newer alternative text books are available. Current papers with clinical guidelines should also be used.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. The opening of the Science House (2018) of the LU Academic Center, where SP Pharmacy takes place, created a high level of material and technical support. The study process occurs in modern auditoriums equipped with multimedia devices, interactive whiteboards, and Internet connections, providing high-quality audio and visual presentation of lectures. The design of the halls allows the tables to be freely rearranged, making them adaptable to different forms of learning – lectures, seminars, group work, or circular discussions – and contributing to a democratic and open learning process. Internet access is available in the buildings using wireless technology. The study process of the PBSP Radiography is organized in classrooms, where they are provided with the latest technological capabilities and large, touch-sensitive, high resolution screens. High-resolution screens improve the study process, as many study courses analyze images from different radiological examinations and the capabilities provided by screens support the learning. Part of the theoretical studies take place in the training rooms of the radiology departments of medical treatment institutions where professional radiology specialists conduct the training process. Practice sessions are carried out in the radiology departments of the same medical treatment institution, so students have the possibility to apply theoretical knowledge in practice immediately. In the study process and

in the development of bachelor's theses, students use the resources of LU libraries on site, as well as many library resource databases, such as the Clinical Key, Dawsonera (e-books), ProQuest (e-books). Statistics on the number of printed expenditures available in the LU Library for the Radiography Program are 229 in different languages (Tour of facilities; SAR; p. 262; Table 3.3.1.1).

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3. The financial basis of PBSP Radiography consists of the obtained funds from paid students, thus ensuring the basic functions of the study program - payment for premises, payment for lecturers, payment for practical classes and clinical placements in medical institutions. The additional funds obtained in various projects provide the purchase of simulation softwares and equipment, and small inventory, as well as new books for the organization of the study process. PBSP Radiography cost calculation is performed taking into account the study program cost calculation methodology developed by the Department of Studies of the University of Latvia. The cost of one student per year is 2936 EUR. Calculations have been made for 18 paid students and the organization of optimal practice in the amount of 8 academic hours in university hospitals. In a pandemic situation, the internship is often only possible for 4 academic hours, but this means that you have to pay for 2 student days, which adds to the cost. There are no state budget places in the study programme, but once there were "budget" places from internal financing of the Faculty of Medicine, which are indicated as budget places in the appendix "Statistics on students in the reporting period". The minimum number of students in the programme to maintain the profitability is 12 students. There is minimum of number of students in last teaching year -12 (Annex 4: Statistics on students in MSP Epidemiology and medical statistics).
In addition to the teaching staff costs, the cost calculation also includes general staff costs in the amount of 31.3% of the academic staff (301 EUR per student per year), infrastructure costs (225 EUR per student per year), renovation of material and technical base, services (435 EUR per student per year), totaling 2936 EUR per year per student (SAR; p.263).
There are no state budget places (Annex8 Statistics on students in PBSP Radiography).

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

Conclusions
The material and technical base of the Study program is modern and well equipped and meets all the requirements. Study program has excellent library resources. Small Number of students.There are no state budget places.

Strengths:
1. Excellent equipment and technologies; library resources.

Weaknesses:
1. No state budget places.
2. Small total number of students.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The material and technical base of the Study program is modern and well equipped and meets all the requirements. Study program has excellent library resources.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. Both the lecturers elected by the Faculty of Medicine and the lecturers teaching the corresponding study courses in the study programme "Radiologist Assistant" of P. Stradins Medical College has been involved in the implementation of the PBSP Radiography. All lecturers have appropriate qualifications. The qualifications of lecturers complies with the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the regulatory enactments of the LU, which determine the qualification of lecturers in the professional bachelor's study programme: Cabinet Regulation No. 49 Regulation on Latvian Science Sectors and Sub-sectors (23 January 2018). Law on Higher Education Institutions (2 November 1995). There are two groups of lecturers at the LU PBSP Radiography: lecturers, who have elected academic positions, and lecturers, who are attracted to the implementation of particular study courses or praxis.
In the SAR report and during the visit, the experts did not see that lecturers from other countries were involved in the study process and lecturers of the program implementation participated in international exchange programs in order to internationalize their skills and make the curriculum more internationally recognizable.

2.4.2. In the course of the 4th year of study, the PBSP Radiography involved 9 teaching staff in the year 2019/2020, of which 3 (33.3%) are academic staff of LU and 6 (66.7%) are guest lecturers. Of the academic staff of LU enrolled in the curriculum, 2 (66.7%) have PhD and 1 (33.3%) has a master's degree. Of the guest professors in the year 2019/2020, one teacher has a doctor's degree and a master's degree in pedagogy, 1 teacher with a Master's degree in Health Sciences, 3 teachers with a doctor's degree, 1 teacher with a PhD in Medicine and master's degree in radiation biology (SAR, p.263).

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4. Considering that professors and doctors of science are involved in the implementation of the program, the expert commission assumes that the number and quality of their publications is high, although the lecturers' CVs and list of publications cannot be found in SAR.

2.4.5. The improvement of the study programme takes place in cooperation with the students' proposals - by reviewing the evaluations of the study courses (SAR, p.267).
PBSP Radiography teaching staff meet at an annual meeting at the end of the academic year to hear a report from the director of the study programme on student surveys. At the meeting, the teaching staff agree on the organization of the study process for the following academic year, e.g. in 2019/2020, the 7th semester was launched by a course in Radiology Methods I, in order to have sufficient time to receive materials purchased under the project for the study course Radiotherapy and Oncology II (SAR, p.267).
During the reporting period, the study module “Radiology Technology Studies Courses” was created, in which study courses in Radiology Methods I, Radiology Methods II, Radiotherapy and Oncology II take place sequentially, with students successfully passing each of the courses, including an exam, and only then continuing with the next course of study. Such a module was created because students had problems learning large-scale (6-8 CP) study courses directly from the perspective of image quality and diagnostic capabilities – the capabilities of CT and magnetic resonance techniques are so developed that often the image quality of both methods has become very similar and became

a burden for students to understand the specificity of each method. Following such an organization of the above-mentioned study courses, the teaching staff received a lot of positive feedback from the students and therefore continues to do so. At the end of each internship, there is a student internship report, during which students have the opportunity to express their thoughts on the sufficiency of theoretical knowledge for participation in the internship.
The teaching staff is informed about these students' opinions and after each internship, together with the internship supervisors, the amount of knowledge and skills in the relevant study courses is discussed and, if necessary, changes are made in the content of the study courses.(SAR, p.267).

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

Conclusions
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the lecturers of the PBSP Radiography, the expert commission concluded that the study program is implemented by qualified employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work in the direction of the study program. In the framework of university training programs and international scientific conferences and seminars, lecturers supplement and improve their knowledge and skills for the implementation of the curriculum of the PBSP Radiography.

Strengths:
1. Highly qualified lectures and good management of the learning process;
2. A multidisciplinary approach to the recruitment of lecturers promotes the implementation of the study program through cooperation with the LU;

Weaknesses:
1. Lack of guest lectures from other counties.
2. Academic staff of the study program does not participate in international exchange programs.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualifications of the academic staff of the study program meet the conditions for the implementation of the study program and the requirements specified in the relevant regulatory acts.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

PBSP Radiography complies with Cabinet Rules No. 512. Provisions regarding the national standard of second-level professional higher education (approved 26.08.2014) (Annex 9).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

PBSP Radiography complies with the professional standard PS-202 (agreed at the meeting of the Tripartite Cooperation Council for Vocational Educational and Employment on 15 December 2021), this professional standard belongs to the professions of the 5th level of professional qualification (corresponds to the 6th level of the Latvian Qualifications Framework), in accordance to the regulation of Cabinet of Ministers No. 626 “Regulations of the List of Mandatory Applicable Professional Standards and Professional Qualification Requirements and the Procedure of Publication of Included Therein Professional Standards and Professional Qualification Requirements”.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU provided the descriptions of the study courses in Latvian language (Annex CC Descriptions of study courses / modules of the PBSP Radiography).
The descriptions of the PBSP Radiography are fully compliant with the requirements set forth in Section 561, Paragraph two and Section 562, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institution, they a. define the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; b. determine the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; c. outline the content of the study course necessary for the achievement of learning outcomes, contain the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, indicate other sources of information; d. describe the organization and tasks for the independent work of students; e. determine the evaluation criteria of learning outcomes.
The description of the study module determines: the learning outcomes achievable as a result of the acquisition of the study module; the plan of the study work time; the study courses included in the study module.
In the opinion of Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia, some literature sources are outdated (Annex AIKA annexes VM opinion) - the course descriptors should be revised to see if newer editions or alternative textbooks are available. Consider including current publications and guidelines. Experts reviewed the literature and overall it is up to date, however, the review should be done annually. Nevertheless this deficiency is not important enough to decrease the evaluation as partially compliant.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the diploma and its supplement is issued for completing the study programme in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers 16.04.2013. to Regulation No. 202 “Procedures for Issuing State-Recognized Higher Education Certificates”.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Declaration of Head of Study Field (Annex Head of Study Field Declaration, 21.04.2021, No. 05), confirming that the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Fully compliant with the Law on Higher Education Institutions Section 46, paragraph 2 and regulations of Cabinet of Ministers 23.01.2007. to Regulation No. 70 “Mandatory regulations to be included in the study agreement” (Annex Standard sample of study agreement „Agreement for EU citizens–2021)

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the (Agreement between the University of Latvia and Riga Technical University on taking over studies, signed on 30.03.2010 for an indefinite time) (SAR, Part I,

Annex Agreement on the implementation of the study programmes), confirming that the students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Refund and Compensation Policy Statement, No 1-13/361) (Annex Refund and Compensation Policy), confirming that the students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

PBSP Radiography complies with the other regulatory enactments as:
Cabinet Regulation No. 268 "Regulations regarding the Competence of Medical Practitioners and Students Acquiring First or Second Level Professional Higher Medical Education Programmes in Medical Treatment and the Amount of Theoretical and Practical Knowledge of These People", paragraph 610;
Cabinet Regulation No. 482 Regulations on Protection against Ionizing Radiation in Medical Irradiation, 10 and 10.1 point Radiation Safety Center of the State Environmental Service;
Cabinet of Ministers 05.12.2017. regulations no. 716 "Minimum requirements for the content of the compulsory civil protection course and the content of the civil protection training of the employees", paragraphs 3 and 4;
Labor Protection Law, Section 23, Paragraph 7 (Annex AA).

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

PBSP Radiography fully complies with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

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

Conclusions

The inclusion of PBSP Radiography in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and the degree and qualification to be awarded.
The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PBSP Radiography are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation as well as the language of implementation, are reasonable and justified.
In consultation with the professional association and employers, it was discussed that the programme can enroll graduates of the college's Radiology Assistant programme. This provides graduates with the possibility to choose either to continue their studies to qualify as a radiographer to work with more complex radiology technologies, or to work predominantly with X-ray equipment.
The dynamics of the number of students and employment indicators of the graduates of the PBSP Radiography in the period 2013 - 2021 shows that the study programme is economically and socially justified.
The programme is topical and relevant and adheres to all legal and professional requirements of the Republic of Latvia and helps to reduce the shortage of specialists in the field. Students are exposed to clinical skills from early on and have a pre-existing knowledge as they enroll in the programme after completing a college degree. The clinical skills practice is enhanced with simulations and they are assigned a mentor during their clinical placement. Assessment criteria are clear and known to the students in advance. The weak point for this programme under these criteria is the inability to enroll students in the programme from Year 1 rather than Year 4 due to the lack of placement providers. This could be solved by arranging more collaboration agreements with medical institutions and also making provisions for a ‘Radiography’ clinic in the House of Health which is planned as a wide access medical center where students could undergo their placements partly or in full.
The material and technical base of the Study program is modern and well equipped and meets all the requirements. Study program has excellent library resources. There are no state budget places.
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the lecturers of the PBSP Radiography, the expert commission concluded that the study program is implemented by qualified employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work in the direction of the study program. In the framework of university training programs and international scientific conferences and seminars, lecturers supplement and improve their knowledge and skills for the implementation of the curriculum of the PBSP Radiography.

Strengths

1. The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PBSP Radiography are interrelated.
2. For more effective implementation of the programme, the PBSP Radiography accepts students who have graduated from the college study programme Radiologist Assistant.
3. A programme that is relevant, topical and adheres to the all legal and professional requirements of the Republic of Latvia and helps to reduce the shortage of qualified professionals in the field.
4. Practical work is not only done by interaction with real patients but also enhanced using simulations.
5. Excellent equipment and technologies; library resources.
6. Highly qualified lectures and good management of the learning process;
7. A multidisciplinary approach to the recruitment of lecturers promotes the implementation of the study program through cooperation with the LU;

Weaknesses

1. 17 results of the study programme are indicated in the PBSP Radiography, but the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.
2. The fact that students are only enrolled in Y4 of the programme and one of the burdens identified for not running a full 4 year programme, alongside the lack of state funded study places, is the availability of clinical placements and accessibility to real patients. This could be solved by arranging more collaboration agreements with medical institutions and also making provisions for a 'Radiography' clinic in the House of Health which is planned as a wide access medical center where students could undergo their placements partly or in full.
3. No state budget places.
4. Lack of guest lectures from other counties.
5. No study program academic staff participates in international exchange programs.
6. Some literature sources in the course descriptions are outdated.

Evaluation of the study programme "Radiography"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Radiography"

Short-term recommendations

1. To review the learning outcomes and formulate them in 5-9 learning outcomes.
2. Course reading lists should be reviewed annually to see if more current editions of books or newer alternative text books are available.

Long-term recommendations

1. It is necessary to carry out explanatory work with decision-makers in order to increase the number of budget places.
2. To arrange more collaboration agreements with medical institutions and to make the provisions for a 'Radiography' clinic in the House of Health which is planned as a wide access medical center where students could undergo their placements partly or in full.
3. Study program academic staff should participate more in international exchange programs in order to improve the training course and their international skills.
4. There should be a need to attract more guest lecturers from universities in other countries in order to gain more internationalization and international experience.

II - "Nursing" ASSESSMENT

II - "Nursing" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The inclusion of PBSP Nursing in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and from the degree and qualification to be awarded.

2.1.2. The PBSP Nursing is a full-time study programme with the implementation duration of 4 years and the amount of 160 Latvian credits (CP). The languages of instruction – Latvian and English. The degree to be acquired – professional bachelor's degree in health care and the qualification to be obtained – nurse (general care nurse).
The admission requirements (full time studies, Latvian - secondary education; full time studies, English - secondary education and English language skills at least at B2 level) (SAR, p. 550) correspond to the aims and tasks of the programme (SAR, p. 548).
The code of the study programme according to the classification of Latvian education – 42723, where the first part 42 of the code indicates that the type of the study programme Nursing is professional higher education programme (fifth level professional qualification and professional bachelor's degree) and the digits of the second part of the code 723 indicate that the thematic area of education is Health care, but the group of educational programmes is Nursing.
The study results of the bacherol's study programme correspond to the 6th level of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF), which is described in the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 322 "Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia" (June 13, 2017).
The name, aims, objectives of the study programme, as well as the qualification to be obtained after completing the programme comply with the requirements of the Directive 2005/36/EEC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the Law of the Republic of Latvia On the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications, the Medical Treatment Law, Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 268 "Regulations regarding the Medical Competence of Medical Practitioners and Students Acquiring First or Second Level Professional Higher Medical Education Programmes in Medical Treatment and the Amount of Theoretical and Practical Knowledge of These Persons", Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 512 "Regulations on the State Standard of the Second Level Professional Higher Education" and the professional standard Nurse (General Care Nurses). The name of the study programme, qualification to be obtained, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated.
In SAR (SAR, p. 552) it is written that PBSP Nursing provides education of a general care nurse that complies with the requirements of the Directive 2005/36/EEC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the Law of the Republic of Latvia On the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications. In Annex 6 "Compliance of the PBSP Nursing with the industry-specific regulations" it is written that PBSP Nursing contains 4600 theoretical and clinical contact hours, of which 2400 contact hours are implemented in a clinical environment – in a hospital, health care center or a practice of a general practitioner, and that the exact number of theoretical and clinical contact hours is indicated in the descriptions of the study courses presented in the Annex (7. annex_MāsuB_kursu apraksti LV ENG.docx). After creating a table and counting contact hours (by using study course descriptions), we can conclude that PBSP Nursing has 3828 theoretical and clinical contact hours, of which 1881 hours are indicated as practical classes or classes in a clinical environment. The hours of practical classes are indicated in different ways in the study course descriptions: practice hours or practice in a clinical environment. Clarification would be desirable, because if we count only the hours in a clinical environment, then there are even fewer – 1526 hours of practice in a clinical environment and clinical practice.
The Ministry of Health, within the scope of its competence, has examined the compliance of the Program with the regulatory enactments of the regulated professions and concludes that Appendix 26A of the Program "Compliance of PBSP Nursing with the specific regulatory framework of the corresponding sector" (file: Appendix 6) states that PBSP Nursing - 4,600 theoretical and clinical contact hours, of which 2,400 contact hours are implemented in a clinical environment - in a hospital, health care center or family doctor's practice, but in Appendix 7 "Descriptions of PBSP "Nursing" courses/modules" it is not clear what the number of clinical teaching hours is. It is

mentioned differently in different courses, for example, in the study course "Patient care in surgery" practice is mentioned, in the study course "Care of a healthy child and pediatrics" - practice in a clinical environment, in the study course "Newborn, infant and maternal care" - practical lessons in a clinical environment.

After considering the study course descriptions provided in the Appendix 1 (Comments of the LU, received on 24.11.2022), it has been concluded that PBSP Nursing contains 4600 theoretical and practical contact hours, of which 2512 hours are indicated as practical classes (distribution of hours in the course description: Number of Practical Assignment Hours). In the study course plan, the Number of Practical Assignment Hours are indicated in various ways: practice (Geriatric patient care and home care), practice in a clinical environment (Healthy child care and pediatrics) or practical lessons (General medicine and patient care).
Clarification would be desirable, because if one counts only the hours envisaged for studies in a clinical environment, then there are less hours - 1506 hours of practice in a clinical environment and clinical practice, which does not comply with the requirement of 2400 hours (contact hours are implemented in a clinical environment - in a hospital, health care center or a practice of a general practitioner) stipulated in the Directive 2005/36/EEC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the Law of the Republic of Latvia On the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications.
In several study courses, the LU changed the number of practical contact hours in the course plan but did not change them in the course content. For example:
• Clinical pharmacology and medical care (p.73; 1.annex_NurseB_Study Plan_Course_Eng);
• Leadership and management in nursing practice (p.76; 1.annex_NurseB_Study Plan_Course_Eng);
• General medicine and patient care (p. 94; 1.annex_NurseB_Study Plan_Course_Eng);
• Methodology of Research in Nursing (p. 145; 1.annex_NurseB_Study Plan_Course_Eng);
• Transcultural Care in Nursing (p. 145; 1.annex_NurseB_Study Plan_Course_Eng).
Practical classes are indicated in the course plan, but seminars are indicated in the content of the study course. In case seminar hours are replaced with practical contact hours (or vice versa), the learning outcomes (skills in particular) should be reviewed and specified.
Taking into account the provisions of the Directive 2005/36/EEC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the Law of the Republic of Latvia On the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications that the PBSP Nursing study programme must contain at least 2400 contact hours that are implemented in a clinical environment (in a hospital, health care center or a practice of a general practitioner); in the description of each study course, which envisages classes in clinical environment, in both the course plan and the course content it must be clearly indicated whether a practical class is implemented in a clinical environment. The Study Plan of the PBSP "Nursing" should be supplemented with a separate column that indicates the contact hours in a clinical environment and the clinical practice.

At the request of the Ministry of Health, the Latvian Nurses' Association (Association) gave an opinion on LU PBSP Nursing. When evaluating the content of PBSP Nursing, 12 shortcomings were found in the study program, and the Association expresses the following opinion - the Association does not support the content of the program.

2.1.3. Since the previous accreditation of the field of study, the definitions of parameters – the aim and objectives of the studies, as well as the results to be achieved within the PBSP Nursing have been specified, changes have been introduced in the admission requirements (taking into account the interest shown in the studies at PBSP Nursing, as well as being aware of the possibilities, PBSP Nursing is also planned in the English version), which are intended to improve the recognizability of

the study programme not only in Latvia but also abroad. These corrections are analyzed, justified and would be supported.

2.1.4. In the 2020/2021 academic year, the number of students in PBSP Nursing amounted to 184 students, in 2021/2022 – 283 students. The comparison of the data of the academic years 2013 and 2021 (SAR, p. 555, Figure 3.1.4.1.), it can be concluded that the number of students has increased during the reporting period. The number of students in the first year of study grew especially rapidly, until 2019 there were none, but in 2020/2021 academic year 52 students were matriculated and in 2021/2022 – 99 students (4. annex_NurseB_Statistics_Eng).
Graduates' work places are not indicated in SAR (p. 554, paragraph 3.1.3. Economic and/or social substantiation of the study program, analysis of graduates' employment). The employers who gave feedback on graduates are not indicated either (SAR, p. 554): "Employers point out that most graduates have good theoretical and practical training, as, in most cases, graduates were able to perform their work duties immediately, in some cases a brief training was required before they could perform their duties independently".
Dynamics of the number of students of the PBSP Nursing in the period 2013 - 2021 and the number of nurses in Latvia in the last 10 year (SAR, p. 555; p. 554) shows that the study programme is economically and socially justified.

2.1.5. N/A

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

Conclusions
The name of the study programme, the qualification to be obtained, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements are interrelated and comply with the requirements of the Directive 2005/36/EEC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia.

According to the descriptions of the study courses presented in the Appendix 1 (Comments of the LU, received on 24.11.2022), the PBSP Nursing does not contain 2400 contact hours are implemented in a clinical environment, according to the requirements of the Directive 2005/36/EEC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the Law of the Republic of Latvia On the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications.

Dynamics of the number of students and employment indicators of the graduates of the PBSP Nursing shows that the study programme is economically and socially justified.

Strengths:
1. The name of the study programme, the qualification to be obtained, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements are interrelated and comply with the requirements of the Directive 2005/36/EEC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and with the requirements of the regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia.

Weaknesses:
1. The PBSP Nursing does not contain 2400 contact hours are implemented in a clinical environment, according to the requirements of the Directive 2005/36/EEC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the Law of the Republic of Latvia On

the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications.
2. The number of clinical teaching hours in Appendix 7 of the Program "Descriptions of the "Nursing" courses/modules of the PBSP Nursing, is not clear enough.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. The goal of the PBSP Nursing (42723) programme is to educate specialists in the nursing professions, who perform patient care, participate in medical treatment, manage patient care work, engage in patient education on health issues, perform professional education work, by providing a scientific basis for professional activity and promoting the development of student personality. The content of the study programme is topical and the study courses formulate a comprehensive and logical wholeness (SAR, pp. 558-560). The content of the courses is updated regularly at the beginning of the academic year based on the feedback of students and recommendations of employers (SAR, p. 556) and examples of the curriculum development are given in SAR (pp 557-558). The reading material / literature regarding the study courses include both Latvian and English language references, but many of the references are 10- 20 years old and need to be updated. The list of the study courses (SAR, pp. 558-560, Table 3.2.1.2. Links for PBSP Nursing Courses to Programme Tasks) does not include a course titled “evidence based nursing”, which is common in bachelor level nursing programmes internationally.
The PSBP Nursing programme complies with the national regulations (SAR, Annex 10. Compliance of PBSP Nursing with the state education standard). PBSP Nursing complies with Cabinet Regulation No 240 “Regulations of the national standard for academic education” (approved 13.05.2014) and with professional standards for general care nurses (SAR, Annex 5. Compliance of PBSP Nursing with the professional standard). The professional standard applies to the professions of the fifth level of professional qualification (corresponds to the sixth level of the Latvian Qualifications Framework), in accordance with the Cabinet Regulation No. 626 “Regulations regarding the List of Mandatory Applicable Professional Standards and Professional Qualification Requirements and the Procedure for Publication of Professional Standards and Professional Qualification Requirements Included Therein”. Professional standard for nurses (general care nurses) was agreed at the meeting of the Tripartite Cooperation Council for Vocational Education and Employment on 12 August 2020, protocol no. 6.
The curriculum consists of mandatory courses, limited elective courses and freely elective courses. The courses are interrelated and successive from basic to advanced knowledge and skills (SAR, pp. 557-558). Study courses and internships are mutually complementary in line with the nursing programme objectives and expected learning outcomes (SAR, p. 556). The underpinning pedagogical principles are student-centered teaching and learning, critical thinking and problem solving.

2.2.2. N/A

2.2.3. The study implementation methods i.e. teaching and learning methods include lectures, seminars, practical sessions, internship, independent work classes, consultations with scientific supervisors (SAR, p. 561-564). Moodle as an e-learning environment is in use including course lecture material. In addition, topical electronic databases are freely available for students. For practical training simulations are commonly in use. The premises for studies at LU are modern with a simulation lab, but the increasing number of PBSP Nursing students may cause challenges for having enough space for students, particularly, in studies where simulation is applied as a teaching and learning method. Students' learning outcomes are evaluated in the intermediate and final tests based on the evaluation criteria which are public before the tests. The defense of Bachelor Theses and the state examination belong to the completion of the PBSP Nursing programme.

2.2.4. The aim of the internship in the PBSP programme is to strengthen and expand students' theoretical knowledge needed in the nurse (general nurse) profession (SAR, pp. 564-565). The internship is divided in three (3) parts as follows: 1) Basics of clinical care, 2) Clinical internship (I, II, III) and 3) Internship by specialty. The description of the general "tasks" of the practice include the (10) specific "task", which could have been presented as "learning outcomes of the placement learning". The number of students in the programme is increasing, thus, there may be a lack of sufficient placement places for students. Foreign students without sufficient language skills in Latvian may have their internships in their home countries (SAR p 565) , which requires clear procedures from the PSBP programme to ensure that the internship corresponds to the requirements of the programme.

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6. PBSP Nursing students prepare their bachelor's theses (12 CT) at the end of the studies. The topics of the theses are related to the priority of the Medical and Health Sciences sector (SAR, p. 566). However, topics related to nursing / nursing science (such as medication management, pain management, end-of-life and palliative care, support for family members) are not mentioned as priority topics.

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

Conclusions
The content of the studies are topical for the nursing profession, but evidence based nursing as a specific course and the topics of bachelor theses related to nursing science could be considered. Student-centered, modern teaching and learning methods and learning environments are in use. The number of students is increasing, which may affect challenges to have enough internship places for students.

Strengths:
1. In general the content of the studies is topical. Modern teaching and learning methods and environments are in use.

Weaknesses:
1. Evidence based nursing courses are not available.
2. Challenge to have enough internship places for an increasing number of students.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. For the implementation of the PBSP Nursing, the LU provides modern, well-technically equipped (simulators, computers, interactive whiteboards) classrooms for audits. Good wireless internet connection and e-study environment (Moodle) solutions. The theoretical and practical

classes of study PBSP Nursing students are conducted in learning laboratories and departments of the Faculty of Medicine (MF) study programme “Medicine” and other department classes of University, like faculty of Biology. The practical classes of the PBSP Nursing and pracsis mostly take place in the premises of P. Stradinš university clinical hospital. The training bases for the acquisition of clinical study courses are also located at Latvian Center of Infectious Diseases and the Center of Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases of RAKUS. Training bases for the acquisition of clinical studies and patient care courses are also located in other major Latvian hospitals - Riga City Maternity Hospital, Riga Psychiatry and Narcology Center (RPN), and others.
The LU library is located in good premises, with good reading rooms, computer classrooms, wi-fi provision and working hours 24/7.
The LU library provides students with all the necessary study literature and access to many databases of scientific literature, so that they can successfully study and engage in research work and familiarize themselves with the latest achievements in the field of study.
All premises of LU are suitable for students with special needs.
In the event that the number of students increases, the number of study rooms and the provision of medical simulators and other teaching materials would need to be increased, correlating with the number of students.

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3. The resources of the study programme consists of the provision of financial resources (funding source - state budget grants, tuition fee, costs of study programme), infrastructure and material and technical provision, as well as methodological and informative provisions (SAR, p. 567). The amount of state budget funding for a particular academic year is determined in accordance with the agreement between the Ministry of Education and Science and the LU.
Based on the PBSP Nursing cost calculation in accordance with the methodology developed by the University of Latvia, the main cost items are faculty remuneration - 34%, services, property - 15%, general staff - 11%, other costs - 8%, infrastructure costs - 7% and indirect costs - 26%. The budget subsidy for one study place of PBSP Nursing is EUR 4,890 EUR, which consists of the base funding of 1,630 EUR, the level coefficient 1.0 and the study area coefficient of 3.0 (SAR, p.570).
PBSP Nursing cost calculation is performed taking into account the study program cost calculation methodology developed by the Department of Studies of the LU. The cost of one student per year is 1800 EUR. Calculations have been made for 25 students and the organization of optimal practice in the amount of 8 academic hours in university hospitals. In a pandemic situation, the internship is often only possible for 4 academic hours, but this means that you have to pay for 2 student days, which adds to the cost. As lecturers have a higher fee for teaching in English, the tuition fee is also different for Latvian and English groups, respectively, when teaching in the English stream, lecturers have a coefficient of 1.5 In order to ensure the profitability of study program “Nursing”, the minimum number of students in Latvian is 25, but in English - 10 (SAR. p.571).

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

Conclusions
By visiting the study bases (Houses of Nature and Science, P. Stradinš university clinical hospital) and meeting with study program managers, lecturers and students, experts have confirmed that the PBSP Nursing of the LU is well materially provided and ensures students with a high-quality education.

Strengths:
1. Modern material base, premises, equipment, IT solutions, including the library.

2. Good clinical basis (hospitals) for clinical subjects and practices.

Weaknesses:
Now no weaknesses regarding resources and provision of the PBSP Nursing.
If the number of students increases, the resources may not be sufficient for quality training.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

By visiting the study bases (Houses of Nature and Science, P. Stradinš university clinical hospital) and meeting with study program managers, lecturers and students, experts have confirmed that the PBSP Nursing of the LU is well materially provided and ensures students with a high-quality education.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. Regarding SAR chapter 3.4.1 the qualifications of lecturers of PBSP Nursing complies with the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the regulatory enactments of the LU, which determine the qualification of lecturers in the professional bachelor's study programme: Cabinet Regulation No. 49 Regulation on Latvian Science Sectors and Sub-sectors (23 January 2018). Law on Higher Education Institutions (2 November 1995). In order to ensure high-quality implementation of the study programme, several criteria have been used for the selection of PBSP Nursing lecturers. The mandatory selection criteria for lecturers are: 1. Compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff with the requirements specified in the laws and regulations; 2. The professional qualification of the lecturer complies with the content of the study course and they possess the required work experience; 3. Adequate knowledge of the state language and foreign languages (SAR. p. 572).
According to experts, the PBSP Nursing lecturers fully comply with the requirements specified in regulatory enactments.
The qualification of the teaching staff is confirmed by their competence in the field of professional activity and scientific research, which also complies with the study programme and the content of the taught courses.
The application of the selection criteria ensures that lecturers, who have both experience in educational work and active professional activity, are involved in the implementation of the study programme, which ensures the achievement of the objectives of the study programme. Other lecturers may be selected for the realization of the study programme in English groups. Most importantly, the lecturers of the study course must have adequate competence in the field and an appropriate level of academic English, as well as the willingness to cooperate with the director of the study programme and students. In-service training of lecturers is implemented in the following ways: 1. At least once a year, lecturers participate in the Nursing Section of the International Scientific Conference on Medicine organized by LU MF, where the lecturers of PBSP Nursing, industry professionals, lecturers and students from various Latvian and foreign universities participate with reports, 2. Lecturers participate in international scientific conferences, conferences and seminars organized by industry professionals. 3. Lecturers participate in continuing education courses for additional English language training, leadership skills and digital skills courses, which are conducted within the framework of the project “Renewal of Academic Staff and Improvement of Competences

at the University of Latvia” of the specific support objective 8.2.2. (SAR. p. 572).

2.4.2. There are two groups of lecturers at the University of Latvia: lecturers, who have elected academic positions, and lecturers, who are attracted to the implementation of particular study courses. During the reporting period, the composition of the principal staff of the PBSP Nursing has been stable (SAR, p.574).
38 lecturers are involved in the implementation of PBSP Nursing, of which 32 (84.22%) lecturers are lecturers of the Faculty of Medicine, but 6 (15.78%) lecturers are attracted from other faculties (SAR, Annex 13). Some study courses are led by two or more lecturers, because the implementation of the course content requires more knowledge, skills and competence, which can be provided by several lecturers by dividing the work to be done among themselves. The lecturers of PBSP Nursing represent several branches of science - doctoral degrees have been obtained in medicine, biology, education, chemistry and economics, which is a huge advantage arising from the opportunities for multidisciplinary cooperation at the LU, while master's degrees have been received in nursing or education (SAR, p.575). During the reporting period, several lecturers have developed academic careers, for example, two (2) associate professors have become professors, but three (3) assistant professors have been elected associate professors, while three (3) have been elected as assistant professors (SAR, p.575).
During the reporting period, the lecturers have completed further studies via the LU study environment Moodle programme courses, English language courses, digital skills courses, university didactics courses and professional courses (SAR, p.575).
Based on the SAR and annexes, the expert commission found that there are no guest lecturers from universities of other countries in the study program. The experts do not have information about the participation of the study program academic staff in international exchange programs.

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4. The scientific publications and the involvement in research- related projects of the academic staff involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programmes contribute to the implementation of a high-quality doctoral study programme is not applicable. There are 577 publications of the lecturers in domestic and international cited journals in the time period from 2019 to 2021. The full list of publications can be seen in each lecturer CV attached to the SAR.

2.4.5. The lecturers of the PBSP Nursing represent several branches of science, the interaction and cooperation of lecturers takes place during various events organised by the LU: staff meetings, scientific conferences and courses of further education. During the reporting period, the lecturers of PBSP Nursing meet at the annual meeting at the end of the academic year after graduation to discuss the progress of the year, discuss the requirements for obtaining credit points for study courses, to discuss the addition of the latest library literature, as well as to update course content in the context of nursing education reform. The lecturers of PBSP Nursing meet at the end of the autumn semester meeting to evaluate the opinions expressed by students in the LUIS survey on the quality of course and programme content, and to discuss the improvement of course content and coordinate the topics of bachelor's theses based on students' proposals. The improvement of the study programme is implemented in cooperation by all parties, with consideration of students' proposals - both by reviewing the evaluations of the study courses and by talking face-to-face with the parents or representatives. The composition of lecturers on PBSP Nursing includes professionals with extensive experience in academic work, which ensures the students of PBSP Nursing with acquisition of knowledge that conforms to the topicalities of the health care sector and regulated profession, which is demonstrated both by the Bachelor's theses supervised by the lecturers, where students have received “excellent” rating (SAR, p.576).

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

Conclusions
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the lecturers of the PBSP Nursing, the expert commission concluded that the training program is implemented by highly qualified employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work in the direction of the study program. In the framework of university training programs and international scientific conferences and seminars, lecturers supplement and improve their knowledge and skills for the implementation of the curriculum of the PBSP Nursing.

Strengths:
1. Highly qualified lectures and good management of the learning process.
2. A multidisciplinary approach to the recruitment of lecturers promotes the implementation of the study program through cooperation with the LU.
3. High scientific potential for lecturers.

Weaknesses:
1. Lack of guest lectures from other counties.
2. Academic staff of the study program does not participate in international exchange programs.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualifications of the academic staff of the study program meet the conditions for the implementation of the study program and the requirements specified in the relevant regulatory acts.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

PBSP Nursing complies with the State Professional Higher Education Standard – Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 512 “Regulations on the State Standard of the Second Level Professional Higher Education”

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the document in Annex 5 giving the evidence that PBSP Nursing complies with the Professional Standard for Nurses (General Care Nurses) agreed at the meeting of the Tripartite Cooperation Council for Vocational Educational and Employment in August 2020,

protocol No. 6.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the descriptions of the study courses in Latvian (Annex 7) and English (Annex 7) languages. The descriptions are fully compliant with the requirements set forth in Section 561, Paragraph two and Section 562, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institution, they a. define the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; b. determine the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; c. outline the content of the study course necessary for the achievement of learning outcomes, contain the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, indicate other sources of information; d. describe the organization and tasks for the independent work of students; e. determine the evaluation criteria of learning outcomes.
The description of the study module determines: the learning outcomes achievable as a result of the acquisition of the study module; the plan of the study work time; the study courses included in the study module.
However, the majority of the compulsory literature lists is quite old, for example there are the editions of the year 2003, 2004 or 2010. This deficiency has to be eliminated on a short term basis, nevertheless this deficiency is not important enough to decrease the evaluation as partially compliant. It is advisable to renew mandatory literature, so it is not older than 10 years.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the diploma and its supplement is issued for completing the study programme in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers 16.04.2013. to Regulation No. 202 “Procedures for Issuing State-Recognized Higher Education Certificates”

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided Head of Study Field Declaration, (21.04.2021, No. 02) stating that the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Head of Study Field Declaration (21.04.2021, No. 18) stating that the teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of the English language.
Additionally during the meeting teaching staff of the PBSP demonstrated sufficient level of English language.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Fully compliant with the Law on Higher Education Institutions Section 46, paragraph 2 and regulations of Cabinet of Ministers 23.01.2007. to Regulation No. 70 “Mandatory regulations to be included in the study agreement” (Annex Standard sample of study agreement „Agreement for EU citizens–2021)

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the proving documents - the agreement between the University of Latvia and Riga Stradins University on taking over studies, signed 13.04.2006 No 137-29/26 for an indefinite period) (SAR, Annex Agreement on the implementation of the study programmes).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the documents - Refund and Compensation Policy Statement, No 1-13/359) (Annex Refund and Compensation Policy), which prove that students are guaranteed

compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The PBSP Nursing contains 4600 theoretical and clinical contact hours, but does not contain 2400 contact hours are implemented in a clinical environment, according to the requirements of the Directive 2005/36/EEC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the Law of the Republic of Latvia On the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications.

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The PBSP Nursing contains 4600 theoretical and clinical contact hours, but does not contain 2400 contact hours are implemented in a clinical environment, according to the requirements of the Directive 2005/36/EEC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the Law of the Republic of Latvia On the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications.

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

General conclusions

The name of the study programme, the qualification to be obtained, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements are interrelated and comply with the requirements of the Directive 2005/36/EEC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia.

The PBSP Nursing does not contain 2400 contact hours are implemented in a clinical environment, according to the requirements of the Directive 2005/36/EEC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the Law of the Republic of Latvia On the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications.

Dynamics of the number of students and employment indicators of the graduates of the PBSP Nursing shows that the study programme is economically and socially justified.
The content of the studies are topical for the nursing profession, but evidence based nursing as a specific course and the topics of bachelor theses related to nursing science could be considered. Student-centered, modern teaching and learning methods and learning environments are in use. The number of students is increasing, which may affect challenges to have enough internship places

for students.
By visiting the study bases (Houses of Nature and Science, P. Stradinš university clinical hospital) and meeting with study program managers, lecturers and students, experts have confirmed that the PBSP Nursing of the LU is well materially provided and ensures students with a high-quality education.
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the lecturers of the study program, the expert commission concluded that the training program is implemented by highly qualified employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work in the direction of the study program. In the framework of university training programs and international scientific conferences and seminars, lecturers supplement and improve their knowledge and skills for the implementation of the curriculum of the PBSP Nursing.

Strengths

1. The name of the study programme, the qualification to be obtained, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements are interrelated and comply with the requirements of the Directive 2005/36/EEC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and with the requirements of the regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia.
2. In general the content of the studies is topical. Modern teaching and learning methods and environments are in use.
3. Modern material base, premises, equipment, IT solutions.
4. Good clinical basis (hospitals) for clinical subjects and practices.
5. Highly qualified lectures and good management of the learning process;
6. A multidisciplinary approach to the recruitment of lecturers promotes the implementation of the study program through cooperation with the LU;
7. High scientific potential for lecturers.

Weaknesses

1. The PBSP Nursing does not contain 2400 contact hours are implemented in a clinical environment, according to the requirements of the Directive 2005/36/EEC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the Law of the Republic of Latvia On the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications.
2. The number of clinical teaching hours in Appendix 7 of the Program "Descriptions of the "Nursing" courses/modules of the PBSP Nursing, is not clear enough.
3. Evidence based nursing courses are not available.
4. Challenge to have enough internship places for an increasing number of students.
5. Lack of guest lectures from other counties.
6. Few study program academic staff participates in international exchange programs.
7. Literature in some study course descriptions is outdated.

Evaluation of the study programme "Nursing"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Average

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Nursing"

Short-term recommendations

1. It is necessary to introduce changes in the number of contact hours of certain study courses.
2. Evidence based nursing courses should be introduced in the study programme.
3. In the description of each study course, which envisages classes in clinical environment, in both the course plan and the course content it must be clearly indicated whether a practical class is implemented in a clinical environment. The Study Plan of the PBSP "Nursing" should be supplemented with a separate column that indicates the contact hours in a clinical environment and the clinical practice.
4. Recommended literature sources in the study course descriptions must be updated.

Long-term recommendations

1. Academic staff of the study program should participate more in international exchange programs in order to improve the training course and their international skills.
2. There should be a need to attract more guest lecturers from universities in other countries in order to gain more internationalization and international experience.
3. Continuous collaborative discussions should be organized with LU and placements to ensure enough quality internships.

II - "Optometry" ASSESSMENT

II - "Optometry" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. ABSP Optometry is a multidisciplinary study programme as it combines several fields of science, including medicine, physics, biology, chemistry, mathematics, etc. The bachelor’s degree to be obtained at ABSP Optometry belongs to the field of health sciences, since the field in which the graduate will work afterwards is related to vision care – optics salons, eye clinics and medical centers – which are part of the overall health care system; besides, this study programme is the basis for the master’s level study programme – PMSP Clinical Optometry. Therefore, we can conclude that ABSP Optometry meets the goal of the study field Health Care – to educate competent health care specialists for the Latvian national economy. The inclusion of the ABSP Optometry in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and the degree to be awarded.

2.1.2. The ABSP Optometry is an academic bachelor study programme and its amount is 120 Latvian credits (CP). The degree to be acquired – Bachelor’s Degree in Health Sciences (Optometry). The languages of instruction – Latvian and English.
In Latvian, the ABSP Optometry is implemented in three ways:
full-time intramural studies (3 study years); admission requirements - secondary education;
part-time intramural studies (4 study years); admission requirements - secondary education;
part-time extramural (4 study years); admission requirements - secondary education.
In English, ABSP Optometry is implemented in three ways:
full-time intramural studies (3 study years); admission requirements - secondary education and English language skills at least at B2 level;

part-time intramural studies (4 study years); admission requirements - secondary education and English language skills at least at B2 level;
part-time extramural (4 study years); admission requirements - secondary education and English language skills at least at B2 level.
The admission requirements (SAR, p. 465, 464) correspond to the aims and tasks of the programme SAR (p. 463).
Three different ways of implementing the study programme in both Latvian and English are justified in the SAR: “Full-time studies shall be binding on applicants who apply immediately for secondary education training. Part-time studies, on the other hand, are binding on foreign stakeholders who already work in the field of optics but want quality education in the field of vision care. After the COVID pandemic, students have expressed a desire to study in a similar way, where lectures can be listened to remotely and practical works are done onsite and learned not every day but by periods” (SAR, p. 472) and they are perfectly acceptable. Part-time studies and studies in English are implemented only for a fee and groups studying for their private funding shall only be opened in cases when a minimum number of students is enrolled who are able to cover the work of the teaching staff.
The code of the study programme according to the classification of Latvian education – 43722, where the first part 43 of the code indicates that the type of the ABSP Optometry is academic bachelor study programme and the digits of the second part of the code 722 indicate that the thematic area of education is Health Care, but the group of educational programmes is Medical Services, which includes “Optometry” (if the sixth and seventh digits of the code were specified for the study programme, then for Optometry, without indicating the first two digits, the code would be 72207 (the Cabinet Regulations No. 322, approved in Riga on June 13, 2017. “Regulations on the Classification of the Latvian Education. Annex 4).
The study results of the bacherol’s study programme correspond to the 6th level of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF), which is described in the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 322 “Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia” (June 13, 2017).
The name, aim, objectives of the study programme, as well as the degree to be obtained after completing the programme comply with the requirements of the Cabinet Regulation No 240 “Regulations on the State Academic Education Standard” (approved 13.05.2014.) and are interrelated.

2.1.3. The corrections introduced in the parameters of the ABSP Optometry (the degree to be awarded after completing the study programme, the aim, objectives and results of the study programme) within the assessment of the study field are analyzed, justified and would be supported. The degree to be awarded has been changed from a Bachelor of Science in Optometry to a Bachelor of Health Sciences (Optometry), since the ABSP Optometry is rightly included in the study field Health Care. The aim of the study programme has been specified and is appropriate to the specifics of the specialists trained in the field of health care. Accordingly, changes have also been introduced in the objectives of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved, which are also coordinated with the requirements set forth in the ECOO “European Qualification in Optics and European Diploma in Optometry” regarding the acquired knowledge, skills and competences.

2.1.4. The economic and social justification of the ABSP Optometry is based on the fact that as the field of vision services develops, trained specialists whose knowledge corresponds to the European Qualification in Optics and the European Diploma in Optometry are necessary also in Latvia. Employers admit that in the coming years, unless there begins an economic crisis in the country and the world, there will definitely be a demand for employees in optics salon, because companies are no longer willing to train and invest large amounts of money in employee training (SAR, p. 439).
Each academic year, a total of 103±11 students study in the APBS Optometry. A large number of

students are full-time intramural students studying in Latvian (the number of students correlates with the number of budget places) and the number of students is similar from year to year. Only foreign students study in part-time distance learning; for the last four years, full-time intramural studies have also been implemented in English. On average, every year there are 18±5 foreign students studying in the English language.
Optometrist's assistant is an optical specialist who advises on spectacle lenses, frames or contact lens care products based on recommendations prescribed by an optometrist. "Pasaules Optika", "Optio", "Vision Express", "Optic Guru", "Metropole", and "Fielmann Optika" providing practice and job offers for undergraduate students. The companies are interested in taking BSP Optometry students on practice and then on placement, as they no longer need additional training in optical matters (lens materials, types, calculations, shapes, etc.) but need additional training in sales service operations and specific issues (SAR, p.473).
Taking into account the above, we can conclude that the ABSP Optometry is economically and socially justified.

2.1.5. N/A

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

Conclusions
The change of the degree to be awarded from the Bachelor of Science in Optometry to the Bachelor of Health Sciences (Optometry) is welcome, and the inclusion of the ABSP Optometry in the study field Health Care is reasonable. The name of the study programme, the degree, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated and meet the requirements of the regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia. The learning outcomes to be achieved are aligned with the requirements of ECOO "European Qualification in Optics and European Diploma in Optometry". The inclusion of the ABSP Optometry in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and the degree to be awarded. The ABSP Optometry is economically and socially justified.

Strengths:
1. The change of the degree to be awarded from Bachelor of Science in Optometry to Bachelor of Health Sciences (Optometry).
2. The name of the study programme, the degree, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated and compliant with the requirements of the regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia.

No weaknesses have been identified.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. The content of ABSP is topical and up to date (SAR Section 3.2.1., p. 481-482). The content of the programme has been updated so that there is not an overlap between the courses (Annex OptoB 1:Currently and after accreditation study plans of ABSP Optometry, Annex OptoB 7: Mapping the learning outcomes of ABSP Optometry – standard model) and, furthermore, for the ABSP Optometry and subsequently PMSP Clinical Optometry to correspond with the European Qualification in Optics and European Diploma in Optometry (SAR p. 481, 484). Also, it adheres to the legislation of the Republic of Latvia (SAR p. 481, Annex OptoB 6: Compliance of the study program with the specific

normative regulation of the corresponding field, Annex Opto B 10: Compliance of BSP Optometry with the state education standard). The justification for the programme to meet the labour market needs has been demonstrated in SAR and further supported with Annex: OptoB 19: Decision No 1.10/40. There are meetings with employers every autumn (SAR p.483). This was also confirmed during the onsite visit (12.08.2022) with staff and employers. The course descriptors are standardized, clear and concise, allowing to clearly see the link between the aims and objectives of the programme and the achievable learning outcomes of the course (SAR p. 481-462 Annex OptoB 11:The course descriptions of Bachelor's study programme "Optometry"). The structure of compulsory, restricted elective and elective courses is well justified (SAR p.484-485).
It has been demonstrated in the SAR (p. 485-486) that the ABSP is regularly reviewed and improved. Student, staff and employer participation in this process is encouraged (SAR p. 483, 485-486). This was also confirmed during the on site visit (12.08.2022) with staff, students, graduates and employers). During the on-site visit (12.08.2022) students and graduates expressed overall satisfaction with the programme and its contents.
This is not a weakness of the programme per se, and, as confirmed by the programme directors of both Optometry study programmes during the onsite visit (12.08.2022), is down to the translation, however, the terminology used of what the graduates will be (assistants of eye care professionals e.g. optometrists (e.g. SAR p. 488)) should be emphasized more - this could potentially help with the confusion of students on what their role is and will be after the completion of the programme described on p. 486 in SAR, especially as the programme is also delivered in English language.
In the opinion of Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia, some literature sources are outdated (Annex AIKA annexes VM opinion) - the course descriptors should be revised to see if newer editions or alternative textbooks are available. Consider including current publications and guidelines. Experts reviewed the literature and overall it is up to date, however, the review should be done annually.

2.2.2. N/A

2.2.3. The methods of ABSP implementation contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study courses and the study programme (SAR. p. 487). Classic delivery methods (lectures, seminars etc.) have been combined with more novel methods (e.g. problem solving) (SAR p. 487-487). The use of the student centered approach has also been demonstrated (SAR p. 487). Students are encouraged to meet up and work in small groups within the facilities of the department, there is a mentorship scheme and lectures who also provide consultations outside the scheduled hours as well as detailed feedback (SAR. p. 487-488). A very positive feature of the course is introduction of the 4 week practical placement (SAR p. 488-489).
Equal opportunities have been provided to the students of different study programme implementation modes (e.g. full-time, part-time, part-time extramural) (SAR p.490). All types of programme are delivered both in Latvian and English languages (SAR p. 465). Study courses are conducted on-site (100% for the form of full-time studies, 75% for the form of part-time onsite studies and 25% for the part-time extramural studies) (SAR p. 490, see section 2.1.1. for a breakdown for length of the studies for each study mode). Virtual learning environment (Moodle) is used to support student learning experience for different study modes and allows sharing of various learning resources (lecture materials, additional reading material and interactive content) as well as delivering assessments (SAR p. 490). Students also have the opportunity to participate in student mobility (e.g. ERASMUS), however only 2% students within the reporting period have used this option (SAR p. 479).
The assessment type and criteria is well known to the students in advance of the assessments (SAR p. 491). Mid-term assessments are combined with the final assessment which contribute to the final mark for 50% or less. The final examination for the BSP has been well justified and explained (SAR p.

492), however, the proportion of ‘known’ (90%) vs ‘hidden’(10%) questions could be reviewed in favor of more even split (e.g. 70% vs 30% respectively). The assessments are marked on a uniformly agreed 10-point scale. During the onsite visit (12.08.2022) in meetings with students and graduates an overall satisfaction was expressed about programme implementation and varied modes of delivery.
How the course is implemented and assessed is dependent on the course lead. This is mostly one individual - this model is represented across all study programmes in the study field. ABSP Optometry has established mechanisms on how it supports and trains its new staff members (SAR p. 485-487, 494), which are well justified and implemented. However, a more team-oriented approach in the development of lecture courses and assessments should be considered. This would provide a more objective assessment methodology. As mentioned before, this will be a recommendation for the whole study field.

2.2.4. There is no legal requirement for students to have an internship, but they have an internship for 4 CP during the study period. This has been implemented by a request by the LU Student Self-Government and conforms with the professional standard of the optometrist assistant (SAR p. 488). Students also by showing employers confirmation letter can recognize some parts of the internship (SAR p. 488-489). The aim of the practice is to train, improve, and strengthen the skills and competences of the assistant for eye care professionals (e.g. optometrist) to work in health care companies as a consultant of optical appliances, manufacturer and as an optometrist's assistant to complete various tasks related to the vision assessment process (SAR p. 488-489). The establishment of practice and learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, and competences) are developed not only in relation to the results of the study programme but also in the framework of the optometrist's assistant professional standard approved in October 2019. (SAR section 3.2.4. page 488). Student suggestions and complaints have been taken into account for improving the internship organization. During the onsite visit (12.08.2022) in the meeting with employers the placement was viewed positively and overall stated that the students’ and graduates’ knowledge has been improved over the last couple of years.

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6. During previous accreditation period 233 Bachelor thesis has been defended. (SAR 3.2.6. page 501.) They cover different directions of optometry - research on vision function and visual perception of school-age children; studies on changes in visual parameters due to visual fatigue; studies on visual ergonomics testing of new equipment; applications of spectacle lenses and their optics etc. that are relevant topics for the field of optometry and optics.

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

Conclusions
Overall, the ABSP Optometry fulfills all the descriptors in this Section. The programme complies with all the legal requirements. The content of the programme is topical and relevant. Multiple improvements to the programme have been made (e.g. introduction of placement in the practice) over the reporting period. The labour market demand and scientific contribution have been well justified. The various programme delivery modes allow accessibility for a wider range of students. Equal opportunities are given to students enrolled in different study modes. Assessment criteria are clear and consistent. However, a practice where the course and assessments are developed and delivered by more than one person should be considered (this is a recommendation for the whole study field). The question bank for the final bachelor’s exam includes 90% of questions used in the actual assessment. This proportion should be reviewed and more favorable proportion to

‘hidden/unknown’ questions should be chosen. Also, the use of the terminology of what the student will be after completing the programme (e.g. eye care practitioner assistant vs dispensing optician) should be reviewed, especially if the programme is also delivered in English as there is a clear distinction between these professions. If the dispensing optician (DO) is the preferred term (defined as dispensing opticians – selects an appropriate vision correction product, vision health care products and performs commercial operations to ensure the circulation of visual aids and their care products in SAR p. 498) or if both terms are used, then they should not be used interchangeably with optometrist assistant (SAR e.g. p. 488 last paragraph in text “In 2019, the standard for the profession of optometrist's assistant (dispensing optician) was developed...” or vice versa to avoid any confusion. If this is a translation error, the terminology should be discussed with the translator beforehand and explained to them as it has been in SAR p. 498”. Both programme directors strongly implied that this is a translation error, however, even when reading SAR and writing this report, experts who were not specialists in this field got confused. The course reading lists should be updated annually and where possible replace with the current editions or a newer alternative text book.

Strengths:
1. Topical and relevant study programme that complies with all the relevant legislation of the Republic of Latvia; placement in optometric practice; flexible study modes that ensures accessibility for a wider range of students. Students are introduced and engaged in the scientific work from early on in their studies. They can take part in research projects (e.g. vision function and visual perception of school-age children) and have to complete a bachelor’s thesis relevant in optometry or optics. Also, they are participating in seminars in which current trends in vision science are discussed.

Weaknesses:
1. The question bank for practicing for the final bachelor’s exam should be revised and a more favorable proportion of ‘hidden/unknown’ questions should be used (e.g. 30% instead of 10%).
2. A development and delivery of courses and assessments by more than one staff member (which is already a case in some lecture courses) would be welcomed as it minimizes any potential bias (this something that the study field as whole should consider).
3. If the dispensing optician (DO) is the preferred term (defined as dispensing opticians – selects an appropriate vision correction product, vision health care products and performs commercial operations to ensure the circulation of visual aids and their care products in SAR p. 498) or if both terms are used, then they should not be used interchangeably with optometrist assistant (SAR e.g. p. 488 last paragraph in text “In 2019, the standard for the profession of optometrist's assistant (dispensing optician) was developed...” or vice versa to avoid any confusion. If this is a translation error, the terminology should be discussed with the translator beforehand and explained to them as it has been in SAR p. 498.
4. The course reading lists should be reviewed annually and, where possible, reading material should be replaced with more current editions or newer alternative textbooks.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. The Department of Optometry and Vision Science is located at the Academic Centre of the University of Latvia on Jelgavas Street 1. Therefore, it is possible to use the extensive offer of the Academic Centre for the needs of the study programme. Auditoriums are shared with students of all faculties located at the House of Nature. If necessary, the study process can also use auditoriums at the House of Science on Jelgavas Street 3, located next to the House of Nature. All auditoriums have whiteboards and/or blackboards, projectors, laptops, and Internet access to allow the readers to deliver lecture without using their own computers. The e-studies platform can be used to demonstrate presentation. Interactive whiteboards are also available for some auditoriums. There are five computer classes in the House of Nature with capacity 15-20 workstations. The computer classes have all the necessary computer programmes not only for implementation of the study programmes in Optometry, but also for other study programmes of the University of Latvia, such as statistical programmes (SPSS, R, etc.), image analyzing programmes (ParaView, ImageJ, etc.), programming languages (Visual Studio, Java, etc.), standard office programs (MS Excel, Word, Access, Outlook, etc.), drawing programmes, etc. In support of specific studies, practices and research processes, the Department of Optometry and Vision Science has several modern laboratories (e.g., Refraction Laboratory, Eye Movement Laboratory, Vision Ergonomics Laboratory, Colour Vision Research Laboratory, Neurophysiological Process Research Laboratory, Spectacle Laboratory, and Students Ambulance (SAR p 319; Tour of facilities)). Internet access is available in the buildings using wireless technology. In the study process and in the development of bachelor's theses, students use the resources of LU libraries on site, as well as many library resource databases. Graduates and students are very satisfied with the teaching materials and conditions because the literature is widely available both in the library and electronically, all the latest is available in English (meeting with graduates; meeting with students).

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3. The Department of Optometry and Vision Science is responsible for the implementation of two study programmes in optometry, the financial base is combined and not separately distributed to the relevant study programme. The State-funded budget places (68 bachelor's and 12 master's) and the additional funding obtained from the students that pay for their studies provide basic 326 functions of the study programmes – environment (including all auditoriums proportional to the size of the department, 100% of all rooms for academic and administrative staff and laboratories of the Department of the Optometry and Vision Science), as well as salaries of the teaching staff.
The same premises, purchased books and technologies are used for both study programmes in optometry and all study forms. After all internal fees defined by the University of Latvia and the Faculty of Physics Mathematics and Optometry, there remains about 253,000 EUR per year from the State-funded budget places, about 90,000 EUR per year from students, who pay for their studies, and about 15,000-20,000 EUR per year from other projects for infrastructure improvement and purchase of books as the available funding of the Department of Optometry and Vision Science (SAR p.325).

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

Conclusions
The material and technical base of the study program is modern and well equipped and meets all the requirements to implement ABSP Optometry study program. Study program has excellent library resources electronically and on site.

Strengths:
1. The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning conditions with good equipment and modern technologies.
2. Plenty of high quality library resources.

Weaknesses:
None identified.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning conditions of the Study program. There are modern and well equipped bases that meet all the requirements to implement an Optometry study program. Study program has excellent library resources electronically and on site.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. ABSP Optometry is composed based on the European and Latvian requirements, regarding the structure of the study programme, the breakdown of courses, the content requested and the number of credits required. For lecturers requirements are regulated by Cabinet Regulation No. 49 Regulation on Latvian Science Sectors and Sub-sectors (23 January 2018), Law on Higher Education Institutions (2 November 1995).
In the knowledge of what is required to be included in the course content (as defined by the European Qualification in Optics and the European Diploma in Optometry guidelines), the teaching staff of appropriate competence is involved in the development of the course content (SAR, p.513).
Confirmation that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions is viewable in SAR Annex OptoB_24.
The following distribution of lecturers are working in the ABSP Optometry: professors (17%), associate professors (11%), assistant professors (49%), lecturers (15%), and assistants, readers (8%). Most study courses are delivered by assistant professors, lecturers, and other readers. The readers are involved in the delivery of specific study courses and where specific expertise is required. The guest readers are involved in the delivery of specific study courses and where specific expertise is required, e.g. a guest lecturer from the University of Manchester (the United Kingdom) was invited to deliver the course “Research Methods in Vision Science” in 2021/2022 Autumn semester.
In cooperation with other faculties of LU, the study programme involves competent lecturers for general courses. The qualification requirements of all lecturers are regulated by both the Law on Higher Education and the internal standards of the LU.
Most readers are elected, and their academic positions are in line with previous achievements: obtained degrees and previous scientific, teaching, and professional experience (SAR, p.513).
According to experts, more international lecturers could make the program more interesting in terms of content and internationally recognizable.
SAR is not specified and experts found during the meeting that only a few lecturers participated in international exchange programs. The participation of program lecturers in international exchange

programs and the experience gained there would improve the content of the curriculum and the way it is presented.

2.4.2. ABSP Optometry courses are not only delivered by the Department of Optometry and Vision Science academic staff members. Approximately 50% of the courses are delivered by lecturers from other LU faculties and departments. The current study plan for the academic year 2020/2021 and the lecturers involved (see SAR,p.516, Annex OptoB 17) indicates that 32 lecturers are involved in the implementation of the content of the full-time and part-time Bachelor's study programmes both in Latvian and English languages. Of these, 25 or 78% have a doctoral degree and each lecturer is competent in the relevant study course. Some study courses are taught by two or more lecturers, as the implementation of the course content requires more extensive knowledge, skills and competences, which can be provided by several lecturers that share their work (SAR, p.516, Annex OptoB 17).
During these years a generational change has taken place and a new generation of teachers, lecturers and assistants has come in, with a greater proportion compared to the previous years (SAR, Table 3.4.2.1).
The lecturers of the study program improve their knowledge by participating in targeted courses and conferences of the LU, as well as in international conferences, to improve the organization of teaching and scientific work. Based on discussions with study program academic staff, experts did not see participants of international exchange programs among the lecturers.

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4. The number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members are shown in the personal CV (see SAR, Annex : Optometry_Teaching_Staff_CVs.zip). During the onsite visit (12.08.2022), it was noted by the members of staff that it is difficult to publish their scientific work internationally due to increased cost, plus editing services for English language are required, therefore, they have to choose what, where and how to publish their work. Therefore, more funding should be allocated for this purpose.
The Department of Optometry and Vision Science is linked to vision studies and all previous and current projects are developed in close cooperation between readers and scientific staff of the department. Major projects involving students of optometry study programmes:
The Development of Vision Screening and Training Device (LIDA and UL Commercialization project No KC-PI-2020/10) duration: 01.04.2020. -30.06.2022. financing: 302 288.- EUR involved: 6 readers, 18 bachelor and master students and 2 doctoral students; The Evaluation of the Volumetric Display 3D image’s Effect on Human Vision Systems (Contract research project No ZD2019/20807, customer "LightSpace Technologies") duration: 01.04.2019. -31.03.2021. financing: 154 880.- EUR involved: 2 readers, 8 bachelor and master students and 2 doctoral students;
The Development of Environment for Vision Ergonomics Research (UL Foundation project No 2184): duration: 01.04.2017. -31.03.2019. financing: 56 805.- EUR involved: 8 readers, 28 bachelor and master students and 2 doctoral students;
Studies of the Physiology of Vision and Visual Perception and the Development of Method for the Assessment of Parameters (UL project No AAP 2015/B003; ZD2014/AZ77): duration: 01.01.2016-31.12.2019. financing: 182 076.- EUR involved: 8 readers, 83 bachelor and master students and 3 doctoral students;
Studies of the Physiology of Visual Overload and the Development of Methodology for the Diagnostics of Visual Stress (ESF project 2013/0021/1DP/1.1.2.0/13/APIA/VIAA/0001): duration: 01.10.2013-31.12.2015. financing: 496 432.- EUR involved: 8 readers, 24 bachelor and master students and 2 doctoral students;
Study of the Disorders of Visual Function and Perception in School-Aged Children and the

Development of Diagnostic Methodology (ERDF project 2011/0004/2DP/2.1.1.1.0/10/APIA/VIAA/027): duration: 01.04.2011 -31.12.2013. financing: 399 524.- EUR involved: 6 readers, 69 bachelor and master students and 1 doctoral student (SAR, p.514).

2.4.5. After getting acquainted with the SAR and after discussions with the program leaders, the experts have seen that, in the development and improvement of the study programme, the student's proposals are taken into account both by using the evaluations of study courses and by speaking in person with the representatives of the student groups. The issue is addressed if students are frustrated with pursuing a study course or have serious problems with the lecturer of the course. The director of the study programme listens to both the opinion of the students and the lecturer of the course. Then, changes are made in the course content and implementation type, or the course is supplemented with new teaching methods. If the above measures do not make a positive change over three years and the problems persist, a new course lecturer is being sought (SAR, p.518).
The lecturers of the ABSP Optometry represent several branches of science, the interaction and cooperation of lecturers takes place during various events organized by the LU: staff meetings, scientific conferences and courses of further education.

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

Conclusions
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the lecturers of the ABSP Optometry, the expert commission concluded that the study program is implemented by highly qualified employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work in the direction of the study program. In the framework of university training programs and international scientific conferences and seminars, lecturers supplement and improve their knowledge and skills for the implementation of the curriculum of the ABSP Optometry.

Strengths:
1. Highly qualified lectures and good management of the learning process;
2. A multidisciplinary approach to the recruitment of lecturers promotes the implementation of the study program through cooperation with the LU;
3. High scientific potential for lecturers.

Weaknesses:
1. Only one of guest lecturer from other counties.
2. Few study program academic staff participates in international exchange programs.
3. Difficulties with publishing scientific work due to increased cost.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualifications of the academic staff of the study program meet the conditions for the implementation of the study program and the requirements specified in the relevant regulatory acts.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the document in Annex 10 giving the prove that the ABSP Optometry complies with Cabinet Regulation No 240 “Regulations of the national standard for academic education” (approved 13.05.2014).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the descriptions of the study courses in Latvian (Annex OptoB 11) and English (OptoB 11) languages. The descriptions are fully compliant with the requirements set forth in Section 561, Paragraph two and Section 562, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institution, they a. define the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; b. determine the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; c. outline the content of the study course necessary for the achievement of learning outcomes, contain the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, indicate other sources of information; d. describe the organization and tasks for the independent work of students; e. determine the evaluation criteria of learning outcomes.
The description of the study module determines: the learning outcomes achievable as a result of the acquisition of the study module; the plan of the study work time; the study courses included in the study module.
In the opinion of Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia, some literature sources are outdated (Annex AIKA annexes VM opinion) - the course descriptors should be revised to see if newer editions or alternative textbooks are available. Consider including current publications and guidelines. Experts reviewed the literature and overall it is up to date, however, the review should be done annually. This deficiency is not important enough to decrease the evaluation as partially compliant.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the diploma and its supplement is issued for completing the study programme in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers 16.04.2013. to Regulation No. 202 “Procedures for Issuing State-Recognized Higher Education Certificates”.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the The Declaration (Riga, 21.04.2021, No 26) of the head of study field (Annex OptoB 24) certifying that the academic staff involved in the implementation of the Bachelor study programme “Optometry” (code 43722) complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Decision of the Council for Higher Education addressed to University of Latvia (25th of April, 2022, No 1.10/40) to support the University of Latvia in starting implementing the Optometry bachelor’s study programme, which is intended for less than 250 full-time students (Annex OptoB 19).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided Head of Study Field Declaration, (21.04.2021, No. 04) stating that the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Head of Study Field Declaration (21.04.2021, No. 17) stating that the teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of the English language.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Fully compliant with the Law on Higher Education Institutions Section 46, paragraph 2 and regulations of Cabinet of Ministers 23.01.2007. to Regulation No. 70 “Mandatory regulations to be included in the study agreement” (Annex Standard sample of study agreement „Agreement for EU citizens–2021).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Declaration No 1-13/441 (SAR, Annex Agreement on the implementation of the study programmes), proving that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Refund and Compensation Policy Statement, No 1-13/360) (Annex Refund and Compensation Policy), which confirms that the students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme’s license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

ABSP Optometry is the basis for an optometrist’s education that consists of the 3+2 model (3 years of bachelor's studies + 2 years of professional master's studies). BSP Optometry does not give a qualification, but the specific courses of study programme are based on education and qualification requirements that are also determined by the Medical Treatment Law (adopted on 12.06.1997.), Cabinet Regulation No 268 Regulations on the Competence of Medical Practitioners and Students Acquiring First or Second Level Professional Higher Medical Education Programs in Medical Treatment and the Amount of Theoretical and Practical Knowledge of These Persons (adopted on 24.03.2009), and the content standard of European Diploma in Optometry (upgraded version October 2017). (Annex OptoB 6).

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The ABSP Optometry fully complies with all the applicable requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

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

General conclusions

The ABSP Optometry adheres to all legislative requirements and is a part of the multidisciplinary LU and study field Health Care family. The change of the degree to be awarded from Bachelor of Science in Optometry to Bachelor of Health Sciences and Optometry is welcomed and well justified. The programme is profitable and the enrollment is stable. The prospects of future graduates are good as there is a shortage of highly qualified optometrist assistants. The content of the programmes is topical and relevant. Students have the opportunity to undergo a practical placement in optometric practice, which is highly regarded by the students, graduates and employers. The programme is offered in various delivery modes, thus widening the access to a bigger pool of prospective students to gain the qualification. Equal opportunities are given to students enrolled in different modes of study programme. The teaching staff is highly qualified and motivated to provide students with an engaging and qualitative learning experience. They are also engaged in research projects and writing of scientific papers, which, in turn, allows them to use these results in the teaching process. The material technical base is excellent as the House of Nature is a modern new building with good accessibility and 24/7 library access. All afortmentiomed are the strengths of the programme.

Strengths

1. The change of the degree to be awarded from Bachelor of Science in Optometry to Bachelor of Health Sciences and Optometry is welcomed and well justified.
2. The programme is profitable and the enrollment is stable. The prospects of future graduates are good as there is a shortage of highly qualified optometrist assistants.
3. The content of the programmes is topical and relevant.
4. Students have the opportunity to undergo a practical placement in optometric practice, which is highly regarded by the students, graduates and employers.
5. The programme is offered in various delivery modes, thus widening the access to a bigger pool of prospective students to gain the qualification. Equal opportunities are given to students enrolled in different modes of study programme.
6. The teaching staff is highly qualified and motivated to provide students with an engaging and qualitative learning experience. They are also engaged in research projects and writing of scientific papers, which, in turn, allows them to use these results in the teaching process.
7. The material technical base is excellent as the House of Nature is a modern new building with good accessibility and 24/7 library access.

Weaknesses

1. The confusion with the terms of “optometrist assistant” and “dispensing optician” (please see conclusion for section 2.2. for more detailed explanation).

2. The outgoing staff and student mobility is insufficient and more international guest lecturers should be invited to present or be involved in the teaching process to increase the international recognition of the programme and university. This would also help to improve the English skills as one of the delivery languages for the programme is English.
3. The question bank of the final bachelor's exam contains 90% of the questions included in the final assessment. Lowering the proportion should be considered.
4. During the on site visit the staff made a comment regarding the publishing of scientific work, that it is expensive, plus editing services are required for English language, which makes publishing even more expensive. Therefore, they have to choose what, where and how to publish. Thus, more funding could be allocated for publications.
5. The course reading lists should be updated annually and where possible older textbooks should be replaced with more current editions or newer alternative textbooks. Also, more current publications with clinical guidelines should be included.

The identified weaknesses are minor and do not have a significant enough impact on any of the forms of delivery of the programme or the quality of the programme as whole, however they should be taken into account for further improvement.

Evaluation of the study programme "Optometry"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Optometry"

Short-term recommendations

1. If the dispensing optician (DO) is the preferred term (defined as dispensing opticians – selects an appropriate vision correction product, vision health care products and performs commercial operations to ensure the circulation of visual aids and their care products in SAR p. 498) or if both terms are used, then they should not be used interchangeably with optometrist assistant (SAR e.g. p. 488 last paragraph in text "In 2019, the standard for the profession of optometrist's assistant (dispensing optician) was developed…" or vice versa to avoid any confusion. If this is a translation error, the terminology should be discussed with the translator beforehand and explained to them as it has been in SAR p. 498.
2. Revise the proportion of "known" and "hidden" (90% vs 10%) questions in the final bachelor's exam. This proportion should be increased in favor of "hidden" questions (e.g. 30%) in both the practicing question bank and subsequently the final exam.
3. Review the course reading lists to see if more current editions of books or newer alternative text books are available. Current papers with clinical guidelines should also be used.

Long-term recommendations

1. Increase the funding allocation for publications. On many occasions staff has to choose what, where and how to publish, as it is expensive. Plus, editing services for the English language are required, which makes publishing even more expensive.

2. Optometry department successfully uses the mixed group approach for both home and international students. However, for both staff and students the English language skills should be improved. Staff has availability to attend English language courses hosted by LU and the improvement is significant and visible but further improvement would be required. However, when it comes to students and graduates, it is evident that the vast majority of them would highly benefit from additional English language courses. To grasp the overall idea of the concept because the terminology is similar or information could be gathered from context of the lecture or the material, is not sufficient to gain a strong and fundamental understanding and subsequently, a knowledge base, especially as most of the core literature in Optometry is in English.
3. The outgoing staff and student mobility is insufficient. Students should be encouraged to take part in ERASMUS mobility and other similar projects, ensuring that the return to studies in LU will be smooth and facilitated by an individual study plan. The Staff mobility also should be encouraged. This would help with the improvement of English skills, networking and international recognition of the Optometry department and LU.
4. More international guest lectures should be invited to participate within the programme or departmental activities. This again will help with international recognition of the department and the improvement of English skills and networking.
5. A development and delivery of courses and assessments by more than one staff member (which is already a case in some lecture courses) would be welcomed as it minimizes any potential bias (this something that the study field as whole should consider).

II - "Pharmacy" ASSESSMENT

II - "Pharmacy" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The study programme complies with the study field. SAR page 20 states that study field Health Care aims “to ensure the acquisition of quality education based on high-quality study results, providing graduates with the necessary knowledge, skills and competence, introduction of innovative study process methods and training of highly qualified professionals, graduating from study programmes of that level, preparation of competent professionals, highly demanded in the labour market both in Latvia and abroad, providing the opportunity to obtain a successive education in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework, starting with bachelor's, continuing with master and finishing with doctoral studies.” The bachelor’s study programme “Pharmacy” aims to “to provide students with the necessary set of knowledge and practical skills to continue their education in the Master's program in pharmacy and to achieve the level of education specified in Directive 2005/36 / EC for the education of a pharmacist.” (SAR p. 215).

2.1.2. The title of the programme reflects the content of the study programme and is in agreement with the code of the study programme (43725) and the degree to be obtained: Bachelor’s Degree of Health Sciences in Pharmacy (Cabinet Regulations No. 322 “Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia”. The admission criteria are well mapped out and explained in the SAR (p. 217-218). A university specific formula has been developed to take into account state exams (CE) as well as specific requirements (e.g. minimum grade in chemistry - 4), additional activities (e.g. graduates of School of Young Medicine at LU) or outstanding achievements (national or international chemistry olympiad winners). The admission criteria correspond to the aims and tasks of the

programme as well as the learning outcomes as stated in SAR (page 218) and demonstrated by Annexes 1, 7 & 8. However, the 16 learning outcomes of the study programme could be combined to form a maximum of 9 learning outcomes (SAR p. 213). The BSP Pharmacy is delivered in accordance with the 3+2 year Bologna Declaration (3 years for BSP) and is well justified. The programme is delivered as a full time programme in Latvian language (SAR page 214) to meet the requirements for a BSP and, subsequently, MSP graduates to meet the requirements for a pharmacy degree as stated in Directive 2005/36/EC (SAR p. 216, Annex 9: Council of Higher Education Decision No 1219.05.2021.). As discussed with the staff, students, graduates and employers during the on-site visit (09.08.2022), there is an overall satisfaction with the study programme (e.g. content, learning outcomes, degree obtained/to be obtained) and the knowledge of the graduates. The students overall are informed about the Bologna principle and that to become a fully qualified pharmacist they will have to study for 5 years and continue their studies in MSP, which this study programme permits. Nevertheless it is important to display such information at the university web page, that after graduating Bachelor level program students have to also finish Masters level to obtain pharmacists degree. This information should be available before enrollment of the students in the study programme.

2.1.3. In the new accreditation period ‘aim of the study programme’ and ‘learning outcomes’ have been changed. The justification for the learning outcomes of the study programme is sufficiently justified with “the latest study programme parameter formulation in the University of Latvia” but could be more specific. The justification for the aim of the study programme is vague and should be more specific. How is the programme “more specific and appropriate to the specifics of the specialists to be trained in the field of health care” - examples should be given (SAR p. 215), for example, change in CP in some lecture courses (Pharmaceutical Cell Biology (from 3 to 4.5 ECTS) and Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapy II (from 3 to 4.5 ECTS)) as per suggestion of students and graduates (SAR p. 240). From the conversations with the staff and students during the on-site visit (09.08.2022) it was clarified that course content is updated and reviewed annually, as well as the CP amount for specific courses has been changed. Some courses (e.g. Basic Chemistry) have been removed from the programme. Such changes have been beneficial to raise student interest in scientific research activities and provided changes based on latest industry trends and employers suggestions, for example introducing psychology study courses to prepare students for actual work in the pharmacy.
2.1.4. The economic and social need of the programme is well justified. There is a shortage of pharmacists in the Republic of Latvia (SAR p. 219, Annex 9: Council of Higher Education Decision No 1219.05.2021). Almost all of the BSP graduates choose to pursue master’s degree to become fully qualified specialists - pharmacists (SAR p. 149, 218). The programme stays relevant by keeping up with the trends in the industry and labour market by adapting and updating its content according to the trends. The staff is engaged in the professional associations and committees and certifications board (SAR p. 219). The student enrollment in the programme is described as stable and in accordance with the current overall demographic trends (SAR p. 2019-220). The dropout rate has been relatively stable in recent years and around 11% and has been mostly linked to individual circumstances (e.g. personal reasons, lack of motivation) (SAR p. 220). The annual enrollment meets the minimum requirement for the programme to be profitable (SAR p. 235). More than 75% of the BSP students start working in pharmacies or industry during their studies (SAR p. 2018-19) and, as mentioned above almost all continue further education in MSP combined with the pharmacist shortage, suggesting a good employability. The free movement of EU and the programmes compliance with European regulations increases the competition between EU countries as many struggle with highly skilled worker shortage (SAR p. 220).

2.1.5. N/A

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

Conclusions
The indicators describing the programme are well mapped out and in accordance with aims set out by the study field Health Care. The study programme corresponds to the legislation of the Republic of Latvia and aims to prepare highly skilled professionals. The enrollment of students in the programme is stable and good and pharmacists are in demand. However the justification provided for the aim of the study programme for the new accreditation period is too vague and should be more specific. Current study programme has 16 learning outcomes which should be reduced below 10.

Strengths:
1. A programme that according to the descriptors complies with all the university and the Republic of Latvia, as well EU regulations and prepares in-demand highly skilled professionals.

Weaknesses:
1. The learning outcomes of the study programme should be reviewed, summarized and combined so that the total number does not exceed 9.
2. Justification of the aims of the programme is too vague - examples should be provided.
3. Students before enrolling in the study programme can not know that they will also have to finish a Masters level programme to legally work in the pharmaceutical industry.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. Academic Bachelor study programme Pharmacy (43725) aims to provide students with the necessary set of knowledge and practical skills to continue their education in the master's study program in pharmacy (SAR page 212.) The content of the study programme is topical and is interconnected and complementary to the study field, to the pharmaceutical industry not only in Bachelors level but also can be viewed together with Masters level since the programme is fulfilling requirements set in EU Directive 2005/36 / EC. Study programme also meets the needs of the industry, for example, in previous accreditation period there have been different changes to react to demands from the industry. For example, study course in Psychology have been introduced to help students to prepare for work with patients. To raise the knowledge of pharmacology additional CP have been added to the relevant study course. Also regarding research, the programme has put a bigger emphasis on the study course “Pharmaceutical Cell Biology” that was increased from 2 to 3 CP to prepare future researchers for in vitro drug research in a cell culture laboratory. The mandatory part of the study programme covers all needs so the students could obtain a degree in pharmacy in the future. All the learning outcomes can be found in each specific study course description in a very detailed manner, their achievement leads to fulfillment of study programme learning outcomes. The study programme complies with the state education standard Cabinet of Ministers No. 240. Study programme is awarding in total 120 CP and at least 10 CP are allocated to Bachelor thesis, students after graduation have opportunity to continue studies in Master level programme. Study courses are available for compulsory and elective compulsory parts. Although, after graduation students are not even able to work as pharmacist assistants in the pharmacy. So to pursue any career in the pharmaceutical industry students have no choice but to continue studies in Master level studies to obtain a Pharmacist degree. Since study courses are covering a wide range of the industry specifics, the study programme meets the latest trends and can provide basic information about opportunities in the pharmaceutical industry. Furthermore the knowledge obtained for students is sufficient for them to enter a Masters study programme without any

problems.

2.2.2. N/A

2.2.3. Different study implementation methods are used to achieve different learning outcomes set for each study course description. For example, starting with regular lectures and practical lessons, seminars and leading to group assignments, group works and student self-evaluation, which also demonstrates student centered learning approach. The range of different studying methods enables students to achieve learning outcomes set by the study courses and the whole study programme. Nevertheless student-centered approaches such as problem-based and project-based learning, flipped classrooms etc should be employed more. Also student self reflection can be encouraged and used more in everyday study processes. During the interviews with employers they indicated interest into participation at the evaluation of final thesis, to provide direct input for the students from industry point of view.

2.2.4. N/A

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6. The study work and final thesis topics are relevant to the study field and correspond to the study programme as well. They also highlight how the pharmacy industry can interact with other STEM programmes and faculties in the university. For example, topic names - Nanoparticles of hydroxyapatite effect on mesenchymal stem cells; 1,4-dihydropyridine derivative ESF-M1 effect on SH-SY5Y and SH-SY5Y-APP751 cells in oxidative stress model; also even covering pharmaceutical care acknowledgment field in the society - Adherence of patients with mood (affective) disorders in Latvia; and many other different interesting topics. These topics confirm student interest into scientific research and also helps to even serve as a basis for Master thesis. Such research topics also indicate high qualification of the academic staff members and that material-technical base is well developed to carry out such research.

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

Conclusions
The content of the academic Bachelor study programme Pharmacy is topical, the study courses are interconnected and are designed to lead students towards achieving study programme outcome - to continue studies in Masters level to obtain Pharmacist degree. There are different study course implementation methods that help diverse learning processes of the students. Student theses are closely related to different aspects of the Pharmaceutical industry - manufacturing, research, drug development etc.

Strengths:
1. Study programme is developing and revising study courses.
2. Study courses are designed to promote and raise interest in research in different pharmaceutical fields.

Weaknesses:
1. Obtained knowledge and skill set, degree awarded after finishing this study programme is not sufficient to provide students opportunity to work as pharmacists assistant in the Pharmacy.
2. Employers from pharmacies are not involved at evaluation of final thesis.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. The opening of the Nature House (2015) and the Science House (2018) of the LU Academic Center, where BSP Pharmacy takes place, created a high level of material and technical support. The study process occurs in modern auditoriums equipped with multimedia devices, interactive whiteboards, and Internet connections, providing high-quality audio and visual presentation of lectures. The design of the halls allows the tables to be freely rearranged, making them adaptable to different forms of learning – lectures, seminars, group work, or circular discussions – and contributing to a democratic and open learning process. Internet access is available in the buildings using wireless technology. The modern study environment at the LU Academic Center is positively evaluated by pharmacy students (SAR section 3.3.1 p 159; Tour of facilities).
Modern chemistry laboratories are available for pharmacy students at the Faculty of Chemistry, located in the House of Nature.
Students study plant and animal biology in modern classrooms and laboratories at the Faculty of Biology. The concept of the Torņakalns Academic Campus of the University of Latvia integrates the study process and a multidisciplinary approach, which provides students with a broad, versatile, and in-depth knowledge of pharmacy, chemistry, and biology.
The study program is provided at a very high level with excellent equipped laboratories (SAR section 3.3.1 p.160 Table 3.3.1.1.) For study and research purposes and for thesis development there are various research equipment from most sophisticated ones can be named- cell incubators, oxygraphs for determination of mitochondrial activity, confocal microscope, cell 3D imaging, flow cytometry, and microtome and more casual ones - pipetting stations, high-pressure liquid chromatography, gas-chromatography, active compound extraction station etc. The Pharmaceutical Compounding Laboratory (97 m2) is equipped with 20 individual workstations, electronic scales, table baskets for storing substances, water baths, lubrication equipment, essential oil extraction equipment, printers for label printing, multimedia equipment (projector, screen, computer), whiteboard, fume hoods, refrigerator, freezer. For the preparation of various dosage forms there are suppository molds, pestles, capsule filling equipment, measuring cups for liquids, pipettes, a special lamp for the control of mechanical impurities of the prepared medicine. The European Pharmacopoeia and the latest online version are available in the library of the University of Latvia. This laboratory is also used in biochemistry and pharmacognosy courses, where workplaces can be supplemented with microscopes, herbariums and drug samples. Staff have a special room (28 m2) for storing and preparing materials, including a dishwasher and oven (SAR p.230; Tour of Facilities). As of 01.12.2020, 1120 printed publications (SAR p.162-163) are available for Pharmacy students in the collection of the LU Library, 94% of which are books, 3% periodicals and 3% other publications (CD, DVD). 50% of the printed editions available in the collection of the library of the University of Latvia are in Latvian, 39% in English, 9% in Russian and 2% in German. In total, there are 30,101 copies of printed editions in the library of the LU for the provision of the Health Care study field, including specialized literature for this MSP Pharmacy.

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3. Based on the cost calculation of the bachelor's study program according to the LU developed methodology, the main cost items are teachers' remuneration - 46%, followed by general staff - 15%, property and services - 9%, infrastructure expenses 4% and 26% indirect costs. The sources of financing are the state budget grant and tuition fees. The state budget grant for a study place for each calendar year is determined in accordance with the annual agreement between the Ministry of Education and Science and the University of Latvia, taking into account the base costs of the study place in a given year, the level of the study program and the cost ratio. The budget grant for one study place at BSP Pharmacy is 4 890 EUR, which consists of the basic funding of 1630 EUR, the level coefficient 1, and the study field coefficient 3. Tuition fees at the University of Latvia are determined in a separate order for each academic year, taking into account the cost of the study place, including all costs of the study process (see above), tuition fees for similar programs at other universities, and potential students' interest in the study program.
BSP Pharmacy tuition fee is 2400 EUR per year. Taking into account the provision of financial resources, calculations are made, and various solutions are implemented to optimize the cost of studies. For example, students are offered a compact set of elective courses, maximum once every two years, but still retain full access to high-quality pharmaceutical knowledge. The funding available for BSP Pharmacy is both a state grant and tuition fee revenue. In 2021, the state budget grant funding was 127,140 EUR, while tuition fee revenue was 85,200 EUR. The total funding is 212,340 EUR, of which 157,132 EUR remains at the disposal of the faculty. The cost per 1 student is 2627 EUR. In order to ensure the profitability of BSP Pharmacy the minimum number of students is 25 (SAR p.234). There are suffiecient total number of students to ensure the profitability of the study programme (Annex 4 :Statistical data on SP students Pharmacy).

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

Conclusions
The Nature House and the Science House of the LU Academic Center offer a modern study environment with sufficient provision of technological and teaching materials. Excellent study conditions, both in terms of facilities and equipment and the availability of reference materials and literary resources for education and research.

Strengths:
1. The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning conditions with good equipment

Weaknesses: none indicated.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Excellent study conditions, both in terms of facilities and equipment and the availability of reference materials and literary resources for education and research.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. The qualification of the teaching staff involved in the implementation and delivery of the BSP Pharmacy complies with all the regulations (e.g. Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions) and “the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses” (SAR p.235, Annex 10: Head of Study Field Declaration, Annex 12: List of ABSP Pharmacy lecturers). Twenty nine members of teaching staff are involved in the delivery BSP, fifteen of those are directly employed by the Faculty of Medicine. Among the staff members are 4 professors, 3 associate professors, 9 assistant professors and 3 lecturers. The rest of academic staff are either researchers or teachers (SAR p. 236-238). The ABSP has also implemented several programme-specific criteria in the selection process for their staff members (SAR p. 235), as well as the staff has to undergo an in-service training (SAR p. 236 & 241). Although it is not specified how various language skills (native, Latvian and foreign) are assessed - this should be clarified (appropriate knowledge of the state language and foreign languages e.g. language exam certificate, an academic degree completed in Latvian etc.) (SAR p. 235).

2.4.2. The staff changes in the reporting period have not negatively affected the teaching quality (SAR p. 239) and are in accordance with all requirements (SAR p.235, Annex 10: Head of Study Field Declaration). As mentioned in Section 2.4.1. 29 members of teaching staff are involved in the implementation of BSP (SAR p. 236-238). New staff members have joined and successfully delivered new lecture courses, as well as a number of staff members have been promoted during the reporting period (SAR p. 239). In the reporting period 2 assistant professors, 4 researchers and one lecturer have joined the team (SAR p. 239-240). As mentioned in Section 2.4.1. staff undergoes in-service training (e.g. Moodle system, English language courses etc.) (SAR p. 236 & 241). There are annual and once in semester meetings to monitor the quality of the programme (SAR p. 241), as well as the university having its QA system and annual reporting in place (see Section 1.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System of this report). During the on-site visit (09.08.2022) the staff confirmed that they undergo in-service training and are familiar with the requirements.

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4. All staff members involved in the programme meet the set criteria (SAR p. 235-236, Annex 10: Head of Study Field Declaration, Annex II - Description of the Study Field - 2.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation: List of the publications, patents, and artistic creations of the teaching staff over the reporting period) , however, this conclusion can be made by viewing the list provided by the Study Field, not ABSP Pharmacy. This is cumbersome and should be reconsidered for the next reporting period, for example, both optometry programmes have included the staff CVs with the list of publications in the reporting period or other applicable relevant experience.

2.4.5. The mechanism of mutual cooperation of the teaching staff in the implementation of the study programme has been established (SAR p. 241). The varied background of teaching staff (doctoral degrees in various disciplines) has been deemed a great advantage, alongside the cooperation between different faculties and the multidisciplinary approach of the LU (SAR p. 241). LU also organizes different formal and informal events (e.g. scientific conferences and scientific cafes, respectively) for both the staff and students (SAR p. 242). As such, intra- and inter-faculty cooperation and collaboration has been ensured. This in turn, helps to review, harmonize and update teaching materials and methods (SAR p. 242). As mentioned in Section 2.4.2. There are regular annual and end of semester meetings to review and discuss the implementation of the course (SAR p. 242). During the on-site visit (08.08.2022 and 09.08.2022) the HEI management, staff and students confirmed and were able to clearly outline how the collaboration and the interdisciplinarity functions and the core of the university's teaching approach.

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

Conclusions
The ABSP Pharmacy fulfills all the applicable descriptors for teaching staff in this category. The staff are qualified and knowledgeable. Intra- and inter-faculty collaboration is ensured and enabled. The staff members are engaged in scientific and professional activities. The ABSP has university and programme specific requirements for staff recruitment and suitability, however, the assessment of language skills should be clarified. Also, for the next reporting period consideration on how scientific publications per staff member are presented in the report and annexes. The justification of the aims of the programme in the SAR (p. 215) is too vague - examples should be provided, for example, like in SAR p. 240.

Strengths:
1. Qualified and knowledgeable staff with multidisciplinary background, intra- and inter-collaboration within faculty and university.

Weaknesses:
1. The justification of the aims of the programme in the SAR (p. 215) is too vague - examples should be provided, for example, like in SAR p. 240.
2. No clear criteria for how language skills of prospective staff members are assessed - this should be specified (language certificate, high school diploma, an academic degree completed in Latvian language).
3. How the individual scientific publication requirement is met, should be updated (e.g. a separate list of all publications by ABSP Pharmacy staff should be included) as it could only be deducted from the Study Field list as no individual list was provided by BSP Pharmacy (this is not a weakness of the staff but the presentation of the report).

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LU has provided Annex 10:Head of Study Field Declaration and further details have been provided in the BSP “Pharmacy” SAR.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

University has provided comparison of the study programm and The academic Bachelor's study program Pharmacy complies with the Cabinet of Ministers 13.05.2014. regulations no. 240 “Regulations on the State Academic Education Standard”. See annex: 5.annex_FarmB_Compliance with the state education standard_Eng.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Study course descriptions are well prepared in both Latvian and English languages and almost all information based on requirements from law of Higher Education Institutions are included. Study course descriptions do not contain information about the study course director (creator) and staff members that are responsible for implementation of the course. This deficiency has to be eliminated on a short term basis, nevertheless this deficiency is not important enough to decrease the evaluation as partially compliant. Additionally it is advisable to renew mandatory literature, so it is not older than 10 years.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Diploma and diploma supplement complies with the Cabinet of Ministers 18.04.2013 regulations No. 202. See annex: 11.annex_FarmB_Diploma_Eng.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

University has provided confirmation that staff complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions. See annex: 10,pielikums_FarmB_apliecin_AL_55_pLV.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

University has provided approval (23.05.2002. No 47 from Council for Higher Education) to implement academic study programme Pharmacy with less than 250 students. See annex: 9_pielikums_FarmB _AIP atzinums_LV.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Study field director has provided confirmation that academic staff members have proficient in the Latvian language. See annex: Apliecinājumi par Valsts Valodas zināšanām.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement. In accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers No. 70. See annex: Ligums_ES_pilsoniem_2021.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LU has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme in Riga Stradins university study 2nd level professional study programme Pharmacy. See annex:Vienošanās_LU_RSU_Ārsti_Māsas_farmceiti_radiografi.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The University of Latvia has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses in case study field is not accredited. See annex: APLIECINĀJUMS_BSP_Farmācija.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

There is no specific regulatory attachment for academic Bachelor level Pharmacy programme,

but there are requirements for obtaining a degree in Pharmacy. Due to this reason Bachelor level study programme has to be taken into account together with Master level programme, since they both contribute to obtaining the degree in Pharmacy. From this point of view study programme complies and fulfills other regulatory attachments, see annex: 6.pielikums_FarmM_FarmB_atbilstība atbilstošās nozares specifiskajam normatīvajam regulējumam_LV.

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

All legislation requirements are met and are fulfilled with minor deficiencies.

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

General conclusions

No significant deficiencies were found for this study programme. The aims of the study programme are clearly defined, achievable, regarding learning outcomes it is recommended to reduce learning outcome amount to 5-9. Duration of programme is enough to fulfill all the requirements. Programme complies with state legislation, it must be taken into account that after graduating this study programme students are not able to work in Pharmacy even as pharmacist assistant, to obtain pharmacists degree they are obliged to also finish Master level study programme. Study courses in the programme are interconnected and cover all needs set by EU regulations. Student thesis developments are at high relevance and follow the latest trends in the pharmaceutical industry. Students are supervised and supported during the thesis development process. Study programme is slowly changing each year which is also confirmed during interviews from graduates of different years. Material technical base to carry out the final thesis and support a wide range of scientific activities is more than sufficient and available to students. Also work in different institutes or laboratories ensure a multidisciplinary environment for the student’s research work. The staff members involved in implementation of the programme are highly qualified, they are engaging in scientific and professional activities.

Strengths

1. A programme that according to the descriptors complies with all the university and the Republic of Latvia, as well EU regulations and prepares in-demand highly skilled professionals.
2. Study programme is developing and revising study courses.
3. Study courses are designed to promote and raise interest in research in different pharmaceutical fields.
4. The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning conditions with good equipment.
5. Qualified and knowledgeable staff with multidisciplinary background, intra- and inter-collaboration within faculty and university.

Weaknesses

1. Learning outcomes of the study programme should be reviewed, summarized and combined so that the total number does not exceed 9.

2. The justification of the aims of the programme in the SAR (p. 215) is too vague - examples should be provided, for example, like in SAR p. 240.
3. Obtained knowledge and skill set, degree awarded after finishing this study programme is not sufficient to provide students opportunity to work as pharmacists assistant in the Pharmacy.
4. No clear criteria for how language skills of prospective staff members are assessed - this should be specified (language certificate, high school diploma, an academic degree completed in Latvian language).
5. How the individual scientific publication requirement is met, should be updated (e.g. a separate list of all publications by ABSP Pharmacy staff should be included) as it could only be deducted from the Study Field list as no individual list was provided by BSP Pharmacy (this is not a weakness of the staff but the presentation of the report).

Evaluation of the study programme "Pharmacy"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Pharmacy"

Short-term recommendations

1. The study programme learning outcomes should be reviewed, summarized and combined so that the total number does not exceed 9.
2. The justification of the aims of the programme in the SAR (p. 215) is too vague - examples should be provided, for example, like in SAR p. 240.

Long-term recommendations

1. Students beforehand in the university website and when signing a contract have to be informed that under current Latvian legislation they will not be able to work as fully fledged pharmacy staff members.
2. For the next accreditation period, develop a system on how to indicate the individual scientific publication requirement is met for each staff member and how language skill level is being assessed.
3. Include employers in the evaluation of student thesis.

II - "Nutrition Science" ASSESSMENT

II - "Nutrition Science" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The strategically developed, integrated joint AMSP Nutrition Science (45722) of the University of Latvia, Riga Stradiņš University and Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies synergistically integrates into the study field Health Care.

2.1.2. The joint study programme – joint AMSP Nutrition Science is implemented as a full time study

programme with duration of two years and the amount of 80 Latvian credits (CP). The language of programme implementation – Latvian. The name of the study programme, the degree, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated. The title of the study programme includes “Nutrition Science”, which is an interdisciplinary field based on the fundamental sciences (chemistry, biology) and medicine (anatomy, physiology), as well as the regularities of health sciences and food science in maintaining and strengthening human health.
The code of the study programme according to the classification of Latvian education – 45722, where the first part 45 of the code indicates that the type of the AMSP Nutrition Science is an academic master’s study programme and the digits of the second part of the code 722 indicate that the thematic area of education is Health Care, but the group of educational programmes is Medical Services, which includes “Nutrition Science” (if the sixth and seventh digits of the code were specified for the study programme, then for Nutrition Science, without indicating the first two digits, the code would be 72208 (the Cabinet Regulations No. 322, approved in Riga on June 13, 2017. “Regulations on the Classification of the Latvian Education. Annex 4).
The degree to be awarded – Master of Health Sciences in Nutrition Science is closely related to the content of the study programme and learning outcomes to be achieved. The aim of the study programme is to educate qualified nutrition science specialists who have acquired in-depth theoretical and methodological knowledge and research skills to independently conduct research in the field of nutrition, food, food chemistry and toxicology, who are able to analyze, critically evaluate and generate new ideas and alternative approaches to nutrition and prevention of nutrition-related diseases. The objectives defined for the implementation of the aim are closely related to the learning outcomes to be achieved, which allows educating specialists for health care institutions, research work, public health policy makers, implementers of educational programmes, etc., who are endowed with critical thinking and analytical skills.
The learning outcomes of the joint AMSP Nutrition Science (results of the study programme - 13) correspond to Level 7 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF), which is described in the Cabinet Regulations No. 322 “Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia” (June 13, 2017), but the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.
The admission requirements for the programme provide for the admission of applicants with appropriate education – 2nd level professional higher education in Medicine or Dentistry, Food Technology, Veterinary Medicine, Bachelor’s or Master’s degree in Health Sciences (Nursing, Public health, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Rehabilitation), Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Sciences, Pharmacy, Food Science, Sports pedagogy and Health Education, and other related fields. Applicants must take an entrance examination, which includes an update of nutrition-related issues. Students are matriculated on a competitive basis grounded on the weighted average mark in the undergraduate education document and the results of the entrance examinations.

2.1.3. Since the previous accreditation of the study field, the definitions of parameters – the aim and objectives of the studies, as well as the results to be achieved within the joint AMSP Nutrition Science have been specified. These corrections are justified and would be supported.

2.1.4. During the reporting period, 157 master students have graduated from the joint AMSP Nutrition Science, who are employed as health care specialists (nurses, doctors, therapists, gastroenterologists, dentists, cosmetologists, etc.), nutritionists, sports teachers and fitness trainers, pharmacists, technologists of various types of food products and sales managers, etc. The content of the study programme provides an opportunity to educate competitive specialists with multidisciplinary knowledge and skills, who are able to use them in scientific research and in the practical solution of nutrition issues in accordance with the main strategic trends of the World Health Organization in the field of nutrition science (SAR, p. 526).

390 master students were matriculated in the study programme in the period 2008 – 2020 and 303 have graduated from the programme (77.7%); during the implementation of the programme from 2008 to 2020, an average of 22.3% of the students have dropped out of studies. The main reasons for the changes in the number of students: the number of master students who have weak prior knowledge in natural sciences is increasing and students (practically all) work for pay in addition to their studies (SAR, p. 528). The number of students fluctuates slightly from year to year, from 19 to 24 within one academic year.
Taking into account that the programme prepares competitive specialists with multidisciplinary knowledge and skills, and the fact that it is an inter-university study programme in which the number of students is approximately the same from year to year, we can conclude that the joint AMSP Nutrition Science is economically and socially justified.

2.1.5. The joint AMSP Nutrition Science is the only programme of its kind in Latvia and the Baltic countries. The cooperation between the University of Latvia, Riga Stradiņš University and the Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies has created an example of good management of study resources, a model of the effective use the universities' resources, their academic and research potential. By implementing an interdisciplinary approach to achieve the aims of the joint AMSP Nutrition Science, each university brings into the programme its own special experience and strategic, purposeful use of infrastructure. The development and implementation of the joint study programme is justified and ensures a high-quality study process.

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

Conclusions
The strategically developed, integrated joint AMSP Nutrition Science (45722) of the University of Latvia, Riga Stradiņš University and Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies synergistically integrates into the study field Health Care. The joint AMSP Nutrition Science is the only programme of this kind in Latvia and the Baltic countries. The cooperation between the University of Latvia, Rīga Stradiņš University and the Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies has created an example of good management of study resources, a model of the effective use the universities' resources, their academic and research potential. By implementing an interdisciplinary approach to achieve the aims of the joint AMSP Nutrition Science, each university brings into the programme its own special experience and strategic, purposeful use of infrastructure. The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the joint AMSP Nutrition Science are interrelated. The learning outcomes of the joint AMSP Nutrition Science correspond to Level 7 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF), which is described in the Cabinet Regulations No. 322 "Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia" (June 13, 2017), but, taking into account the above-mentioned regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers, the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.

Strengths:
1. The cooperation between the University of Latvia, Riga Stradiņš University and the Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies to implement the AMSP Nutrition Science has created an example of good management of study resources, a model of the effective use the universities' resources, their academic and research potential.
2. The name of the study programme, the degree, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated and compliant with the requirements of the regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia.

Weaknesses:
1. 13 results of the study programme are indicated in the AMSP Nutrition Science, but the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. The AMSP Nutrition Science' is a joint programme that is delivered together by 3 universities (Annex 11: Nutrition Science Diploma & Diploma Supplement), which means that the students enrolling in the programme have varied backgrounds. The mode of delivery is full time and in Latvian language (SAR p. 523). The content is relevant and on topic (SAR p. 530, Annex 8: KMSP Nutrition Science study course mapping). The programme complies with the legislation of the Republic of Latvia (Annex 3: Explanation of how the Joint (LU, LLU, RSU) academic Master's study program Nutrition Science ensures compliance with the provisions of Article 55.1, Paragraph two, Clause 4 of the AL that “the higher education institution and partner institutions have jointly established a joint study program quality assurance system”, Annex 10: KPMS Nutrition Science compliance with the national education standard, Annex 6: Compliance of the program with the Law on Higher Education Institutions). AMSP is designed in such a way that all students can gain the necessary knowledge (SAR p. 530). The courses are organized in 3 main blocks: A, B and C courses, ensuring that students gain the fundamental knowledge in nutrition and theoretical and methodological knowledge in scientific research; for students with different knowledge to gain the necessary in depth knowledge on core subjects; and free choice courses, respectively (SAR p. 530, Annex 1: KMSP Nutrition Science study plan, Annex 7: Course descriptions of the joint master's study program Nutrition Science, Annex 8: KMSP Nutrition Science study course mapping). Lectures and theoretical knowledge are interlinked with the practicals in clinical setting and laboratory (SAR p. 530). The content of the courses is constantly updated to meet the requirements of the evolving field and labour market (SAR p. 531). A good collaboration between lecturers and universities has also been demonstrated, where course is delivered by two or more staff members (SAR p. 530-531). This practice should be encouraged all across the study field. The course descriptors are clear and concise (Annex 7: Course descriptions of the joint master's study program Nutrition Science). This is an academic study programme so no professional qualification is issued by LU.
In the opinion of Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia, some literature sources are outdated (Annex AIKA annexes VM opinion) - the course descriptors should be revised to see if newer editions or alternative textbooks are available. Consider including current publications and guidelines. Experts reviewed the literature and overall it is up to date, however, the review should be done annually.

2.2.2. “In order to provide research-based and innovative studies that would contribute to the development of public health and well-being, both students and academics involved in the study process share their competencies with the public” (SAR 531). The research interests of the programme are demonstrated in Table 3.2.2.1 (SAR p. 531-533, Annex 88: THE 3RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE NUTRITION AND HEALTH) and some research topic examples: Nutrition - a risk factor for chronic and acute diseases, Nutritional therapy, Metabolic syndrome for medical staff. Students can attend all involved partner university departments, institutes, for example from RSU Biochemistry laboratory, LU physiology department, LLU Faculty of food technology. The involvement of the staff in the scientific research and artistic creation can be deducted from Annex 14: Head of Study Field Declaration, Annex II - Description of the Study Field - 2.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation: List of the publications, patents, and artistic creations of the teaching staff over the reporting period. However, it would be more helpful if the achievement for this criterion would be summarized separately for the programme, for example, in a way how PMSP

Clinical Optometry has done it.

2.2.3. As mentioned in Section 2.2.1. the programme is implemented as a joint study programme between 3 universities as a full time study program in Latvian language over a period of 2 years. The universities have a collaboration agreement on how programme should be implemented and which part of the programme is fulfilled by which university (Annex 73: Augstskolu (LLU, LU, RSU) Sadarbības līgums un tā grozījumi). 10 students from each university (30 in total) are enrolled in the programme each year. The main teaching methods include lectures, seminars, practical and clinical placements and self-directed learning. Virtual learning environment (Moodle) is used to facilitate the process (SAR p. 534). The assessment scale (10 point scale) is standardized and in accordance with LU requirements (SAR p. 534).
The assessment criteria are well known to students in advance and comprises interim and end of semester assessments (this contributes towards the final mark in a range of 10 -50% t). The attendance for practice in the laboratory is compulsory (SAR p. 534). Alternative measures are put in place if there is a delay with the delivery of some lecture courses - students have to individually prepare a literature review of the topic that was not covered (SAR p. 534). The assessments are designed in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia 13.05.2014, namely Regulations No. 240 “Regulations on the State Academic Education Standard” (SAR p. 534). Students, graduates, staff and employers are encouraged to participate in the improvement process of the programme (SAR P. 534), which ensures up to date and engaging programme content. The programme staff and LU also has QA system in place to ensure a smooth and engaging study process and programme delivery (SAR p.534-535). This was confirmed during the onsite visit (10.08.2022) with staff, students, graduates and employers as well as programme director and HE management.

2.2.4. N/A

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6. During the last reporting period in total 157 thesis have been developed. All theses are covering the majority of societies health problems regarding nutrition, for example how nutrition is connected to chronic diseases, or are the society members obtaining balanced and nutritious food or how nutrition influences active lifestyle. These research works are giving input to understand better Latvian population habits towards nutrition and healthy lifestyle. Topics are relevant and are well acknowledged by specialists that are evaluating thesis from all partner universities therefore also correspond to the study programme.

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

Conclusions
The programme demonstrates an excellent collaboration between 3 higher education institutions, is topical, relevant and adheres to all professional and legal requirements. The collaboration between the 3 institutions allows students with a very wide academic background to pursue the degree. Both students and staff are involved in the scientific and research activities, which again are topical and relevant, and are engaged with the general public. Assessment criteria are clear and known well in advance. The courses are delivered in collaboration between all 3 universities - this is a practice that LU should strive for and encourage for the courses and assessments to be developed and delivered by more than one staff member.

Strengths:

1. A programme that is delivered jointly by 3 universities, is topical and relevant and allows students with a wide range of academic background pursue the qualification. There is a very good collaboration between all 3 institutions and some courses are delivered jointly. This is a practice that LU should strive for and encourage for more than one staff member to develop and deliver courses and assessments. Both students and staff are involved in scientific activity and also make it relevant to the general public.

Weaknesses:
1. Some literature sources in the course descriptions are outdated.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

All topics are relevant to the study field, and bring additional knowledge about habits of nutrition habits in society.

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. AMSP Nutrition Science is implemented together by 3 higher education institutions (LU, LLU, RSU) using the material and technical base of the higher education institutions participating in this joint program in accordance with the study plan and Cooperation Agreement. All 3 institutions provide material and technical support. The study process mainly takes place in the House of Nature of the LU (since 2015) and in the House of Sciences of the LU (since 2019). A projector and laptop for presentations are available in all auditoriums; in large audiences - sound equipment and recording capabilities. Wireless internet coverage is available throughout the building.
Study courses and elaboration of master's theses, in which practical work is planned, are implemented in laboratories, which are equipped with the necessary research equipment and data processing programs. Study courses and practical work are also implemented in medical institutions and research institutes, for example, the University of Latvia has appropriate premises and analytical equipment for physical, chemical and microbiological research. LU Faculty of Chemistry has equipment for determination of biologically active compounds and micro and macroelements in biological samples, food raw materials and food (SAR, p.538). The study process and internship involves university hospitals, scientific research institutes, for example: UL Institute of Microbiology and Biotechnology; Institute Of Organic Synthesis; Latvian Scientific Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and the Environment BIOR under the Ministry of Agriculture; Health Ministry Center for Disease Prevention and Control and, etc. (SAR, p. 538).
The amount of information resources required for studies is supplemented every year. The Purchase of internationally recognized teaching materials in English is significantly increasing. An important role is to improve the range of e-books, which allows anyone interested to partially replace paper books. Every user has access to an electronic joint catalog, with the help of which the necessary information resources are searched and reserved remotely. Inter library loan and international inter library loan services are available to students. The UL Library consists of three databases: the database of publications and history of UL scientists, the database of dissertations developed and defended by the University of Latvia, the database of final theses of the University of Latvia.Significant international databases are available and used in the field of health care studies.

In total, SP Nutrition Science students can use more than 22 databases to search for information (SAR, p.538).
LU library has lot of printed publications available for SP Nutrition Science (SAR, p.539; Table 3.3.1.1 Literature available in the Library of the University of Latvia SP Nutrition Science).

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3. Since the beginning of the implementation of the program in 2006, the implementation of the program has been financially ensured with the state budget funds in accordance with the master's level of the study program. LU receives funding from the Ministry of Education and Science; LLU- from the Ministry of Agriculture; RSU- no VM. The state budget grant for a study place is determined for each year in accordance with the annual agreement between the Ministry of Education and Science and the University of Latvia. Funding for the Master's study program is determined by the basic funding of the study place, the level of the study program and the cost coefficient for the thematic area of education. 2019 The budget grant of the study place for nutrition was 6833 euros (1518.44 x 1.5 x 3). In the financial year 2019: for the implementation of the LU program received from the Ministry of Education and Science - 81,996 euros (6833 x 12 study places); from LLU and RSU - 59,559 euros (in accordance with the Cooperation Agreement, the received funding is redistributed between higher education institutions, it is determined by the contribution of the teaching staff of each higher education institution in the implementation of the program in each financial year).
The total budget funding of the University of Latvia for the implementation of the program is141,556 euros. In the financial year 2019, the teaching staff of the University of Latvia implements 62.53% of the total CP in the study plan, which corresponds to the number of 25.63 students (in 2019, an average of 41 master students study in the program); LU funding per budget place in the financial year 2019: 141 555: 25.63 = 5523 euros. In order to ensure the profitability of SP Nutrition Science the minimum number of students is 10.

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

Conclusions
The Nature House and the Science House of the LU Academic Center offer a modern study environment with sufficient provision of technological and teaching materials.Additional opportunities are provided by both cooperating universities.The multidisciplinary joint program uses the resources of 3 universities, thus ensuring the high-quality and diverse technological provision and scientific resources.

Strengths:
1. The multidisciplinary joint program with resources of 3 universities has the interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning conditions with good equipment and modern technologies.

Weaknesses:
No significant weaknesses detected.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The multidisciplinary joint program uses the resources of 3 universities, thus ensuring the high-quality and diverse technological provision and scientific resources of the library and availability of data bases. Some of the literature resources in the study course descriptions were identified as outdated, this deficiency should be eliminated in the short-time basis, but it does not decrease the compliance to partial.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. AMSP Nutrition Science is joint study program between three universities University of Latvia (LU), Riga Stradiņš University (RSU), Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies (LLU) (Annex 73 "KMSP Uzturzinatne_Augstskolu (LLU, LU, RSU) Sadarbības līgums un tā grozījumi.docx").
Since the beginning of the AMSP Nutrition Science (2006), the teaching staff of higher education institutions (LU, RSU, LLU), are specialists with active scientific activity who work in elected academic positions in their higher education institutions, whose selection and recruitment takes place in accordance with the existing regulations acts on academic and administrative positions, in accordance with announced competitions and appropriate electoral procedures. In each of the higher education institutions (LU, LLU, RSU) the teaching staff of the cooperating higher education institutions is credited as a guest lecturer, whose course (or part of the course) AMSP Nutrition Science is part of the teaching load of his students at his higher education institution. Each higher education institution provides its lecturers with opportunities for growth and professional development, in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers of Latvia 11.09.2018. Regulations No. 662 on the Education and Professional Qualifications Required for Teachers (SAR, p.542).
Confirmation that the academic staff of the study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions is viewable in SAR Annex Uzturzinātnes apliecinājums 14.
For example, the Department of Academic of the LU offers lecturers courses in the didactics of higher education institutions, improvement of the competence of curators, formulation and evaluation of study results, improvement of English language skills, etc. Starting with the transition to the distance learning process, the IT departments of higher education institutions offered consultations on the acquisition of digital skills, as a result, in 2020 the distance learning process started and continues successfully. In order for lecturers and students to strengthen their understanding and confidence in the multidisciplinary nature of nutrition, its preventive role in strengthening health, the lecturers of the program prepare scientific cooperation projects involving master students, which include research from field to spoon-clinical research and organize international research.
The qualifications of teaching staff comply with the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the laws and regulations of the LU that determine the qualifications of lecturers in academic master's study programmes: 1. Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No.49 Regulations on scientific sectors and sub-sectors in Latvia (23.01.2018). 2. Law on Higher Education Institutions (02.11.1995).
The composition of the teaching staff in accordance with the list of teaching staff involved in the implementation of AMSP Nutrition Science AMSP Nutrition Science is given in SAR, Table 3.4.2.1.
According to the results of AMSP Nutrition Science, which provide competencies corresponding to the 7th level of the European Qualifications Framework, which provide multidisciplinary knowledge and skills, the ability to operate and the ability to conduct interdisciplinary research. The implementation process of AMSP Nutrition Science is quite complicated, for example, both the program director and the lecturers in charge of higher education institutions must simultaneously ensure the normative acts in Latvia in the field of higher education and observe the regulations and

decisions regulating the study process of each higher education institution always coincides.
Getting acquainted with the SAR and meeting with the program managers and students, experts found that foreign university lecturers are not involved in the study process and it was not possible to find whether the program lecturers participate in international exchange programs in order to improve their knowledge according to international teaching requirements and the program would be more internationally recognized.

2.4.2. 2019./2020. teaching year teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study program: professors 20%, associate professors 43%, professors assistant 8%, lecturers 29%; doctors of sciences 71%, of which professors and associate professors 63% (SAR, p. 543).
Within the framework of the program, the process of teacher renewal is taking place; teaching staff and professionals in the field of nutrition, as well as graduates of the nutrition program are attracted to the implementation of the program. Involvement of graduates will ensure the improvement of the content of the program, avoid duplication of topics included in the courses, as their acquired knowledge, skills and competencies while studying the program will allow more objective, critical and reasonable evaluation of the program and plan to a particular person (SAR, p. 543).

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4. The scientific activity of the lecturers and students of the program and the number of publications can be seen in SAR 3.4.5.

2.4.5. The implementation of the joint academic master's study program takes place in cooperation with the teaching staff involved in the program:
In the direct study process, jointly implementing the courses or parts of courses included in one module (for example: in the course “Food supplements” at the University of Latvia and food additives at the University of Latvia; in the course “Novel foods” (LLU) and “Genetically modified organisms” (LU), in the course “Medical nutrition in the treatment of chronic diseases (LU and RSU)”;
In scientific research work, implementing jointly prepared research projects;
By jointly organizing the international conference “Nutrition and Health” (2012, 2016, 2020) to ensure the compliance of the “Nutrition Science” program with the knowledge, skills and competencies of the 7th level of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF), higher education institutions (LU, LLU, RSU) teaching staff 2017/2018.
Co-organizing Scientists' Nights (SAR, p. 545).
Each higher education institution implements a certain module of AMSP Nutrition science study courses (according to the concluded cooperation agreement) see the SAR Table 3.4.5.1.
Based on SAR the selection criteria, evaluation procedures, methods and indicators for the teaching staff to be involved in the AMSP Nutrition Science, as well as the development planning process take place in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the University Cooperation Agreement (SAR, p. 546).

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

Conclusions
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the staff of the AMSP Nutrition Science, the expert commission concluded that the study program is implemented by highly qualified employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work in the direction of the study program. In the framework of university training programs and international scientific conferences and seminars, lecturers supplement and improve their knowledge and skills for the implementation of the curriculum of the AMSP Nutrition Science.

Strengths:
1. Highly qualified lectures and good management of the learning process;
2. A multidisciplinary approach to the recruitment of lecturers promotes the implementation of the study program through cooperation with the LU, RSU, LLU;
3. High scientific potential for lecturers.

Weaknesses:
1. Lack of guest lectures from other counties.
2. Few members of the academic staff of the study program participate in international exchange programs.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualifications of the academic staff of the study program meet the conditions for the implementation of the study program and the requirements specified in the relevant regulatory acts.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Joint AMSP Nutrition Science complies with the Cabinet Regulation no. 24 Regulations on the State Academic Education Standard (approved on 13.05.2014) (Annex 10).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the descriptions of the study courses in Latvian (Annex 7 Course descriptions of the joint master's study program Nutrition) language. The descriptions are fully compliant with the requirements set forth in Section 561, Paragraph two and Section 562, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institution, they a. define the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; b. determine the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; c. outline the content of

the study course necessary for the achievement of learning outcomes, contain the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, indicate other sources of information; d. describe the organization and tasks for the independent work of students; e. determine the evaluation criteria of learning outcomes.
The description of the study module determines: the learning outcomes achievable as a result of the acquisition of the study module; the plan of the study work time; the study courses included in the study module.
In the opinion of Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia, some literature sources are outdated (Annex AIKA annexes VM opinion) - the course descriptors should be revised to see if newer editions or alternative textbooks are available. Consider including current publications and guidelines. Experts reviewed the literature and overall it is up to date, however, the review should be done annually. This deficiency is not important enough to decrease the evaluation as partially compliant.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the diploma and its supplement is issued for completing the study programme in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers 16.04.2013. to Regulation No. 202 “Procedures for Issuing State-Recognized Higher Education Certificates”.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Declaration (Riga, 21.04.2021, No 30) of the head of study field (Annex 14) certifying that the academic staff involved in the implementation of the Master’s study programme “Nutrition Science” (code 45722) complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the The Decision No 147 (24.12.2004) of the Council for Higher Education addressed to University of Latvia “On the implementation of academic study programmes under LHEI Section 55 Clause 2” the Council has decided to allow to implement the interuniversity master’s study program in health sciences “Nutrition Science” (Annex 13).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Head of Study Field Deklaration (Annex Head of Study Field Declaration, 21.04.2021, No. 12) confirming that the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Fully compliant with the Law on Higher Education Institutions Section 46, paragraph 2 and regulations of Cabinet of Ministers 23.01.2007. to Regulation No. 70 “Mandatory regulations to be included in the study agreement” (Annex Standard sample of study agreement „Agreement for EU citizens–2021).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the document Cooperation Agreement, in which Riga Stradins University and Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies agree to co-operate in the implementation of the Nutrition Science Programme at the university level, it was signed at 29.11.2004 for an indefinite period) (SAR, Annex Agreement on the implementation of the study programmes).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the The Declaration, signed by the Rectors of Latvian University, Riga Stradins University and Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technology) (Annex Refund and Compensation Policy).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Compliance of the program with the Law on Higher Education Institutions is analyzed in Annex 6, according to the criteria from Article 55.1 of the Law of Higher Education Institutions. The justification for the criteria “Confirmation that the joint study program implemented by the partner institution has been recognized in accordance with the procedures established in the respective foreign country” is not provided”, but this criteria is not relevant, because the study programme is not implemented in any foreign country (only in Latvia).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The Joint AMSP Nutrition Science fully complies with all the applicable requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

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

General conclusions

The strategically developed, integrated joint AMSP Nutrition Science (45722) of the University of Latvia, Riga Stradiņš University and Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies synergistically integrates into the study field Health Care. The joint AMSP Nutrition Science is the only programme of this kind in Latvia and the Baltic countries. The cooperation between the University of Latvia, Rīga Stradiņš University and the Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies has created an example of good management of study resources, a model of the effective use the universities’ resources, their academic and research potential. By implementing an interdisciplinary approach to achieve the aims of the joint AMSP Nutrition Science, each university brings into the programme its own special experience and strategic, purposeful use of infrastructure. The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the joint AMSP Nutrition Science are interrelated. The learning outcomes of the joint AMSP Nutrition Science correspond to Level 7 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF), which is described in the Cabinet Regulations No. 322 “Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia” (June 13, 2017), but, taking into account the above-mentioned regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers, the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.
The programme demonstrates an excellent collaboration between 3 higher education institutions, is topical, relevant and adheres to all professional and legal requirements. The collaboration between the 3 institutions allows students with a very wide academic background to pursue the degree. Both students and staff are involved in the scientific and research activities, which again are topical and relevant, and are engaged with the general public. Assessment criteria are clear and known well in advance. The courses are delivered in collaboration between all 3 universities - this is a practice that LU should strive for and encourage for the courses and assessments to be developed and delivered by more than one staff member.
The multidisciplinary joint program uses the resources of 3 universities, thus ensuring the high-

quality and diverse technological provision and scientific resources.
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the staff of the AMSP Nutrition Science, the expert commission concluded that the study program is implemented by highly qualified employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work in the direction of the study program. In the framework of university training programs and international scientific conferences and seminars, lecturers supplement and improve their knowledge and skills for the implementation of the curriculum of the AMSP Nutrition Science.

Strengths

1. A multidisciplinary approach to the recruitment of lecturers promotes the implementation of the study program through cooperation with the LU, RSU, LLU.
2. High scientific potential for lecturers.
3. A programme that is delivered jointly by 3 universities, is topical and relevant and allows students with a wide range of academic background pursue the qualification. There is a very good collaboration between all 3 institutions and some courses are delivered jointly. This is a practice that LU should strive for and encourage for more than one staff member to develop and deliver courses and assessments. Both students and staff are involved in scientific activity and also make it relevant to the general public.
4. The cooperation between the University of Latvia, Riga Stradiņš University and the Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies to implement the AMSP Nutrition Science has created an example of good management of study resources, a model of the effective use the universities' resources, their academic and research potential.
5. The name of the study programme, the degree, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated and compliant with the requirements of the regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia.

Weaknesses

1. Lack of guest lectures from other counties.
2. Few study program academic staff participates in international exchange programs.
3. 13 results of the study programme are indicated in the AMSP Nutrition Science, but the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.
4. Some of the literature sources in the subject descriptions are outdated.

Evaluation of the study programme "Nutrition Science"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Nutrition Science"

Short-term recommendations

1. To review the learning outcomes and formulate them in 5-9 learning outcomes.
2. Course reading lists should be reviewed annually to see if more current editions of books or newer alternative text books are available.

Long-term recommendations

1. Academic staff of the study program should participate more in international exchange programs in order to improve the training course and their international skills.
2. There should be a need to attract more guest lecturers from universities in other countries in order to gain more internationalization and international experience.

II - "Nurse Studies" ASSESSMENT

II - "Nurse Studies" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The AMSP Nurse studies aims at providing students with theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of Health Sciences in Nursing and related disciplines, developing research skills and fostering professional development and intellectual potential (SAR, p. 582). The inclusion of AMSP Nurse studies in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and from the degree and qualification to be awarded.

2.1.2. The AMSP Nurse studies is a full-time study programme with the implementation duration of two years and the amount of 80 Latvian credits (CP). The language of instruction – Latvian. The degree to be acquired – Master's degree of Health Sciences in Nursing.
The code of the study programme according to the classification of Latvian education – 45723, where the first part 45 of the code indicates that the type of the AMSP Nurse studies is academic master programme and the digits of the second part of the code 723 indicate that the thematic area of education is Health Care, but the group of educational programmes is Nursing.
The admission criteria (bachelor's degree in nursing or second level professional higher education with the qualification "Nurse") SAR (p. 580) correspond to the aims and tasks of the programme as well as the learning outcomes as stated in SAR (p. 579).
The name, aims, and objectives of the study programme, as well as the degree to be obtained after completing the study programme comply with the requirements of the Cabinet Regulation No 240 "Regulations on the State Academic Education Standard" (approved 13.05.2014.).
The study results of the Master's study programme correspond to the 7th level of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF), which is described in the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 322 "Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia" (June 13, 2017).
In SAR (SAR, p. 582) it is written: "the content of MSP Nursing ensures the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for the performance of professional activities in accordance with the knowledge, skills and competencies of Level 7 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework for Classification of Education (Cabinet Regulation No. 512 of 26.08.2014, Paragraph 21)." Supposedly, this is just a misprint that the AMSP Nurse studies SAR has been developed in compliance with the Cabinet Regulations No. 512 "Regulations on the State Standard of the Second Level Professional Higher Education" rather than with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 240 "Regulations on the State Academic Education Standard", because in Annex 10, the LU has provided the document providing the evidence that AMSP Nurse studies complies with Cabinet Regulations No 240 "Regulations on the State Academic Education Standard''.
The name of the study programme in English is not completely clear either. In the SAR Table of Contents (SAR, p. 5) the name of the programme is Nurse studies (45723), in the SAR programme application (SAR, p. 579) and in the list of programmes on the AIKA page (Study programmes for accreditation) the name of the programme is 45723 Nurse studies. In the SAR report on the

programme itself (SAR, p. 581 – 605), on the study field (SAR, p. 22, Table 2.1.1.1) and in the sample diploma in English (11. annex_MāsuM_Diploma_Eng), the name of the programme is given as MSP Nursing. In the Latvian language, both in the application for accreditation and in the text of the SAR, one and the same name is used for the programme, i.e. AMSP Māszinības (45723). It would be desirable to specify the name of the programme in English and to use the same name of the programme in all cases (application for accreditation, SAR, sample diploma).

2.1.3. Since the previous accreditation of the field of study, the definitions of parameters – the aim and objectives of the studies, as well as the results to be achieved within the AMSP Nurse studies have been specified. These corrections are justified and would be supported.
On a positive note, the content of the study courses of the AMSP Nurse studies has been revised during the reporting period to ensure that there is no overlap in course content, as well as to highlight timely innovations in the field of nursing and implement lessons learned in the TUNING CALOHEE assessment frameworks.

2.1.4. Dynamics of the number of students of the AMSP Nurse studies in the period 2013 - 2021 is fluctuating (from 38 to 20 students in one academic year), but it does not fall below the number of 20 students per year (SAR, p. 586), which is acceptable for an academic master study programme. In the SAR it is stated that “market research shows that nurses with a master’s degree are more likely to hold senior positions in healthcare facilities, such as nurses or head nurses”. The number of students and the labor market demand shows that the study programme is economically and socially justified.

2.1.5. N/A

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

Conclusions
The code, degree to be obtained, aim, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated and comply with the requirements of the regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia. In the documents in English available to experts two different names for the same programme are used: AMSP Nursing and AMSP Nurse studies.
It would be desirable to specify the name of the programme in English and to use the same name of the programme in all cases (application for accreditation, SAR, sample diploma).
The content of the study courses of AMSP Nurse studies has been revised during the reporting period to ensure that there is no overlap in content of the courses, as well as to highlight timely innovations in the field of nursing and implement lessons learned in the TUNING CALOHEE assessment frameworks.
The AMSP Nurse studies are economically and socially justified. The number of students and the labor market demand shows that the study programme is economically and socially justified.

Strengths:
1. The code, degree to be obtained, aim, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of AMSP Nurse studies are interrelated. The duration and amount of the study programme implementation, as well the language of implementation, are reasonable and justified.
2. During the reporting period, the content of the study courses of AMSP Nurse studies has been revised to ensure that there is no overlap in course content, as well as to highlight timely innovations in the field of nursing and implement lessons learned in the TUNING CALOHEE assessment frameworks.

Weaknesses:
1. In the documents in English available to experts two different names for the same programme are used: AMSP Nursing and AMSP Nurse studies.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. AMSP Nurse studies provides in-depth knowledge in the management of health services and nursing education. The programme bases on multidisciplinary knowledge and disciplines such as medicine and life sciences, social and legal sciences and the sciences. The programme is delivered in collaboration with the health care sector, jointly identifying solutions to industry problems and developing data-driven decision-making in the healthcare system. Special emphasis is placed on interdisciplinary analyses of philosophical debates in the context that are relevant to the professional practice of medicine. In master's theses studies students focus on current problems in healthcare and medicine (SAR, pp. 586-588). The content of the studies complies with the state education standards level X at Latvian Qualification Framework, LQF (SAR, p. 587) corresponding to European Qualification Framework (EQF) level VII. The studies include compulsory (38 CT), compulsory elective (40 CT) and free elective courses (2 CT). However the opinion of the Latvian Nurses' Association on the master's program "Nursing" (in the attachment 2. Latvian Nurses' Association letter of 25.08.2022 No. LMa -30/2022) is that outdated literature is presented in the study program, an incomplete description of the study course "Medical Statistics".

2.2.2. Nursing science as a fundamental discipline for nurse studies is not clearly visible in the description of nurse studies in SAR (pp. 586-588) but is visible in Appendix 10 (V MSP Nursing to the national academic education standard Compliance of MSP Nursing with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 240 of 13 May 2014, "Regulations on the State Standard of Academic Education"), Appendix 8 (Mapping of MSP Nursing study courses Learning outcomes of the study program Nursing) and Appendix 1 (MSP Nursing study plans). However, the branch of science, as described in the Descriptions of the study courses (appendix 7, Descriptions of study courses / modules of the MSP "Nursing"), in master's theses of nurse studies programme as well as in courses specific to nursing, such as Ethics of Nursing Practice, Nursing, Theory, Methodology of Research in Nursing, Qualitative methods in nursing research, is medicine instead of nursing science, which (nursing science) is the main scientific base for nurse studies in international programmes.

2.2.3. Teaching and learning methods contain lectures, seminars, individual, pair and group work, discussions and projects, study excursions to sectoral organisations. E-learning environment (Moodle) is used to support the learning process and independent studies. Student-centered methods are implemented. Starting in 2018 the study programme includes an internship to introduce students to their future professional field and labour markets (SAR, pp. 589-593). Students are encouraged to mobility, but it is rarely used because of the other responsibilities (family, work). Assessment of studies includes interim and final assessment and defense of master's theses in the Theses Defense Board. The assessment criteria for different assessment procedures are available in advance (SAR, pp. 589-593).

2.2.4. Starting in 2018 the study programme includes an internship to introduce students to their future professional field and labour markets (SAR, p. 590).

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6. The topics of the master's theses are relevant to the field of nursing and correspond to the

study programme, the theses include topics such as “Pre-operative Patient Control in the Work of Anesthesia, Intensive Care and Emergency Care Nursing”by in Newborn Intensive care department” and “Nurses experiences in caring for dying patients in pediatrics” (98. Pielikums MSP Māszinības aizstāvēto maģistra darbu saraksts, List of master's theses defended at MSP Nursing).

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

Conclusions
The content of the AMSP of Nurse studies is relevant, but the branch of science in the master’s theses and other nurse study specific courses in the field of study is medicine instead of nursing science.. Teaching and learning methods are student-centered.

Strengths:
1. Relevant content of the studies.
2. Student-centered teaching and learning methods.

Weaknesses:
1. The medicine as a branch of science for master’s theses and other nursing specific courses (Ethics of Nursing Practice, Nursing, Theory, Methodology of Research in Nursing, Qualitative methods in nursing research) is not the fundamental discipline for nursing, which should be nursing science.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The content of the AMSP of Nurse studies is relevant except the master’s theses and other nursing specific courses in the field of study which is the science branch of medicine. Nursing science as a fundamental discipline for nursing should be more visible in the description of the curriculum (master’s theses and other nursing specific courses).

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. Resources of the study programme consist of financial resources, infrastructure and material and technical support, as well as methodological and information provision.
For the implementation of the study program there are modern equipped classrooms and auditoriums. All classrooms have a projector and laptop for presentations, and interactive whiteboards. The House of Science includes 15 lecture theatres, 8 seminar rooms, 78 science and teaching laboratories Wireless network coverage is provided throughout the building (SAR, p.595).
The LU Library is included in the Library Register (BLB1000) of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia; on 22 June 2017 it received the Library Accreditation Certificate and was granted the status of a library of national importance for five years.
The methodological support of the LU for the implementation of the study programme is extensive. In addition to traditional information resources - library books - access is provided to more than 170 000 subscribed e-resources in various fields of study and science. For the implementation of the study program, the opportunities offered by the e-learning environment (Moodle system) of the LU are used - the uploading of lecture materials, the use of online tests to supplement and assess students' knowledge. Each lecturer is obliged to create an appropriate e-course in both Latvian and

English. Remote training uses a variety of tools for the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies, such as video lectures, tests, online submission of papers and tasks and online feedback, opportunities to obtain study materials, which is essential for students outside Latvia, and access to books from the LU library. E-environment enables quick and easy communication between student and teaching staff and vice versa. E- environment gives the student access to study materials, the possibility to keep track of their progress and course completion, the lecturer access to the latest books and publications anytime and anywhere (SAR, p.595).
Tuition fees for each programme at the LU are determined annually on the basis of the projected cost of the study place (which includes all projected costs - remuneration of teaching staff, material and technical support, infrastructure maintenance and administration costs), the projected number of students and the market situation - tuition fees offered by other higher education institutions. The tuition fee for a given student is set for the entire period of study for each academic year (SAR, p.599).

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3. In order to assess the amount of funds required for financial support, AMSP Nurse Studies carries out a costing calculation according to a methodology developed by the LU, using information on the structure and costs of the programme and teaching staff and the number of students. To provide the necessary funds for the conduct of studies, study programm “Nurse studies” shall use the state budget subsidy from the Ministry of Education and Science and tuition fees The calculation of the cost of AMSP Nurse Studies has been performed taking into account the available state grants and the methodology for calculating the cost of study programs developed by the Academic Department of the LU. The cost of one student per year is 1800 EUR. Calculations have been made for 10 paid students and 2 state-subsidized budget places. In addition to the costs of teaching staff, the cost calculation also includes general staff costs in the amount of 31.3% of the academic staff (441 EUR per student per year), infrastructure expenses (315 EUR per student per year), renovation of material and technical base, services (47 EUR per student per year) , totaling 2603 EUR per year per student. In order to ensure the profitability of AMSP Nurse Studies, the minimum number of students is 10 (SAR. p.599).

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

Conclusions

The expert commission concluded that the material and financial resources are sufficient for implementation of AMSP Nurse Studies.

Strengths:
1. Excellent premises and equipment, library resources and e-training environment for implementation of study program.

Weaknesses:
There are no remarkable weaknesses.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The expert commission concluded that the material and financial resources are sufficient for implementation of AMSP Nurse Studies.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. The qualifications of teaching staff of AMSP Nurse Studies comply with the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the laws and regulations of the LU that determine the qualifications of lecturers in academic master's study programmes: 1. Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No.49 Regulations on scientific sectors and sub-sectors in Latvia (23.01.2018). 2. Law on Higher Education Institutions (02.11.1995) (SAR, Annex 14).
In order to ensure the quality and innovative implementation of the study programme, several criteria are used for the selection of teaching staff for AMSP Nurse Studies. The mandatory criteria for the selection of teaching staff are: 1. compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff with the requirements specified in regulatory enactments; 2. research area/interests relevant to the study programme/course, relevant publications and work experience; 3. adequate knowledge of the official language and foreign languages (SAR, p.601).
During the reporting period, the core faculty of the AMSP Nurse Studies is stable. It is reflected in SAR Tables 3.4.1.1. and 3.4.1.2.
In-service training and upskilling of teaching staff take place in the following ways:
At least once a year, the teaching staff participates in the international conference in the field of medicine organized by the LU Faculty of Medicine, which has a section on basic medical sciences, including pharmacy. Teaching staff and professors from various Latvian and foreign universities participate in the section with reports;
teaching staff participate in international scientific conferences, Erasmus plus mobility, local and international research projects;
teaching staff participate in the work of non-governmental organizations, state and European Union institutions;
participate in continuing education courses for additional English language training, leadership skills and digital skills within the framework of the project "Academic staff renewal and capacity building at the University of Latvia" of the specific support objective 8.2.2 (SAR, p.601).
Based on the SAR and annexes, the expert commission found that there are no guest lecturers from universities of other countries in the study program. SAR is not specified and experts found during the meeting that only a few lecturers participated in international exchange programs. The participation of program lecturers in international exchange programs and the experience gained there would improve the content of the curriculum and the way it is presented.

2.4.2. During the reporting period, the AMSP Nurse Studies teaching staff is stable, with several lecturers having progressed in their academic careers. The faculty is highly experienced in both academic lecturing and research, as evidenced by publications in local and internationally cited journals, supervised Master's theses, PhD theses, and involvement in research projects.
The faculty of AMSP Nurse Studies has extensive experience in both academic lecturing and research, as evidenced by publications in local and internationally cited journals and involvement in research projects.
All AMSP Nurse Studies teaching staff are actively involved in research or scientific projects. Lecturers work on several research topics and publish articles in indexed journals with a high impact factor.

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4. Publications of lecturers are available in personal CV in SAR annexes and in annex “Scientific activity of MSP Nursing lecturers.docx” in Latvian.
By looking at the lecturer's CV and annexes, it can be found that the lecturer has been actively published in internationally cited journals and local medical periodicals.

2.4.5. The lecturers of AMSP Nurse Studies represent several branches of science, the interaction and cooperation of lecturers takes place during various events organized by the LU: staff meetings, scientific conferences and courses of further education. During the reporting period, the lecturers of AMSP Nurse Studies and PBSP Nursing meet at the annual meeting at the end of the academic year after graduation to discuss the progress of the year, discuss the requirements for obtaining credit points for study courses, to discuss the addition of the latest library literature, as well as to update course content in the context of nursing education reform. The lecturers of AMSP Nurse Studies meet at the end of the autumn semester meeting to evaluate the opinions expressed by students in the LUIS survey on the quality of course and programme content, and to discuss the improvement of course content and coordinate the topics of master 's thesis based on students' proposals (SAR. p.605).

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

Conclusions
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the lecturers of the AMSP Nurse Studies, the expert commission concluded that the training program is implemented by highly qualified employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work in the direction of the study program. In the framework of university training programs and international scientific conferences and seminars, lecturers supplement and improve their knowledge and skills for the implementation of the curriculum of the AMSP Nurse Studies.

Strengths:
1. Highly qualified lectures and good management of the learning process;
2. A multidisciplinary approach to the recruitment of lecturers promotes the implementation of the study program through cooperation with the LU;
3. High scientific potential for lecturers.

Weaknesses:
1. Lack of guest lectures from other counties.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualifications of the academic staff of the study program meet the conditions for the implementation of the study program and the requirements specified in the relevant regulatory acts.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the document in Annex 10 giving the evidence that AMSP Nurse Studies complies with Cabinet Regulation No 240 “Regulations of the national standard for academic education” (approved 13.05.2014.)

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the descriptions of the study courses in Latvian (Annex 7) language. The descriptions are fully compliant with the requirements set forth in Section 561, Paragraph two and Section 562, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institution, they a. define the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; b. determine the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; c. outline the content of the study course necessary for the achievement of learning outcomes, contain the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, indicate other sources of information; d. describe the organization and tasks for the independent work of students; e. determine the evaluation criteria of learning outcomes.
The description of the study module determines: the learning outcomes achievable as a result of the acquisition of the study module; the plan of the study work time; the study courses included in the study module.
However the opinion of the Latvian Nurses' Association on the master's program "Nursing" (in the attachment 2. Latvian Nurses' Association letter of 25.08.2022 No. LMa -30/2022) is that outdated literature is presented in the study program, an incomplete description of the study course "Medical Statistics".
This deficiency has to be eliminated on a short term basis, nevertheless this deficiency is not important enough to decrease the evaluation as partially compliant. Additionally it is advisable to renew mandatory literature, so it is not older than 10 years.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the diploma and its supplement is issued for completing the study programme in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers 16.04.2013. to Regulation No. 202 “Procedures for Issuing State-Recognized Higher Education Certificates”

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Declaration (Riga, 21.04.2021, No 24) of the head of study field (Annex 14) certifying that the academic staff involved in the implementation of the Master's study programme "Nursing" (code 45723) complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Decision No 12 (10.05.2001) of the Council for Higher Education addressed to University of Latvia "On the implementation of academic study programmes under LHEI Section 55 Clause 2" the Council has decided to allow the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Latvia to implement the academic study program in Nursing (Annex 13).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided Head of Study Field Declaration, (21.04.2021, No. 10) stating that the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Fully compliant with the Law on Higher Education Institutions Section 46, paragraph 2 and

regulations of Cabinet of Ministers 23.01.2007. to Regulation No. 70 “Mandatory regulations to be included in the study agreement” (Annex Standard sample of study agreement „Agreement for EU citizens–2021).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the proving documents - the agreement between the University of Latvia and Riga Stradins University on taking over studies, signed 13.04.2006 No 137-29/26 for an indefinite period) (SAR, Annex Agreement on the implementation of the study programmes).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the document - Refund and Compensation Policy Statement, No 1-13/385) (Annex Refund and Compensation Policy), which confirms that the students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme’s license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The AMSP Nurse Studies fully complies with all the applicable requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

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

General conclusions

The code, degree to be obtained, aim, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated and comply with the requirements of the regulatory enactments of the Republic of

Latvia. In the documents in English available to experts two different names for the same programme are used: AMSP Nursing and AMSP Nurse studies.
It would be desirable to specify the name of the programme in English and to use the same name of the programme in all cases (application for accreditation, SAR, sample diploma).
The content of the study courses of AMSP Nurse studies has been revised during the reporting period to ensure that there is no overlap in content of the courses, as well as to highlight timely innovations in the field of nursing and implement lessons learned in the TUNING CALOHEE assessment frameworks.
The AMSP Nurse studies are economically and socially justified. The number of students and the labor market demand shows that the study programme is economically and socially justified.
The content of the AMSP of Nurse studies is relevant except the master's theses field of study which is the branch of medicine. Teaching and learning methods are student-centered.
The expert commission concluded that the material and financial resources are sufficient for implementation of AMSP Nurse Studies.
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the lecturers of the study program, the expert commission concluded that the training program is implemented by highly qualified employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work in the direction of the study program. In the framework of university training programs and international scientific conferences and seminars, lecturers supplement and improve their knowledge and skills for the implementation of the curriculum of the AMSP Nurse Studies.

Strengths

1. The code, degree to be obtained, aim, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of AMSP Nursing are interrelated. The duration and amount of the study programme implementation, as well the language of implementation, are reasonable and justified.
2. During the reporting period, the content of the study courses of AMSP Nursing has been revised to ensure that there is no overlap in course content, as well as to highlight timely innovations in the field of nursing and implement lessons learned in the TUNING CALOHEE assessment frameworks.
3. Mostly relevant content of the studies. Student-centered teaching and learning methods.
4. Excellent premises and equipment, library resources and e-training environment for implementation of study program.
5. Highly qualified lectures and good management of the learning process;
6. A multidisciplinary approach to the recruitment of lecturers promotes the implementation of the study program through cooperation with the LU;
7. High scientific potential for lecturers.

Weaknesses

1. In the documents in English available to experts two different names for the same programme are used: AMSP Nursing and AMSP Nurse studies.
2. The branch of master's theses is not the fundamental discipline for nurse studies.
3. Lack of guest lectures from other counties.
4. Few study program academic staff participates in international exchange programs.
5. The outdated literature is presented in the study program, an incomplete description of the study course "Medical Statistics".

Evaluation of the study programme "Nurse Studies"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Nurse Studies"

Short-term recommendations

1. It would be desirable to specify the name of the programme in English and to use the same name of the programme in all cases (application for accreditation, SAR, sample diploma).
2. Nursing science as a fundamental discipline for nurse studies should be more visible in the description of the curriculum (master's theses).
3. The outdated literature is presented in the study program, an incomplete description of the study course "Medical Statistics".

Long-term recommendations

1.Academic staff of the study program should participate more in international exchange programs in order to improve the training course and their international skills.
2. There should be a need to attract more guest lecturers from universities in other countries in order to gain more internationalization and international experience.

II - "Pharmacy" ASSESSMENT

II - "Pharmacy" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The study programme complies with the study field. SAR page 20 states that study field Health Care aims "to ensure the acquisition of quality education based on high-quality study results, providing graduates with the necessary knowledge, skills and competence, introduction of innovative study process methods and training of highly qualified professionals, graduating from study programmes of that level, preparation of competent professionals, highly demanded in the labour market both in Latvia and abroad, providing the opportunity to obtain a successive education in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), starting with bachelor's, continuing with master and finishing with doctoral studies.", whilst AMSP Pharmacy aims "to provide students with a set of theoretical and practical knowledge in the sub-branches of pharmaceutical science and related branches for independent research in the development and defense of a Master's thesis, as well as to prepare students for work in pharmaceutical companies and further education in the doctoral study programme" (SAR p. 145).

2.1.2. The title of the programme reflects the content of the study programme and is in agreement with the code of the study programme (45725) and the degree to be obtained: Master's degree of Health Sciences in Pharmacy (Cabinet Regulations No. 322 "Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia" Annex 10: Compliance with the State Academic Requirements). The admission criteria are well mapped out and explained in the SAR (p. 147). A university specific formula has been developed to take into account the previous academic achievements - weighted average grade of Bachelor's degree in Pharmacy or second level professional higher education in Pharmacy and the overall average mark of the final examinations (SAR p. 147). The admission criteria correspond to

the aims and tasks of the programme as well as the learning outcomes as stated in SAR (p. 147-148) and demonstrated by Annex 1: Study Plan, Annex 7: Study Programme Course Descriptors & Annex 8: Mapping of Study Courses. However, the 16 results of the study programme could be combined to form a maximum of 9 results/learning outcomes (SAR p. 143). The AMSP Pharmacy is delivered in accordance with the 3+2 year Bologna Declaration (2 years for MSP) and is well justified (SAR p. 148). The programme is delivered as a full time programme in Latvian language (SAR p. 143) to meet the requirements for a MSP and, subsequently, for AMSP graduates to meet the requirements for a pharmacy degree as stated in Directive 2005/36/EC (SAR p. 147, Annex 6: Compliance of BSP Pharmacy, of MSP Pharmacy with the specific regulatory framework of the respective industry). University does not issue a professional qualification, it is an academic study programme (Annex 11: Diploma & Diploma Supplement). According to the Law on Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications section 16 the diploma of the education of a pharmacist certify that the relevant person has acquired appropriate theoretical and practical knowledge regarding medicinal products, therefore study programme graduates have no issues to enter labour market. As discussed with the staff, students, graduates and employers during the on-site visit (09.08.2022), there is an overall satisfaction with the study programme (e.g. content, learning outcomes, degree obtained/to be obtained) and the knowledge of the graduates. The students overall are informed about the Bologna principle and that to become a fully qualified pharmacist they will have to study for 5 years.

2.1.3. In the new accreditation period ‘aim of the study programme’ and ‘results of the study programme’ have been changed. The justification for the results of the study programme is sufficiently justified with “the latest study programme parameter formulation in the University of Latvia” but could be more specific. The study programme learning outcomes should be reviewed, summarized and combined so that the total number does not exceed 9. The justification of the aims of the programme in the SAR (p. 145) is too vague - examples should be provided, for example, like in SAR p. 240. How is the programme “more specific and appropriate to the specifics of the specialists to be trained in the field of health care” - examples should be given (SAR p. 145). From the conversations with the staff and students during the on-site visit (09.08.2022) it was clarified that course content is updated and reviewed annually, as well as the CP amount for specific courses has been changed.

2.1.4. The economic and social need of the programme is well justified. There is a shortage of pharmacists in the Republic of Latvia (SAR p. 148). Almost all of the ABSP graduates choose to pursue master’s degree to become fully qualified specialists - pharmacists (SAR p. 149, 218). The programme stays relevant by keeping up with the trends in the industry and labour market by adapting and updating its content according to the trends. The student enrollment in the programme is described as stable and in accordance with the current overall demographic trends (SAR p. 149, 168). The dropout rate has been relatively stable in recent years (~6%) and around 2% or 1 student per year in the last 3 years and has been mostly linked to individual circumstances (e.g. personal reasons, lack of motivation) (SAR p. 149). The annual enrollment meets the minimum requirement for the programme to be profitable (SAR p. 149). Most of the AMSP graduates work in pharmacies or industry, or continue their studies at doctoral level but no concrete numbers have been given (SAR p. 148). However, the shortage of pharmacists can be seen as a good indicator for employability. Students after graduation primarily can work in open or closed type pharmacies, this does not exclude opportunities to work in pharmaceutical industry companies local and international, start career in clinical environment or work at governmental authorities etc.

2.1.5. N/A

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

Conclusions
The indicators describing the programme are well mapped out and in accordance with aims set out by the study field Health care. The study programme corresponds to the legislation of the Republic of Latvia and aims to prepare highly skilled professionals. The enrollment of students in the programme is stable and good and pharmacists are in demand. However the results of the programme are too extensive and should be summarized and combined more, sothey not exceed 9 in total. Also, the justification provided for the aim of the study programme for the new accreditation period is too vague and should be more specific.

Strengths:
1. A programme that according to the descriptors complies with all the university and the Republic of Latvia, as well EU regulations and prepares in-demand highly skilled professionals.

Weaknesses:
1. No major weaknesses identified according to the descriptors. However, the results of the programme should be summarized and combined more and not exceed 9 in total.
2. The justification of the aims of the programme in the SAR (p. 145) is too vague - examples should be provided.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. Academic Master study programme Pharmacy (45725) goal is to provide students with a set of theoretical and practical knowledge in the pharmaceutical science for independent research, defense of a Master's thesis, as well as to prepare students for work in pharmaceutical companies and further education in the doctoral programme (SAR page 142.). Study programme contents are made in accordance with requirements set in EU Directive 2005/36/EC and the Law on Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications. All requirements set in Cabinet of Ministers No. 240 State education standard are also met. The content of the study programme is topical, study courses are interconnected and complementary to the study field and to the pharmaceutical industry. Study courses - Clinical Pharmacology, Social Economics, Drug form design demonstrate different aspects of the pharmaceutical industry and that students have the opportunity to get acquainted with different possibilities for future work. Scientific research component is added from the writing Master thesis and internship during the last year of studies connects students to the pharmacy (Annex:1.pielikums_FarmM_studju plāns_LV). Study courses provided in this programme helps to achieve study programme learning outcomes such as: To expose students to modern research methods, as well as to national priorities and globally accepted guidelines for pharmaceutical education or to develop students' creative and independent working skills. Taking into account that the study programme has to be looked at as a whole with Bachelor level and that students have a big impact with practical lessons in the study process as well as 20 CP internship experts recommend turning this study programme into a professional one. Since pharmacists are practically oriented health care professionals it would be only advisable that graduates receive professional education diplomas and that they also are obliged to fulfill requirements from pharmacists professional standard.After successfully finishing the study programme students have the option to continue studies at doctoral level. Study programme definitely meets scientific trends which is demonstrated by various thesis topics such as:
Synergistic antibacterial effect of herbal extracts and antibiotics
Derivation and characterisation of mesenchymal stromal cells from adipose tissue of SigmaR1-/-

mice
Long-term studies on mitochondrial activity after middle cerebral artery occlusion in mice etc.
Such topics could also be done by medical students, which also demonstrates a multidisciplinary approach in the thesis development process.

2.2.2. The awarded degree is based on achievements and findings in the field of pharmacy and is based on examination of the master thesis. This is ensured by involving leading researchers in the process of evaluation of the final thesis. Employer representatives during the site visit showed interest to be more involved in the final examination of students as well. This could provide direct input and feedback from the industry. Also topics of the thesis are related to the latest developments and topics in the field.

2.2.3. Different study implementation methods are used to achieve different learning outcomes set for each study course description. For example, starting with regular lectures and practical lessons, seminars and leading to group assignments, group works and student self-evaluation, which also demonstrates student centered learning approach. The range of different studying methods enables students to achieve learning outcomes set by the study courses and the whole study programme. Nevertheless, student-centered approaches such as problem-based and project-based learning, flipped classrooms etc. are involved in the study process. Also student self reflection can be encouraged and used more in everyday study processes. Students are involved in scientific activities primarily via Master thesis development, this is also supported by novel and specific thesis topics, that require actual scientific work, not just surveying, for example - Polyprenol effects and their influence of atorvastatin on the behaviour, memories and analgetic tests in the wistar line rats; Determination of biofilm forming Staphylococcus epidermidis antimicrobial resistance and mecA gene; Effects of metformin on behavior and glucose homeostasis disorder in Alzheimer's disease model animals etc. Another opportunity is by getting involved in research projects such as Latvian Council of science projects or develop scientific research work with other institutions such as Latvian Institute of Organic synthesis, Institute of Hydroecology of the University of Latvia, Institute of Clinical and Preventive Medicine.

2.2.4. Internship is a crucial part of the learning process to prepare students for the potential job market. The Law on Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and EU Directive 2005/36 / EC and requires to have at least a 20 week internship during the pharmaceutical studies. Internships can be held at any open access pharmacy in any pharmacy network, preferably it is recommended to find pharmacy that also creates extemporal drugs. Students can arrange internship place on their own at any pharmacy that is convenient for them and can fulfill all internship requirements. Elective part can be undergone in any hospital for example - Children's Clinical University Hospital, Riga east university hospital etc. Students have in total 24 week (6 months) of practice which is divided in 2 parts - extemporal drug preparation (12 weeks) and work with patients by distributing drugs in open/closed type pharmacies (12 weeks). Internship organization is effective, students during the interviews did not complain nor about finding practice placement nor the organization of the internship. Nevertheless, the internship division should be revised since extemporal drug manufacturing is becoming less popular and only few pharmacies (less than 20 in Latvia) are providing this service information obtained from employer representatives. Therefore it is useless to have such a long internship which can not be fully used since an abundance of prescriptions are topical forms (ointments, creams) that are very similar from preparation point of view.
At the site visit students identified that during the internship they are not obliged to carry out analytical (qualitative and quantitative analysis of the formulation) inspection. This part of drug formulation development should be introduced to the internship, this is also a requirement from

legislation to check chemical-physical properties of prepared drug forms.
Also it would be beneficial to have mandatory part of the internship in closed type pharmacy. Hospital pharmacies also are fastly developing and using new modern technologies for drug preparation. Students should get acquainted with the work of hospital pharmacy hence this also would provide a wider view of the health care system in Latvia.

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6. The study work and final thesis topics are relevant to the study field and correspond to the study programme as well. They also highlight how the pharmacy industry can interact with other programmes and faculties in the university. During the interviews experts found out that employers are not closely related to the evaluation or participation in defense of the final thesis, but they expressed interest and readiness to do so. The awarding of a degree is based on the achievements and findings of the latest pharmaceutical industry trends. In annex: 15.annex_FarmM_noslēguma darbu tēmu apkopojums EN different pharmacy subfield topics can be found regarding - pharmacology, pharmacognosy, biochemistry, oncology etc.

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

Conclusions
The content of the academic Masters study programme Pharmacy is topical, the study courses are interconnected and are designed to lead students towards achieving study programme outcome - to to obtain Pharmacist degree and carry out scientific research activities. There are different study course implementation methods that help diverse learning processes of the students. Regarding internship, students are able to find and undergo the internship, but the composition of the internship should be revised. At the current situation it is not fully possible to actually do the extemporal drug preparation and as students confirmed they are not doing any analysis of prepared drug forms. Student theses are closely related to different aspects of Pharmaceutical industry - manufacturing, research, drug development etc. and gives input in research development.The justification of the aims of the programme in the SAR (p. 145) is too vague - examples should be provided, for example, like in SAR p. 240.

Strengths:
1. Prepared Master thesis are at high level and correspond to the novelties in the industry.

Weaknesses:
1. Student 6 month internship is not diverse, does not include drug form analysis, and practically can not be fully undergone for all students, since only few pharmacies in Latvia are creating extemporal drugs.
2. Employers from pharmacies are not involved in the evaluation of the final thesis.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Prepared thesis are topical and are based on novelties in the Pharmaceutical industry.

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. The opening of the Nature House (2015) and the Science House (2018) of the LU Academic Center, where MSP Pharmacy takes place, created a high level of material and technical support. The study process occurs in modern auditoriums equipped with multimedia devices, interactive whiteboards, and Internet connections, providing high-quality audio and visual presentation of lectures. The design of the halls allows the tables to be freely rearranged, making them adaptable to different forms of learning – lectures, seminars, group work, or circular discussions – and contributing to a democratic and open learning process. Internet access is available in the buildings using wireless technology. The modern study environment at the LU Academic Center is positively evaluated by pharmacy students, noting that the new study environment has served as an additional motivating factor to study at MSP Pharmacy (SAR p 159; Tour of facilities).
Modern chemistry laboratories are available for pharmacy students at the Faculty of Chemistry, located in the House of Nature. Other faculties and structures of the University of Latvia are also involved in the implementation of MSP Pharmacy - Faculty of Physics and Mathematics, Faculty of Chemistry, Faculty of Biology, Faculty of Business Administration and Economics, and Language Centre.
For the implementation of preclinical study courses in the laboratories of the Faculty of Biology, the following equipment is used for the practical work of students: metobometer, Finopress, plethysmograph, laser dopplerograph, pneumograph, spirometer, mechanoelectrical transducer, perimeter, audiometer, bioimpedance analyzer and other equipment for physiological examination and research of heart circulation, blood biochemistry, respiration, metabolism, nervous muscle, and sensory system functions. MSP Pharmacy students study plant and animal biology in modern classrooms and flow laboratories at the Faculty of Biology. The concept of the Torņakalns Academic Campus of the University of Latvia integrates the study process and a multidisciplinary approach, which provides students with a broad, versatile, and in-depth knowledge of pharmacy, chemistry, and biology.
The study program is provided at a very high level with excellent equipped research laboratories (SAR; p.160; Table 3.3.1.1.). For research purposes and for thesis development there are various research equipment from most sophisticated ones can be compound extraction station etc.named-cell incubators, oxygraphs for determination of mitochondrial activity, confocal microscope, cell 3D imaging, flow cytometry, and microtome and more casual ones - pipetting stations, high-pressure liquid chromatography, gas-chromatography, active.
As of 01.12.2020, 1120 printed publications (SAR p.162-163) are available for Pharmacy students in the collection of the LU Library, 94% of which are books, 3% periodicals and 3% other publications (CD, DVD). 50% of the printed editions available in the collection of the library of the University of Latvia are in Latvian, 39% in English, 9% in Russian and 2% in German. In total, there are 30,101 copies of printed editions in the library of the LU for the provision of the Health Care study field, including specialized literature for this MSP Pharmacy.

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3. Based on the cost calculation of the MSP Pharmacy according to LU methodology, the main cost items are the remuneration of the teaching staff - 39%, followed by property and services - 15%, general staff - 13%, infrastructure costs 7% , and 26% indirect costs. Funding comes from a state budget grant and tuition fees. The state budget subsidy for a study place for each calendar year is determined in accordance with the annual agreement between the Ministry of Education and Science and the LU. The budget allocation per study place for MSP Pharmacy is EUR 7335, consisting of a base funding of EUR 1630, a level factor of 1.5, and a field of study factor of 3. Tuition fees at the University of Latvia are determined in a separate order for each academic year, taking into

account the cost of the study place, including all costs of the study process (see above), tuition fees for similar programs at other universities, and the interest of potential fee-paying students in the study program. MSP Pharmacy tuition fee is 2400 EUR per year. Taking into account the provision of financial resources, calculations are made, and various solutions are implemented to optimize the cost of studies. For example, students are offered a compact set of elective courses, a maximum of once every two years, while maintaining the full opportunity to acquire quality pharmaceutical-specific knowledge. In order to make optimal use of the resources of highly qualified teaching staff, elective courses are implemented in synergy with other study programs in the field of health care. In order to ensure the profitability of MSP Pharmacy, the minimum number of students is 10 (SAR; p.164). However, very limited number of state-funded study places - 5 (Annex 4; Statistics on students MSP Pharmacy).There are sufficient total number of students to ensure the profitability of study programme (Annex 4;Statistics on students MSP Pharmacy).

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

Conclusions
The Nature House and the Science House of the LU Academic Center offer a modern study environment with sufficient provision of technological and teaching materials.Excellent study conditions, both in terms of facilities and equipment and the availability of reference materials and literary resources for education and research. There is limited state funding for the number of budget students.

Strengths:
1. The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning conditions with good equipment and modern laboratories.

Weaknesses:
2. Limited number of state-funded study places.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Excellent study conditions, both in terms of facilities and equipment and the availability of reference materials and literary resources with interdisciplinary approach for education and research.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. The qualification of the teaching staff involved in the implementation and delivery of the AMSP Pharmacy complies with all the regulations (e.g. Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions) and “the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses” (SAR p.164-165, SAR Table 3.4.2.1.: List of MSP Lecturers, Annex 14: Head of Study Field Declaration). Fifteen academic staff members are involved in the delivery of AMSP. Among the teaching staff are 5 professors, 1 associate professor, 2 assistant professors and 1

lecturer. The rest are leading researchers, researchers or teachers (SAR p. 165-167). The AMSP has also implemented several programme-specific criteria in the selection process for their staff members (SAR p. 165), as well as the staff has to undergo an in-service training (SAR p. 165). Although it is not specified how various language skills (native, Latvian and foreign) are assessed - this should be clarified (appropriate knowledge of the state language and foreign languages, e.g. a language exam certificate, high school diploma, an academic degree completed in Latvian language) (SAR p. 165).

2.4.2. The staff changes in the reporting period have not negatively affected the teaching quality (SAR p. 165-166) and are in accordance with all requirements (SAR p.165, Annex 14: Head of Study Field Declaration). As mentioned in Section 2.4.1. fifteen academic staff members are involved in the delivery of AMSP. Among the teaching staff are 5 professors, 1 associate professor, 2 assistant professors and 1 lecturer. The rest are leading researchers, researchers or teachers (SAR p. 165-167). New staff members have joined and successfully delivered new lecture courses, as well as a number of staff members have been promoted during the reporting period (SAR p. 165 & 167). In the reporting period 4 new members of staff have been recruited (1 professor, 1 lecturer, 1 leading researcher and 1 researcher) (SAR p. 166-167). As mentioned in Section 2.4.1. staff undergoes in-service training (e.g. Moodle system, English language courses etc.) (SAR p. 165, 167-168). There are annual and once in semester meetings to monitor the quality of the programme (SAR p. 167), as well as the university having its QA system and annual reporting in place (see Section 1.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System of this report). During the on-site visit (09.08.2022) the staff confirmed that they undergo in-service training and are familiar with the requirements.

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4. All staff members involved in the programme meet the set criteria (SAR p. 164-165, Annex 14: Head of Study Field Declaration, Annex II - Description of the Study Field - 2.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation: List of the publications, patents, and artistic creations of the teaching staff over the reporting period), however, this conclusion can be made by viewing the list provided by the Study Field, not AMSP Pharmacy. This is cumbersome and should be reconsidered for the next reporting period, for example, both optometry programmes have included the staff CVs with the list of publications in the reporting period or other applicable relevant experience.

2.4.5. The mechanism of mutual cooperation of the teaching staff in the implementation of the study programme has been established (SAR p. 168). The varied background of teaching staff (doctoral degrees in various disciplines) has been deemed a great advantage, alongside the cooperation between different faculties and the multidisciplinary approach of the LU (SAR p. 168). LU also organizes different formal and informal events (e.g. scientific conferences and scientific cafes, respectively) for both the staff and students (SAR p. 168). As such, intra- and inter-faculty cooperation and collaboration has been ensured. This in turn, helps to review, harmonize and update teaching materials and methods (SAR p. 169). As mentioned in Section 2.4.2. There are regular annual and end of semester meetings to review and discuss the implementation of the course (SAR p. 169). During the on-site visit (08.08.2022 and 09.08.2022) the HEI management, staff and students confirmed and were able to clearly outline how the collaboration and the interdisciplinarity functions and the core of the university's teaching approach.

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

Conclusions
The AMSP Pharmacy fulfills all the applicable descriptors for teaching staff in this category. The staff

are qualified and knowledgeable. Intra- and inter-faculty collaboration is ensured and enabled. The staff members are engaged in scientific and professional activities. The AMSP has university and programme specific requirements for staff recruitment and suitability, however, the assessment of language skills should be clarified (e.g. language exam certificate, high school diploma, an academic degree completed in Latvian language). Also, for the next reporting period consideration on how scientific publications per staff member are presented in the report and annexes (e.g. a separate list of publications by AMSP should be included).

Strengths:
1. Qualified and knowledgeable staff with multidisciplinary background, intra- and inter-collaboration within faculty and university.

Weaknesses:
1. The aim provided in the SAR (p. No clear criteria for how language skills of prospective staff members are assessed (e.g. language exam certificate, high school diploma, an academic degree completed in Latvian language).
2. How the individual scientific publication requirement is met, should be updated as it could only be deducted from the Study Field list as no individual list was provided by AMSP Pharmacy (this is not a weakness of the staff but the presentation of the report, e.g. a separate list of publications by AMSP Pharmacy should be included).

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LU has provided Annex 14: Head of Study Field Declaration and further details have been provided in the MSP “Pharmacy” SAR.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Study programme complies with the state academic education standard Cabinet of Ministers No. 240., although taking into account the huge amount of practical lessons and internship that is 6 months long, University of Latvia should consider turning this study programme as profesional one. Also since graduates can work in Pharmacy as pharmacists (health care specialists) they should also comply with professional standards, which currently is not needed since the programme is academic one.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Study course descriptions are well prepared in both Latvian and English languages and almost all information based on requirements from law of Higher Education Institutions are included. Study course descriptions do not contain information about the study course director (creator) and staff members that are responsible for implementation of the course. This deficiency has to be eliminated on a short term basis, nevertheless this deficiency is not important enough to decrease the evaluation as partially compliant. Additionally it is advisable to renew mandatory literature, so it is not older than 10 years.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Diploma and diploma supplement complies with the Cabinet of Ministers 18.04.2013 regulations No. 202. See annex:11_pielikums_FarmM_Diploma_pielikums_lv

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

University has provided confirmation that staff complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions. See annex: 14.pielikums_FarmM__apliecin_AL_55p_LV.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

University has provided approval (23.05.2002. No 47 from Council for Higher Education) to implement academic study programme Pharmacy with less than 250 students. See annex: 13_pielikums_FarmM_ FarmB_AIP atzinums_LV.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Study field director has provided confirmation that academic staff members have proficient in the Latvian language. See annex: Apliecinājumi par Valsts Valodas zināšanām.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement. In accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers No. 70. See annex: Ligums_ES_pilsoniem_2021.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LU has provided the agreement between the University of Latvia and Riga Stradins University on taking over Master level Pharmacy studies to offer them 2nd level higher education Pharmacy studies. Additional supplement provided to the agreement signed 31.10.2007. No. 6012-A53/7. Annex : 2_pielikums_annex_Vienošanās_MG_Farmacija_Sagatavots.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The University of Latvia has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses in case study field is not accredited. See annex: APLIECINĀJUMS_MSP_Farmācija.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Since both study programme levels (academic Bachelor and academic Master) contribute to obtaining the degree in Pharmacy they have to be looked at simultaneously. From this point of view study programme complies and fulfills other regulatory attachments, see annex: 6.pielikums_FarmM_FarmB_atbilstība atbilstošās nozares specifiskajam normatīvajam

regulējumam_LV.

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

AMSP Pharmacy fully complies with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments

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

General conclusions

No significant deficiencies were found for this study programme. The aims of the study programme are clearly defined, achievable, regarding learning outcomes it is recommended to reduce learning outcome amount to 5-9. Study programme duration is enough to finish and obtain a pharmacist's degree. Study programme complies with state legislation, but nevertheless it is advisable to turn this study programme into a professional one since a lot of study courses are practically oriented and students have 6-month long internships. Also, pharmacists are noble healthcare professionals and should have recognisable practical education not only academic one and should also comply with professional standard that is available. It is alarming that during the site interviews students could not confirm that they have to check the quality of their prepared extemporal drugs. This process is regulated by law of the Cabinet of Ministers and should be normal practice in pharmacies where drugs are being manufactured by hand. After graduation students can continue studies in Doctoral level study programme. Student thesis developed are at high relevance and follow latest trends in pharmaceutical industry. Students are supervised and supported during the thesis development process. Study courses in the programme are interconnected and cover all needs set by EU regulations and are considered by also looking at Bachelor level study programme. Material technical base to carry out final thesis and study work is more than sufficient and available to students. Also work in different institutes or laboratories ensure a multidisciplinary environment for the student’s research work, which raises even further interest into academic research. The staff members involved in implementation of the programme are highly qualified, they are engaging in scientific and professional activities and seem highly motivated.

Strengths

1. A programme that according to the descriptors complies with all the university and the Republic of Latvia, as well EU regulations and prepares in-demand highly skilled professionals.
2. Prepared Master theses are at high level and correspond to the novelties in the industry.
3. The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning conditions with good equipment and modern laboratories.
4. Qualified and knowledgeable staff with multidisciplinary background, intra- and inter-collaboration within faculty and university.

Weaknesses

1. The learning outcomes of the programme should be summarized and combined more and not exceed 9 in total.

2. The justification of the aims of the programme in the SAR (p. 145) is too vague - examples should be provided.
3. Student 6 month internship is not diverse, does not include drug form analysis, and practically can not be fully undergone for all students, since only few pharmacies in Latvia are creating extemporal drugs.
4. Employers from pharmacies are not involved in the evaluation of the final thesis.
5. Limited number of state-funded study places.
6. No clear criteria for how language skills of prospective staff members are assessed (e.g. language exam certificate, high school diploma, an academic degree completed in Latvian language).
7. How the individual scientific publication requirement is met, should be updated as it could only be deducted from the Study Field list as no individual list was provided by AMSP Pharmacy (this is not a weakness of the staff but the presentation of the report, e.g. a separate list of publications by AMSP Pharmacy should be included).

Evaluation of the study programme "Pharmacy"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Pharmacy"

Short-term recommendations

1. The learning outcomes of the programme should be summarized and combined more and not exceed 9 in total.
2. The justification of the aims of the programme in the SAR (p. 145) is too vague - examples should be provided.

Long-term recommendations

1. Find ways to diversify the student internship by including analytics of drug composition, mandatory practice in hospital pharmacies etc.
2. Include employers representatives from pharmacies in the evaluation of the final thesis.
3. Open debate with Ministries about raising state-funded study places, hence pharmacists are lacking in Latvia's healthcare system. It is necessary to carry out explanatory work with decision-makers in order to increase the number of budget places.
4. For the next accreditation period develop a system to indicate the individual scientific publication requirement is met for each staff member and how language skill level is being assessed.
5. It is advisable to turn this study programme into a professional one since a lot of study courses are practically oriented and students have 6-month long internships. Graduates should also comply with professional standard that is available.

II - "Epidemiology and Medical Statistics" ASSESSMENT

II - "Epidemiology and Medical Statistics" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The development of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics within the framework of the study field Health Care is substantiated by the fact that there is a lack of specialists in Latvia who are able to compile health care data in accordance with internationally accepted requirements, which is important for comparing them with the world data. In order to modernize medical research in Latvia, it is critical to develop the highest level of epidemiology and medical statistics that students acquire within this programme, acquiring the principles of data collection, analysis and interpretation (SAR, p. 652). The development of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics at the LU and its inclusion in the study field Health Care is an important contribution to the education of qualified specialists in epidemiology and medical statistics.

2.1.2. The name of the programme – the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics, its code – 45726, the degree to be obtained – Master's Degree in Public Health are closely related to the content of the study programme and learning outcomes to be achieved. The code of the study programme according to the classification of education in Latvia – 45726, where the first part 45 of the code indicates that the type of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics – it is an academic master's study programme; the digits of the second part of the code 726 indicate that the thematic area of education is Health Care, but the group of educational programmes is Public Health.
The AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics is implemented as a full-time study programme with the duration of 2 years and the amount of 80 Latvian credits (CP). The languages of programme implementation – Latvian, English. The aim of the study programme – to provide highly qualified specialists in epidemiology and medical statistics to the Latvian and Baltic health systems at the regional, national and international levels, who know and develop epidemiological and other research methodologies, are able to analyze complex data and interpret results based on the latest international knowledge and standards required by international organizations (SAR, p. 648) is harmonized with the study results of the study programme. The learning outcomes of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics correspond to Level 7 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF), which is described in the Cabinet Regulations No. 322 "Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia" (June 13, 2017).
Admission requirements of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics – bachelor's degree or second level professional higher education in health care, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, psychology, sociology, natural sciences, environmental sciences, food sciences, or other comparable higher education.
The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation (including different options of the study programme implementation), as well as the implementation language, are reasonable and justified.

2.1.3. The AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics was licensed in the spring of 2020. In the implementation of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics, the recommendations given in the licensing process were taken into account: to plan the number of trained graduates necessary for the potential labor market of the state of Latvia; to increase the awareness of Latvian students about the possibility of the programme; to develop a separate course programme as neutral as possible with regard to the prioritization of specific nosologies; to find an opportunity to recognize the study courses acquired in the mobility programmes in the overall evaluation of the study programme and to attract teaching staff corresponding to the study programme. The SAR (p. 652) states that the recommendations are being implemented as much as possible.

2.1.4. The Ministry of Health has acknowledged that the lack of specialists who are able to compile health care data in accordance with internationally accepted requirements in the Latvian health care system is critical. Within the framework of the programme, the competence to collect large amounts of administratively obtained and digital data is acquired in depth. In the implementation of the study programme, co-operation with the representatives of the health care sector is continued, jointly identifying the solution of the problems of the sector. Graduates of the study programme will address nationwide challenges in the field of health, as well as develop data-based decision-making in the health care system, which the OECD has identified as one of the five recommendations for strengthening it (SAR, p. 655).
The first admission to the study programme took place in the autumn semester of the academic year 2020/2021, 8 students were enrolled in the programme; two students were awarded a scholarship from the LU Study Quality Improvement Fund, one student received a scholarship from SIA "Biosan Latvija" in an open competition, and one student quitted their studies after the end of Semester 1. The statistical data on the students are presented in the annex (4.annex_EPImedical statistics_statistics_Eng), from which it can be concluded that the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics has no budget places. 2021/2022 the number of students is indicated in the 1st study year (6 students) and in the 2nd study year (6 students).
Considering the number of students in the programme, as well as the fact that the programme is implemented only in the Latvian language (though it is also planned to implement the programme in English for foreign students), it is not possible to conclude whether the study programme is cost-effective.

2.1.5. N/A

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

Conclusions
The development of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics at the LU and its inclusion in the study field Health Care is an important contribution to the education of qualified specialists in epidemiology and medical statistics.
The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation (including different options of the study programme implementation), as well as the implementation language, are reasonable and justified.
The recommendations received during the process of licensing are implemented as much as possible.
According to the SAR and the annex, it is not possible to draw a conclusion regarding the economic feasibility of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics.

Strengths:
1. The development of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics at the LU and its inclusion in the study field Health Care is an important contribution to the education of qualified specialists in epidemiology and medical statistics.
2. The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics are interrelated.

Weaknesses:
No weaknesses identified.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. The content of the programme AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics is topical and relevant (SAR Section 3.2.1.). The programme has been developed and delivered in accordance with university and the Republic of Latvia legislation (Annex 5: MSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics Compliance with National Education Standard. The program complies with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 240 “Regulations on the State Academic Education Standard, Annex 13: Council of Higher Education Decision No 1.12/15). The demand of the labour market is well justified (SAR p. 656). The stakeholders in the field and Ministry of Health are involved in the development of the programme (SAR p. 656). The programme consists of 3 main blocks of courses (compulsory, limited elective and free elective courses). The compolsay (Part A) consists of courses exploring modern problems in research and methods on how to solve them. As well as helps develop the necessary skill set for them to be able to conduct and implement research projects independently (e.g. writing an ethics application, research proposal and protocol) (SAR p. 657). The courses build students’ knowledge step-by-step and students are encouraged to present their work at LU annual scientific conference (SAR p. 657, Annex 1: Study Plan, Annex 7: Course Descriptors, Annex 8: Course Mapping). The limited elective (Part B) courses expands and deepens students’ knowledge in specific areas (e.g. problems of public health, research promotion, research designs and others). The free elective courses (Part C) are also offered (Annex 1: Study Plan, Annex 7: Course Descriptors, Annex 8: Course Mapping), however there has been an error in SAR and the wrong information has been compiled under this section (SAR p. 662) - no information about free elective courses has been provided. The programme design ensures that courses are interconnected and complementary, correspond to the objectives of the programme and ensures the achievement of learning outcomes (SAR p. 658-662, Annex 1: Study Plan, Annex 7: Course Descriptors, Annex 8: Course Mapping). Course descriptors are clear, concise and standardized (Annex 7: Course Descriptors). Within the study process there might be problems in future with obtaining data sets for analysis to train practical skills in statistics, since health care data usually is with restricted access and not all students may have such access.
In the opinion of Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia, some literature sources are outdated (Annex AIKA annexes VM opinion) - the course descriptors should be revised to see if newer editions or alternative textbooks are available. Consider including current publications and guidelines. Experts reviewed the literature and overall it is up to date, however, the review should be done annually.

2.2.2. The involvement of staff members of AMSP in scientific research activities has been demonstrated in Section 3.2.2. and summarized in Table 3.2.2.1. (SAR p. 662-669). The academic staff has also been involved in research projects and delivered guest lectures (SAR p. 669). Students are also encouraged to participate in scientific conferences and publish their results in peer-reviewed journals (SAR p. 657).

2.2.3. The programme is delivered as a full time programme in both latvian and English (SAR p.649-650). Various methods of course delivery have been employed (e..g lecture and seminars) and more innovative and interactive delivery methods like problem-orientated lectures and practical application of knowledge in special guest lectures (SAR p. 670). Assessments are compiled of intermediate and final assessments (SAR p. 670-671). Various methods of assessments are employed (reports, essays, presentations) (SAR p. 670). The total grade of the intermediate examinations is not less than 50% of the total grade of the course. The final exam contributes 10% or more to the final grade (SAR p. 671). Student-centered approach has been demonstrated with individual and group work, self-reflection, project-based learning and other active teaching methods, as well as taking into account the student needs when planning the timetable (SAR p. 670-672).

Technological advances and virtual learning environment (Moodle) are vastly employed in the delivery of the programme (SAR p. 671). The assessment criteria and intended learning outcomes are known to students in advance (SAR p.671). The assessments are designed and marked on a 10 point scale Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia 13.05.2014. Regulations No. 240 “Regulations on the State Academic Education Standard” and the Senate of the University of Latvia on 29.06.2015. decision no. 211 (SAR p. 671). To date the programme has been implemented only in Latvian but from the next academic year English as a language of implementation will also be used. The same provisions will be applicable to the programme delivered in the English language as the one n Latvian. However, international students will be offered a 2 CP course in Latvian (SAR p. 672).

2.2.4. N/A

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6. Study programme is young and currently there is only one year of graduates of the programme so it is hard to evaluate the topicality and tendencies of the thesis, but University of Latvia has provided a lot of support to programme students to find their research topics. For example potential topics were discussed with students at various LU project managers, pharmaceutical companies and researchers, who will be provided with statistical analysis within the project in the future (SAR section 3.2.6. page 674). This ensures that topics researched are at high value for the industry and bring additional knowledge in Epidemiology. During the interviews students also showed satisfaction with the study process and support towards developing a Master thesis, which serves as a good indicator towards future student works. Student-centered approach has been demonstrated with individual and group work, self-reflection. Students also confirmed that they have been working together to better learn the programme syllabus.

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

Conclusions
The Content of study programme is topical and study courses are interconnected and help students to achieve study course learning outcomes and lead to accomplishing study programme learning outcomes. Needs of the industry also are taken into account, during the interviews employers have also shown involvement in the development of the study programme and help with developing student final thesis. Master degree awarded is based on the achievements in the relevant field of epidemiology and medical statistics. There is no internship for students, but they have some study courses to develop their practical skills. Topics of the final thesis are relevant to the field and are developed in close relation with staff members and other stakeholders. Review the course reading lists to see if more current editions of books or newer alternative text books are available. Current papers with clinical guidelines should also be used.

Strengths:
1. Study programme syllabus is unique to teach medical statistics and epidemiology.
2. Employers are closely involved in providing Master thesis topics.

Weaknesses:
1. Future students may have restricted access to medical or epidemiological data that is necessary to actually train skills on real data sets.
2. Course reading lists should be reviewed annually and where possible, the older textbooks and materials should be replaced with newer alternative books. Current papers with guidelines in the

field should also be used.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Master theses are developed in close relation to the academic staff and industry members that are aware of the novelties in the research are and industry itself.

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. MSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics is implemented at the University of Latvia, Jelgavas Street 3, Riga, and premises with multimedia equipment are used for implementation, which use the latest information and communication technologies, such as video conferencing. A study methodologist is attached to the Master's study program, who plans and organizes the study process, as well asad ministers student affairs, provides all the necessary services to students in the study process. The material and technical base of the University of Latvia FM fully ensures the implementation of the MSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics. The study rooms of the study field Health Care are located in several faculties of the University of Latvia. The number of rooms is two computer classes, a total of 48 workstations. Classrooms and study / seminar rooms are equipped with multimedia projectors, computers, screens and whiteboards, they can be easily converted for group or individual work. Among them, students have access to equipped study laboratories, classrooms equipped with the necessary presentation equipment, Wi-Fi and computer connection in all rooms, individual and group study rooms with electricity supply. In the LU Science House the whole building is provided with wireless internet. Open access printers / copiers for students (with electronic cards). Statistical data processing methods: Microsoft Office 365 ProPlus and Statistical Package for Social Sciences SPSS,which LU offers to students and staff for free installation on their personal computer, as well as R, Prisma, GPower statistical software and specific epidemiology software DAGitti and MedCalc, which students can download to their personal computer. The methodological support of the University of Latvia for the implementation of the study program is extensive and prepared in accordance with the specifics of the field of medicine and health sciences. In addition to traditional information resources, the University of Latvia provides access to more than 170,000 subscribed e-resources in various fields of science. In order to expand the diversity of study courses, new e-learning courses are being developed and introduced, and existing methodological materials in the e-learning environment are being updated and modernized, creating materials also in English (SAR, p.675). There are many library resources SAR, p.675; Table 3.3.1.1 Number of printed editions (copies) of MSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics in the collection of the Library of the LU).

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3. The cost calculation of MSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics has been performed without providing state funding for these studies. According to the methodology for calculating the cost of study programs developed by the Department of Studies of the University of Latvia, the cost per student per year is 3449 euros, the expected return per student is 39 euros per year. The calculation takes into account the projected number of students 32, of which 22 are full-time students and 10

are students with an increased plan, who are students from outside the European Union. It is estimated that at least 32 first-year and second-year students will study at MSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics. In addition to teaching costs, the cost calculation also includes general staff costs in the amount of 31.7% of the academic staff (432 euros per student per year), infrastructure costs in the amount of 7.5% (258 euros per student per year), property and services 14.5% (501 euros per student per), indirect costs in the amount of 26% (897 euros per student per year) other costs totaling 2088 euros per student per year. The tuition fee for the study program is 2400 euros per year. Compared to similar master's study programs in the Baltics and abroad, tuition fees for citizens of Latvia and the European Union are similar or even lower. For example, the tuition fee for the Master's program in Public Health atLSMU (Lietuvos Sveikatos Mokslu Universitetas / Lithuenian University of Health Science) is 4,200 euros per year. Tuition fees for English-speaking students from outside the European Union are set at € 6,000, which is significantly lower than for similar programs at foreign universities.Tuition fees have been agreed with the student government at the FM faculty and have been discussed with students at the university level.
The minimum number of students in the Latvian stream is 22, in the English stream it is 10.Master's study program "Epidemiology and Medical Statistics" 45726 is currently implemented only in Latvian.
There are insufficient numbers of students - total number of students in 2020 year - 8 and 2021 year - 12 (Annex 4; Statistics on students in MSP Epidemiology and medical statistics) and no state budget funded places at all.

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

Conclusions
Study infrastructure, facilities and information support enable the achievement of quality study and research results, and create adequate opportunities for the job market and the implementation of the study programme.

Strengths:
1. The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning conditions with good equipment and modern technologies; plenty of high quality library resources

Weaknesses:
1. Small number of students - the minimum number of students to ensure the profitability of the study programme is not met.
2. No state funded places.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Study infrastructure, facilities and information support enable the achievement of quality study and research results, and create adequate opportunities for the job market and the implementation of the study programme.
Insufficient number of students and no budget funded places.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics was licensed in the summer of 2020 (SAR, p.682).
AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics lecturer selection criteria are based on the following regulatory enactments and are based on the following projects: 1. MK 23.01.2018. Regulations No. 49 Regulations on Latvian Science Sectors and Sub-Sectors . 2. LR 02.11.1995. Law on Higher Education Institutions 3. Operational Programs “Growth and Employment” 8.2.1. the requirements of the specific support objective project 8.2.1.0/18/A/015 “Development of Internationally Competitive Study Programs Promoting the Development of the Latvian Economy at the University of Latvia”.
Confirmation that the academic staff of the study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions is viewable in SAR Annex 15 “EPI apliecinājums AL 55”.
Project no. 8.2.1.0/18/A/015 AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics was developed within the framework of “Development of Internationally Competitive and Economic Development Study Programs at the University of Latvia”, one of the requirements is the English language skills of the lecturers, which correspond to at least C1 level, required for teaching in an international environment. The teaching staff involved in the implementation of the program is those who can prove their knowledge of English at the C1 level already in the development phase of the program, or who have started additional English language training to achieve this level, for example, 8.2.2. within the framework of the specific support objective project “Academic Staff Renewal and Competence Improvement at the University of Latvia”. The degree / qualification obtained abroad expands the lecturers' knowledge of various aspects related to the program and provides an opportunity to train students based on international experience (SAR, p.678).

2.4.2. The lecturers of the program have wide opportunities to improve their qualification in order to acquire the latest knowledge related to the study process and content. Even before the beginning of the program, the teaching staff participated in various types of seminars and courses - both in Latvia and abroad. The knowledge that lecturers receive in continuing education courses is applicable to their teaching practice. The content of the program's courses is updated annually to include the latest trends in the programme (SAR, p.680).
Lecturers have the opportunity to participate in exchange programs provided for in ERASMUS + agreements. The agreement with Ben Gurion University of the Negev provides for an exchange of three lecturers for three days; in agreement with the Holon Institute of Technology (HIT) – two lecturers for 14 days. Short-term exchange of lecturers is also provided for in all cooperation agreements. The program is constantly implemented by 13 lecturers, including those who teach electives. Lecturers from other Latvian and international institutions joined part of the courses for 1-5 lectures (SAR, p.680).
The lecturers of AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics were selected by assessing the qualifications of the staff involved, as well as their scientific and methodological training. The qualification of the lecturers is confirmed by their activity in the chosen field of scientific research and scientific and academic activity, which is also in accordance with the study program and the content of the taught courses, they have appropriate scientific publications. The application of the selection criteria ensures that the teaching staff is involved in the implementation of the study program, who not only have pedagogical work experience, but also carry out active scientific work themselves in order to prepare highly qualified specialists in epidemiology and medical statistics. Due to the fact that the program has three main blocks - epidemiology, medical statistics and public health, the lecturers were selected based on their education and / or long-term work experience in the respective topic. For example, in the Epidemiology block, the courses Modern Epidemiology I and II will be taught by assoc. prof. Dr. Civjāne, who has an international education in epidemiology; The course Epidemiology of Infectious Diseases is taught by the lecturer Dr. Ķīvīte Urtāne, who is an

epidemiologist and an active researcher and participant in several Latvian and World Health Organizations. In the block of medical statistics, the courses Medical Statistics and Statistical Software for Data Analysis will be taught by docent Dr. Erts, who has a long experience in working with medical data sets, as well as several publications in the field of medical statistics; The course New Age in Digital Health will be taught by foreign lecturers Dr. Bennis and Dr. Hadas Lewy, whose PhD thesis is defended in medical informatics and who has a number of additional education in biology and medical engineering, has a degree from a French university. The courses of the Public Health Block will be taught, for example, by the lecturer Kužniece, who has a degree in Public Health, prof. Folkmanis, who has been involved in health promotion in Latvia for a long time. According to the recommendations of experts from study program licensing, additional lecturers from foreign and Latvian institutions are involved in the program: doc. J. Brass from SPKC. Some of the courses are attended by guest lecturers from the WHO and the CDC (SAR, p.681).

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4. Considering that professors and doctors of science are involved in the implementation of the program, the expert commission assumes that the number and quality of their publications is high, although the lecturers' CVs and list of publications cannot be found in SAR.

2.4.5. During visit and based on SAR, experts found that there was active cooperation between students and faculty, students discussing current issues with lecturers, facilitated a broader examination and solution of the problem. In cooperation with the lecturers, two students have submitted their reports to the LU MF International Conference on Scientific Medicine, the reports have been prepared in close cooperation with the lecturers of the program.

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

Conclusions
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the staff of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics, the expert commission concluded that the study program is quite new (licensed in 2020) and is implemented by highly qualified employees with international and extensive experience in practical and scientific work and good English language skills.

Strengths:
1. Highly qualified lectures and good management of the learning process;
2. A multidisciplinary approach to the recruitment of lecturers promotes the implementation of the study program.

Weaknesses:
No remarkable weaknesses.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualifications of the academic staff of the study program meet the conditions for the

implementation of the study program and the requirements specified in the relevant regulatory acts.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics complies with Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 240 “Regulations on the State Academic Education Standard” (Annex 5).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The descriptions of the study courses of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics are provided in Latvian and English languages (Annex 7 Course descriptions of AMSP Epidemiology and medical statistics).
The descriptions are fully compliant with the requirements set forth in Section 561, Paragraph two and Section 562, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institution, they a. define the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; b. determine the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; c. outline the content of the study course necessary for the achievement of learning outcomes, contain the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, indicate other sources of information; d. describe the organization and tasks for the independent work of students; e. determine the evaluation criteria of learning outcomes.
The description of the study module determines: the learning outcomes achievable as a result of the acquisition of the study module; the plan of the study work time; the study courses included in the study module.
In the opinion of Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia, some literature sources are outdated (Annex AIKA annexes VM opinion) - the course descriptors should be revised to see if newer editions or alternative textbooks are available. Consider including current publications and guidelines. Experts reviewed the literature and overall it is up to date, however, the review should be done annually.
Nevertheless this deficiency is not important enough to decrease the evaluation as partially compliant.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the diploma and its supplement is issued for completing the study programme in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers 16.04.2013. to Regulation No. 202 “Procedures for Issuing State-Recognized Higher Education Certificates”.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Declaration (Riga, 21.04.2021, No 28) of the head of study field (Annex 15) certifying that the academic staff involved in the implementation of the Master’s study programme “Epidemiology and Medical Statistics” (code 45726) complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Decision No 1.12/15 (07.02.2020) of the Council for Higher Education addressed to University of Latvia “On the implementation of academic study programmes under LHEI Section 55 Clause 2” the Council has decided to allow the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Latvia to implement on the Master’s study program “Epidemiology and Medical Statistics” (Annex 55_2).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Head of Study Field Declaration (Annex Head of Study Field Declaration, 21.04.2021, No. 07) confirming that the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.
Sufficient English language level of the teaching staff of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics was noticed during the on-site visit.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Head of Study Field Declaration (Annex Head of Study Field Declaration, 21.04.2021, No. 19) confirming that the teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level of English language.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Fully compliant with the Law on Higher Education Institutions Section 46, paragraph 2 and regulations of Cabinet of Ministers 23.01.2007. to Regulation No. 70 “Mandatory regulations to be included in the study agreement” (Annex Standard sample of study agreement „Agreement for EU citizens–2021).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Agreement between the University of Latvia and Riga Stradins University on taking over studies) (SAR, Part I, Annex Agreement on the implementation of the study programmes), confirming that the students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the document Refund and Compensation Policy Statement, No 1-13/363) (Annex Refund and Compensation Policy), confirming that the students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme’s license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics fully complies with all the applicable requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

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

General conclusions

The development of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics at the LU and its inclusion in the study field Health Care is an important contribution to the education of qualified specialists in epidemiology and medical statistics.
The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation (including different options of the study programme implementation), as well as the implementation language, are reasonable and justified.
The recommendations received during the process of licensing are implemented as much as possible.
Study programme does not have the minimum number of students to ensure the profitability of the study programme.
The Content of study programme is topical and study courses are interconnected and help students to achieve study course learning outcomes and lead to accomplishing study programme learning outcomes. Needs of the industry also are taken into account, during the interviews employers have also shown involvement in the development of the study programme and help with developing student final thesis. Master degree awarded is based on the achievements in the relevant field of epidemiology and medical statistics. There is no internship for students, but they have some study courses to develop their practical skills. Topics of the final thesis are relevant to the field and are developed in close relation with staff members and other stakeholders.
Study infrastructure, facilities and information support enable the achievement of quality study and research results, and create adequate opportunities for the job market and the implementation of the doctoral study programme.
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the staff of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics, the expert commission concluded that the study program is quite new (licensed in 2020) and is implemented by highly qualified employees with international and extensive experience in practical and scientific work and good English language skills.

Strengths

1. The development of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics at the LU and its inclusion in the study field Health Care is an important contribution to the education of qualified specialists in epidemiology and medical statistics.
2. The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the AMSP Epidemiology and Medical Statistics are interrelated.
3. Study programme syllabus is unique to teach medical statistics and epidemiology.
4. Employers are closely involved in providing Master thesis topics.
5. The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning conditions with good equipment and modern technologies; plenty of high quality library resources

6. Highly qualified lectures and good management of the learning process;
7. A multidisciplinary approach to the recruitment of lecturers promotes the implementation of the study program.

Weaknesses

1. Small number of students and no state funded places.
2. Future students may have restricted access to medical or epidemiological data that is necessary to actually train skills on real data sets.
3. Some literature sources in the course descriptions are outdated.

Evaluation of the study programme "Epidemiology and Medical Statistics"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Epidemiology and Medical Statistics"

Short-term recommendations

1. Course reading lists should be reviewed annually to see if more current editions of books or newer alternative text books are available.

Long-term recommendations

1. It is necessary to carry out explanatory work with decision-makers in order to increase the number of budget places.
2. To search for the methods ensuring the ability to train the students' skills on the real data sets in the situations when the access to medical or epidemiological data is restricted.

II - "Sports Science" ASSESSMENT

II - "Sports Science" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. In its content, the AMSP Sports Science (SAR, Annex 6_SpoSci_MSP, Annex 7_SpoSci_MSP) corresponds to the study field Health Care, "because about 60% of the total amount of credit points of the study programme is made up of courses in the fields of Medicine and Health sciences, 20% consists of Social sciences courses, and 20% - Natural sciences courses" (SAR, 611).
But if the programme code of the AMSP Sports Science is analyzed according to the Cabinet Regulations No. 322 "Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia" (June 13, 2017), then it can be seen that the third, fourth and fifth digits of the study programme code (813) correspond to the group of education programmes Sports.
The compliance of the MSP Sports Science with the study field Health Care is related to the interdisciplinarity of the study programme, the graduates of this study programme use their knowledge about physical activity and exercise to support health, improve performance, and prevent diseases. According to the Cabinet Regulations No. 322 "Regulations on the Classification of

Education in Latvia" (June 13, 2017), the code of the study programme is 45813 and the graduates of the study programme will be awarded a Master's degree in Health and Sports Sciences (SAR, p. 611; Annex 1_SpoSci_MSP).

2.1.2. The title of the programme AMSP Sports Science, its code – 45813, degree to be awarded – Master's Degree in Health and Sport Science are closely related to the content of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved. The code of the study programme in accordance with the Classification of Education in Latvia – 45813.
The AMSP Sports Science is implemented as a full-time study programme with the duration of two years and the amount of 80 Latvian credits (CP). The languages of implementation – Latvian, English. The name of the study programme, the degree to be awarded, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are interrelated.
The aim of the study programme is "to provide students with the opportunity to research, analyze and develop the physical, mental, emotional and social benefits of sport and physical activity that improve health and quality of life for all individuals, from children and young people to seniors, from patients with serious pathologies to professional high performance athletes, thus fostering the intellectual potential in academically trained professionals and promoting the transfer of research-based interdisciplinary knowledge to topics of societal relevance in sports science" (SAR, p. 607).
Admission requirements of AMSP Sports Science – Bachelor's or Master's Degree in Natural Sciences, Health Sciences, Education Sciences, Humanities, Social Sciences, Engineering, Environmental Sciences or second level professional higher education (or equivalent higher education) in medicine.
The learning outcomes of the AMSP Sports Science correspond to Level 7 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF), which is described in the Cabinet Regulations No. 322 "Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia" (June 13, 2017).
The title, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the AMSP Sports Science are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation (including different options of the study programme implementation), as well as the language of implementation, are reasonable and justified.

2.1.3. The AMSP Sports Science was licensed on June 21, 2019, and no changes have been made to the study programme parameters, but in the process of licensing the study programme, the experts suggested five recommendations related to the implementation of the programme (SAR, p. 570), which are taken into account during the implementation of the study programme.

2.1.4. "The position of the MSP Sports Science in the Latvian education market is determined by the demand for education to prepare competitive and highly qualified specialists at the Master's level who are ready for both academic and professional work. One of the tools for developing the skills and competences required on the labour market is interdisciplinary higher education and the implementation of interdisciplinary study programmes at higher education institutions" (SAR, p. 613). AMSP Sports Science graduates have a wide range of professional opportunities, such as sports laboratory staff in the Physical Performance Testing Laboratories, qualified staff in sports clubs and centers, physical education teacher and coach if graduates get a previous or subsequent professional qualification (SAR, p. 613). Interdisciplinary research in health and sports sciences is of great importance, which could be noted as a strength of the AMSP Sports Science.
The MSP Sports Science is supported by the Latvian Physiological Society, the Latvian Olympic Committee, the Traumatology and Orthopedics Hospital. Several municipalities in Latvia, whose cities have established modern comprehensive sports centers and new and modern laboratories equipped for the determination of physical performance (e.g., Sigulda, Mārupe), have expressed their support for the implementation of the Master's degree programme at the University of Latvia (SAR, p. 613).

In the three years since the programme was launched, 10, 16 and 12 students have been matriculated respectively in each year; it is a normal indicator for an academic master's study programme. The results of the discussions confirm that the number of students in AMSP Sports Science could increase if the number of places in the state budget was increased. This reason was given by applicants who did not sign study agreements, because they were not able to pay for their studies immediately after completing their bachelor's studies. In the first three years of studies, the AMSP Sports Science is implemented in the group studying in Latvian. Beginning with the academic year 2022/2023, the admission to the English group has also been announced. The previously planned enrolment in the English language group was not implemented due to the COVID 19 pandemic and restrictions and requirements for the recognition of vaccination certificates for foreigners (SAR, p. 615).
Taking into account the above, we can conclude that the AMSP Sports Science is economically and socially justified.

2.1.5. N/A

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

Conclusions
The compliance of the MSP Sports Science with the study field Health Care is related to the interdisciplinarity of the study programme, graduates of this study programme use their knowledge about physical activity and exercise to support health, improve performance, and prevent diseases. The graduates of the study programme will be awarded a Master's degree in Health and Sports Sciences.
The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the AMSP Sport Science are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation), as well as the language of implementation, are reasonable and justified.
The MSP Sports Science is supported by the Latvian Physiological Society, the Latvian Olympic Committee, the Traumatology and Orthopedics Hospital. Interdisciplinary research in health and sports sciences is of great importance, which could be noted as a strength of the AMSP Sports Science.

Strengths:
1. The compliance of the MSP Sports Science with the study field Health Care is related to the interdisciplinarity of the study programme, graduates of this study programme use their knowledge about physical activity and exercise to support health, improve performance, and prevent diseases.
2. The AMSP Sport Science has a major role in interdisciplinary research in health and sport science.

No weaknesses have been identified.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. The content of AMSP Sport Science is topical and up to date (SAR p. 616, Annex 6: Master's study program Sport Science planning, Annex 7: Study courses of the MSP Sports Science). The programme is delivered as a full time study programme in Latvian or English language (SAR p. 608 -609). The courses within the programme allows for the achievement of aims and objectives of the study programme (SAR p. 609, Annex 6: Master's study program Sport Science planning, Annex 7: Study courses of the MSP Sports Science). The programme adheres to the legislation of the Republic

of Latvia (Annex 2: Council of Higher Education Decision No 1.10/19, Annex 4: The MSP Sports Science compliance with the State Education Standard). The programme is designed in such way that students with various professional backgrounds (as the admissions criteria are wide (SAR p. 608)) can obtain their desired sub-speciality (biomechanics and neuroscience, exercise physiology and biochemistry, sport psychology and public health) (SAR p. 616). There are 3 main blocks of the study courses: Part A (fundamental knowledge on the topic of study programme so that students with varied academic background can successfully continue and complete the programme and later introduce them to sub-specialities), Part B (in-depth knowledge of the selected field and its practical application), Part C (restrictive elective courses from another branch of study field Health Care) (SAR p. 616). The requirements and foundational courses for development of master thesis have been sufficiently justified (SAR p. 616-617). For the students undertaking the programme in English, Latvian language course of 2 credits is offered in the 1st semester (SAR p. 616). The course descriptors are standardized and concise (Annex 7: Study courses of the MSP Sports Science). The programme also provides a dual career opportunities for professional athletes (onsite meeting with the programme director 10.08.2022).
In the opinion of Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia, some literature sources are outdated (Annex AIKA annexes VM opinion) - the course descriptors should be revised to see if newer editions or alternative textbooks are available. Consider including current publications and guidelines. Experts reviewed the literature and overall it is up to date, however, the review should be done annually.

2.2.2. The achievements and findings of the relevant field of science have been demonstrated and summarized in SAR in Section 3.2.2. The programme staff is involved in research projects, writing research papers and attending international conferences and exchange programmes (SAR p. 619-631). Students are also encouraged to participate in conferences nationally and internationally and to write scientific publications (SAR p. 619). This was confirmed during the onsite visit (10.08.2022) in the meetings with staff and students.

2.2.3. As mentioned in Section 2.2.1. the programme is delivered in full time mode in both latvian and English language (SAR p. 608-609). The main delivery methods for the programme, especially in the core courses are lectures, seminars and practical sessions in laboratories (SAR p. 632). There is a wide range of lecture delivery modes used (e.g. summary and problem oriented lectures) (SAR p. 632). A relatively high number of guest lecturers have contributed to the programme delivery (SAR p. 632). Student-centered approach has also been demonstrated (SAR p. 632) by use of independent group work for example. The virtual learning environment (Moodle) is widely incorporated in the teaching process (SAR p. 632). As well, various assessment methods have been used in accordance with the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia No.240 of 13.05.2014, Regulations on the StateAcademic Education Standard (SAR p. 632-633). The assessment criteria of the master thesis is sufficiently explained (SAR p. 633). The assessment criteria, intended learning outcomes and course descriptors are available to the students in advance (SAR p. 633). These are set in accordance with the relevant legislation (SAR p. 633). The grading is standardized using a 10-point scale (SAR p. 633). Innovative and interactive adjustments to the programme delivery were made during the Covid-19 pandemic (SAR p.632-633). The only difference in delivery provided between Latvian and English is that international students are offered Latvian language course of 2 credits in the 1st semester (SAR p. 616), therefore, equal opportunities are provided for both delivery modes.
The study programme is new and alongside experienced teaching staff members, new academics are employed. From the onsite meeting with the staff (10.08.2022), it is clear that new academics are eager and highly qualified, however they sometimes struggle with implementation of their

course (e.g. how to select the most crucial information for the lectures), therefore, a more team-orientated approach for implementation and delivery would be advised (e.g. more than one person delivering the lecture course and is involved in the development of assessments). This is a recommendation for all programmes in the study field, but especially the newly licenced programmes and courses.

2.2.4. N/A

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6. Theses developed in this study programme are related to the different areas of sport science, for example: biomechanics and neuroscience; physiology and biochemistry; sports psychology and public health. These themes of the Master's theses feature interdisciplinarity with social and medical aspects of sports science and are relevant to the study programme.

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

Conclusions
The programme is innovative, topical, relevant and complies with all legal requirements of the Republic of Latvia. Prospective students with a wide academic background can pursue the degree. Students are encouraged to participate in scientific activity and to publish their findings in peer reviewed journals. Staff members themselves are vastly engaged in research activities and projects, providing students with up to date knowledge. The only weak point that could be mentioned under these criteria is the support for new academic staff, as during the on site visit, the newer academics expressed a feeling of sometimes being overwhelmed with the vast amount of material that could be included in the course, lectures etc. Therefore, a more team-based approach or mentorship would help. As mentioned under most programmes, universities should encourage collaboration and practice for more than one staff member to develop and deliver courses and assessments. Course reading lists should be reviewed annually to see if more current editions of books or newer alternative text books are available. Current papers with guidelines in the field should also be used.

Strengths:
1. A programme that is innovative, relevant and topical and adheres to all the legal requirements of the Republic of Latvia.
2. Student engagement in research activities and writing of peer review papers.

Weaknesses:
1. Lack of support system for new academic personal members to start their academic career and to get acquainted with LU internal systems. A support system should be put in place for new academicas as during the on-site visit they expressed a feeling of sometimes being overwhelmed with the vast amount of information and how to fit it into a course or a lecture. Here a mentorship scheme or a team-base approach of more than one person developing and delivering the course and assessments. This would improve the experience for the new academics and students.
2. Course reading lists should be reviewed annually to see if more current editions of books or newer alternative text books are available. Current papers with guidelines in the field should also be used.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Topics are relevant to the study field and research activities help to improve sport activities of both - professional athletes and society members. Some literature sources in the course descriptions are outdated. This deficiency has to be eliminated on a short term basis, nevertheless this deficiency is not important enough to decrease the evaluation as partially compliant.

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. This study programme uses a wide range of infrastructure and equipment of the faculties and research institutes located in the House of Nature and the House of Science at the UL Academic Centre in Tornakalns. The laboratories of Biomechanics and Neuroscience areas of the Sports Science programme are located in the laboratories of the Faculty of Physics, Mathematics and Optometry, and the Institute for Mechanics of Materials. In the course of their activity, the Faculty of Biology Department of Human and Animal Physiology, Blood Flow Physiology and Exercise Physiology laboratories have updated and developed a new and modern methodological basis for the study of the circulatory system, respiratory system,metabolism and musculoskeletal system in athletes and non-active people (SAR, p. 635; Tour of facilities). There are modern equipment: Ge Logiq E BT12 high resolution portable sonographer; Venous occlusion plethysmography system Hokanson; Master-CPX cardiopulmonary system; Electrophysiology equipment; Mobile system for testing neuromuscular function in athletes and different others technologies (SAR, p.636) with excellent possibilities for interdisciplinary approach for researches (meeting with graduates). The services are provided in 8 branch libraries of the LU Library in accordance with the LU Library Terms of Use (LU Rector's Order No. 1/39 of 1 February 2017). The services, according to the terms of use, can be used by LU students, academic and general staff, other libraries, students of other universities, as well as by any person. The LU Library provides free basic services and paid services. The House of Science Library provides staff with 24-hour access to: the open-access collection, two self-service machines for home delivery, renewal and return of books, and a self-service wall for the use of laptops. The LU Library is the first in the Baltic States to provide such a facility and service. The self-service facility is equipped with 36 laptops. LU staff can check out the laptops at any time of the day and use them for 6 hours, not only in the library area, but in the whole building, using student or employee ID cards. There are plenty of literature resources SAR , p.638 ; 3.3.1.1. Table Printed publications available in the UL Library for the MSP Sport Science).

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3. The study programme is currently mainly funded by the students themselves, and there are two state-funded places. The state budget subsidy for a study place is determined for each academic year by agreement between the LU and the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Latvia. The tuition fee is determined by the LU by an ordinance for each academic year, after consultation with the LU Student Council. The tuition fee is calculated taking into account: 1) the cost of a study place, 2) the potential interest of fee-paying students in the study programme, and 3) the tuition fees in similar programmes of other higher education institutions. The cost per student per year is estimated at EUR 2679 (calculations are made per 30 students). Teaching staff costs account for 48%, general staff costs for 15%, infrastructure costs for 10% and indirect costs for 26%. In oder to ensure the profitability of MSP Sports Science, the minimum number of students in Latvian group is 20, in English group - 10. Unfortunately for now there is insufficient number of students (SAR, Annex: 3_SpoSci_MSPStatistics on students in MSP Sports Science). The annual tuition fee approved by the

LU Ordinance for the academic year 2021/2022 is EUR 2400 for LV, EU and EEA citizens and EUR 4000 for non-EU citizens (SAR, p.370). There are very limited state funded places (Annex 3_SpoSci_MSP Statistics on students in MSP Sports Science).

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

Conclusions
MSP Sports Science study infrastructure, facilities of scientific laboratories and information support enable the achievement of quality study and research results, and create adequate opportunities for the job market and the implementation of the doctoral study programme.

Strengths:
1. Interdisciplinary approach with excellent equipment and technological resources for study and research.

Weaknesses:
2. Insufficient number of students and limited state funded places.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

MSP Sports Science study infrastructure, facilities of scientific laboratories and information support enable the achievement of quality study and research results, and create adequate opportunities for the job market and the implementation of the doctoral study programme.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. Qualification of teaching staff, election of professors or associate professors, including evaluation of the performance of a candidate for the post of professor or associate professor shall take place in accordance with the criteria established by the Cabinet of Ministers, in accordance with the requirements of Section 34 (5) of the Law on Higher Education, as well as Cabinet Regulation No 129 of 25 February 2021 "Procedure for Evaluation of Scientific and Pedagogical Qualification or Artistic Creativity Performance of a Candidate for the Post of Professor or Associate Professor and a Professor or Associate Professor in Appointment" (“Profesora vai asociētā profesora amata pretendenta un amatā esoša profesora vai asociētā profesora zinātniskās un pedagoģiskās kvalifikācijas vai mākslinieciskās jaunrades darba rezultātu novērtēšanas kārtība”) and the LU Regulations on Academic and Administrative Positions (SAR, p. 641).
Confirmation that the academic staff of the study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions is viewable in SAR Annex 8 SpoSCI MSP.
Professional qualifications are fully relevant to the study programme of the field of study, as the academic staff mostly holds PhD degrees in biology, physics, medicine, pharmacy, psychology, social sciences, economics, engineering and computer science.
The following conditions were set for the involvement of teaching staff in the implementation of the AMSP Sports Science: a doctoral degree in a relevant field, sub-field; academic and/or professional

experience in fields related to sports science and public health; research activity and publications related to the study programme aim and objectives. The academic staff's knowledge of the official language complies with the regulations on the scope of official language knowledge and the procedure for testing the official language knowledge for the performance of professional and official duties. In accordance with the LU normative documents, all teaching staff involved in the study process have at least B2 or higher level knowledge and skills in English. All teaching staff may also teach their courses in English by signing a certificate to that effect. In the framework of the project "Renewal and Competence Development of Academic Staff at the University of Latvia", the teaching staff are upgrading their qualifications in leadership, digital skills, academic integrity lecture courses, as well as developing their language skills in the course "Improvement of Professional English Skills of Academic Staff for Work in the Study Environment".
All lecturers involved in the programme regularly participate in leading international and Latvian scientific conferences, including the annual international scientific conference of the LU (SAR, p. 641).

2.4.2. According to Article 55 of the Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Latvia, the academic staff involved in the development and implementation of the AMSP Sports Science are 6 professors, 9 associate professors, 4 assistant professors, 9 lecturers, 1 researcher, PhD students and Doctor of Science, 3 sports physicians (SAR, p. 642).
The teaching staff involved in the implementation of the AMSP Sports Science are listed in SAR Table 3.4.1.1. Four visiting professors and associate professors are involved in the implementation of the study process. This structure of academic staff determines high quality academic education, which is mainly provided by highly qualified and internationally recognised experts in their field (SAR, p.642).
Several LU faculties, departments and scientific institutes, their academic and scientific staff are involved in the programme implementation and development - Faculty of Biology (Department of Human and Animal Physiology and Department of Molecular Biology), Faculty of Medicine (Department of Pharmacology and 646 Department of Pharmacy, Department of Medical Biochemistry), Faculty of Education, Psychology and Arts (Department of Psychology), BVEF, FMOF, Faculty of Computer Science, as well as the Institute for Mechanics of Materials, the Institute of Cardiology and Regenerative Medicine and the Institute of Atomic Physics and Spectroscopy (SAR, p.646).

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4. Based on information in SAR (SAR p. 619), the number and quality of publications and scientific activity of professors and doctors of science are involved in the implementation of the program are high.

2.4.5. The interaction and cooperation between the academic staff of the various fields of science involved in the study programme takes place during various events organized by the LU: staff meetings, scientific conferences, science cafes, further education courses and informative meetings on science projects.
Visiting professors/researchers from Sweden (PhD, Prof. Robert Joffe), Italy (PhD, Prof. Mauro Zarrelli) and Portugal (PhD, Prof. Rui Miranda Guedes), Latvian scientist from Australia - PhD, Prof. Ingvars Birznieks - have been engaged for lectures in Biomechanics and Neuroscience (SAR, p.646).
In the implementation of theoretical courses and practical classes, as well as in the further exchange of experience among academic staff and students, it is planned to use the already existing cooperation with the Department of Sports Exercise Biology of the University of Tartu Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences of the University of Jivaskilas, as well as to establish cooperation with the Lithuanian Sports University and Latvian universities for joint research

and development of movement mechanics, new technologies (with Riga Technical University and the Latvian Academy of Sports Pedagogy). Successful cooperation has been established with sports professionals outside the University. As an excellent example of cooperation with the Latvian Olympic Team, 3 sports doctors - J.Kaupe, L.Kalniņa-Havraneka and L.Ušacka give lectures in the Sports Medicine course. Within the course, guest lecturer E.Bernāns from LASE (Latvian Academy of Sport Education), physiotherapist from Latvian Olympic Unit A.Noveičuks were invited, J.Misiņš and J.Grīnbergs lectured on the use of modern sports technologies in professional sports, on their international experience in the USA and Spain (SAR, p.646).

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

Conclusions
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the staff of the AMSP Sports Science the expert commission concluded that the study program is implemented by highly qualified international employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work in the direction of the AMSP Sports Science.

Strengths:
1. Highly qualified lectures and good management of the learning process;
2. Good international cooperation and visiting professor involvement;
3. A multidisciplinary approach to the recruitment of lecturers promotes the implementation of the study program.

Weaknesses:
No remarkable weaknesses.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualifications of the academic staff of the study program meet the conditions for the implementation of the study program and the requirements specified in the relevant regulatory acts.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

AMSP Sports Science complies with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 240 of 13 May 2014 “Regulations on the State Academic Education Standard” (Annex 4_Spo_Sci_MSP).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The descriptions of the study courses of the AMSP Sports Sciences are provided (Annex 7 SpoScoMSP) in English and Latvian.
The descriptions are fully compliant with the requirements set forth in Section 561, Paragraph two and Section 562, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institution, they a. define the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; b. determine the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; c. outline the content of the study course necessary for the achievement of learning outcomes, contain the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, indicate other sources of information; d. describe the organization and tasks for the independent work of students; e. determine the evaluation criteria of learning outcomes.
The description of the study module determines: the learning outcomes achievable as a result of the acquisition of the study module; the plan of the study work time; the study courses included in the study module.
In the opinion of Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia, some literature sources are outdated (Annex AIKA annexes VM opinion) - the course descriptors should be revised to see if newer editions or alternative textbooks are available. Consider including current publications and guidelines. Experts reviewed the literature and overall it is up to date, however, the review should be done annually. Nevertheless this deficiency is not important enough to decrease the evaluation as partially compliant.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the diploma and its supplement is issued for completing the study programme in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers 16.04.2013. to Regulation No. 202 “Procedures for Issuing State-Recognized Higher Education Certificates”.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the The Declaration (Riga, 21.04.2021, No 29) of the head of study field (Annex 8) certifying that the academic staff involved in the implementation of the Master’s study programme “Sports Science” (code 45813) complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Decision No 1.10/19 (21.05.2021) of the Council for Higher Education addressed to University of Latvia “On the implementation of the Master’s study programme “Sports Science” at the University of Latvia the Council has decided to allow to implement the Master’s study program in health sciences “Sports Science” (Annex 2_SpoSci_MSP).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Head of Study Field Declaration (Annex Head of Study Field Declaration, 21.04.2021, No. 11), confirming that the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Head of Study Field Declaration (Annex Head of Study Field Declaration, 21.04.2021, No. 20) confirming that the teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level of English language.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Fully compliant with the Law on Higher Education Institutions Section 46, paragraph 2 and regulations of Cabinet of Ministers 23.01.2007. to Regulation No. 70 “Mandatory regulations to be included in the study agreement” (Annex Standard sample of study agreement „Agreement for EU citizens–2021).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the LU Declaration (The University of Latvia Declaration No 1-13/506) (SAR, Annex Agreement on the implementation of the study programmes), confirming, that the students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study

programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Refund and Compensation Policy Statement, No 1-13/380 (Annex Refund and Compensation Policy), which confirms that the students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The AMSP Sports Science fully complies with all the applicable requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

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

General conclusions

The compliance of the MSP Sports Science with the study field Health Care is related to the interdisciplinarity of the study programme, graduates of this study programme use their knowledge about physical activity and exercise to support health, improve performance, and prevent diseases. The graduates of the study programme will be awarded a Master's degree in Health and Sports Sciences.

The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the AMSP Sport Science are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation (including different options of the study programme implementation), as well as the language of implementation, are reasonable and justified.

The MSP Sports Science is supported by the Latvian Physiological Society, the Latvian Olympic Committee, the Traumatology and Orthopedics Hospital. Interdisciplinary research in health and

sports sciences is of great importance, which could be noted as a strength of the AMSP Sports Science.
The programme is innovative, topical, relevant and complies with all legal requirements of the Republic of Latvia. Prospective students with a wide academic background can pursue the degree. Students are encouraged to participate in scientific activity and to publish their findings in peer reviewed journals. Staff members themselves are vastly engaged in research activities and projects, providing students with up to date knowledge. The only weak point that could be mentioned under these criteria is the support for new academic staff, as during the on site visit, the newer academics expressed a feeling of sometimes being overwhelmed with the vast amount of material that could be included in the course, lectures etc. Therefore, a more team-based approach or mentorship would help. As mentioned under most programmes, universities should encourage collaboration and practice for more than one staff member to develop and deliver courses and assessments.
MSP Sports Science study infrastructure, facilities of scientific laboratories and information support enable the achievement of quality study and research results, and create adequate opportunities for the job market and the implementation of the doctoral study programme.
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the staff of the AMSP Sports Science the expert commission concluded that the study program is implemented by highly qualified international employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work in the direction of the AMSP Sports Science.

Strengths

1. The compliance of the MSP Sports Science with the study field Health Care is related to the interdisciplinarity of the study programme, graduates of this study programme use their knowledge about physical activity and exercise to support health, improve performance, and prevent diseases.
2. The AMSP Sport Science has a major role in interdisciplinary research in health and sport science.
3. A programme that is innovative, relevant and topical and adheres to all the legal requirements of the Republic of Latvia.
4. Student engagement in research activities and writing of peer review papers.
5. Interdisciplinary approach with excellent equipment and technological resources for study and research.
6. Highly qualified lectures and good management of the learning process;
7. Good international cooperation and visiting professor involvement;
8. A multidisciplinary approach to the recruitment of lecturers promotes the implementation of the study program;
9. High scientific potential for lecturers.

Weaknesses

1. Lack of support system for new academic personal members to start their academic career and to get acquainted with LU internal systems.
2. Limited number of students, specially-state funded.
3. Some literature sources in the course descriptions are outdated.

Evaluation of the study programme "Sports Science"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Sports Science"

Short-term recommendations

1. Course reading lists should be reviewed annually to see if more current editions of books or newer alternative text books are available.

Long-term recommendations

1. It is necessary to carry out explanatory work with decision-makers in order to increase the number of budget places.

2. A support system should be put in place for new academicas as during the on-site visit they expressed a feeling of sometimes being overwhelmed with the vast amount of information and how to fit it into a course or a lecture. Here a mentorship scheme or a team-base approach of more than one person developing and delivering the course and assessments. This would improve the experience for the new academics and students.

II - "Clinical Optometry" ASSESSMENT

II - "Clinical Optometry" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The PMSP Clinical Optometry is based on more than 25 years of experience in training optometrists at the University of Latvia, the legislation of the Republic of Latvia from January 1, 2020, which stipulates that an optometrist is a medical practitioner – functional specialist, as well as the latest trends and requirements for the system of optometrist education in the European Union regulated by the European Council of Optometry and Optics (SAR, p. 278). The inclusion of the study programme in the study field Health Care is justified by the Medical Treatment Law, Article 3, which defines that “health care is a set of measures implemented by health care providers, including telemedicine and activities with medicines and medical devices to provide, maintain, and restore the patient’s health”. An optometrist is a primary vision care professional whose activity is directly related to the provision, maintenance and restoration of a patient’s visual health within the limits of their competence. The extent of the implemented measures is strictly defined by the professional standard. As the study programme is designed taking into account both the Medical Treatment Law and the professional standard of optometrists, the study programme fully complies with the study field Health Care (SAR, p. 280). Therefore, we can conclude that PMSP Clinical Optometry meets the aim of the study field Health Care – to educate competent health care specialists for the Latvian national economy. The inclusion of the PMSP Clinical Optometry in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and the degree to be awarded.

2.1.2. The PMSP Clinical Optometry is a professional master study programme and offers two study models: the standard model – 80 Latvian credits (CP) and the model with the preliminary year with 120 Latvian credits (CP). The degree to be acquired – professional master’s degree in clinical optometry, qualification to be obtained – optometrist. The languages of instruction – Latvian and English.
In Latvian, the PMSP Clinical Optometry is implemented in three ways:

full-time intramural studies (80 CP, 2 study years; admission requirements – Bachelor's degree in Optometry),
part-time intramural studies (80 CP, 2.6 study years; admission requirements – Bachelor's degree in Optometry),
full-time intramural studies (120 CP, 3 study years; admission requirements – Bachelor's degree or a second-level professional higher education (or equivalent higher education)).
In English, the PMSP Clinical Optometry is implemented in four ways:
full-time intramural studies (80 CP, 2 study years; admission requirements – Bachelor's degree in Optometry),
part-time extramural studies (80 CP, 2,6 study years; admission requirements – Bachelor's degree in Optometry),
full-time intramural studies (120 CP, 3 study years; admission requirements – Bachelor's degree or a second-level professional higher education (or equivalent higher education)),
part-time extramural studies (120 CP, 4 study years; admission requirements – Bachelor's degree or a second-level professional higher education (or equivalent higher education)).
The code of the study programme according to the classification of Latvian education – 47722, where the first part 47 of the code indicates that the type of the PMSP Clinical Optometry is professional master study programme and the digits of the second part of the code 722 indicate that the thematic area of education is Health Care, but the group of educational programmes is Medical Services, which includes "Optometry".
The learning outcomes of the Master's study programme correspond to Level 7 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF), which is described in the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 322 "Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia" (June 13, 2017). Education and qualification requirements of the PMSP Clinical Optometry comply with the requirements of the Cabinet Regulations No. 512 "Regulations on the State Standard of the Second Level Professional Higher Education" (approved on 26.08.2014), professional standard Optometrist (approved on 11 December 2019, protocol No. 8), the Medical Treatment Law (adopted on 01.10.1997), Cabinet Regulation No. 268 Regulations on the Competence of Medical Practitioners and Students Acquiring First or Second Level Professional Higher Medical Education Programs in Medical Treatment and the Amount of Theoretical and Practical Knowledge of These Persons (adopted on 24.03.2009) and the system of optometrist education in the European Union, regulated by the ECOO (European Council of Optometry and Optics).
The title, code, degree to be obtained, professional qualification, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PMSP Clinical Optometry are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation, as well as the implementation languages, are reasonable and justified.

2.1.3. In order to develop the PMSP Clinical Optometry and improve its recognition not only in Latvia, but also abroad, the following changes have been made:
the previous name of the programme PMSP Optometry has been specified and now it is PMSP Clinical Optometry
parallel to the standard model of 80 Latvian credits (CP), the model with the preliminary year with the amount of 120 Latvian credits (CP) has been introduced;
the aim of the study programme has been made more specific and is in line with the requirements of the professional standard Optometrist;
the objectives of the study programme have been reformulated, taking into account the latest requirements for the formulation of parameters of the study programme, as well as the requirements of the professional standard Optometrist;
the results of the study programme have been reformulated and harmonized with the requirements of the "European Diploma in Optometry" regarding the acquired knowledge, skills and competences,

which meet the requirements of the European Diploma in Optometry set by ECOO.
These corrections introduced into the PMSP Clinical Optometry parameters within the assessment of the study field are analyzed, justified and would be supported.

2.1.4. LU PMSP Clinical Optometry is the only study programme of the kind in Latvia, upon graduation of which one obtains a professional master's degree in clinical optometry and the qualification of optometrist; moreover, LU is the only higher education establishment in the Baltics that offers master's level studies in optometry. PMSP Clinical Optometry is designed taking into account trends, needs, and requirements of today's labor market, as well as the specifics of the field. The survey shows that 85% of graduates work as optometrists in vision care or health care fields in optic stores, medical centers, or clinics (SAR, p. 828, Table 3.1.3.2.).
In the part-time extramural form, studies are mainly implemented in the form of distance learning with several on-site meetings in Riga. The on-site meetings last for 3-10 days and are envisaged for the students to take examinations and listen to introductory classes of the next semester's study courses, as well as to make arrangements for clinical internship. The economic and social justification of the study programme, as well as the graduates' employment, are evaluated by considering the results of the graduate and employer surveys.
The majority of students are in the full-time Latvian groups. A significant drop in students is observed comparing the beginning (52 students) and the end of the reporting period (37 students). One explanation is the reduction in state-financed budget places. At the beginning of the reporting period, the number of study places to be financed from the funds of the State budget in the professional master's study programme was 20, which decreased to 12 at the end of the reporting period. The students have also recognised the reduction in budget places as a key factor why they do not plan to continue their studies in the professional master's study programme as a postgraduate study option. In order to address this issue, the Department of Optometry and Vision Science discuss the employers' financial support for their students by covering their tuition fees. With a shortage of qualified optometrists in the country, employers provide extensive financial support by covering the tuition fees of their employees. Consequently, the University of Latvia acquire students and the employer later acquires a highly qualified optometrist." (SAR, p. 288).
Part-time studies are implemented only for a fee and groups studying for their private funding shall only be opened in cases when a minimum number of students is enrolled who are able to cover the work of the teaching staff.
Taking into account the above, we can conclude that the PMSP Clinical Optometry is economically and socially justified.

2.1.5. N/A

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

Conclusions
The PMSP Clinical Optometry meets the aim of the study field Health Care – to educate competent health care specialists for the Latvian national economy. The PMSP Clinical Optometry is a professional master's study programme and the PMSP Clinical Optometry offers two study models: the standard model with 80 Latvian credits (CP) and the model with the preliminary year with the amount of 120 Latvian credits (CP). The title, code, degree to be obtained, professional qualification, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PMSP Clinical Optometry are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation, as well as the implementation language, are reasonable and justified. The corrections introduced into the PMSP Clinical Optometry parameters within the assessment of the study field are analyzed, justified and would be supported.

The LU PMSP Clinical Optometry is the only study programme of its kind in Latvia, upon graduation of which one obtains a professional master's degree in clinical optometry and the qualification of optometrist; besides, the LU is the only higher education institution in the Baltics that offers master's level studies in optometry. The PMSP Clinical Optometry is designed taking into consideration trends, needs, and requirements of today's labor market and the specifics of the field. The PMSP Clinical Optometry is economically and socially justified.

Strengths:
1. The change of the name of the study programme from PMSP Optometry to PMSP Clinical Optometry.
2. The two study models of the PMSP Clinical Optometry: the standard model with 80 Latvian credits (CP) and the model with the preliminary year and the amount of 120 Latvian credits (CP) and different forms of the study programme implementation (full-time, part-time, intramural, extramural).
3. The name, code, degree to be obtained, professional qualification, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PMSP Clinical Optometry are interrelated and compliant with the requirements of the regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia and the system of optometrist education in the European Union, regulated by the ECOO (European Council of Optometry and Optics).

No weaknesses have been identified.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. The content of PMSP is topical and up to date (SAR Section 3.2.1., p. 292-293, 296). The content of the programme has been updated so that there is not an overlap between the courses (Annex OptoPM 6: Mapping the learning outcomes of PMSP Clinical Optometry – standard model) and, furthermore, for the PMSP Clinical Optometry to correspond with the European Diploma in Optometry (SAR p. 293). Also, it adheres to the legislation of the Republic of Latvia and professional standard as this is a professional SP (SAR p. 293, Annex OptoPM 10: Compliance of PMSP Clinical Optometry with the state education standard, Annex OptoPM 7: Compliance of PMSP Clinical Optometry with the occupational standard, Annex OptoPM 8:Compliance of the study program with the specific normative regulation of the corresponding field, Annex OptoPM 19: Diploma & Diploma Supplement). The justification for the programme to meet the labour market needs has been demonstrated in SAR (e.g. p. 295, Annex OptoPM 7: Compliance of PMSP Clinical Optometry with the occupational standard, Annex OptoPM 8:Compliance of the study program with the specific normative regulation of the corresponding field). There are meetings with employers every autumn to discuss the job market trends and the suggested improvements for the programme (SAR p. 296). This was also confirmed during the onsite visit (12.08.2022) with staff and employers. The course descriptors are standardized, clear and concise, allowing to clearly see the link between the aims and objectives of the programme and the achievable learning outcomes of the course (SAR p. 297-298 Annex OptoPM 11: The course descriptions of professional master study programme "Clinical optometry"). The structure of compulsory, restricted elective and elective courses is well justified (SAR p. 297-298).
In the opinion of Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia, some literature sources are outdated (Annex AIKA annexes VM opinion) - the course descriptors should be revised to see if newer editions or alternative textbooks are available.
It has been demonstrated in the SAR that the PMSP is regularly reviewed and improved (SAR p. 293, 296). Student, staff and employer participation in this process is encouraged (SAR p. 295). This was

also confirmed during the on site visit (12.08.2022) with staff, students, graduates and employers). During the on-site visit (12.08.2022) students and graduates expressed overall satisfaction with the programme and its contents.
This is not a weakness of the programme per se, and, as confirmed by the programme directors of both Optometry study programmes during the onsite visit (12.08.2022), is down to the translation, however, the terminology used of what the graduates will be (optometrists after completion of PMSP; assistants of eye care professionals e.g. optometrists (e.g. SAR p. 296, 488)) should be emphasized more - this could potentially help with the confusion of students on what their role is and will dbe after the completion of the programme described on p. 486 in SAR, especially as the programme is delivered also in English.

2.2.2. It has been extensively demonstrated in the SAR (p. 299-300, Annex: Optometry Teaching Staff CVs) the majority of employees involved in the provision of the study process are also involved in scientific work (18 out of 28). The staff introduces their experience, study results, and methods into the study courses ensuring the continuous acquisition of the latest knowledge and skills for students. The staff participation in various projects have been demonstrated (SAR p. 300). Students also are involved in the scientific process at the department (SAR p. 301). They can take part in guest lectures and seminars (Doctoral School), as well as research projects (e.g. Vision screening for school children) and develop their own research project during during the write uo master thesis.
The attachment of staff CVs has made the assessment of various criteria easy. This practice should be used for all study programmes in the study field for the next accreditation period.

2.2.3. The methods of PMSP implementation contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study courses and the study programme (SAR. p. 301-302). Classic delivery methods (lectures, seminars etc.) have been combined with more novel methods (e.g. peer-to-peer work) (SAR p. 302). The use of the student centered approach has also been demonstrated (SAR p. 303). Students are encouraged to meet up and work in small groups within the facilities of the department, there is a mentorship scheme and lectures who also provide consultations outside the scheduled hours as well as detailed feedback (SAR. p. 304). A very positive feature of the course is the 4 part clinical practice (SAR p. 302). Even though the optimization of resources is welcomed, if “Clinical Practice 1” will be delivered in English for Latvian students, the English language knowledge should be improved for both staff and students (SAR p. 303). This was also confirmed during the on site visit in the meeting with programme directors, staff, students and graduates. The MPSP programme director confirmed that students do struggle with English. “A clue of what is being talked about and similar terminology” is not sufficient to fully engage and gain knowledge. Equal opportunities have been provided to the students of different study programme implementation modes (e.g. full-time, part-time, part-time extramural, PMSP studies with preliminary year for non-Optometry Bachelor’s degree holders) (SAR p. 307, please see Section 2.1. for a detailed breakdown of various delivery modes). All modes of delivery are offered both in Latvian and English (SAR p. 274-275). The SAR clearly demonstrates that different modes of delivery have been implemented for different study modes. For example full time students have 100% on site delivery), whilst part time students - 75%, and part-time extramural - 25%, where students mostly attend on site exams and practicals in a week to two week long blocks SAR p. 307). Virtual learning environment (Moodle) is widely used to support all delivery forms (p. 307). It allows students to supply lecture materia, additional reading material and interactive learning content to support student self-directed learning (SAR p. 307-308). Students also have the opportunity to participate in student mobility (e.g. ERASMUS, ERASMUS practice placement), however only 2-3 students per year within the reporting period use this option. There are years with no outgoing student mobility (SAR p. 291).
The assessment type and criteria is well known to the students in advance of the assessments (SAR p. 304). Mid-term/interim assessments are combined with the final assessment which contribute to

the final mark for 50% or less (SAR p. 305). The final qualification examination for the MSP has been well justified and explained (SAR p. 305). Here the split between ‘known’ and ‘hidden’ questions is better - maybe this model could be adapted for BSP Optometry. The marking of assessments is done using a uniformly accepted 10-point scale. During the onsite visit (12.08.2022) in meetings with students and graduates an overall satisfaction was expressed about programme implementation and varied modes of delivery. Part-time extramural study group students noted that maybe the visit to Riga could be extended to a longer period as it is very intensive and demeaning.
How the course is implemented and assessed is dependent on the course lead. This is mostly one individual - this model is represented across all study programmes in the study field. BSP Optometry has established mechanisms on how it supports and trains its new staff members (SAR p. 310, 485-487, 494), which are well justified and implemented. However, a more team-oriented approach in the development of lecture courses and assessments should be considered. This would provide a more objective assessment methodology. As mentioned before, this will be a recommendation for the whole study field.

2.2.4. The students have to undergo an internship worth 26 CP or 39 ECTS. Internship is organized in accordance with national legislation “Regulations on the state standard of second-level professional higher education”Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 512. and optometrist profession standard (International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) code 2267 01. The internship is divided into 4 parts to give opportunity for students to learn all 9 general objectives set by the internship. (SAR section 3.2.4. page 311.) During the reporting period there have been some changes in the implementation of the internship that are appropriate and were made by taking into account the guidance and expectations of students and employers. Students are informed about the possible internship places and what they have to do during the internship. To ensure high quality of the practical skills that students have learned during the internship at the end of each Clinical Practice in Optometry, there is an exam on the student’s knowledge and skills acquired during the practice. Regarding international students as stated in SAR section 3.2.4. page 314, the Department of Optometry and Vision Science works to meet all requirements for clinical practice for students in English groups - clinical practice is organized in English or students are working together with students that are bilingual, patients for international students are chosen so they are able to speak also in English.

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6. During the reporting period in total 184 different Master Theses have been developed. Topics can be divided into experimental studies, clinical studies. Both areas cover a wide range of different research topics relevant to the industry. Most of the topics are offered from the Department of Optometry and Visual Science based on latest trends in the industry. This ensures that all developed Master works are relevant to the field and correspond to the study programme.

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

Conclusions
The PMSP complies with all professional and legal requirements. The awarding of a degree is based on the achievements and findings of the relevant field of science or artistic creation. The programme is topical and relevant. Different delivery modes are available increasing the number of students who can complete the qualification. The assessment criteria are clear. Students undergo a four-part clinical placement to obtain the practical knowledge required for the profession. The scientific work completed by the students is relevant and of a good quality. As the programme is delivered in both Latvian and English and mixed groups are used, the English language knowledge should be

improved for both Latvian students and staff as an overall inkling of the topic is insufficient to achieve the required knowledge base and intended learning outcomes. Also, the use of the terminology of what the student will be after completing the programme (e.g. eye care practitioner assistant vs dispensing optician) should be reviewed, especially if the programme is also delivered in English as there is a clear distinction between these professions. If the dispensing optician (DO) is the preferred term (defined as dispensing opticians – selects an appropriate vision correction product, vision health care products and performs commercial operations to ensure the circulation of visual aids and their care products in SAR p. 498) or if both terms are used, then they should not be used interchangeably with optometrist assistant (SAR e.g. p. 488 last paragraph in text “In 2019, the standard for the profession of optometrist's assistant (dispensing optician) was developed...” or vice versa to avoid any confusion. If this is a translation error, the terminology should be discussed with the translator beforehand and explained to them as it has been in SAR p. 498”. More team-based approach should be taken when developing and delivering the courses and assessments to minimize any potential biases. This is a recommendation to the whole study field.

Strengths:
1. A programme that complies with all legal and professional requirements which is topical and relevant and fulfills the demand of labour market.
2. Different delivery modes, that widens the accessibility to the programme.
3. Good involvement of students in scientific activities.

Weaknesses:
1. English language skills should be improved for both staff and students, especially if a mixed group approach is used. This could be done by introducing additional English language courses for both staff and students.
2. A development and delivery of courses and assessments by more than one staff member would be welcomed as it minimizes any potential bias (this something that the study field as whole should consider).
3. If the dispensing optician (DO) is the preferred term (defined as dispensing opticians – selects an appropriate vision correction product, vision health care products and performs commercial operations to ensure the circulation of visual aids and their care products in SAR p. 498) or if both terms are used, then they should not be used interchangeably with optometrist assistant (SAR e.g. p. 488 last paragraph in text “In 2019, the standard for the profession of optometrist's assistant (dispensing optician) was developed...” or vice versa to avoid any confusion. If this is a translation error, the terminology should be discussed with the translator beforehand and explained to them as it has been in SAR p. 498.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

All topics developed are based on latest trends or novelties in the industry and bring additional knowledge to the field of optometry.

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. The Department of Optometry and Vision Science is located at the Academic Centre of the University of Latvia on Jelgavas Street 1. Therefore, it is possible to use the extensive offer of the Academic Centre for the needs of the study programme. Auditoriums are shared with students of all faculties located at the House of Nature. If necessary, the study process can also use auditoriums at the House of Science on Jelgavas Street 3, located next to the House of Nature. All auditoriums have whiteboards and/or blackboards, projectors, laptops, and Internet access to allow the readers to deliver lectures without using their own computers. The e-studies platform can be used to demonstrate presentation. Interactive whiteboards are also available for some auditoriums. There are five computer classes in the House of Nature with capacity 15-20 workstations. The computer classes have all the necessary computer programmes not only for implementation of the study programmes in Optometry, but also for other study programmes of the University of Latvia, such as statistical programmes (SPSS, R, etc.), image analyzing programmes (ParaView, ImageJ, etc.), programming languages (Visual Studio, Java, etc.), standard office programs (MS Excel, Word, Access, Outlook, etc.), drawing programmes, etc. In support of specific studies, practices and research processes, the Department of Optometry and Vision Science has several modern laboratories (e.g., Refraction Laboratory, Eye Movement Laboratory, Vision Ergonomics Laboratory, Colour Vision Research Laboratory, Neurophysiological Process Research Laboratory), Spectacle Laboratory, and Students Ambulance (SAR p 319; Tour of facilities) Internet access is available in the buildings using wireless technology. In the study process and in the development of bachelor’s theses, students use the resources of LU libraries on site, as well as many library resource databases. Graduates are very satisfied with the teaching materials and conditions because the literature is widely available both in the library and electronically, all the latest is available in English (meeting with graduates).

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3. The minimum number of students required for the effective implementation of the study programme in English groups so that the tuition fee fully covers at least the salaries of the involved academic staff. However, these calculations are variable, as everything is determined by the size of the group of students and a reasonable tuition fee that is in relation to the cost of the study programme and does not exceed the tuition fees of other countries where optometry studies can be available in English. The minimum number of full-time students should be 10-12 students per study year for the PMSP Clinical Optometry which is implemented in the Latvian language. In part-time onsite studies of PMSP Clinical Optometry, which is implemented in the Latvian language, the minimum number of students should be 10 students per study year. In full-time studies, which are implemented in the English language, there should be at least 10 students and part-time extramural studies must be 8 students each year. Tuition fees at the University of Latvia are determined by a separate directive for each academic year, taking into account the cost of the study place, including all costs of the study process, tuition fees for similar programmes at other universities and potential students' interest in the study programme. The study costs of the Latvian groups are balanced with the income, varying according to the courses of the limited choice part, as well as combining groups of students in these study courses. Part of the expenses is also covered by the income from the students that pay for their studies at the PMSP Clinical Optometry, as well as from various study development projects.
The PMSP Clinical Optometry has a small total number of students. In 2019/2020, there were 71 students in all study groups (full-time, part-time onsite, part-time extramural) in Latvian and English, of which 56 were not budget students but paid for their studies.
The average cost per student is 5,043 EUR per year in the PMSP Optometry in both language groups. Estimates are made for 12 state-funded budget places, 4 “budget places” guaranteed by the Department of Optometry and Vision Science, and 8 private funding. There are also paid study

places in the study programme. In addition to the costs of teaching staff, the cost calculation also includes general staff 327 costs – 31.3% of academic staff (EUR 497 per student per year), infrastructure expenditure (EUR 250 per student per year), renovation of the technical base, services (EUR 303 per student per year)(SAR, p.326)

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

Conclusions
The material and technical base of the Study program is modern and well equipped and meets all the requirements to implement PMSP Optometry. Study program has excellent library resources electronically and on site.

Strengths:
1. The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning conditions with good equipment and modern technologies.
2. Plenty of high quality library resources.

Weaknesses:
1. Insufficient number of state funded places.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The material and technical base of the Study program is modern and well equipped and meets all the requirements to implement PMSP Optometry. Study program has excellent library resources electronically and on site.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. The PMSP Clinical Optometry is based on more than 25 years of experience in the training of optometrists at the Department of Optometry and Vision Science of the LU, the legislation of the Republic of Latvia, which stipulates that an optometrist is a medical practitioner – functional specialist – from January 1, 2020, the Optometrist professional standard, as well as the latest trends and requirements for the optometrist education system in the European Union regulated by the ECOO (https://ecoo.info/ecoo-accreditation-agency/european-diploma-in-optometry/) which termines the content and scope of the courses. That required involve competent readers in the development of course content (SAR, p. 327). In cooperation with other faculties, the study programme involves competent lecturers. The qualification requirements of all readers are regulated by both the Law on Higher Education and the internal standards of the LU. For lecturers requirements are regulated by Cabinet Regulation No. 49 Regulation on Latvian Science Sectors and Sub-sectors (23 January 2018), Law on Higher Education Institutions (2 November 1995).
Most lecturers are elected, and their academic positions are in line with previous achievements: obtained degrees and previous scientific, teaching, and professional experience. Other lecturers may be selected for the realization of the study programme in English groups. Most importantly, the lecturer of the study course must have adequate competence in the field and an appropriate level of

academic English – B2, as well as the willingness to cooperate with the director of the study programme and students (SAR, p.327).
The following distribution of lecturers are working in the PMSP Clinical optometry: professors and associate professors (17%), assistant professors (31%), lecturers (22%), and assistants, readers and industry specialists (30%) (SAR, p. 327). Most study courses are delivered by assistant professors, lecturers, and other readers. The readers are involved in the delivery of specific study courses and where specific expertise is required. In addition, guest professors are involved in teaching individual courses (e.g., a guest professor from Tartu University (Estonia) was invited to deliver the course "Visual Neuroscience" in 2019/2020) (SAR, p.328).
Industry specialists are also actively involved in the study process to implement high-quality Clinical Practice in optometry. Usually, these are the qualified optometrists with a five-year-long clinical practice as optometrists. The practice also involves doctoral students with qualifications in optometry who practice as optometrists.

2.4.2. In the PMSP Clinical Optometry, courses are delivered mainly by teaching staff from the Department of Optometry and Vision Science. Only 3 (10%) courses are delivered by lecturers from other faculties and departments of the LU: the additional courses (Civil Protection and Environmental Protection) and a Latvian language course for English groups. Looking at the academic year 2019/2020 and the teaching staff involved (see SAR, Annex OptoPM 18), 22 lecturers were involved in the implementation of the programme both for Latvian and English groups and in all study types – in full-time, part-time onsite and part-time extramural. 11 or 50% of them had a doctoral degree and each one was competent in the topic of the course (see SAR, Annex (zip file) Optometry - Teaching Staff CVs). Some courses (e.g., Contact Lens Correction, Clinical Practice in Optometry I-III) are delivered by two or more readers since the content of the course requires more knowledge, skills, and competences, which can be provided by a number of readers by dividing the work between themselves (SAR, p. 328).
At the beginning of the previous accreditation period (see SAR, Table 3.4.2.1), professors were more involved in the implementation of the study programme. There has also been a generational shift over the years and the new generation has come – assistant professors, lecturers, and assistants, who are proportionally more in number. The average age of the teaching staff (in years) (see SAR, Table 3.4.2.2) has changed from 54 years at the beginning of the accreditation period to 42 years at the end of the accreditation period (SAR, p.329).
SAR Annex OptoPM 18 compiles the information about the teaching staff through the previous accreditation period.
In addition, for a few courses (Clinical Practice in Optometry I-III, Emergency Medicine, Clinical Ethics for Optometrists, Civil Protection), the lecturers (hourly paid) and industry specialists were attracted. Their competencies are appropriate to ensure that the results of the study programme are achieved. The quality of each lecturer is evaluated by all students by revealing positive and negative parts of the course delivering processes. That helps the director of the study programme to analyze the composition of the lecturer and the necessary changes or develop content-based methodological courses focused on success stories. The lecturer can share their experiences and learn from each other. The increase in the number of the teaching staff at the end of the accreditation period can be explained by an increase in the number of doctoral students, which are primarily involved in the implementation of Clinical Practice, and new readers with a doctoral degree (SAR, p.330).

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4. Publications of lecturers are available in personal CV in annexes.
By looking at the lecturer's CV, it can be found that the lecturer has been actively published in internationally cited journals and local medical periodicals.

During the onsite visit (12.08.2022), it was noted by the members of staff that it is difficult to publish their scientific work internationally due to increased cost, plus editing services for English language are required, therefore, they have to choose what, where and how to publish their work. Therefore, more funding should be allocated for this purpose.

2.4.5. After getting acquainted with the SAR and after discussions with the program leaders, the experts have seen that, in the development and improvement of the study programme, the student's proposals are taken into account both by using the evaluations of study courses and by speaking in person with the representatives of the student groups. The issue is addressed if students are frustrated with pursuing a study course or have serious problems with the lecturer of the course. The director of the study programme listens to both the opinion of the students and the lecturer of the course. Then, changes are made in the course content and implementation type, or the course is supplemented with new teaching methods. If the above measures do not make a positive change over three years and the problems persist, a new course lecturer is being sought (SAR, p.531).
The lecturers of the PMSP Clinical optometry represent several branches of science, the interaction and cooperation of lecturers takes place during various events organized by the LU: staff meetings, scientific conferences and courses of further education.

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

Conclusions
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the lecturers of the PMSP Clinical Optometry, the expert commission concluded that the study program is implemented by highly qualified employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work in the direction of the study program. In the framework of university training programs and international scientific conferences and seminars, lecturers supplement and improve their knowledge and skills for the implementation of the curriculum of the PMSP Clinical Optometry .

Strengths:
1. Highly qualified lectures and good management of the learning process;
2. A multidisciplinary approach to the recruitment of lecturers promotes the implementation of the study program through cooperation with the LU;
3. High scientific potential for lecturers.

Weaknesses:
1. Only a few guest lectures take part in the teaching process.
2. Few study program academic staff participates in international exchange programs.
3. Difficulties with publishing scientific work due to increased cost.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualifications of the academic staff of the study program meet the conditions for the implementation of the study program and the requirements specified in the relevant regulatory acts.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

PMSP Clinical Optometry offers two study models: the standard model (80 CP or 120 ECTS) and the model with the preliminary year (120 CP or 180 ECTS). The model with the preliminary year is intended for persons who choose PMSP Clinical Optometry after graduation from other bachelor study programs (other than optometry studies) to ensure equal achievement of study results for all graduates as defined by the the professional standard (approved on 11 December 2019, protocol No. 8) and the education system of optometrists in the European Union, regulated by the ECOO (European Council of Optometry and Optics). Despite the differences in the duration of the studies, both models comply with Cabinet Regulation No. 512. “Regulations on the second level professional higher education state standard” (approved on 26.08.2014) and their indicators coincide (Annex OptoPM 10).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The professional standard of the optometrist has been updated and agreed at the meeting of the Tripartite Cooperation Council for Professional Education and Employment on 11 December 2019, which is approved by the protocol no. 8. It can be found on the official website of the National Center of Education. The professional knowledge mentioned in the professional standard is acquired partly within the framework of PMSP Clinical Optometry, as well as within the framework of BSP Optometry. For those who have obtained a bachelor's degree or a second-level professional higher education (or equivalent higher education) in other related sciences, but wish to obtain an optometrist qualification, a PMSP module with an additional preliminary study year (PMSP + P) is offered, during which knowledge is supplemented with courses that are essential for the full acquisition of the professional knowledge referred to in the professional standard (ANNEx OptoPM 7).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the descriptions of the study courses in Latvian (Annex OptoPM 11) and English (OptoPM 11) languages. The descriptions are fully compliant with the requirements set forth in Section 561, Paragraph two and Section 562, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institution, they a. define the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; b. determine the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; c. outline the content of the study course necessary for the achievement of learning outcomes, contain the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, indicate other sources of information; d. describe the organization and tasks for the independent work of students; e. determine the evaluation criteria of learning outcomes.

The description of the study module determines: the learning outcomes achievable as a result of the acquisition of the study module; the plan of the study work time; the study courses included in the study module.

In the opinion of Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia, some literature sources are outdated (Annex AIKA annexes VM opinion) - the course descriptors should be revised to see if newer editions or alternative textbooks are available.

This deficiency is not important enough to decrease the evaluation as partially compliant.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the diploma and its supplement is issued for completing the study programme in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers 16.04.2013. to Regulation No. 202 “Procedures for Issuing State-Recognized Higher Education Certificates”.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Head of Study Field Declaration (Annex Head of Study Field Declaration, 21.04.2021, No. 09), confirming that the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Head of Study Field Declaration (Annex Head of Study Field Declaration, 21.04.2021, No. 21) confirming that the teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level of English language.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Fully compliant with the Law on Higher Education Institutions Section 46, paragraph 2 and regulations of Cabinet of Ministers 23.01.2007. to Regulation No. 70 “Mandatory regulations to be included in the study agreement” (Annex Standard sample of study agreement „Agreement for EU citizens–2021).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Declaration No 1-13/439) (SAR, Part I, Chapter 2.1., Annex Agreement on the implementation of the study programmes) confirming that the students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Refund and Compensation Policy Statement, No 1-13/386) (Annex Refund and Compensation Policy),. confirming that the students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme’s license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

PMSP Clinical Optometry education and qualification requirements are also determined by the Medical Treatment Law (adopted on 01.10.1997), Cabinet Regulation No. 268 Regulations on the Competence of Medical Practitioners and Students Acquiring First or Second Level Professional Higher Medical Education Programs in Medical Treatment and the Amount of Theoretical and Practical Knowledge of These Persons (adopted on 24.03.2009) (Annex OptoPM 8).

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The PMSP Clinical Optometry fully complies with all the applicable requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

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

General conclusions

The PMSP Clinical Optometry adheres to all legislative requirements and is a part of the multidisciplinary LU and study field Health Care family. The programme is profitable and the enrollment is stable. The prospects of future graduates are good as there is a shortage of highly qualified optometrists. The content of the programmes is topical and relevant. Students have the opportunity to undergo a four part clinical placement both in university clinics and optometric practice, which is highly regarded by the students, graduates and employers. The programme is offered in various delivery modes, thus widening the access to a bigger pool of prospective students to gain the qualification. Equal opportunities are given to students enrolled in different modes of study programme. The teaching staff is highly qualified and motivated to provide students with an engaging and qualitative learning experience. They are also engaged in research projects and writing of scientific papers, which, in turn, allows them to use these results in the teaching process. The material technical base is excellent as the House of Nature is a modern new building with good accessibility and 24/7 library access. All aforementioned are the strengths of the programme.
The lack of state funded study places (by comparison 12 vs 68 in PMSP vs ABSP respectively). The confusion with the terms of “optometrist assistant” and “dispensing optician” (please see conclusion for section 2.2. for more detailed explanation). The term “dispensing optician” should be avoided, especially as the programme is delivered also in English. It can be used inclusively when describing some of the duties and professional responsibilities of an optometrist or optometrist assistant. Also, the outgoing staff and student mobility is insufficient and more international guest lecturers should be invited to present or be involved in the teaching process to increase the international recognition of the programme and university. This would also help to improve the English skills as one of the delivery languages for the programme is English. During the on site visit the staff made a comment regarding the publishing of scientific work, that it is expensive, plus editing services are required for English language, which makes publishing even more expensive. Therefore, they have to choose what, where and how to publish. Thus, more funding could be allocated for publications. Course reading lists should be reviewed annually and where possible, older textbooks should be replaced with more current editions or alternative newer text books.

Strengths

1. The programme is profitable and the enrollment is stable.
2. The prospects of future graduates are good as there is a shortage of highly qualified optometrists.
3. The content of the programmes is topical and relevant.
4. Students have the opportunity to undergo a four part clinical placement both in university clinics and optometric practice, which is highly regarded by the students, graduates and employers.
5. The programme is offered in various delivery modes, thus widening the access to a bigger pool of prospective students to gain the qualification. Equal opportunities are given to students enrolled in

different modes of study programme.
6. The teaching staff is highly qualified and motivated to provide students with an engaging and qualitative learning experience. They are also engaged in research projects and writing of scientific papers, which, in turn, allows them to use these results in the teaching process.
7. The material technical base is excellent as the House of Nature is a modern new building with good accessibility and 24/7 library access. All aforementioned are the strengths of the programme.

Weaknesses

1. The lack of state funded study places (by comparison 12 vs 68 in PMSP vs ABSP respectively).
2. The confusion with the terms of “optometrist assistant” and “dispensing optician” (please see conclusion for section 2.2. for more detailed explanation). The term “dispensing optician” should be avoided, especially as the programme is delivered also in English. It can be used inclusively when describing some of the duties and professional responsibilities of an optometrist or optometrist assistant.
3. Also, the outgoing staff and student mobility is insufficient and more international guest lecturers should be invited to present or be involved in the teaching process to increase the international recognition of the programme and university. This would also help to improve the English skills as one of the delivery languages for the programme is English.
4. During the on site visit the staff made a comment regarding the publishing of scientific work, that it is expensive, plus editing services are required for English language, which makes publishing even more expensive. Therefore, they have to choose what, where and how to publish. Thus, more funding could be allocated for publications.
5. Course reading lists should be reviewed annually and where possible, older textbooks should be replaced with more current editions or alternative newer text books.

The identified weaknesses are minor and do not have a significant enough impact on any of the forms of delivery of the programme or the quality of the programme as whole, however they should be taken into account for further improvement.

Evaluation of the study programme "Clinical Optometry"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Clinical Optometry"

Short-term recommendations

1. If the dispensing optician (DO) is the preferred term (defined as dispensing opticians – selects an appropriate vision correction product, vision health care products and performs commercial operations to ensure the circulation of visual aids and their care products in SAR p. 498) or if both terms are used, then they should not be used interchangeably with optometrist assistant (SAR e.g. p. 488 last paragraph in text “In 2019, the standard for the profession of optometrist's assistant (dispensing optician) was developed…” or vice versa to avoid any confusion. If this is a translation error, the terminology should be discussed with the translator beforehand and explained to them as it has been in SAR p. 498.

Long-term recommendations

1. Increase the number of state funded study places. There is a sharp contrast between ABSP Optometry and PMSP Clinical Optometry (68 vs 12 respectively).
2. Increase the funding allocation for publications. On many occasions staff has to choose what, where and how to publish, as it is expensive. Plus, editing services for the English language are required, which makes publishing even more expensive.
3. Optometry department successfully uses the mixed group approach for both home and international students. However, for both staff and students the English language skills should be improved. Staff has availability to attend English language courses hosted by LU and the improvement is significant and visible but further improvement would be required. However, when it comes to students and graduates, it is evident that the vast majority of them would highly benefit from additional English language courses. To grasp the overall idea of the concept because the terminology is similar or information could be gathered from context of the lecture or the material, is not sufficient to gain a strong and fundamental understanding and subsequently, a knowledge base, especially as most of the core literature in Optometry is in English.
4. The outgoing staff and student mobility is insufficient. Students should be encouraged to take part in ERASMUS mobility and other similar projects, ensuring that the return to studies in LU will be smooth and facilitated by an individual study plan. Staff mobility also should be encouraged. This would help with the improvement of English skills, networking and international recognition of the Optometry department and LU.
5. More international guest lectures should be invited to participate within the programme or departmental activities. This again will help with international recognition of the department and the improvement of English skills and networking.
6. Course reading lists should be reviewed annually and where possible, older textbooks should be replaced with more current editions or alternative newer text books.

II - "Medicine" ASSESSMENT

II - "Medicine" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The aim of PHESP Medicine is to educate future specialists in the medical profession with scientifically based medical activities directly or indirectly acting on humans, performing disease prevention, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and research to provide the public with quality medical care (SAR, p. 366). The PHESP Medicine complies with the aim of the study field Health Care to prepare competent health care specialists for the needs of the Latvian economy. The inclusion of the PHESP Medicine in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and the degree and qualification to be awarded.

2.1.2. The 2nd level PHESP Medicine is a full-time study programme with the implementation duration of 6 years and the amount of 240 Latvian credits (CP). The languages of instruction – Latvian and English. The degree to be acquired – Doctor’s degree.
The code of the study programme according to the classification of education in Latvia – 49721, where the first part of the code 49 indicates that the type of the PHESP Medicine is professional higher education programme (Level 5 professional qualification) and the digits of the second part of

the code 721 indicate that the thematic area of education is Health Care, but the group of educational programmes is Medicine.
The learning outcomes of the PHESP Medicine (results of the study programme - 22) correspond to Level 7 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF), which is described in the Cabinet Regulations No. 322 “Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia” (June 13, 2017), but the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.
The aim of the PHESP Medicine is coordinated with the objectives and the learning outcomes of the study programme.
Admission requirements of the PHESP Medicine – secondary education.
The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PHESP Medicine are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation, as well as the language of implementation, are reasonable and justified.
The PHESP Medicine complies with the Cabinet Regulation No. 512 “Regulations on the State Standard for Second Level Professional Higher Education” (adopted on 26.08.2014.), the Professional Standard of Doctors (Doctor’s professional standard agreed and approved at the meeting of the Tripartite Cooperation Sub-Council for Vocational Training and Employment on 16 October 2019), Medical Treatment Law, Law On Regulated Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the Directive of the European Parliament and the Council.

2.1.3. During the accreditation period:
the learning outcomes of the study programme have been improved in accordance with regulatory documents (the Law on Higher Education Institutions; the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, 2015; the Cabinet Regulation No. 268 of 24.03.2009 “Regulations on the Competence of Medical Practitioners and Students Acquiring First or Second Level Professional Higher Medical Education Programs in Medical Practice and the Amount of Theoretical and Practical Knowledge of These Persons”; the Description of Level 7 Results of the European Qualifications Framework);
all the study courses and their content have been reviewed and improved, as well as new study courses have been created, taking into account the compliance with the development trends of the field, the recommendations of the Latvian Association of Doctors, cooperation partners/hospitals and students;
the updated structure plan of the PHESP Medicine, based on the decision of the Council of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Latvia No. MF-V12.2 / 90, was introduced in the study process from the academic year 2020/2021. In the autumn semester of the academic year 2019, students of SP Medicine had already started their studies according to the previous study programme structure plan, which differed significantly from the updated study programme plan, therefore the need for the study process to be implemented in accordance with the plans of the transition study programme in the period from 2020 to 2025 is justified (SAR, p. 366).
These corrections introduced into the PHESP Medicine parameters within the assessment of the study field are analyzed, justified and would be supported. Only the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.

2.1.4. Medicine is one of the priority areas of Latvia’s smart specialization strategy. The PHESP Medicine is sustainable, because according to the labor market assessment performed by PwC in 2020, the number of doctors per 10,000 inhabitants in Latvia has decreased in recent years. Comparing the number of doctors per 1,000 inhabitants in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, Norway and Slovenia, it is one of the lowest in the group of these countries. In negotiations with employers, the Latvian Medical Association, and considering publicly available information, in 2019 more than 1,000 doctors, nurses and other health care professionals were missing in Latvian

hospitals and the NMPD. Analyzing the employment of graduates, it is seen that in total 97% of graduates continue their studies and are employed in health care institutions, but 3% of graduates do not work in their speciality (SAR, p. 368, 369).
The PHESP Medicine is unique because it is the only Medicine Programme in Latvia that is implemented in a classical university environment, by using the potential of all faculties, as well as the only one that includes students' original research. Students acquire knowledge in preclinical study courses, clinical study courses, practical skills, acquire and strengthen their practical skills, develop and defend a diploma thesis (SAR, p. 368).
The PHESP Medicine is implemented in Latvian and English groups. Having analyzed the statistical data on students during the accreditation period, it can be concluded that the number of students has increased. In 2019, 2020 and 2021, the increase in the number of matriculated students and thus, respectively, in the total number of students, was ensured by those studying in the English groups. In the reporting period 2013 - 2021, the proportion of drop-outs has fluctuated between 8 and 13% of the total number of students enrolled in the PHESP Medicine, this percentage of drop-outs is adequate for the field of medicine.
Taking into account the above, we can conclude that the PHESP Medicine is economically and socially justified.

2.1.5. N/A

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

Conclusions
The inclusion of the PHESP Medicine in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and the degree and qualification to be awarded.
The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PHESP Medicine are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation as well as the languages of implementation, are reasonable and justified.
The PHESP Medicine complies with the Cabinet Regulation No. 512 "Regulations on the State Standard for Second Level Professional Higher Education" (dated 26.08.2014.), the Professional Standard of Doctors (Doctor's profession standard agreed and approved at the meeting of the Tripartite Cooperation Sub-Council for Vocational Training and Employment on 16 October 2019), Medical Treatment Law, Law on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications and Directive of the European Parliament and the Council.
The corrections introduced into the PHESP Medicine parameters within the assessment of the study field are analyzed, justified and would be supported. Only the learning outcomes could be reformulated and combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.
Medicine is one of the priority areas of Latvia's smart specialization strategy. The PHESP Medicine is sustainable, because according to the labor market assessment performed by PwC in 2020, the number of doctors per 10,000 inhabitants in Latvia has decreased in recent years.
The PHESP Medicine is unique because it is the only Medicine Programme in Latvia which is implemented in a classical university environment, by using the potential of all faculties, as well as the only one that includes students' original research.
97% of graduates of PHESP Medicine continue their studies and are employed in health care institutions.

Strengths:
1. The name, code, degree to be obtained, professional qualification, aims, objectives, learning

outcomes and admission requirements of the PHESP Medicine are interrelated and compliant with the requirements of the regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia and Directive of the European Parliament and the Council.
2. The PHESP Medicine is unique because it is the only Medicine Programme in Latvia which is implemented in a classical university environment, by using the potential of all faculties, as well as the only one that includes students' original research.
3. 97% of graduates of PHESP Medicine continue their studies and are employed in health care institutions.

Weaknesses:
1. 22 results of the study programme are indicated in the PHESP Medicine, but the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. The study programme is delivered as a full time programme both in Latvian and English (SAR p. 362-363). The programme is delivered in accordance to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 268 of 24.03.2009 "Regulations regarding the Competence of Medical Practitioners and Students Acquiring First or Second Level Professional Higher Medical Education Programs in Medicine and the Amount of Theoretical and Practical Knowledge of These Persons", the Medical professional Standard and EU directive 2005/36/EC for medical education (SAR p. 371, Annex 5:SP Medicine Compliance with the Professional Standard of Doctors, Annex 6: SP Medicine compliance with the sector-specific regulatory framework, Standard of Physician's Profession, Annex 10: Compliance with the State Education Standard). Some of the changes within the course outline (CP amount etc.) was made in order to comply with LU specific regulations (SAR p. 371). The content of the study programme is topical and the content of the study courses is interconnected and complementary, ensuring that the objectives and learning outcomes of the programme are achieved (SAR p. 371- 382, Table 3.2.1.1., Annex 1: Study Plan, Annex 7: Course Descriptors, Annex 8: Course Mapping). The use of evidence-based medicine and ever changing labour market has been justified sufficiently (SAR p. 382). Employers, students and graduates are involved in the programme development via regular feedback (SAR p. 382). Employers, also, provide various guest lectures (SAR p. 385). The implemented changes as a result of this feedback have been summarized in the SAR (p. 383-384) and have been well justified. Course descriptors are concise, clear and up to date (Annex 7: Course Descriptors).

2.2.2. N/A

2.2.3. As mentioned in Section 2.2.1. the programme is delivered in a full-time attendance mode both in Latvian and English. There are 3 main study blocks: compulsory courses (Part A), Compulsory optional courses (Part B) and optional courses (Part C) (SAR p. 384). The changes in the CP distribution over the courses and study blocks have been well justified (SAR p. 384-385). The delivery is base on a model of 40 hours of study per week of which 24 are contact hours, whilst the rest are self-directed learning ones (SAR p. 385). The main forms of course delivery are lectures, seminars and interactive classes as well as clinical and laboratory placements are used (SAR p. 385). The virtual learning environment Moodle has been widely incorporated in the study process (SAR p. 385). The use of student centered approach has been demonstrated via the promoted dialogue between staff and students, self-reflection and encouragement of critical thinking (SAR p. 385-386). The assessments are developed and delivered in accordance with the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia No.240 of 13.05.2014, Regulations on the State Academic

Education Standard and consists of intermediate and final assessments (SAR p. 386). The assessment criteria and intended learning outcomes are available to the students in advance (SAR p. 386-387). The main forms of assessments are mid-term tests, colloquiums and various forms of individual written work (e,g, reports, essays, presentations) (SAR p. 387). Final examination can take either written or voice viva form (SAR p. 387). The mid term assessments can accumulate a minimum of 50% of the final overall mark, whilst the final assessment contributes a minimum of 10% to the final overall mark (SAR p. 387). A welcomed assessment form is the introduction of Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) (SAR p. 387). The assessments are marked on a uniform 10-point scale in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Latvia (SAR p. 387). The requirements for the submission of diploma thesis have been sufficiently described, as is the final examination (SAR p. 388). The delivery of the programme in English language is identical to the programme delivered in Latvian (SAR. 388). As discussed with the international students during the onsite visit (11.08.2022) they are offered an introductory course in Latvian, which is not sufficient for them to communicate with patients during the clinical rotations/placements, especially if the patient is Russian speaking. In the meeting with graduates (11.08.2022.), they were supportive of a uniform state-wide final exam in medicine. To further facilitate the international environment and help international students to integrate in Latvian health care system it would be advisable to create mixed study groups which can be voluntarily joined by students. Experts understand that mixing groups may end up with different experiences for students that are based on internal dynamics of student relationships, nevertheless this will promote communication and experience exchange for students that is very crucial in healthcare.

2.2.4. Internship is a very important part of a Medicine student study programme and each internship place has agreement with the university. Internship complies with state legislation and external regulation requirements, this is described in more detail in the Internship regulations (See annex: 9.annex_Ārsti_Prakses nolikums ENG). For each internship students receive a certain list of tasks that describe skills, knowledge that has to be learned during the placement. Students from early on have the opportunity to start engaging with patients which can be highlighted as a strength of study process. After achieving and fulfilling each task, the internship supervisor signs the specific task as complete. This helps to track student progress and can highlight the biggest issues of the student during the internship. University is working in close relation with the clinical facilities to synchronize and agree and renew tasks set by the internships (SAR section 3.2.4. page 389). Regarding international students that are studying in English language they are obliged to learn basic Latvian language level to communicate with patients. Sometimes as told by academic staff members, international students work together with Latvian speaking peers or residents that can help with communication with patients. Overall communication from international students with patients is still a problem that should be addressed more. University also offers international students in their last year of studies to undergo an internship in their homeland to make the study process easier in their own language.

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6. Each year's thesis developed by students are topical and covers a large portion of the healthcare field, for example: clinical and basic research in cardiovascular diseases, epidemiology, infectious diseases and also topics in innovative transnational medicine are covered (See annex: 8.pielikums_SP ārstniecība aizstāvēto diplomdarbu tēmu apkopojums). Latest novelties and trends in the thesis are provided by specialists and institutes that are working in the clinical area, also pre-clinical research activities can be carried out by highly qualified academic staff members. Research topics also promote students to pursue further careers in the academic environment by entering doctoral studies.

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

Conclusions
The content of the study programme is topical, study courses are very closely related and complement each other so the students can build their knowledge about providing health care. Study programme complies with all legislation requirements. The internships are well organized and provide the ability for students to learn all necessary skills to achieve study programme learning outcomes and later on continue studies in their desired residency. The only issue with internships is not sufficient language level of international students that causes problems in communication with patients. Close integration in the study programme of doctors that are also working in hospitals provide input of latest trends right into the study process. Degrees awarded are based on relevant findings and achievements in the healthcare field. Different study implementation methods are taken into account, to help english speaking students integrate in Latvia's health care experts advise to leave open opportunities for creating mixed groups of local and international students. Thesis developed are also at high quality and reflect the latest topics and novelties in the healthcare field.

Strengths:
1. Students from early on can engage in Hospital environment to start developing practical skills in the work with patients.
2. A lot of academic staff members are also clinicians that can provide latest information about different topics right into the syllabus of study courses.

Weaknesses:
1. Latvian language courses for international students are not enough to provide sufficient communication with patients.
2. Integration of international students can be improved.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. SP Medicine material and technical facilities include: Lecture rooms; Teaching laboratories and chairs; Internship sites. Since the academic year 2016/2017, some part of the SP Medicine has been implemented at the House of Nature, the LU Academic Centre in Torņakalns. The new building provides a modern and comfortable study environment for both students and lecturers The buildings have access to the Internet via wireless technology, an open library space that provides all the necessary study literature, course descriptions and study materials are placed in an e-learning environment that is increasingly used in the study process. Students have access to modern laboratories with the necessary presentation equipment, Wi-Fi access in all rooms, individual and group study rooms with electrical outlets (SAR, p.392; Tour of the facilities).
The Anatomy and Histology laboratories are excellently equipped (Tour of the facilities).
The Clinical departments are located in Riga University Hospitals, specialized hospitals and

municipality hospitals. There are excellent possibilities for internship and clinical studies.
In total, the Faculty of Medicine Library has 30101 copies of printed publications for the implementation of studies in the Health Care area (SAR, p.396; Table 'Literature available in the library for the implementation of the SP Medicine programmes'). Students have very wide access to various e-resources - both the most popular databases in medicine EBSCO databases - AHFS Consumer Medication Information, EBSCO Academic Search Complete, Web of Science, Scopus, ClinicalKey, MEDLINE Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition, European Pharmacopoeia, SpringerLink, Emerald eJournals Premier, Oxford Journals JSTOR, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, SAGE Journals Online, SAGE Research Methods,ScienceDirect, Physical Review Online Archive (PROLA), UpToDate, and a very extensive library of ebooks from the ebook platform Dawsonera and ProQuest Ebook Academic Complete. SP Medicine students actively use ClinicalKey - Elsevier's electronic medical information resource (SAR, p.397). The LU Library in cooperation with LU Information Technology Department provides free online access to the LU e-resource repository.

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3. In order to estimate the funds needed for financial support, the SP Medicine (Latvian and English streams) carries out a costing calculation according to the LU developed methodology, using information on the structure and costs of the programme and teaching staff and the number of students. For funding necessary for the conduct of studies, the SP Medicine (Latvian and English streams) uses:1) State budget grant from the Ministry of Education; 2) Tuition fees. The state budget subsidy for a study place for each calendar year is determined in accordance with the annual agreement between the Ministry of Education and the University of Latvia, taking into account the base cost of a study place in a given year, the level of the study programme and the cost coefficient for the thematic field of education. Based on the costing of the SP Medicine according to the LU developed methodology, the main cost items are faculty remuneration - 46%,general staff - 15%, property and services - 9%, infrastructure costs 4% and 26% indirect costs. The budget allocation per study place in the Faculty of Medicine is EUR 5705, consisting of a base funding of EUR 1630, a level factor of 1.0 and a field of study factor of 3.5. The tuition fee is set by the SP Medicine by a separate ordinance for each academic year, taking into account the cost of the study place, including all costs of the study process (see above), tuition fees for similar programmes at other universities and the interest of potential fee-paying students in the study programme. Taking into account the availability of financial resources, calculations are made and solutions are developed to optimise the cost of study in order to make optimal use of the highly qualified lecturers, elective courses are implemented together for Latvian and English students or in cooperation with other Health Care programmes. In order to ensure the profitability of SP Medicine, the minimum number of students in Latvian is 25, but in English – 10 (SAR, p.398)There are sufficient number of students to ensure the profitability of the study programme (Annex 4:Statistics on students in the second level professional higher education study programs"Medicine").
There are limited state funded budget places (Annex 4; Statistics on students in the second level professional higher education study programs"Medicine").

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

Conclusions
Excellent learning conditions with clinical basis and practical working places with the best teachers as experts in their own field, good equipment, modern technologies; plenty of high quality library resources, ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Strengths:
1. The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning conditions with clinical basis and practical working places.
2. Good equipment, modern technologies; plenty of high quality library resources.

Weaknesses:
1. There are limited state funded budget places.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Excellent learning conditions with clinical basis and practical working places with the best teachers as experts in their own field, good equipment, modern technologies; plenty of high quality library resources, it ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. Qualifications of PHESP Medicine lecturers comply with the Law on Institutions of Higher Education and the LU regulatory enactments, which determine the qualifications of lecturers in academic Master's programmes:
1. Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 49 of 23.01.2018 Regulations on Latvian Science Sectors and Sub-Sectors). Law on Institutions of Higher Education (Higher Education Law 02.11.1995).
2. LU Regulations on Study Programmes and Continuing Education. Programmes (LU Senate Resolution No. 102 of 24.04.2017) (SAR, p.399).
In order to ensure a qualitative and innovative implementation of the study programme, several criteria are used for the selection of PHESP Medicine lecturers. The following are the mandatory criteria for the selection of lecturers:
1. teaching staff qualifications meet the requirements stipulated by laws and regulations;
2. professional qualifications, research area relevant to the study programme/course, relevant publications and work experience;
3. adequate knowledge of the official language and of foreign languages (SAR, p.399).
During the visit and getting acquainted with SAR experts made sure that the PHESP Medicine teaching staff fully meet the requirements specified in the laws and regulations.
The teaching staff qualifications are confirmed by their competence in the field of scientific research and professional activity, which is also appropriate to the study programme and the respective course content (SAR, p.399).
The application of selection criteria ensures that the study programme involves lecturers who have both teaching experience and active scientific and professional activity, which ensures the achievement of the study programme aim.
The following types of staff development are used:
1. At least once a year lecturers participate in the international conference on medical sciences organized by the LU Faculty of Medicine, where PHESP Medicine lecturers, professionals of the field and lecturers from different Latvian and foreign universities participate with their reports.
2. Lecturers participate in international scientific conferences, Erasmus plus mobility, local and international research projects, conferences and seminars organized by professionals in the field.

3. Participates in continuing education courses for additional English language training, leadership skills and digital skills within the project "Renewal of academic staff and development of competences at the University of Latvia" of specific support objective 8.2.2.

2.4.2. During the reporting period, the core teaching staff of the PHESP Medicine at the LU Faculty of Medicine is stable. The composition of the respective teaching staff is reflected in SAR Tables 48 and 49. The PHESP Medicine is implemented by sixteen (16) professors, two (2) visiting professors, twenty-seven (27) assistant professors, one (1) acting assistant professor, thirty-two (32) lecturers and several guest lecturers (SAR, p.402).
During the reporting period, a number of lecturers have developed their academic careers, such as three (3) associate professors have become professors, while five (5) assistant professors have been elected as associate professors, while 7 lecturers have been elected as assistant professors (SAR, p.422). Doctoral degrees in medicine, biology, pedagogy, chemistry and economics are obtained, which is a great advantage resulting from the opportunities for multidisciplinary cooperation at the LU. For example, chemistry courses are taught by an associate professor of the Faculty of Chemistry, medical physics by a professor of the Faculty of Physics and Mathematics, and economics by an associate professor of the Faculty of Economics. During the reporting period, seventeen lecturers of the PHESP Medicine defended their doctoral theses and obtained doctoral degrees (SAR. p.402).
During the reporting period, lecturers have been trained in the Moodle programme, English language courses and digital skills courses. The professional traineeship of lecturers is ensured by their involvement in attraction and execution of research projects, participation in international scientific conferences (SAR, p. 422).
Each semester, the PHESP Medicine lecturers meet to review the programme's current developments and students' opinions on the quality of courses and programme content as expressed in the LUIS survey, to discuss the course content improvement and to coordinate the distribution of diploma thesis topics (SAR, p.422).
Various forms and support mechanisms are used to increase the qualifications of the teaching staff in order to improve the academic skills of the elected reader within six years: experience exchange in other universities, participation in the international academic and scientific conferences and seminars, and experience not only in didactics but also in scientific work.

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4. Considering that professors and doctors of science are involved in the implementation of the program, the expert commission assumes that the number and quality of their publications is high, although the lecturers' CVs and list of publications cannot be found in SAR.

2.4.5. The PHESP Medicine lecturers represent several branches of science, for example, chemistry courses are taught by lecturers of the LU Faculty of Chemistry, business courses are taught by an associate professor of the LU Faculty of Business, Management and Economics (BVEF). Interaction and cooperation between academic staff take place during various events organized by the University: staff meetings, scientific conferences, science cafés, continuing education courses and information meetings about scientific projects. During the reporting period, each semester the PHESP Medicine lecturers discuss the credit requirements for study courses and update the course content to align the relevant knowledge, skills and competence with the latest trends in the field.
The curriculum is developed in response to student suggestions, both through course evaluations and face-to-face discussions with course leaders or representatives (SAR, p. 423).
The staff meetings discuss expanding library collections with the latest literature and useful

databases. The PHESP Medicine lecturers meet at the end of each semester to evaluate the students' opinions on the quality of the courses and programme content expressed in the LUIS survey and, based on the students' suggestions, to discuss the course content improvement and to coordinate the thesis topics (SAR, p. 423).

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

Conclusions
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the lecturers of the PHESP Medicine, the expert commission concluded that the study program is implemented by highly qualified employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work in the direction of the study program. In the framework of university training programs and international scientific conferences and seminars, lecturers supplement and improve their knowledge and skills for the implementation of the curriculum of the PHESP Medicine.

Strengths:
1. Highly qualified lectures and good management of the learning process;
2. A multidisciplinary approach to the recruitment of lecturers promotes the implementation of the study program through cooperation with the LU;
3. High scientific potential for lecturers.

Weaknesses:
1. Few guest lecturers from other foreign universities.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualifications of the academic staff of the study program meet the conditions for the implementation of the study program and the requirements specified in the relevant regulatory acts.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Second level PHESP Medicine complies with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 512 Regulations on the State Standard for Second Level Professional Higher Education (dated 26.08.2014.) (Annex 10).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Second level PHESP Medicine complies with the Professional Standard of Doctors. Doctor profession standard agreed and approved by the Tripartite Cooperation Sub-Council for Vocational Training and Employment at the meeting on 16 October 2019 (Annex 5).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the descriptions of the study courses in Latvian and English languages (Annex 7

The descriptions of the PHESP Medicine are fully compliant with the requirements set forth in Section 561, Paragraph two and Section 562, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institution, they a. define the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; b. determine the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; c. outline the content of the study course necessary for the achievement of learning outcomes, contain the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, indicate other sources of information; d. describe the organization and tasks for the independent work of students; e. determine the evaluation criteria of learning outcomes.

The description of the study module determines: the learning outcomes achievable as a result of the acquisition of the study module; the plan of the study work time; the study courses included in the study module.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the diploma and its supplement is issued for completing the study programme in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers 16.04.2013. to Regulation No. 202 “Procedures for Issuing State-Recognized Higher Education Certificates”.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Declaration of the Head of Study Field (Annex Head of Study Field Declaration, 21.04.2021, No. 01), confirming that the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Declaration of the Head of Study Field (Annex Head of Study Field Declaration, 21.04.2021, No. 15) confirming that the teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of an English language
The teaching staff of the PHESP Medicine demonstrated high level of English language during the meetings.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Fully compliant with the Law on Higher Education Institutions Section 46, paragraph 2 and regulations of Cabinet of Ministers 23.01.2007. to Regulation No. 70 “Mandatory regulations to be included in the study agreement” (Annex Standard sample of study agreement „Agreement for EU citizens–2021).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the agreement between the University of Latvia and Riga Stradins University on taking over studies, signed 20.03.2006 No137-29/17 for an indefinite period) (SAR, Annex Agreement on the implementation of the study programmes), confirming that the the students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Refund and Compensation Policy Statement, No 1-13/357) (Annex Refund and Compensation Policy), confirming that the students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Second level PHESP Medicine complies with other regulatory enactments as:
SP Medicine compliance with the sector-specific regulatory framework. Standard of Physician's Profession
Link to the Standard description:
https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-116.pdf
Doctor's responsibilities
Medical Treatment Law
Law On Regulated Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications
Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council
(Annex 6).

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Second level PHESP Medicine fully complies with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments

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

General conclusions

The inclusion of the PHESP Medicine in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and the degree and qualification to be awarded.
The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PHESP Medicine are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation as well as the languages of implementation, are reasonable and justified.
The PHESP Medicine complies with the Cabinet Regulation No. 512 "Regulations on the State Standard for Second Level Professional Higher Education" (dated 26.08.2014.), the Professional Standard of Doctors (Doctor's profession standard agreed and approved at the meeting of the

Tripartite Cooperation Sub-Council for Vocational Training and Employment on 16 October 2019), Medical Treatment Law, Law on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications and Directive of the European Parliament and the Council.
The corrections introduced into the PHESP Medicine parameters within the assessment of the study field are analyzed, justified and would be supported. Only the learning outcomes could be reformulated and combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.
The PHESP Medicine is unique because it is the only Medicine Programme in Latvia which is implemented in a classical university environment, by using the potential of all faculties, as well as the only one that includes students' original research.
97% of graduates of PHESP Medicine continue their studies and are employed in health care institutions.
The content of the study programme is topical, study courses are very closely related and complement each other so the students can build their knowledge about providing health care. Study programme complies with all legislation requirements. The internships are well organized and provide the ability for students to learn all necessary skills to achieve study programme learning outcomes and later on continue studies in their desired residency. The only issue with internships is not sufficient language level of international students that causes problems in communication with patients. Close integration in the study programme of doctors that are also working in hospitals provide input of latest trends right into the study process. Degree awarded is based on relevant findings and achievements in the healthcare field. Different study implementation methods are taken into account, to help english speaking students integrate in Latvia's health care experts advise to leave open opportunities for creating mixed groups of local and international students. Thesis developed are also at high quality and reflect the latest topics and novelties in the healthcare field.
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the lecturers of the study program, the expert commission concluded that the study program is implemented by highly qualified employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work in the direction of the study program. In the framework of university training programs and international scientific conferences and seminars, lecturers supplement and improve their knowledge and skills for the implementation of the curriculum of the study program "Medicine".

Strengths

1. The name, code, degree to be obtained, professional qualification, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PHESP Medicine are interrelated and compliant with the requirements of the regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia and Directive of the European Parliament and the Council.
2. The PHESP Medicine is unique because it is the only Medicine Programme in Latvia which is implemented in a classical university environment, by using the potential of all faculties, as well as the only one that includes students' original research.
3. 97% of graduates of PHESP Medicine continue their studies and are employed in health care institutions.
4. Students from early on can engage in Hospital environment to start developing practical skills in the work with patients.
5. A lot of academic staff members are also clinicians that can provide latest information about different topics right into the syllabus of study courses.
6. The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning conditions with clinical basis and practical working places with the best teachers as experts in their own field, good equipment, modern technologies; plenty of high quality library resources.
7. Highly qualified lectures and good management of the learning process.

8. A multidisciplinary approach to the recruitment of lecturers promotes the implementation of the study program through cooperation with the LU.
9. High scientific potential for lecturers.

Weaknesses

1. 22 results of the study programme are indicated in the PHESP Medicine, but the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.
2. Latvian language courses for international students are not enough to provide sufficient communication with patients.
3. Integration of international students can be improved.
4. There are limited state funded budget places.
5. Lack of guest lectures from other counties.
6. Few study program academic staff participates in international exchange programs.

Evaluation of the study programme "Medicine"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Medicine"

Short-term recommendations

1. To review the learning outcomes and formulate them in 5-9 learning outcomes.

Long-term recommendations

1. Academic staff of study program should participate more in international exchange programs in order to improve the training course and their international skills.
2. There should be a need to attract more guest lecturers from universities in other countries in order to gain more internationalization and international experience.
3. Provide opportunities for international students to learn Latvian language to improve communication with patients.
4. Create mixed groups with local and international students to raise chance of better international student integration in study process.
5. Open dialog with Ministries to raise state funded places.

II - "Dentistry " ASSESSMENT

II - "Dentistry " ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The aim of the PHESP Dentistry is to prepare qualified specialists in the field, whose theoretical and practical skills are appropriate in order to independently start practicing in general dentistry (SAR, p. 334). The PHESP Dentistry complies with the aim of the study field Health Care to

prepare competent health care specialists for the needs of the Latvian economy. The inclusion of the PHESP Dentistry in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and the degree and qualification to be awarded. The study courses have been developed and are updated by analyzing the latest scientifically based trends and recommendations of AADE (Association for Dental Education in Europe), changes in the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia, the guidelines of the Latvian Dental Association and the requirements for the dental certification examination, which is mandatory for all graduates of the programme Dentistry, regardless of whether they intend to start their dental practice in Latvia or abroad.

2.1.2. The 2nd level PHESP Dentistry is a full-time study programme with the implementation duration of 5 years and the amount of 200 Latvian credits (CP). The total amount of contact hours in the programme is 5000. The languages of instruction – Latvian and English. The qualification to be obtained – Degree in dentistry.
The code of the study programme according to the classification of Latvian education – 49724, where the first part of the code 49 indicates that the type of the PHESP Dentistry is professional higher education programme (Level 5 professional qualification) and the digits of the second part of the code 724 indicate that the thematic area of education is Health care, but the group of educational programmes is Dentistry.
The learning outcomes of the PHESP Dentistry (results of the study programme - 23) correspond to Level 7 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF), which is described in the Cabinet Regulations No. 322 “Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia” (June 13, 2017), but the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.
The aim of PHESP Dentistry is coordinated with the objectives and the learning outcomes of the study programme.
Admission requirements of the PHESP Dentistry – secondary education.
The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PHESP Dentistry are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation, as well as the language of implementation are reasonable and justified.
The PHESP Dentistry complies with the Cabinet Regulation No. 512 “Regulations on the State Standard for Second Level Professional Higher Education” (dated 26.08.2014.), the Medical Treatment Law (adopted on 01.10.1997), the Law on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications (adopted on 20.06.2001), Cabinet Regulation No. 268 Regulations on the Competence of Medical Practitioners and Students Acquiring First or Second Level Professional Higher Medical Education Programs in Medical Treatment and the Amount of Theoretical and Practical Knowledge of These Persons (24.03.2009).
The study programme is developed in accordance with the EU Directive 2005/36 / EC on the recognition of professional qualifications, which is directly related to the guidelines of the European Association of Dental Education in Europe “Profile and competencies for the Graduating European Dentist Update 2009”, “Curriculum Structure, Content, Learning and Assessment in European Undergraduate Dental Education”. The study programme has been developed in collaboration with the University of Tromso, Norway, Programme for Master degree in dentistry, which manifests itself in the use of methodological materials and expert advice (SAR, 339).

2.1.3. During the accreditation period some changes have been made to the parameters of the PHESP Dentistry: the aims of the study programme have been specified and the results of the study programme have been reformulated, taking into account the latest requirements for the formulation of parameters of study programmes in the LU regulations.
These corrections introduced into the PHESP Dentistry parameters within the assessment of the study field are analyzed, justified and would be supported. Only the learning outcomes could be

combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.

2.1.4. The development trends of the labor market in Latvia and abroad show the constant demand for dentists who wish to improve themselves in further training courses and postgraduate education programmes following the development of the profession in the fields of new medical science achievements and technology development. The skills and competence acquired in the SP Dentistry not only allow the graduate to fully meet the requirements of the professional standard, but also to work competitively in the profession at an international level, using the acquired knowledge as a full-fledged basis for further education.
The graduates of the PHESP Dentistry have the opportunity to start working in a private practice or start their own private practice in Latvia or abroad as soon as the professional certificate is received from the Latvian Dental Association, which is mandatory for all graduates of the programme, regardless of whether they are Latvian nationals or foreigners. In SAR it is indicated that all the graduates work in the acquired specialty in Latvia or in the countries of their origin (SAR, p. 340).
The PHESP Dentistry strives to develop dental graduates who are effective and reflective practitioners capable of responding to the demands of the 21st century and aims to maintain the highest learning standards, and to facilitate knowledge, understanding and skills by using a broad range of teaching, learning and assessment methods. Keeping pace with the globalization of higher education, the dental programme focuses on training specialists for both the Latvian and international markets at same time.
During the reporting period, the number of students in English in the programme has reached 42-43 and this level has maintained during the last three years (4.annex.Zob_Statistics on students_Eng.docx). The number of first-year matriculates has approached the possible maximum, as it is limited by the capacity of the study clinic of the programme, which stipulates that the maximum number of matriculated students should not exceed 12.
Taking into account the above, we can conclude that the PHESP Medicine is economically and socially justified.

2.1.5. N/A

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

Conclusions
The inclusion of the PHESP Dentistry in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and the degree and qualification to be awarded.
The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PHESP Dentistry are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation, as well as the language of implementation are reasonable and justified.
The study programme is developed in accordance with the EU Directive 2005/36 / EC on the recognition of professional qualifications, which is directly related to the guidelines of the European Association of Dental Education in Europe “Profile and competencies for the Graduating European Dentist Update 2009”, “Curriculum Structure, Content, Learning and Assessment in European Undergraduate Dental Education”. The study programme has been developed in collaboration with the University of Tromso, Norway.
PHESP Dentistry complies with the Cabinet Regulation No. 512 “Regulations on the State Standard for Second Level Professional Higher Education”, the Medical Treatment Law, the Law on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications, Cabinet Regulation No. 268 Regulations on the Competence of Medical Practitioners and Students Acquiring First or Second Level Professional Higher Medical Education Programs in Medical Treatment and the Amount of Theoretical

and Practical Knowledge of These Persons.
The corrections introduced into the PHESP Dentistry parameters within the assessment of the study field are analyzed, justified and would be supported. Only the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.
The PHESP Dentistry strives to develop dental graduates who are effective and reflective practitioners capable of responding to the demands of the 21st century and aims to maintain the highest learning standards, to facilitate knowledge, understanding and skills by using a broad range of teaching, learning and assessment methods. Keeping pace with the globalization of higher education, the Dentistry programme focuses on training specialists for both the Latvian and international markets at same time.

Strengths:
1. The study programme is developed in accordance with the EU Directive 2005/36 / EC on the recognition of professional qualifications, which is directly related to the guidelines of the European Association of Dental Education in Europe “Profile and competencies for the Graduating European Dentist Update 2009”, “Curriculum Structure, Content, Learning and Assessment in European Undergraduate Dental Education”. The study programme has been developed in collaboration with the University of Tromso, Norway.
2. The PHESP Dentistry complies with the Cabinet Regulation No. 512 “Regulations on the State Standard for Second Level Professional Higher Education”, the Medical Treatment Law, the Law on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications, Cabinet Regulation No. 268 Regulations on the Competence of Medical Practitioners and Students Acquiring First or Second Level Professional Higher Medical Education Programs in Medical Treatment and the Amount of Theoretical and Practical Knowledge of These Persons.
3. The PHESP Dentistry strives to develop dental graduates who are effective and reflective practitioners capable of responding to the demands of the 21st century and aims to maintain the highest learning standards, to facilitate knowledge, understanding and skills by using a broad range of teaching, learning and assessment methods. Keeping pace with the globalization of higher education, the Dentistry programme focuses on training specialists for both the Latvian and international markets at same time.

Weaknesses:
1. 23 results of the study programme are indicated in the PHESP Dentistry, but the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. The PHESP is delivered as a full time programme both in Latvian and English (SAR p. SAR p. 336). Currently, only English groups are enrolled. The SP Dentistry complies with the legislation of the Republic of Latvia (Annex 5: Compliance with the State Academic Standard, Annex 6: Compliance with the Professional Standard, Annex 9: Compliance of the study program with the specific normative regulation of the corresponding field). The content is topical and relevant, which is demonstrated in Section 3.2.1. (e.g. the specific work with children, aging population and women during pregnancy etc.). Students are encouraged to develop their research interest from early on in their studies (SAR p. 341). The content of the study programme is topical, the content of the study courses is interconnected and complementary, corresponding to the objectives of the programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes (e.g. General Medicine is introduced in the course so that students are able to recognize systemic conditions that might have an effect on a patient's oral health) (SAR p. 342-347, Annex 1: Study plan, Annex 7: Course descriptors, Annex 8:

Mapping of study courses). The course descriptors are clear, concise and standardized (Annex 7: Course descriptors). The labour market demand is well justified (SAR p. 342). The diploma allows students to freely work within countries of EU and EEA (SAR p. 342). The completion of the programme allows students to practice as dentists after completion of a qualifying exam ran by the Association of Dentists of Latvia (Annex 11: Diploma & Diploma Supplement).

2.2.2. N/A

2.2.3. As mentioned in Section 2.2.1. the SP is delivered as a full time programme in Latvian and English. The main modes of delivery include lectures, seminars and practical classes (SAR p. 347). The virtual learning environment (Moodle) is vastly employed in the study process (SAR p. 347). Student centered learning approach is demonstrated by working in small groups, treatment plan development, autonomy in the study process among other approaches (SAR p. 347). The programme puts a huge emphasis on obtaining practical knowledge and clinical thinking (SAR p. 347). The students are exposed to extensive clinical practice and practical application of skills from Semester 3 (SAR p. 343). The students have access to assessment criteria and intended learning outcome in advance (SAR p. 347). The assessments are developed and delivered in accordance with the Regulations “Organization of Study Course Examinations at the University of Latvia” approved by the Senate of the University of Latvia on 29.06.2015 (SAR p. 348). Also, programme specific evaluation criteria have been established to ensure fair marking and reduce bias (SAR p. 348). During the onsite visit (08.09.2022) experts had some concerns about the teaching staff’s understanding of marking criteria and how marking criteria/rubrics were developed for practical assessments. This was clarified during the on site visit with the programme director (11.08.2022.). The bulk of the programme (80%) has been adapted from University of Tromso in Norway, including the evaluation criteria that are based on international standards. Considering that this is a relatively new programme and most of the staff are comparatively academically inexperienced as most are practicing dentists and clinicians, the standardized assessment criteria and team work orientated development of curriculum is crucial. The students are marked on a uniformly accepted 10-point scale (SAR p. 348). The assessments consist of interim (50% or more of the final overall grade) and the final assessment (10% or more of the final overall grade) (SAR p. 348). Various assessment methods are used (written, oral and practical) (SAR p. 348). The requirements of development of diploma thesis have been sufficiently described (SAR p. 348).
When developing and delivering a fairly new programme it is important to engage in teamwork when developing assessment criteria, especially for practical assessments, and also course content. Approaches like second marking for a select group of assessments helps with standard setting and excludes potential biases. Also, it is helpful if lecture courses are developed and delivered by more than one person. The meeting with the programme director (11.08.2022.) did convince the committee about a sufficient QA system concerning these criteria, however, this was not the impression during the meeting with SAR report team and one of the Dentistry SP staff members (08.09.2022).

2.2.4. Internship in Dentistry is in close relation with manual skills and knowledge obtained from practical lessons (starting as early as Semester 3, SAR p. 343), that is mandatory for students to start the internship. Starting from the study courses students receive a certain list of tasks and an amount of that has to be performed during the practical lessons as well as during the internship, examples were provided during the site visit of dentistry facilities. All these tasks are supervised by qualified specialists and signed when they are completed. The practicum is in total of 26 CP and is focused on different tasks that students should complete: perform clinical work with patients, collect anamnesis, train extraoral and intraoral examination of the patient, learn how to prevent oral diseases and to learn conventional approach in dentistry subfields. Tasks that are described in

clinical practice can be found in annex: 10. Zob_Clnical_practise_Eng. The internship prepares students to start work in general dentistry after graduation. Current clinical base is only based on premises of the Dental Clinic of the University of Latvia, which currently helps to monitor and easily adjust the student skill development process, but at the same time limits the possibility to attract more students and expand study programmes to offer studies also in Latvian. Language barrier for students also is limiting normal frutifull communication with patients, which can cause inconvenience for both - patients and the students during the internship. More Latvian language practice should be included in the study process to better integrate students in Latvian environment. During the interviews students demonstrated high satisfaction with the study programme as whole and internship opportunities.

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6. Dentistry is fastly growing and changing field of healthcare where new types of composite materials and techniques are emerging every year. Student research topics are based on the actual possibility to carry out the research. Qualification topics usually cover orthodontics, oral microbiology, and questionnaires about oral hygiene are also common, it has to be taken into account that there are only 3 years of graduates currently. Another research direction is rather multidisciplinary; for example “influence of the psychiatric disease bulimia nervosa on oral health” is a topic combining dentistry with psychology. As indicated by SAR page 352 research topics are also created in collaboration with Norwegian Cleft Centre, that also can ensure the novelty and topicality of the research work.

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

The PHESP Dentistry is a fairly new study programme which has been updated to the legislation of the Republic of Latvia from University of Tromso. The programme complies with all the professional and legal requirements of the Republic of Latvia and European Union. This is important, as at the moment more international students are enrolled in the programme and it is conducted only in English language. After graduation these students return to their home countries and practice dentistry there. The content of the programme is topical and relevant, evidence-based dentistry is widely used in the teaching process. Assessments are conducted in accordance with the legal requirements of the Republic of Latvia. Evaluation criteria have been based on international guidelines. Students are involved in the research activities from earlier on in the programme. The programme involves extensive clinical practice and practical application of skills from Semester 3. However, there are several weak points. The staff of Dentistry in some instances could not sufficiently justify the marking criteria or fully grasp the concept of standard setting during the practical assessments. This was concerning as the programme is relatively new and the vast majority of staff is relatively academically inexperienced. However, some assurance was given during the meeting with the programme director. The bulk of the programme is based on a Dentistry program at University of has been adapted from University of Tromso in Norway and the criteria for practical assessments are based on international standards. Standard setting and double marking for a select group of assessments is a common practice, especially when setting up and running a new programme. It is a LU policy of academic freedom and approach that mostly one person develops, runs course and develops the assessments, however, when it comes to new programmes, a more team-based approach, second marking and standard setting should be encouraged. Also, as at the moment the programme is tailored more towards international students, they should be more integrated in the Latvian culture and their Latvian language skills should be improved as this will help them to build a good rapport with patients and improve their communication skills. This can be done via more Latvian language courses and integrating them in the community of Latvian students.

Strengths:
1. A programme that is topical and relevant and adheres to all the legal and professional requirements of the Republic of Latvia, also allowing graduates to practice dentistry in other countries of EU and EEA.
2. Great exposure to clinical skills and scientific work from early on in the programme.

Weaknesses:
1. Most of the staff members are relatively academically inexperienced as they are practicing clinicians.
2. The programme is delivered in English and mostly tailored towards international students.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. The base of theoretical and preclinical studies of SP Dentistry is located in the newly built LU Academic Center Science House at Jelgavas Street 3 in 2019, as well as in the Nature House Jelgavas Ie in 2015. The academic center allowed creating a modern study base for students that fully complies with normative and international university development trends. SP Dentistry students The House of Sciences has created opportunities to use the most modern technologies in the study process, with which all auditoriums and laboratory rooms are provided. The Science House also has small, isolated rooms for one student's individual work or work in small groups, where students can easily prepare for knowledge tests (SAR; p. Tour of facilities).
The material and technical base located at the LU Science House fully ensures the quality implementation of SP Dentistry and the achievement of study results, as it is a modern study environment, where the study process is possible, access to library resources, individual student work with study materials. SP Dental Clinical Base The Dental Clinic is located in the premises of the University of Latvia on Aspazijas Boulevard 5. The Dental Clinic is a structural unit of the University of Latvia, which is registered in the Latvian Register of Medical Institutions. The dental clinic complies with all the requirements of the regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia and is regularly inspected, just like any medical institution registered in Latvia. The dental clinic is equipped with modern technical devices, clinical manipulation, visualization and radiological examination. The dental clinic has 12 full-fledged dental workplaces in two halls, which is the maximum number of students who can simultaneously participate in practical classes with mannequins or patients under the supervision of teachers (SAR, .p. 352; Tour of facilities).
The information base, including the services of the classical library, is available to the students of SP Dentistry in the premises of the Science House, where it is possible to obtain textbooks for appropriate study courses. The study literature is compiled on the basis of the lists of literature created by the lecturers in the descriptions of the study courses, which are regularly updated to include the latest editions (SAR, p.353; Table 3.3.1.1. Literature available in SP Dentistry library). Students have very wide access to a variety of e-resources .

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3. SP Dentistry cost calculation is performed taking into account the study program cost calculation methodology developed by the Department of Studies of the University of Latvia. The cost of one student per year is 14000 EUR. Calculations have been made for 12 paid students. There are no state budget places in the study program. The funding available to SP Dentistry is tuition fee income. In 2021, the tuition fee revenue was 404,250 EUR, of which 299,145 EUR was available to the faculty. The cost per student is 15,000 EUR per year. The following items are included in the cost calculation - teaching staff costs, general staff costs, infrastructure costs, other costs, costs of materials and services, as well as indirect costs of the University of Latvia. Tuition fees for Latvian and English students are the same. In order to ensure the profitability of SP Dentistry the minimum number of students is 10 (SAR, p.354).There are sufficient total number of students (Annex 4:Statistics on students of SP Dentistry)SP Dentistry is conducted in English
There are no state budget places (Annex4; Statistics on students of SP Dentistry).

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

Conclusions
The material and technical base of the Study program is modern and well equipped and meets all the requirements. Study program has excellent library resources.

Strengths:
1. The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning conditions with good equipment and modern technologies.
2. Plenty of high quality library resources.

Weaknesses:
1. There are no state budget places.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The material and technical base of the Study program is modern and well equipped and meets all the requirements. Study program has excellent library resources.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. The implementation of the PHESP Dentistry involves highly qualified Faculty of Medicine academic staff for teaching theoretical and preclinical study courses, which provides a full-fledged theoretical basis for the acquisition of dental clinical study courses. The qualifications of lecturers complies with the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the regulatory enactments of the LU, which determine the qualification of lecturers in the professional bachelor's study programme: Cabinet Regulation No. 49 Regulation on Latvian Science Sectors and Sub-sectors (23 January 2018). Law on Higher Education Institutions (2 November 1995). Regarding SAR the lecturers of the preclinical study courses continue to cooperate with the students even after the successful final

examination of their study course, performing joint research work, the results of which are later used in diploma theses (SAR, p. 355).
The lecturers of PHESP Dentistry have a wide range of professional skills and experience, combined with pedagogical skills to work with students. In recent years a stable team of dentists has been formed, which ensures the acquisition of dental skills at the MF Dental Clinic (SAR, p.355).
When the experts familiarize themselves with the composition of the lecturers, they found that this is a relatively new program and several lecturers are relatively inexperienced academically. Most are practicing dentists and clinicians.

2.4.2. The analysis of changes in the composition of the teaching staff of the PHESP Dentistry during the reporting period shows a generally low level of change, which is close to the natural change of the generations of lecturers. It is determined by the stable staff of the LU Faculty of Medicine (MF) over the years, who teach theoretical and general medicine study courses at the study program “Dentistry”. This part of the lecturers makes up the majority of the teaching staff and provides the academic atmosphere and traditions of MF and SP Dentistry (SAR, p.356).
Three of the 8 attached lecturers - dentists already had teaching experience and they successfully continued their work during the reporting period, working on the development and improvement of the program. These lecturers ensured stable development of the program, participated in the development of planning documents, new study courses and took care of the technical and material provision of the Dental Training Clinic (SAR, p.356).
Attracting new collaboration opportunities and guest lecturers is one of the active goals of the Dentistry programme. Currently, the University of Tartu, the University of Oslo and the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences Klaipeda University are potential partners. Successful and long-term cooperation with these universities is already taking place at the Faculty of Medicine. The collaboration is planned not only as lectures, but also as demonstrations by high-level international specialists. Successful cooperation in the field of periodontology has already taken place with Lithuanian specialists, as well as the second academic year the part of course of Oral, Facial and Jaw Radiology is led by prof. J. Biederer (Germany). The study program in a foreign language is implemented by attracting lecturers with experience in the study and work process in English - the lecturers include graduates of the Karolinska Institutet (Sweden), specialists with internships at the University of Oslo (Norway), and dentists practicing dentistry in English-speaking countries in private practices (SAR, p.356). The composition of lecturers is indicated in SAR Table 3.4.2.1.
The lecturers include authors of international publications. Teachers actively attend both Latvian and foreign courses and apply an evidence-based practical and theoretical approach to patient care in their daily work. The lecturers are mutually calibrated and problem-oriented meetings are held at least once a month. Internationally recognized and evidence-based literature is used in the study process (SAR, p.356).

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4. PHESP Dentistry involves highly qualified Faculty of Medicine academic staff for teaching theoretical and preclinical study courses, considering that professors and doctors of science are involved in the implementation of the program, the expert commission assumes that the number and quality of their publications is high, although the lecturers' CVs and list of publications cannot be found in SAR.

2.4.5. The cooperation of the teaching staff involved in the PHESP Dentistry takes place both at the stage of study course development, when the study courses of theoretical disciplines and general medicine were developed and improved taking into account the specifics of the dental profession. Special attention is paid in the development of clinical courses to the emergency conditions of the

dental patient, which may occur unexpectedly as a result of psychological stress, manipulation, exacerbation of the course of somatic chronic illness. For this reason, in cooperation with dentists - lecturers of clinical subjects and supervisors of practical classes with the teaching staff of the LU, Faculty of Medicine, study courses are developed that are suitable for students of the PHESP Dentistry programme. Professional Ethics in Dentistry, Latin for Dental Students, Special Histology for Dental Students, Human Physiology for Dental Students, and others (SAR, p.356).
The lecturers of the study program improve their knowledge by participating in targeted courses and conferences of the LU, as well as in international conferences, to improve the organization of teaching and scientific work.

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

Conclusions
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the PHESP Dentistry employees, the expert commission concluded that the study program is implemented by highly qualified employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work.

Strengths:
1. Good management of the studying process;
2. Involvement of international lecturers in the learning process.

Weaknesses:
1. Several lecturers are practicing dentists who need pedagogical and academic work experience.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualifications of the academic staff of the study program meet the conditions for the implementation of the study program and the requirements specified in the relevant regulatory acts.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The second level PHESP Dentistry complies with the Cabinet Regulation no. 512 Regulations on the State Standard of the Second Level Professional Higher Education (approved on 26.08.2014) (Annex 5).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The second level PHESP Dentistry complies with the professional standard. The standard of the dental profession was developed and approved at the meeting of the Tripartite Cooperation Council for Vocational Education and Employment on February 10,
2021. Agreed at the meeting of the Tripartite Cooperation Sub-Council for Vocational Education and Employment on 10 February 2021, Minutes No. 2 (Annex 6).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the study course descriptions for the Second level PHESP Dentistryin Latvian and English languages (Annex 7 The course descriptions of SP “Dentistry”).
The descriptions of the Second level PHERSP Medicine are fully compliant with the requirements set forth in Section 561, Paragraph two and Section 562, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institution, they a. define the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; b. determine the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; c. outline the content of the study course necessary for the achievement of learning outcomes, contain the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, indicate other sources of information; d. describe the organization and tasks for the independent work of students; e. determine the evaluation criteria of learning outcomes.
The description of the study module determines: the learning outcomes achievable as a result of the acquisition of the study module; the plan of the study work time; the study courses included in the study module.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the diploma and its supplement is issued for completing the study programme in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers 16.04.2013. to Regulation No. 202 “Procedures for Issuing State-Recognized Higher Education Certificates”.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Declaration of the Head of Study Field (Annex Head of Study Field Declaration, 21.04.2021, No. 14), confirming that the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Declaration of the Head of Study Field (Annex Head of Study Field Declaration, 21.04.2021, No. 16) confirming that the teaching staff members to be involved in the implementation of the study programme have at least B2-level knowledge of an English language.
The teaching staff members who participated in the meeting during the on-site visit demonstrated high level English language skills.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Fully compliant with the Law on Higher Education Institutions Section 46, paragraph 2 and regulations of Cabinet of Ministers 23.01.2007. to Regulation No. 70 “Mandatory regulations to be included in the study agreement” (Annex Standard sample of study agreement „Agreement for EU citizens–2021).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Agreement between the University of Latvia and Riga Stradins University on taking over studies, signed 21.12.2018 No 48-22/E/1/2018 for an indefinite period) (SAR, Part I, Chapter 2.1., Annex Agreement on the implementation of the study programmes), confirming that the students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Refund and Compensation Policy Statement, No 1-13/365) (Annex Refund and Compensation Policy), confirming that the students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme's license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The second level PHESP Dentistry complies with the other regulatory enactments such as the Medical Treatment Law (adopted on 01.10.1997), the Law on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications (adopted on 20.06.2001), Cabinet Regulation No. 268 Regulations on the Competence of Medical Practitioners and Students Acquiring First or Second Level Professional Higher Medical Education Programs in Medical Treatment and the Amount of Theoretical and Practical Knowledge of These Persons (24.03.2009) (Annex 9).

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The second level PHESP Dentistry fully complies with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

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

General conclusions

The inclusion of the PHESP Dentistry in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and the degree and qualification to be awarded.
The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PHESP Dentistry are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation, as well as the language of implementation are reasonable and justified.
The study programme is developed in accordance with the EU Directive 2005/36 / EC on the recognition of professional qualifications, which is directly related to the guidelines of the European Association of Dental Education in Europe "Profile and competencies for the Graduating European Dentist Update 2009", "Curriculum Structure, Content, Learning and Assessment in European Undergraduate Dental Education". The study programme has been developed in collaboration with the University of Tromso, Norway.
PHESP Dentistry complies with the Cabinet Regulation No. 512 "Regulations on the State Standard for Second Level Professional Higher Education", the Medical Treatment Law, the Law on Regulated

Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications, Cabinet Regulation No. 268 Regulations on the Competence of Medical Practitioners and Students Acquiring First or Second Level Professional Higher Medical Education Programs in Medical Treatment and the Amount of Theoretical and Practical Knowledge of These Persons.
The corrections introduced into the PHESP Dentistry parameters within the assessment of the study field are analyzed, justified and would be supported. Only the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.
The PHESP Dentistry strives to develop dental graduates who are effective and reflective practitioners capable of responding to the demands of the 21st century and aims to maintain the highest learning standards, to facilitate knowledge, understanding and skills by using a broad range of teaching, learning and assessment methods. Keeping pace with the globalization of higher education, the Dentistry programme focuses on training specialists for both the Latvian and international markets at same time.
The PHESP Dentistry is a fairly new study programme which has been updated to the legislation of the Republic of Latvia from University of Tromso. The programme complies with all the professional and legal requirements of the Republic of Latvia and European Union. This is important, as at the moment more international students are enrolled in the programme and it is conducted in English language. After graduation these students return to their home countries and practice dentistry there. The content of the programme is topical and relevant, evidence-based dentistry is widely used in the teaching process. Assessments are conducted in accordance with the legal requirements of the Republic of Latvia. Evaluation criteria have been based on international guidelines. Students are involved in the research activities from earlier on in the programme. The programme involves extensive clinical practice and practical application of skills from Semester 3. However, there are several weak points. The staff of Dentistry in some instances could not sufficiently justify the marking criteria or fully grasp the concept of standard setting during the practical assessments. This was concerning as the programme is relatively new and the vast majority of staff is relatively inexperienced. However, some assurance was given during the meeting with the programme director. Standard setting and double marking for a select group of assessments is a common practice, especially when setting up and running a new programme. It is a LU policy of academic freedom and approach that mostly one person develops, runs course and develops the assessments, however, when it comes to new programmes, a more team-based approach, second marking and standard setting should be encouraged. Also, as at the moment the programme is tailored more towards international students, they should be more integrated in the Latvian culture and their Latvian language skills should be improved as this will help them to build a good rapport with patients and improve their communication skills. This can be done via more Latvian language courses and integrating them in the community of Latvian students.

Strengths

1. A programme that is topical and relevant and adheres to all the legal and professional requirements of the Republic of Latvia, also allowing graduates to practice dentistry in other countries of EU and EEA.
2. Great exposure to clinical skills and scientific work from early on in the programme.
3. After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the PHESP Dentistry employees, the expert commission concluded that the study program is implemented by highly qualified employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work.
4. The study programme is developed in accordance with the EU Directive 2005/36 / EC on the recognition of professional qualifications, which is directly related to the guidelines of the European Association of Dental Education in Europe “Profile and competencies for the Graduating European Dentist Update 2009”, “Curriculum Structure, Content, Learning and Assessment in European

Undergraduate Dental Education". The study programme has been developed in collaboration with the University of Tromso, Norway.
5. The PHESP Dentistry complies with the Cabinet Regulation No. 512 "Regulations on the State Standard for Second Level Professional Higher Education", the Medical Treatment Law, the Law on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications, Cabinet Regulation No. 268 Regulations on the Competence of Medical Practitioners and Students Acquiring First or Second Level Professional Higher Medical Education Programs in Medical Treatment and the Amount of Theoretical and Practical Knowledge of These Persons.
6. The PHESP Dentistry strives to develop dental graduates who are effective and reflective practitioners capable of responding to the demands of the 21st century and aims to maintain the highest learning standards, to facilitate knowledge, understanding and skills by using a broad range of teaching, learning and assessment methods. Keeping pace with the globalization of higher education, the Dentistry programme focuses on training specialists for both the Latvian and international markets at same time.
7. Highly qualified lecturers and good management of the studying process.
8. Involvement of international lecturers in the learning process.

Weaknesses

1. 23 results of the study programme are indicated in the PHESP Dentistry, but the learning outcomes could be combined into larger blocks, stating 5-9 expected learning outcomes.
2. Most of the staff members are relatively academically inexperienced as they are practicing clinicians.
3. The programme is delivered in English and mostly tailored towards international students.

Evaluation of the study programme "Dentistry "

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Dentistry "

Short-term recommendations

1. To review the learning outcomes and formulate them in 5-9 learning outcomes.

Long-term recommendations

1. As this is a new programme it is important that fair and transparent assessment marking is ensured. Therefore, standard setting and double marking for some assessments should be encouraged, even though the bulk of the programme has been adapted from University of Tromso in Norway.
2. The Latvian language skills of students should be improved as this would help them with patient interaction and communication. As well, they should be integrated in the community of local students. This could be done by additional Latvian Language courses.

II - "Medicine" ASSESSMENT

II - "Medicine" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The aim of the PHERSP Medicine is to ensure in-depth acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical skills in one of the basic medical specialties, sub-specialties or additional specialties after obtaining higher medical education (doctor's degree or specialist qualification), to prepare specialists for independent medical activity and administration of certain clinical trials in the acquired specialty, as well as to provide the necessary knowledge for passing the certification examination in the specialty in accordance with the regulatory enactments of the European Union and the Republic of Latvia (SAR, p. 425). The PHERSP Medicine complies with the aim of the study field Health Care to prepare competent health care specialists for the needs of the Latvian economy. The inclusion of the PHERSP Medicine in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and the degree and qualification to be awarded.

2.1.2. The 2nd level PHERSP Medicine is a full-time study programme, the implementation duration and the amount of Latvian credits (CP) of which depend on the qualification to be obtained. The languages of instruction – Latvian. The degree to be acquired – qualification of doctor – specialist in one of the basic medical specialties, sub-specialties or additional specialties. The PHERSP Medicine includes 34 sub-programmes of medical specialties with a study period from 2 to 6 years or 88 CP (132 ECTS) to 264 CP (396 ECTS).

It is regulated not only by Cabinet Regulation No. 268 and Directive 2005/36 / EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 7 September 2005, but also by the recommendations of the European Union of Medical Specialists. The European Directive defines the minimum duration of studies for a speciality/qualification, while the UEMS guidelines, which are regularly reviewed, updated and, if necessary, revised, recommend an optimal study time, which may be longer than the one stated in the European Directive. Latvian professional doctors' associations follow UEMS recommendations when providing recommendations for the programme development or correction of existing programmes (SAR, p. 433).

The code of the study programme according to the classification of education in Latvia – 50721, where the first part of the code 50 indicates that the type of the PHERSP Medicine is professional higher education programme (Level 5 professional qualification) for the acquisition of the specialist medical qualification and the acquisition of the specialist medical qualification in sub-specialty and additional specialty (can be implemented after obtaining the qualification of a basic medical specialist), and the digits of the second part of the code 721 indicate that the thematic area of education is Health Care, but the group of educational programmes is Medicine.

The learning outcomes of the PHERSP Medicine, according to its code, correspond to Level 8 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF), which is described in the Cabinet Regulations No. 322 "Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia" (June 13, 2017). Considering the fact that the next level of the Latvian qualifications framework contains the knowledge, skills and competences defined for the previous level, the learning outcomes defined by the PHERSP Medicine correspond to Level 8 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework, where the emphasis is on scientific activity (the third and sixth learning outcomes of the PHERSP Medicine directly show the specialist's scientific skills). In SAR (p. 432) it is stated that: "Upon graduation from the programme Medicine, the acquired learning outcomes confirm the compliance with the requirements of the LQF and EQF Level 7 in accordance with the Cabinet Regulations of 13 June 2017 on the Classification of Education in Latvia". In this respect, an explanation from the LU would be necessary: why are the learning outcomes of the PHERSP Medicine (50721) equated to Level 7 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF) and not Level 8 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF). Maybe it is just a misprint or an oversight?

The objectives of the study programme are clearly defined and the aim of the PHESP Medicine is

harmonized with the objectives and the learning outcomes of the study programme.
Admission requirements of the PHERSP Medicine are dependent on the qualification to be obtained, and it could be:
medical degree for qualification to be obtained – dermatologist, venereologist, family physician (general practitioner), laboratory doctor, ophthalmologist, otolaryngologist, pathologist, paediatrician, psychiatrist, psychotherapist, radiotherapist, sports doctor, anaesthesiologist reanimatologist, vascular surgeon, radiologist, gynaecologist, endocrinologist, pneumonologist, gastroenterologist, infectologist, internist, cardiologist, surgeon; thoracic surgeon, emergency physician, nephrologist, oncologist chemotherapist, pneumonologist, rheumatologist, heart surgeon, trauma and orthopaedic surgeon, urologist, neurosurgeon;
qualification of one of the basic specialties of a doctor for qualification to be obtained – osteopath;
medical degree and professional qualification in a basic medical specialty paediatrician for the qualification to be obtained – neonatologist
qualification in one of the specialties: internist, dermatologist, venereologist, pneumonologist, family physician (general practitioner), otolaryngologist, paediatrician for qualification to be obtained – allergologist.
Admission to the sub-programmes of the Medical specialties of the programme takes place on a competitive basis. The number of study places is determined by the Ministry of Health in accordance with the Cabinet Regulation No. 685 “Procedures for Admission, Distribution and Financing of Residency” (SAR, p. 433).
The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PHERSP Medicine are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation, as well as the language of implementation, are reasonable and justified.
The names of the speciality programmes, the duration of studies and the qualification to be awarded comply with the regulations of Latvian and European regulatory enactments: No 268 “Regulations regarding the competence of medical practitioners and students who acquire first or second level professional higher medical education programs in medical treatment and the amount of theoretical and practical knowledge of these persons” as of 24.03.2009 and Directive 2005/36 / EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications (SAR, p. 432).
The LU is convinced of the equal competition of graduates of the PHERSP Medicine not only in the Latvian but also in the European labour market.
2.1.3. Changes introduced in the PHERSP Medicine in the accreditation period:
changes in the study programme classification code from 48721 to 50721 in accordance with the Cabinet regulations No. 322 “Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia” of June 13, 2017;
added specialty sub-programmes with the acquisition of the corresponding qualification at the end of the studies – 5 specialties;
the names of the 3 specialty sub-programmes have been changed: in accordance with the regulation No. 268 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia “Regulations on the competence of medical practitioners and students acquiring first or second level professional higher medical education programs in medical practice and the amount of theoretical and practical knowledge of these persons”;
changes in the duration of 7 (in SAR in Latvian)/6 (SAR in English) specialty sub-programmes and the transition of the specialty from the status of a sub-specialty to a basic specialty, in accordance with the amendments to the regulation No.268 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia “Regulations on the competence of medical practitioners and students acquiring first or second level professional higher medical education programs in medical practice and the amount of theoretical and practical knowledge of these persons” (the regulation version No. 784 of 13.12.2016);

the name and duration of one speciality sub-programme have been changed, in accordance with the amendments to the Cabinet of Minister's regulation No. 268 of March 24, 2009 “Regulations on the competence of medical practitioners and students acquiring first or second level professional higher medical education programs in medical practice and the amount of theoretical and practical knowledge of these persons”;
research work (diploma thesis) and defense of the diploma; research work can be: a research work reported at an international conference or congress; a research work published in a peer-reviewed medical publication; a patented invention (SAR, p. 431).
These corrections introduced into the PHERSP Medicine parameters within the assessment of the study field are analyzed, justified and would be supported.
2.1.4. Taking into account the growing shortage of human resources in the medical sector, which was especially highlighted by the epidemic caused by the Covid-19 virus of the last two years, it is clearly obvious that the number of students in the study programme Medicine should not decrease, but on the contrary – an opportunity should be found to increase the number of students. In hospitals, where emergency medical assistance, secondary and tertiary level health care is provided, the number of doctors employed in Latvia is lower than in OECD countries on average: in Latvia approximately 35%; in OECD countries, more than 75% (SAR, 434).
Employers positively evaluate the graduates of the LU PHERSP Medicine and emphasize that “the development of medicine in the state in general and in the university hospital, in particular, is unthinkable without close, mutually oriented cooperation with universities and their academic staff, therefore the position of the hospital for cooperation with the University of Latvia is open and favorable” (SAR, p. 441).
The scientific staff and clinical specialists of the hospital participate in forums and conferences organized by the LU. Cooperation in this direction should be continued and expanded. The hospital is ready to get involved and give its best in the development and improvement of study programmes, because such cooperation is considered to be a far-sighted and sustainable investment not only in the quality replacement of generations of hospital specialists, but also in preparing the basis of the intellectual potential of the country’s medicine and medical science.
The number of students studying in the PHERSP Medicine specialty sub-programmes is determined by human resources planning in the health care sector, which takes into account the number of existing specialists in the country as a whole, age parameters (retirement/pre-retirement age), provision of medical institutions with specialists and the number of residents already studying in the corresponding specialty in two Latvian universities.
The number of places financed by the state budget is strictly regulated, it is supervised by the LR Ministry of Health in accordance with the provisions No. 685 of the LR Cabinet of Ministers “Procedures for admission, distribution and financing of residency”. On the other hand, the number of students who study on personal or third-party funds is determined by the University of Latvia in coordination with professional associations and medical institutions where resident training takes place. SAR presents a detailed analysis of the number of students in the PHERSP Medicine, evaluating the need for budget and paid places and also the reasons for student dropout.
Taking into account the above, we can conclude that the PHERSP Medicine is economically and socially justified.
2.1.5. N/A

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

Conclusions
The inclusion of the PHERSP Medicine in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and the degree and qualification to be awarded.

The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PHERSP Medicine are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation as well as the language of implementation, are reasonable and justified.
The PHERSP Medicine complies with the Cabinet Regulation No. 512 “Regulations on the State Standard for Second Level Professional Higher Education” (dated 26.08.2014.), the Professional Standard of Doctors (Doctor profession standard agreed and approved at the meeting of the Tripartite Cooperation Sub-Council for Vocational Training and Employment on 16 October 2019), Medical Treatment Law, Law On Regulated Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications and Directive of the European Parliament and the Council.
The LU is convinced of the equal competition of graduates of PHERSP Medicine not only in the Latvian but also in the European labor market.
The development of medicine in the state in general and in the university hospital, in particular, is unthinkable without close, mutually oriented cooperation with universities and their academic staff, therefore the position of the hospital for cooperation with the University of Latvia is open and favorable.
The number of students studying in the PHERSP Medicine specialty sub-programmes is determined by human resources planning in the health care sector, which takes into account the number of existing specialists in the country as a whole and is supervised by the LR Ministry of Health in compliance with the provisions No. 685 of the LR Cabinet of Ministers “Procedures for admission, distribution and financing of residency”.

Strengths:
1. The LU is convinced of the equal competition of graduates of PHERSP Medicine not only in the Latvian but also in the European labor market.
2. The development of medicine in the state in general and in the university hospital, in particular, is unthinkable without close, mutually oriented cooperation with universities and their academic staff, therefore the position of the hospital for cooperation with the University of Latvia is open and favorable.

No weaknesses have been identified.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. The study programme is delivered in Latvian as a full time programme with a varied overall duration, depending on the speciality to be obtained (SAR p. 427-429). The content of the training courses has been developed in accordance with the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 24.03.2009. 268 (edition of the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 784 of December 13, 2016) "Regulations on the competence of medical workers and students mastering the programs of professional higher medical education of the first or second level in the field of treatment, and the amount of theoretical and practical knowledge of these persons" and are in agreement with professional societies (SAR p. 445, Annex: Compliance of the study program “Medicine” with the state education standard). In some branches (e.g. urology, vascular surgery etc.) the content corresponds to the recommendations of the European Union Of Medical Specialists (SAR p. 446). Therefore, residents are not only trained to meet the Requirements of the Republic of Latvia but also EU (SAR p. 446). The programme is built in such a way, that for example, in Year 1 or Year 2 of most surgical specialities or all internships the specialization can be changed allowing flexibility, for both the resident and employer (SAR p. 447, Annex: Specialty study programme). An example of sub-speciality “Allergology” has been provided to see the course plan, mapping and course descriptors (Annex 2: Medicine Mapping, Annex 3: Medicine Course plan, Annex 4: Medicine Course Descriptors).

Thus, the content of the study programme is topical, the content of the study courses is interconnected and complementary, corresponding to the objectives of the programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes. The course descriptors are clear, concise and standardized (Annex 4: Medicine Course Descriptors). The labour market demand is well justified (SAR p.446). The students are required to undergo scientific work, either basic medical research or clinical research, which is on trend (SAR p. 447).

2.2.2. N/A

2.2.3. As mentioned in Section 2.2.1. residency is a full time programme delivered in Latvian language with the study length depending the speciality to be obtained. As such, residency programme is an individual experience and each resident has an individual study plan (SAR p. 447). The training takes place in the medical institution which is selected as a clinical base (SAR p. 448). Thus, the training that the resident undergoes is specific to the chosen speciality (SAR p. 448). The delivery methods are varied but mostly practical in nature (a minimum of 85%) is stipulated in regulations on one-to-one basis as one doctor with the right to train residents can supervise no more than 2 at the same time (SAR p. 448). All aforementioned, as such, demonstrated a student-centered learning approach. Seminars and case reviews are regular (SAR p. 448). A part of the learning experience is also attendance of medical institution's, national and international conferences (SAR p. 448). The Covid-19 pandemic allowed the delivery of seminars and discussions to an online format (SAR p. 448). The assessments and the distribution of CP depends on the speciality but the overarching principles are the same - there are intermittent assessments that need to be submitted (SAR p. 448). For practical training, the minimum number of manipulations stipulated in the programme regulations must be completed. The final assessment is held in a form of voice viva and usually is a case analysis. The same applies to the assessment of practical skills (e.g. imaging techniques etc.) (SAR p. 448). The assessment criteria and intended outcomes are known to students in advance (SAR p. 448). Also residents have to fill in a logbook without which they cannot sit the final assessment for the course (SAR p.448). During the onite meeting (11.08.2022) with residents and graduates and overall satisfaction with the programme was expressed. Both residents and graduates were satisfied with the existing set up of residency and did not wish to be only trained by the hospital but also keep the university's involvement in their study process. It would be advisable that during the residency time students also find and use opportunities to gain practice abroad in other hospitals, this can help to widen the expertise of potential specialists and also create new collaboration between different clinical institutions. Also approaches and ideas gained from abroad can help to improve diagnostic and treatment plans locally and provide ideas for qualification work topics. Universities should encourage and support such activities.
2.2.4. The whole residency study programme is practically oriented towards learning practical skills needed to obtain anamnesis of patients, determine the cause and causality of the symptoms and diseases etc. There is no specific internship in this study programme. Each residency spot is determined by the institution and is filled based on each year's enrollment of new residents from the joined residency process.

2.2.5. N/A

2.2.6. Each resident to continue successfully studies has to do clinically-oriented research work with topics regarding each specific speciality. Students are informed about requirements for the development of the qualification work. University also has taken into account compliance with the Law on the processing of personal data (SAR section 3.2.6. page 450). Topics really vary from specialty to specialty. For example, internal medicine residents are more focused on finding the best

treatment solutions, but family medicine residents are more keen on researching causality of different symptoms and diseases in public health, etc. After the research students have to present and defend their findings, during this process the topicality and relevance of the subject and actual clinical purpose of the research is evaluated. This ensures the quality of the thesis. The grade of these qualification papers vary from 5 to 10 which indicates that scientific work of residents indeed is at different quality levels and topicality is important to achieve better marks. These research activities help to investigate and find better treatment, diagnostic patterns in each specific field of medicine.

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

Conclusions
Each subspeciality of residency is topical and is being prepared as close to international guidelines and standards as it can be taking into account also local legislation, stated by programme director. Study implementation method is based on residents' work in the clinical environment and this brings to overall achievement of learning necessary skills for each speciality. This is being tracked by residents logbook where all the learning progress is being tracked and signed by residents supervisor. During the residency it is recommended to widen student knowledge in experience gained abroad to bring it back to Latvia's health care later on. Topics of residents qualification work are topical for each speciality and are based on real clinical problems and issues that need to be resolved or can be improved.

Strengths:
1. Residents research work in each subspeciality helps to improve the healthcare system by approaching different diagnostic and treatment methods.

Weaknesses:
1. Students are not fully using mobility opportunities to raise their clinical competencies during the residency.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. Residency studies are carried out in medical institutions. The largest number of LU residents is related to P. Stradiņš University Hospital and Riga East University Hospital. University clinics and the main specialized medical institutions are a logical choice, as they are able to provide both the required amount of treatment and highly developed medical technologies, as well as highly qualified specialists who carry out academic work and research. The main clinical training places: clinical university hospitals (P. Stradins University Hospital, Riga East University Hospital and Children University Hospital) and specialized medical institutions (Hospital of traumatology and Orthopedics, Riga Psychiatry and Narcology Center, Department of Emergency medicine, Rehabilitation Center Vaivari), family doctor practices. Each year, the number of students is coordinated with medical

institutions to ensure an appropriate training process. Clinical bases are certified and equipped with all the necessary infrastructure to ensure the treatment process. The LU Residency Development Program in cooperation with medical institutions has purchased equipment for study programs (SAR; p.452 ;Tour of facilities).

2.3.2. N/A

2.3.3. The number of students in the speciality is determined by the human resource planning in the health care sector, which takes into account the number of existing specialists in the country, age parameters (retirement / pre-retirement age), provision of medical institutions and specialists. The number of places financed from the state budget is strictly regulated, it is supervised by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia in accordance with the 685th Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia “Procedures for Admission, Distribution and Financing of Residency” (https://likumi.lv/ta/id/235421-rezidentu-uznemsanas-sadales-un-rezidenturas-finansesanas-kartiba) 9% of the state budget funding remains at the disposal of the University of Latvia, the rest of the funding flow goes to the medical institution with which the employment of the budget resident is concluded when starting studies. The funding received by the medical institution includes the remuneration of not only the resident but also the lecturers for training in the clinical base. By the regulations of the MK No. 685, January 1, 2022, the funding allocated to medical institutions: for the training of residents in the first and second year of residency in the primary specialty does not exceed 37,759.20 euros per calendar year for one resident if the residency takes place in a regional multi-profile hospital,The number of financial resources to be allocated to the medical institutions referred to in sub-paragraph for the training of residents starting from the third year of residency in the main speciality and the first year of residency in the additional speciality and subspeciality shall not exceed EUR 41,154.24 per calendar year per resident in practice outside Riga, and 32,535.72 euros per calendar year per resident, if the residency takes place in another medical 456 institution; The funding of the University of Latvia for one budget resident per year is 1297.68 euros, which in cooperation with P. Stradiņš University Hospital provides a joint subscription fee for the UpToDate database, purchase of technologies necessary for training work organization, promotion of residents' research activities and presentation of its results outside Latvia. The tuition fee remains the same for all speciality programs - 3000.00 euros per year, of which 90% is required for the remuneration of teachers and staff because the peculiarity of residency studies is that one lecturer can teach/supervise no more than 2 residents in practical work at the same time. As residents each study according to an individual plan and cost items are determined by Cabinet Regulation No. 685 and the agreement between the University of Latvia and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia, then the number of students in one study program does not affect the positions of the use of funding. In addition, it should be taken into account that there are special programs for which the number of graduates in the country is limited due to their high specifics (for example, heart surgery, neurosurgery, etc.), so there will never be a large number of students in these programs. Even more - there have been and will be years of study when in some speciality programs no budget place is allocated and there will be no demand for paid study places (SAR; p 456).

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

Conclusions
Residency studies are carried out in medical institutions. The largest number of LU residents is related to P. Stradiņš University Hospital and Riga East University Hospital. University clinics and the main specialized medical institutions are a logical choice, as they are able to provide both the required amount of treatment and highly developed medical technologies, as well as highly qualified specialists who carry out academic work and research.

Strengths:
1. The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning conditions with clinical basis and practical working places with the best teachers as experts in their own field, good equipment, modern technologies; plenty of high quality library resources.

Weaknesses:
1. Insufficient number of state funded places.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning conditions with clinical basis and practical working places with the best teachers as experts in their own field, good equipment, modern technologies; plenty of high quality library resources.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. When the expert commission familiarized itself with SAR and met with the leaders and implementers of the PHERSP Medicine, found out that each subprogram of the speciality is managed by the head of the program, who in most cases is the leading specialist in Latvia in the relevant field, often the head of a Latvian professional association or otherwise a nationally recognized specialist. The head of the program is the one who determines the involvement of other teaching staff in the acquisition of practical skills and theoretical knowledge. Preference is given to the teaching staff of the university or, if there is no corresponding course, the program is implemented by the leading specialist of the clinic or a certified doctor with at least 5 years of work experience in it. Taking into account the fact that training is mostly provided in clinical university hospitals or specialized medical institutions, the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the program is determined by an agreement between LU, the head of the speciality sub-program and the medical institution's delegated person responsible for residency training. The teaching staff is selected on the basis of the possibilities to implement the activities envisaged in the study program in the appropriate medical institution and the compliance of the teaching staff with the requirements of regulatory enactments (SAR, p.456).

2.4.2. The average number of responsible LU lecturers involved in the PHERSP Medicine is 170 (SAR, p.457).
The number of lecturers in each study year may vary slightly, as it depends on the number of residents and their distribution by sub-programs of specialties and medical institutions (SAR, p.457).
During the reporting period, there have been changes among sub-program managers related to the early retirement of 3 program managers, as well as the entry of new and talented teachers into the academic environment. In total, it has affected 4 programs (dermatology, venereology, pneumology, sports medicine, laboratory medicine) (SAR, p.457).
During the reporting period, there is a significant increase in the section on academic indicators of teachers. If in 2013 76 of the lecturers of the residency sub-programs had a doctoral degree in medical sciences, then in 2020 it is 108 lecturers (an increase of 42%). During this period, an increase is also observed in the qualification and academic growth of sub-program managers: an

increase in the number of managers with a PhD degree from 19 to 25 (32%) and an increase in the number of assistant professors, associate professors or professors from 18 to 21 (17%) (SAR, p.457). A positive contribution to the study process is the joining of LU residency graduates to the ranks of lecturers after 5 years of professional activity in the speciality. Special mention may be made of young specialists in dermatology, venereology, cardiology, allergology, endocrinology, anesthesiology and traumatology and orthopaedics. It should be noted that a part of the academic staff purposefully chooses to be the teaching staff of the LU residency programs, due to the high quality and training principles of the LU residency programs. Several lecturers of residency specialities have passed the European professional certificate (Dr.med. Kristīne Baumane, doc. Patrīcija Ivanova). The certificate of the European residency training base was obtained in ophthalmology (LU ophthalmology training base in Biķernieki Hospital in 2020). In turn, several sub-programs correspond to the joint programs of the relevant European association and upon completion of the Latvian residency sub-program, the graduate has the right to obtain a European speciality certificate (for example anesthesiology residency, urology, ophthalmology, vascular surgery) (SAR, p.457).

2.4.3. N/A

2.4.4. Considering that professors and doctors of science are involved in the implementation of the program, the expert commission assumes that the number and quality of their publications is high, although the lecturers' CVs and list of publications cannot be found in SAR.

2.4.5. When the expert commission familiarized itself with SAR and met with the leaders and implementers of the study program, they found that the teaching staff communicates with each other by creating common sections of residency programs, or several residency programs have common lecturers. Residents of different programs share lecture cycles and seminars or study modules.

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

Conclusions
The teaching staff is selected on the basis of the possibilities to implement the activities envisaged in the study program in the appropriate medical institution and the compliance of the teaching staff with the requirements of regulatory enactments. A positive contribution to the study process is the joining of LU residency graduates to the ranks of lecturers after 5 years of professional activity in the speciality. After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the PHERSP Medicine employees, the expert commission concluded that the study program is implemented by highly qualified employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work. Taking into account the specifics of training in medical specialties, specialists with extensive practical experience are involved in the training process.

Strenghts:
1. Highly qualified lecturers, experienced practitioners and good management of the studying process.

Weaknesses:
No remarkable weaknesses.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualifications of the academic staff of the study program meet the conditions for the implementation of the study program and the requirements specified in the relevant regulatory acts.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Second level PHERSP Medicine complies with the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of August 26, 2014 No. 512 “Regulations on the State Standard of the Second Level Professional Higher Education” (Annex 1).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Second level PHERSP Medicine complies with the Professional Standard of Doctors.
Doctor profession standard agreed and approved by the Tripartite Cooperation Sub-Council for Vocational Training and Employment at the meeting on 16 October 2019 (Annex 5).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the study course descriptions for the second level PHERSP Medicine in Latvian language (Annex 3).
The descriptions of the Second level PHERSP Medicine are fully compliant with the requirements set forth in Section 561, Paragraph two and Section 562, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institution, they a. define the requirements for the commencement of the acquisition of the study course; b. determine the aims for the implementation of the study course and the planned learning outcomes; c. outline the content of the study course necessary for the achievement of learning outcomes, contain the study course calendar, mandatory and supplementary literature, indicate other sources of information; d. describe the organization and tasks for the independent work of students; e. determine the evaluation criteria of learning outcomes.
The description of the study module determines: the learning outcomes achievable as a result of the acquisition of the study module; the plan of the study work time; the study courses included in the study module.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of the diploma and its supplement is issued for completing the study programme in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers 16.04.2013. to Regulation No. 202 “Procedures for Issuing State-Recognized Higher Education Certificates”).

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Declaration of the Head of Study Field (Annex Head of Study Field Declaration, 21.04.2021, No. 13), confirming that the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme are proficient in the official language in accordance with the regulations on the level of the official language knowledge and the procedures for testing official language proficiency for performing professional duties and office duties.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Fully compliant with the Law on Higher Education Institutions Section 46, paragraph 2 and regulations of Cabinet of Ministers 23.01.2007. to Regulation No. 70 “Mandatory regulations to be included in the study agreement” (Annex Standard sample of study agreement „Agreement for EU citizens–2021).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Agreement between the University of Latvia and Riga Stradins University) (SAR, Annex Agreement on the implementation of the study programmes), confirming that the students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution or college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The LU has provided the Refund and Compensation Policy Statement, No 1-13/357) (Annex Refund and Compensation Policy), confirming that the students are guaranteed compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme’s license is revoked due to the actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Specialty subprogrammes in the Second level PHERSP Medicine (Annex 1) complies with the requirements specified in other regulatory enactments, related with the specific specialty.

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Second level PHERSP Medicine fully complies with the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other regulatory enactments.

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

General conclusions

The inclusion of the PHERSP Medicine in the study field Health Care is justified and follows from the aim of the given study programme, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the content of the programme and the degree and qualification to be awarded.
The name, code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, learning outcomes and admission requirements of the PHERSP Medicine are interrelated. The duration and scope of the study programme implementation as well as the language of implementation, are reasonable and justified.
The PHERSP Medicine complies with the Cabinet Regulation No. 512 “Regulations on the State Standard for Second Level Professional Higher Education” (dated 26.08.2014.), the Professional Standard of Doctors (Doctor profession standard agreed and approved at the meeting of the Tripartite Cooperation Sub-Council for Vocational Training and Employment on 16 October 2019), Medical Treatment Law, Law On Regulated Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications and Directive of the European Parliament and the Council.
The LU is convinced of the equal competition of graduates of PHERSP Medicine not only in the Latvian but also in the European labor market.
The development of medicine in the state in general and in the university hospital, in particular, is unthinkable without close, mutually oriented cooperation with universities and their academic staff, therefore the position of the hospital for cooperation with the University of Latvia is open and favorable.
The number of students studying in the PHERSP Medicine specialty sub-programmes is determined by human resources planning in the health care sector, which takes into account the number of existing specialists in the country as a whole and is supervised by the LR Ministry of Health in compliance with the provisions No. 685 of the LR Cabinet of Ministers “Procedures for admission, distribution and financing of residency”.
Each subspeciality of residency is topical and is being prepared as close to international guidelines and standards as it can be taking into account also local legislation, stated by programme director.
Study implementation method is based on residents' work in the clinical environment and this brings to overall achievement of learning necessary skills for each speciality. This is being tracked by residents logbook where all the learning progress is being tracked and signed by residents supervisor. During the residency it is recommended to widen student knowledge in experience gained abroad to bring it back to Latvia's health care later on. Topics of residents qualification work are topical for each speciality and are based on real clinical problems and issues that need to be resolved or can be improved.
After getting acquainted with SAR and meeting with the study program employees, the expert commission concluded that the study program is implemented by highly qualified employees with extensive experience in practical and scientific work.

Strengths

1. The LU is convinced of the equal competition of graduates of PHERSP Medicine not only in the Latvian but also in the European labor market.
2. The development of medicine in the state in general and in the university hospital, in particular, is unthinkable without close, mutually oriented cooperation with universities and their academic staff, therefore the position of the hospital for cooperation with the University of Latvia is open and favorable.
3. Residents research work in each subspeciality helps to improve the healthcare system by

approaching different diagnostic and treatment methods.
4. The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning conditions with clinical basis and practical working places with the best teachers as experts in their own field, good equipment, modern technologies; plenty of high quality library resources.
5. Highly qualified lecturers and good management of the studying process.

Weaknesses

1. Students are not fully utilising mobility opportunities during the residency.

Evaluation of the study programme "Medicine"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Medicine"

Short-term recommendations

1. An explanation on the part of the LU would be necessary: why are the learning outcomes of the PHERSP Medicine (50721) equated to Level 7 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF) and not to Level 8 of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF). Maybe it is just a misprint.

Long-term recommendations

1. To increase the students' international mobility during the residency.

II - "Medicine and Pharmacy" ASSESSMENT

II - "Medicine and Pharmacy" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The study programme complies with the study field. SAR page 20 states that study field Health Care aims "to ensure the acquisition of quality education based on high-quality study results, providing graduates with the necessary knowledge, skills and competence, introduction of innovative study process methods and training of highly qualified professionals, graduating from study programmes of that level, preparation of competent professionals, highly demanded in the labour market both in Latvia and abroad, providing the opportunity to obtain a successive education in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework, starting with bachelor's, continuing with master and finishing with doctoral studies.", whilst DSP Medicine & Pharmacy aims "to prepare highly qualified scientists and academic specialists in various fields of medicine and health sciences, so that they can obtain an internationally comparable doctoral degree and master the principles of implementation, organization and management of pedagogical and research work at the highest level." (SAR p. 174).

2.1.2. The title of the programme partly reflects the content of the study programme and is in a partial agreement with the code of the study programme (51721) and the degree to be obtained: Doctorate, Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in basic medical sciences, including pharmacy, or doctoral

degree, doctorate (Ph.D.) in clinical medicine, or Doctorate, Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Health and Sport Sciences, or Doctor of Science, Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in medical biotechnology, or Doctor of Science, Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in other medical and health sciences, including forensic medicine (noteikumi par Latvijas izglītības klasifikāciju: Noteikumi par Latvijas izglītības klasifikāciju (likumi.lv), Annex 14 & Annex 15: Head of Study Field Declaration). The title should be updated in accordance with the extended admissions criteria (SAR p.175). An appropriate title could potentially be Medicine and Health Sciences. Also, from the onsite interview (09.08.2022) with the programme director, it was not clear how well the extended admissions criteria have been planned out and how well and soon they could be implemented. Currently Master's degree in biology, pharmacy, chemistry, nutrition, nursing, professional (second level professional higher education), clinical optometrists can apply for the study programme but not all of these study programmes are under healthcare field (SAR p. 172). No examples were provided that for example an optometrist would be able to enter and complete this doctoral programme. Such approach can be evaluated as positive but university should specify that thesis should be connected to health care field and provide the applicants with the opportunities to complete all parts/training within one programme. If it is impossible, then a mechanism for a collaborative approach between faculties should be proposed and this also should be explained to the potential applicant/student. During the onsite visit (09.08.2022) the programme director explained that potential doctoral students who meet the extended admissions criteria (e.g. graduate from MSP Clinical Optometry) could use the courses provided by the programme but might not be able to undergo the scientific research work under this programme and would most likely have to collaborate with their faculty (e.g. Physics, Mathematics and Optometry), whilst the Optometry department would be very willing for their students to be able to graduate from this programme as mentioned by both Optometry programme leaders during the on-site visit (12.08.2022). A university specific formula has been developed to take into account the previous academic achievements - applicant's research work, such as existing publications, participation in conferences on the topic of the doctoral research, participation in projects and other activities, as well as entrance interviews (SAR p. 176). The admission criteria correspond to the aims and tasks of the programme as well as the learning outcomes as stated in SAR (p. 176-177) and demonstrated by Annex 1: Study Plan, Annex 7: Study Programme Course Descriptors & Annex 8: Mapping of Study Courses. The DSP Medicine & Pharmacy is delivered in accordance with the requirements of the Scientific Law of the Republic of Latvia and is well justified (SAR p. 176-180). However, the 13 results of the programme should be reviewed, summarized and combined so that the total number does not exceed 9 in total (SAR p. 172). The programme is delivered as a full time programme in Latvian language, also planning to extend the delivery in English (SAR p. 175) to meet the requirements for a DSP (SAR p. 176). As discussed with the staff, students, graduates and employers during the on-site visit (09.08.2022), there is an overall satisfaction with the study programme (e.g. content, learning outcomes, degree obtained/to be obtained) and the knowledge of the graduates.

2.1.3. In the new accreditation period the delivery of programme will include the following changes: aim of the study programme, the results of the study programme, changes in the requirements set at the beginning of the programme, language of implementation, degree to be obtained. All the requirements are well justified, except for the “aim of the study programme”. For this criterion only justification given is “the aim of the study program is specified”. This should be revised and a more detailed explanation should be provided - how is the aim more specific (SAR p. 174).

2.1.4. The economic and social need of the programme is well justified. There is a shortage of the highest level specialists in health care (SAR p. 180). The programme stays relevant by keeping up with the trends in the industry and labour market by adapting and updating its content according to the trends. The student enrollment in the programme is described as stable and in line with the

global trends (SAR 180-181). In previous reporting period each year 5-8 students are enrolled and aproximately 3 students graduate each year, for example in 2021 there were 8 new students and 35 were already enrolled in studies. The state funded study places (17 for the whole DSP) are fully filled, the study programme has expressed a wish to increase the state funding for students (SAR p. 181), which would be also recommended by the expert group of this accreditation procedure for the whole study field. The dropout rate has been relatively stable and small (not an exact number has been given) has been mostly linked to individual circumstances (e.g. personal reasons, change of residence country, burnout due to multiple commitments) (SAR p. 181). The annual enrollment meets the minimum requirement for the programme to be profitable as the organizational expenses per student are relatively low (SAR p. 181). Most of the graduates work in academia, research institutes and health care-related institutions (exact number has not been given) (SAR p. 180). However, the increased demand of highly skilled workers and the level of the degree obtained can be seen as a very good indicator for employability.

2.1.5. N/A

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

Conclusions
The indicators describing the programme are well mapped out and in accordance with aims set out by the study field Health Care. The study programme corresponds to the legislation of the Republic of Latvia and aims to prepare the most highly skilled professionals. The enrollment of students in the programme is stable and good and doctors of science are in demand. However the justification provided for the aim of the study programme for the new accreditation period is too vague and should be more specific. Also, the name/title of the programme should be reconsidered due to extended admission criteria to better reflect the content (e.g. Medicine and Health Care). As well as the collaboration with other faculties and how the programme is suitable for prospective students meeting the extended admissions requirements (e.g. master’s degree biology, chemistry, nutrition science, optometry) should be reviewed. During the on-site visit the impression that the expert team got was that the process has not been fully thought through. As it stands currently based on the admissions criteria, the scope of the programme would allow for all the applicants of DSP who meet the extended admissions criteria to complete the programme, and which in turn would encourage collaboration between different branches of health care, something that LU is proud of and strives for. A clear collaborative approach should be proposed on how the prospective students meeting the extended admissions criteria would be able to complete the programme. The results of the programme (13) should be reviewed, summarized and combined so that the total number does not exceed 9. As the most highly skilled professionals are in demand and doctoral studies are challenging as it is (one of the listed reasons for drop out is burnout), state funded places should be increased, as doctoral students should feel supported, motivated and appreciated.

Strengths:
1. A programme that according to the descriptors complies with all the university and the Republic of Latvia regulations and prepares in-demand highly skilled professionals.

Weaknesses:
1. Limited state funded study places (17 for the whole DSP) - this should be increased as doctoral students should feel supported, motivated and appreciated. This is further supported by the fact that one of the reasons for dropout has been listed as burnout due to multiple commitments. This is an overall recommendation for the study field.
2. Programme extended admissions requirements should be reviewed. During the on-site visit the

impression that the expert team got was that the process has not been fully thought through.
3. The results of the programme are too extensive. They should be reviewed, summarized and combined so that the total number does not exceed 9.
4. The justification of the aims of the programme in the SAR (p. 174) is insufficient and should be updated - the question: “How is the aim specific?” should be answered.
5. Also, the name/title of the programme should be reconsidered due to extended admission criteria to better reflect the content.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. The doctoral study programme Medicine and Pharmacy (51721) is based on scientific research divided in two huge branches - clinical research and other medical base sciences. The most CP in this study programme are allocated to develop doctoral thesis and carry out the research work. Therefore study content is structured in a manner to provide students with the possibility to demonstrate their knowledge on independently choosing and evaluating methods for research. To achieve study programme learning outcomes, additional study courses are provided to help students write publications, grant applications, and communicate with the society etc. Academic staff that is involved in implementation of the study programme ensures that needs of industry and scientific trends are met with research work that is carried out by doctoral students. To raise doctoral student qualification even more, networking and searching for new partners that may be beneficial for the defense, university may consider encouraging students to go on short term exchanges.

2.2.2. Awarding of a doctoral degree in the field of basic medical sciences (Doctorate, PhD) or in clinical medicine is based on relevant findings and achievements in the fields of pharmacy and medicine. According to the site visit interviews with students, graduates and staff members experts concluded that students are benefiting from highly qualified staff and supervisors that are involved in local and international projects. This gives a lot of place for artistic creation in terms of scientific research topics.
2.2.3. The organization of doctoral studies is mostly based on the independence of doctoral students. Successful completion of studies must have passed the examinations in the compulsory study courses. Doctoral students can bring a student-centered approach into the study process when they are involved in the development of the study programmes and their improvement. Study courses are designed to help doctoral students overcome common issues such as - publication writing, start of pedagogical work, time management etc. Based on student surveys some changes to the study course composition has been introduced to the syllabus (SAR section 3.2.3. page 187).

2.2.4. N/A

2.2.5. During the interviews with doctoral students experts found out that they are informed about how to start the promotion process and what has to be done during the doctoral studies. Students need at least 3 reviewed publications with at least one in an international journal (SAR section 3.2.6. page 191). Doctoral study programme Medicine and Pharmacy is affiliated with the LU MF Promotion Council “LU Promotion Council in the fields of medicine and health sciences”. The term of office of the Council is confirmed until 27.12.2024. The promotion process is organized in accordance with the regulations of the Promotion Council, which have been approved at the meeting of the Council of the Faculty of Medicine.

2.2.6. Most doctoral theses are developed on the basis of clinical Hospitals in Riga (during last

accreditation period in total 19), another part has been done in collaboration with institutes such as the Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis (OSI) or the Biomedical Research and Study Center. These partners are leading research places in Latvia for clinical and pre-clinical research, therefore experts conclude that student theses are topical, they follow trends and novelties in the healthcare industry and bring additional knowledge to the field. There is also huge interest from students to enter this study programme which is supported by student statistics - on average 8 students enrolled each year and approximately 5 students graduating successfully each year ensure continuity of bringing research into the field.

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

Conclusions
Doctoral study programme Medicine and Pharmacy is a well enough developed study programme that thrives to achieve main outcome - prepare young researchers for their research or academic careers. The overall student amount that each year successfully defends the thesis is also satisfactory and ensures renewal of academic staff. Study courses complement each other and encourage students to successfully finish study programmes with the starting promotion process. Thesis developed are in close relation with leading institutes and clinical hospitals in research areas in Latvia.

Strengths:
1. Study programme ensures a successful defense of doctoral theses.

Weaknesses:
None found.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Doctoral degrees obtained are based on the novelties and findings in health care field.

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. The development of doctoral theses takes place in the laboratories of Medicine, Biology and other faculties, as well as in the scientific institutes of the LU - the Institute of Clinical and Preventive Medicine of the LU, the Institute of Cardiology and Regenerative Medicine of the LU. Medicine and Pharmacy dissertations are developed in the structural units of the LU, for example, the Department of Pathology, the Department of Pharmacology, the group of lecturers of Biochemistry, the Department of Surgery, the Department of Internal Medicine, groups of professors of Pharmacy, etc. For example, the Department of Pathology has a separate laboratory room for immunohistochemical and immunocytochemical staining of tissues and cells, ELISA method, Western Blot method, and microscopes are available. The Department of Pharmacology has a cell room for working with cell cultures, there is also a facility for in vivo studies of animal behavior with video recording and computer program processingLiterature available in the library for the implementation of the DSP. The LU Library increases the share of e-resources and develops remote access to e-resources to provide users with the ability to use resources remotely. LU subscribes to 34 e-resource platforms

(which 193 includes e-books, e-journals, reference resources, tools, multimedia, statistics, and mixed-format databases). They contain 17,592 full-text e-journals (including individual subscriptions), 2.5 million full-text world dissertations and master's theses, 4 statistical databases, 2 research tools, 9 reference databases, and 2 research platforms. LU has 122 tested open access databases with multi-format materials. Every year, the Library offers users an average of 110 new electronic resources. The following e-resources subscribed to by the library in the medical and health care sciences are available to PhD students: ClinicalKey, EBSCO Databases in Medicine, AHFS Consumer Medication Information, MEDLINE, Health Source: Nursing / Academic Edition, UpToDate, EBSCO Academic Search Complete, Emerald eJournals Premier, Oxford Journals , SAGE Journals Online, SAGE Research Methods, ScienceDirect, Scopus, Web of Science.Infrastructure and material and technical support for the DSP are implemented as in the premises of the Faculty of Medicine (SAR, p.193).

2.3.2. The development of doctoral theses takes place not only within LU, but also in hospitals and other institutions related to health care, as well as in scientific institutes, mostly in the current or future workplaces of doctoral students. Within the framework of DSP Medicine and Pharmacy, the closest cooperation contacts have been established with three University hospitals and other hospitals such as Maritime Medicine Center, Hospital of Traumatology and Orthopaedic, LU Institute of Clinical and Preventive Medicine, LU Institute of Cardiology and Regenerative Medicine, LU Institute of Biology, Latvian Biomedical Research and Study Center and Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis. In all the mentioned hospitals and institutes it is possible to collect material for dissertation work and / or use laboratories and technologies. The research carried out in the laboratories of the University of Latvia takes place mainly in the basic sciences of medicine, but clinical research is not conceivable without the participation of hospitals (SAR; p 195).

2.3.3. Every year, the University of Latvia allocates funds for the scientific work of the doctoral study program and the purchase of equipment. The Study program director is responsible for the distribution of financial resources in the Doctoral study program. The program director plans the financial use for each year. Further, the plan is approved by the dean of the faculty and it is submitted to the Academic Department of the University of Latvia. The use of funds is controlled by the Executive Director of the Faculty and the Planning and Finance Department of the University of Latvia. In 2020, the Ministry of Education and Science has allocated EUR 151258 from the budget, of which EUR 32878 is intended for development, for example, for the purchase of equipment. If the doctoral student starts studies for personal funding, the tuition fee is 2400 EUR per year. In order to ensure the profitability of DSP Medicine and Pharmacy, the minimum number of students is 10 (SAR , p.197) and now the number of students is sufficient (SAR, Annex:Statistical data on students of DSP Medicine and Pharmacy).

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

Conclusion
Excellent study conditions, both in terms of facilities and equipment and the availability of reference materials and library resources for education and research. There is an interdisciplinary approach and good cooperation with the scientific institutes of the LU and hospitals and other institutions related to health care.

Strengths:
1. The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning and researching conditions with modern equipment, technologies, scientific resources and international approach.

Weaknesses:
None found.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Excellent study conditions, both in terms of facilities and equipment and the availability of reference materials and literary resources for education and research. There is interdisciplinary approach and good cooperation with the scientific institutes of the LU and hospitals and other institutions related to health care.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. The qualification of the teaching staff involved in the implementation and delivery of the DSP Medicine & Pharmacy complies with all the regulations (e.g. Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions) and “the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses” (SAR p. 198, Table 3.4.3.2. p. 201, Annex 14: Head of Study Field Declaration & Annex 15: Head of Study Field Declaration (Table 3.4.1.1. on page 198 would also be helpful but is missing)). The DSP has also implemented several programme-specific criteria in the selection process for their staff members (SAR p. 198), as well as the staff is actively involved in research projects and other scientific activities (SAR p. 198).

2.4.2. The staff changes in the reporting period have not negatively affected the teaching quality (SAR p.199) as they are highly qualified and acknowledged specialists and experts in their field, and are in accordance with all requirements (SAR p.199, Annex 14: Head of Study Field Declaration & Annex 15: Head of Study Field Declaration). The staff changes and numbers are dictated by the research interests of the doctoral students, which is specific to all DSP. At the time of submission of SAR, there are 22 supervisors involved in the DSP (SAR 198). New staff members have joined and new lecture courses have been successfully delivered (SAR p. 199). Staff/supervisors have to fulfill requirements in order to be able to supervise a doctoral student (e.g. 3 publications in the last 2 years). During the on-site visit (09.08.2022) the staff confirmed that they undergo in-service training and are familiar with the requirements.

2.4.3. As demonstrated by the summary of publications on page 200 in SAR as well as the list of examples (SAR p. 200-201), “the scientific publications and the involvement in research- related projects of the academic staff involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programmes contribute to the implementation of a high-quality doctoral study programme”. A trend of increasing level in publication output by the programme staff can be seen (SAR. p. 200-207, Section 3.4.4. p. 207-208), which is encouraging.

2.4.4. All staff members involved in the programme meet the set criteria (SAR p. 201-203, Annex 14: Head of Study Field Declaration & 15: Head of Study Field Declaration, Annex II - Description of the Study Field - 2.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation: List of the publications, patents, and artistic creations of the teaching staff over the reporting period), however, this conclusion can be

made by viewing the list provided by the Study Field, not the summary provided by the DSP Medicine & Pharmacy. This is cumbersome and should be reconsidered for the next reporting period, for example, both Optometry programmes have included the staff CVs with the list of publications in the reporting period or other applicable relevant experience. Also, English language skills of each staff member have not been listed and should be improved as the language for programme delivery has also been extended to English language.

2.4.5. The mechanism of mutual cooperation of the teaching staff in the implementation of the study programme has been established (SAR p. 209). The varied background of teaching staff (doctoral degrees and medical degrees in various disciplines) has been deemed a great advantage, alongside the cooperation between different faculties and the multidisciplinary approach of the LU, both in delivery of study courses and scientific activities (SAR p. 209). As such, intra- and inter-faculty cooperation and collaboration has been ensured. During the on-site visit (08.08.2022 and 09.08.2022) the HEI management, staff and students confirmed and were able to clearly outline how the collaboration and the interdisciplinarity functions and the core of the university's teaching approach.

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

Conclusions
The DSP Medicine & Pharmacy fulfills all the applicable descriptors for teaching staff in this category. The staff are qualified and knowledgeable. Intra- and inter-faculty collaboration is ensured and enabled. The staff members are engaged in scientific and professional activities. The DSP has university and programme specific requirements for staff recruitment and suitability. It should be reconsidered how scientific publications per staff member are presented in the report and annexes for the next reporting period.

Strengths:
1. Qualified and knowledgeable staff with multidisciplinary background, intra- and inter-collaboration within faculty and university.

Weaknesses:
1. English language skills of each staff member have not been listed and should be improved as the language for programme delivery has also been extended to English language. This is a general recommendation for the whole study field.
2. Not a weakness, however, how the individual scientific publication requirement is met, should be updated. Academic staff publication list could be deducted only from Study field list.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LU has provided Annex 14: Head of Study Field Declaration & Annex 15: Head of Study Field Declaration and further details have been provided in the DSP “Medicine & Pharmacy” SAR.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Study course descriptions are well prepared in both Latvian and English languages and almost all information based on requirements from law of Higher Education Institutions are included. Study course descriptions do not contain information about the study course director (creator) and staff members that are responsible for implementation of the course. This deficiency has to be eliminated on a short term basis, nevertheless this deficiency is not important enough to decrease the evaluation as partially compliant.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Diploma and diploma supplement complies with the Cabinet of Ministers 18.04.2013 regulations No. 202. See annex:11_pielikums_FarmM_Diploma_pielikums_lv

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

University has provided confirmation that staff complies with the requirements set forth in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions. See annex: 14.pielikums_DSP atbilstiba AL 55.pantam_LV.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

University has provided approval (06.07.2017. No 1.10/18 from Council for Higher Education) to implement academic study programme Pharmacy with less than 250 students. See annex: 13.pielikums_DSP_AIP atzinums_LV.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

According to SAR section 3.4.1. page 185 There are more than 30 staff members with PhD degree involved in the study programme implementation and have expert status in Latvian Council of Science. Additionally, university has provided approval that at least five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree are among the academic staff of an academic doctoral study programme, at least three of which are experts approved by the Latvian Science Council in the respective field of science. See annex: 15.pielikums_DSP_apliecinajums par LZP_LV.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Study field director has provided confirmation that academic staff members have proficient in the Latvian language. See annex: Apliecinājumi par Valsts Valodas zināšanām.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Study field director has provided confirmation that academic staff members have at least B2 knowledge level of the English language. See annex: Apliecinājumi par Angļu valodas prasmēm. Because the study programme delivery has also been extended to international students, thus English language skill courses for the academic staff members would be beneficial.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement. In accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers No. 70. See annex: Ligums_ES_pilsoniem_2021

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

LU has provided confirmation that students will be provided with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme in Riga Stradins university doctoral study programme Medicine and Pharmacy. See annex:Vienošanās_LU_RSU_Ārsti_Māsas_farmceiti_radiografi.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The University of Latvia has provided confirmation that students are guaranteed compensation for losses in case study fields are not accredited. See annex: APLIECINĀJUMS_DSP_Medicina_Farmācija.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

N/A

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

All legislation requirements are fulfilled.

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

General conclusions

Only few small deficiencies were found for this study programme. The aims of the study programme are clearly defined, achievable, regarding learning outcomes it is recommended to reduce learning outcome amount to 5-9. Study programme duration is enough to finish and obtain doctoral degree. Considering that different Health care study programme students can apply for the studies the title of doctoral programme should be reconsidered due to extended admission criteria to better reflect the content and represent all possible applicants. More detailed admission requirements should be set for each study programme that students can apply from. If possible, universities should use their position in Latvia’s higher education system and demand more doctoral state funded places to support and boost students' interest in doctoral studies. The overall student amount that each year successfully defends the thesis is also satisfactory and ensures renewal of academic staff. Thesis developed are in close relation with leading institutes and clinical hospitals in research areas in Latvia. Therefore they are relevant to the industry and bring novelties in the health care research field. Mobility opportunities always can be improved and encouraged more to raise student awareness of how research is done in different HEI or organizations abroad. The DSP fulfills all the applicable descriptors for teaching staff in this category. The staff are qualified and knowledgeable. There is an interdisciplinary approach and good cooperation with the scientific institutes of the LU and hospitals and other institutions related to health care. There is a strong market for the doctoral degree holders, due to lack of qualified academics in Latvian universities but also in industry and state regulatory bodies regarding health care.

Strengths

1. A programme that according to the descriptors complies with all the university and the Republic of Latvia regulations and prepares in-demand highly skilled professionals.
2. Study programme ensures a successful defense of doctoral theses.
3. The interdisciplinary approach and excellent learning and researching conditions with modern equipment, technologies, scientific resources and international approach.
4. Qualified and knowledgeable staff with multidisciplinary background, intra- and inter-collaboration within faculty and university.

Weaknesses

1. English language skills of each staff member have not been listed and should be improved as the language for programme delivery has also been extended to English language. This is a general recommendation for the whole study field.
2. How the individual scientific publication requirement is met, should be updated.
3. Limited state funded study places (17 for the whole DSP) - this should be increased as doctoral students should feel supported, motivated and appreciated. This is further supported by the fact that one of the reasons for dropout has been listed as burnout due to multiple commitments. This is an overall recommendation for the study field.
4. The collaboration between different faculties and the extended admissions requirements should be reviewed. During the on-site visit the impression that the expert team got was that the process has not been fully thought through.
5. The results of the programme are too extensive. They should be reviewed, summarized and combined so that the total number does not exceed 9.
6. These are not particular weaknesses per se have been identified according to the descriptors. However, the justification of the aims of the programme in the SAR (p. 174) is insufficient and should be updated - the question: “How is the aim specific?” should be answered.
7. Also, the name/title of the programme should be reconsidered due to extended admission criteria to better reflect the content.

Evaluation of the study programme "Medicine and Pharmacy"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Medicine and Pharmacy"

Short-term recommendations

1. Specify admission process and requirements for each applicant from different possible study programmes indicated in admission requirements (SAR page 172).
2. The results of the programme are too extensive. They should be reviewed, summarized and combined so that the total number does not exceed 9.

Long-term recommendations

1. English language skills of each staff member have not been listed and should be improved as the language for programme delivery has also been extended to English language. For example, provide language skill courses for the staff members.

2. For the next accreditation period develop a system to indicate the individual scientific publication requirement is met for each staff member.
3. Open debate with Ministries to raise state founded places for doctoral students. This is crucial to ensure continuity of Latvia's health care system.
4. The justification of the aims of the programme in the SAR (p. 174) is insufficient and should be updated - the question: “How is the aim specific?” should be answered.
5. The name of the programme should be reconsidered due to extended admission criteria to better reflect the content, for example Health care doctoral studies.

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

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

Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation			Comment
R1 - Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 2.1 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field whilst implementing its internal quality assurance system:	Fully compliant			All criteria are fully compliant, LU is ensuring continuous development and improvement of study field and study programmes based on data obtained and analyzed from all stakeholders.

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation	Comment
R2 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the level of development of scientific research and artistic creation (if applicable)	Fully compliant	Scientific research implemented in the Health Care study field is compliant with the required level of development of scientific research in the different level Health care study programmes implemented in the LU. It is justified by the compliance of the learning outcomes with the requirements of EQF, active involvement of the teaching staff and students in the international scientific projects, implementation of the outcomes of the latest scientific research in the study process and complying with the needs of industry and society. The students of the different study programmes confirm they are sufficiently involved in the scientific research, it leads them to get engaged in the study process and continue their studies in the doctoral study programmes.
R3 - The cooperation implemented within the study field with various Latvian and foreign organizations ensures the achievement of the aims of the study field.	Fully compliant	Cooperation and internationalization are well developed in the field of study, however, could wish for more outgoing mobility among students and teachers (Annex: Teaching staff un general staff MOBILITY in the study field Health Care (outgoing)).
R4 - Elimination of deficiencies and shortcomings identified in the previous assessment of the study field, if any, or implementation of the recommendations provided.	Fully compliant	The recommendations received during the previous assessment procedures have been sufficiently implemented and some long term recommendations are in the process of implementation.

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

No.	Study programme	R5	R6	R7	R8	Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)

No.	Study programme	R5	R6	R7	R8	Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)
1	Radiography (42722)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
2	Nursing (42723)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Average
3	Optometry (43722)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
4	Pharmacy (43725)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
5	Nutrition Science (45722)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
6	Nurse Studies (45723)	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
7	Pharmacy (45725)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
8	Epidemiology and Medical Statistics (45726)	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
9	Sports Science (45813)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
10	Clinical Optometry (47722)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
11	Medicine (49721)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
12	Dentistry (49724)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
13	Medicine (50721)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good

No.	Study programme	R5	R6	R7	R8	Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)
14	Medicine and Pharmacy (51721)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good

The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts

Recommendation for the AMSP Sport Science (expert I. Kaminska)
Taking into account that the third, fourth and fifth digits of the programme code (813) according to the Cabinet Regulations No. 322 “Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia” (June 13, 2017; Annex 4) correspond to the group of education programmes Sports, we suggest reconsidering the change of the name of the study programme, by expanding it, and thus changing also the code of the programme so that the programme corresponds to the study field Health Care not only in terms of its content, but also in terms of the code. Some of the program title options could be: Integrated Sports, Movement and Health Sciences or Health, Exercise and Sport Sciences. Presumably, the expanded name would also be more attractive to a larger number of potential students who are interested not only in sports as a professional sport, but also in health and related trends. Therefore, the third, fourth and fifth digits of the programme code could be “726”, which correspond to the group of educational programmes Public Health. Especially if one takes into account the aim of the AMSP Sports Science, which is as follows: “To provide students with the opportunity to study, analyze and develop the beneficial aspects of sports and physical activities – physical, mental, emotional and social, which improve the health and quality of life of all individuals, from children and young people to seniors, from patients with serious pathologies to professional high-achieving sports athletes,...”, where it is indicated that the programme provides an opportunity to acquire knowledge not only about sports, but also about physical activity and quality of life for all individuals (from children to seniors, from patients with serious pathologies to professional athletes).

Recommendation for Quality Assurance (1.2. Efficacy of the Internal Quality Assurance System, Section 1.2.1.) - experts M. Zvirgzdina & R. Serzants
During the onsite meeting with the study field director (11.08.2022) he described his role as strategic. He was very knowledgeable, a pleasure to interact with and could answer most of the expert questions, but more from the perspective of his study programme. LU study field Health Care is a wide study field consisting of 14 study programmes; therefore, the role of study field director should be the main appointment of the appointed individual. The university should consider employing a study field director who oversees the study field and is more involved in each study programme within the study field and for the time of their appointment only have the duties of leading the study field and might be involved in research activity and some teaching. This would help to enhance the quality of QA system and for the appointed person to focus of the development, direction and achievements of the study field.