

## APPLICATION

Study field "Sociology, Political Science, and Anthropology" for assessment

Study field	<i>Sociology, Political Science, and Anthropology</i>
Title of the higher education institution	<i>Latvijas Universitāte</i>
Registration code	<i>3341000218</i>
Legal address	<i>RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050</i>
Phone number	<i>67034301</i>
E-mail	<i>lu@lu.lv</i>

# **Self-evaluation report**

Study field "Sociology, Political Science, and Anthropology"

University of Latvia

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# 1. Information on the Higher Education Institution/College

## 1.1. Basic information on the higher education institution/ college and its strategic development fields,.

The University of Latvia (hereinafter – UL) was founded in 1919 and is the only classical university in Latvia. The University of Latvia is a university of science, incorporating and developing the country's main study and scientific research potential in the field of humanities, natural, technical, and social sciences. The UL serves science and fatherland. By participating in worldwide research and educational processes, it contributes to the growth and sustainability of the Latvian state and nation. UL retains its status as the largest higher education institution (hereinafter – HEI) in the country in terms of the number of students.

**Mission:** The mission of the UL is expressed in its *motto Scientiae et Patriae* (For Science and Fatherland). The UL contributes to global science, higher education, knowledge, technology transfer and innovation, and ensures the growth of Latvian democracy and culture, the development of the Latvian language and the prosperity of the national economy.

**Vision:** Space for excellence, environment for development, time for responsibility. The UL is a university of science of high international standing. The UL creates an interdisciplinary, open and innovation-oriented, excellent work and study environment. The activities of the University of Latvia form the basis for the sustainable development and economic transformation of the Republic of Latvia.

### Values:

- University community;
- Excellence;
- Science-based development;
- Openness;
- Cooperation;
- Academic freedom.

The UL plays an important role not only in the development of the higher education system in Latvia, but also in the growth of the country's economy, providing cutting edge studies and research, based on the unity of higher education and science. The UL actively participates in solving topical problems of the state and society, and is the centre of intellectual life in Latvia, where new knowledge is created, while nurturing the national language, culture and promoting the development of the state and society. The University of Latvia focuses its efforts on providing quality studies and developing scientific excellence, creating structures open to interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research and studies, ensuring a high return on invested resources, sustainable and environmentally friendly use of resources. The UL is evolving as a modern international academic centre, creating an environment and infrastructure for excellence in studies, research, and innovation.

The study process at the University of Latvia is implemented at [13 faculties](#), [7 regional branches](#) (available only in Latvian) and [3 medical colleges](#). Research activities are also performed at [18 research institutes](#), and various research, training and consulting activities are conducted in [27 study centres](#). The UL [Regional Centre](#) (available only in Latvian) coordinates and supervises the activities of the UL regional branches, as well as promotes cooperation between the UL and local

authorities in the fields of human resources development, education and interdisciplinary research. The UL has more than [200 bilateral cooperation agreements with universities in 51 countries](#). The [UL Culture Centre](#) (available only in Latvian) is represented by more than 20 amateur arts groups - choirs, dance groups, vocal ensembles, early music ensembles, theatre, a brass band, and a ceramics studio. The [UL Sports Centre](#) organises UL sports activities for up to 40 different sports classes in 11 sports – basketball, wrestling, group fitness classes, football, floorball, table tennis, kendo, general fitness, volleyball, cheerleading and self-defence. The activities of the UL are also performed by the [Museum of the UL](#), the [UL Botanical Garden](#), the [UL Experimental Rhododendron Breeding Nursery "Babiĕ"](#), the [University of Latvia Press](#), and the [UL Baldone Observatory](#) (available only in Latvian). The [UL Foundation](#) and the [Alumni Club](#) (available only in Latvian) have also been operating successfully.

As of 1 October 2022, the UL has 3 087 employees, including 1 396 the UL academic staff and 1 691 the UL general staff. The UL financial performance is characterised by a turnover of EUR 98 million. The University's EUR 135 million equity represents 69% of total assets. The main activities of the University take place in Riga, at 19 Raina Boulevard and the UL Academic Centre in Tornkalns, as well as in several locations in Riga and in the UL regional branches in Aluksne, Bauska, Cesis, Jekabpils, Kuldīga, Madona and Tukums.

In the *Times Higher Education World University Ranking* for excellence in science, LU is ranked 482<sup>nd</sup>, with an overall ranking of 800-1000 (2022).

The UL offers study programmes at all levels, covering 28 branches of science and 22 study fields. The UL faculties offer 140 study programmes. See Table 1.1.1. for the fields of study, the number of study programmes and the accreditation periods.

**Table 1.1.1.**

***Study fields, number of study programmes and accreditation periods (01.11.2022.)***

No	Study fields	Number of study programmes	Accreditation period
1.	Architecture and Construction	1	08.06.2022-09.06.2028.
2.	Life Sciences	3	29.05.2013-31.12.2023.
3.	Economics	8	08.09.2021-09.09.2027.
4.	Physics, Materials Science, Mathematics and Statistics	7	29.05.2013-31.12.2023.
5.	Geography and Earth Sciences	6	24.04.2017-24.04.2023.
6.	Information Technology, Computer Engineering, Electronics, Telecommunications, Computer Management, and Computer Science	5	29.05.2013-22.08.2023.
7.	Internal Security and Civil defence	3	05.06.2013-31.12.2024.

8.	Information and Communication Sciences	5	16.06.2021-17.06.2023.
9.	Education, Pedagogy and Sports	24	12.06.2013-31.12.2024.
10.	Chemistry, Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology	3	24.05.2013-31.12.2023.
11.	Arts	1	24.11.2021-25.11.2027.
12.	Psychology	3	21.06.2019-21.06.2025.
13.	Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology	9	12.06.2013-31.12.2024.
14.	Social Welfare	2	14.09.2022-13.09.2028
15.	Religion and Theology	3	22.05.2013-31.12.2023.
16.	Law	4	21.06.2019-21.06.2025.
17.	Translation	2	14.05.2013-31.12.2024.
18.	Management, Administration and Real Estate Management	8	29.09.2021-30.09.2027.
19.	Language and Culture studies, Native Language Studies and Language Programmes	21	26.06.2013-31.12.2024.
20.	Healthcare	13	31.05.2013-31.12.2022.
21.	History and Philosophy	6	24.05.2013-31.12.2023.
22.	Environmental Protection	3	05.06.2013-31.12.2024.

The UL study programmes in several fields of study are also available in seven UL branches located in the regions of Latvia. In the academic year 2022/2023, 7 different study programmes in 2 study fields, ranging from short cycle professional higher education study programmes, professional bachelor study programmes to master's study programmes, are being implemented in the regional branches. See Table 1.1.2. for the number of study fields and study programmes in the regional branches.

**Table 1.1.2.**

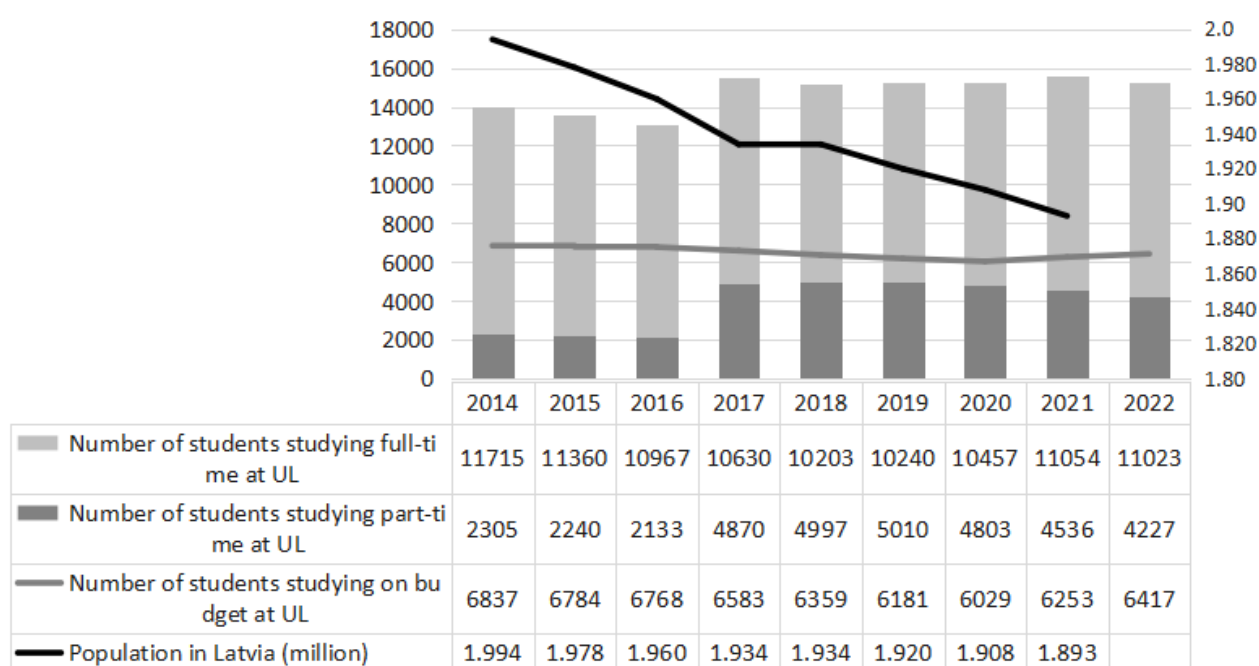
***Number of study fields and study programmes implemented in the regional branches of the University of Latvia, data as of 2022***



Regional branches	Aluksne (founded 1997)	Bauska (founded 1997)	Cesis (founded 1995)	Jekabpils (founded 1996)	Kuldiga (founded 1996)	Madona (founded 1997)	Tukums (founded 1996)
Number of study fields	2	2	2	1	2	1	1
Number of study programmes	4	4	6	5	7	2	5
Number of students	80	194	480	131	298	74	316

As of 1 October 2021, the total number of students studying at the UL is 15 250, 42% of whom are financed from the state budget. Around 10% of students study at the UL regional branches. In total, almost five thousand new students are enrolled every year. See trends of the number of students over a period of nine years in Fig. 1.1.1..

**Fig. 1.1.1.** Number of students at the University of Latvia against the population of Latvia, 2014-2022



The UL medium-term development strategy for the period from 2021 to 2027 ([the UL Strategy 2021-2027](#) in Latvian and English) was approved on June 28, 2021, by the Senate decision No 2-3/90. With the cooperation of the involved parties and the analysis of the national and international competitiveness of the University of Latvia, the mission of the UL has been revised and strategic goals have been defined in six development directions - three in each - in the core business and institutional areas. Development goals have been set for science, studies, public education, as well as in the domains of staff and organisational culture, environment, and governance. *The UL Strategy 2021-2027* envisages the further development of the UL as an internationally recognised science centre, the development of unique study and lifelong learning programmes, as well as the offer of competitive working and study conditions. The UL continues the work initiated in the previous strategic period to achieve the highest level of scientific excellence, as well as to promote student-oriented studies and develop a modern study environment. The involvement and

contribution of the UL to the society of Latvia is being purposefully promoted. The UL is improving the working conditions and environment necessary for talent development. Sustainable growth is playing an increasingly important role and is becoming a cross-cutting principle in all its areas of activity. Significant attention is paid to ensuring academic integrity and strengthening the value-oriented organisational culture of the UL. See Table X for the current strategic goals and development directions of the UL.

**Table X**

*The UL Strategic Goals Map, 2021-2027*

Development directions (D)	Strategic goals (G)
<b>DEVELOPMENT OF PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES</b>	
1.D. Scientific excellence	1.G. Internationally recognized research university
2.D. Development of studies	2.G. Unique study offer and high competitiveness of graduates
3.D. Contribution to society	3.G. University activities as a basis for the growth of Latvia
<b>INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	
4.D. Talent development	4.G. Development- and excellence-oriented HR policy
5.D. Environment and governance	5.G. Green thinking, attractive, sustainable university environment, and effective administrative support
6.D. Organisational culture	6.G. Inclusive, cooperation- and innovation-focused culture

The outcomes of the implementation of *the UL Strategy 2021-2027* will be measured by twenty-one performance indicators, five of which have been designated as *the UL Key Performance Indicators*. They are – research funding from foreign sources per full-time equivalent of academic staff in EUR, co-publications with foreign partners in *Scopus* and *Web of Science* databases (%), the percentage of graduates who are satisfied (rated at least "good") with the quality of their studies (%); the percentage of foreign students at UL (%), as well as the commercialisation revenue (EUR/thousands).

**1.2. Description of the management structure of the higher education institution/ college, the main institutions involved in the decision-making process, their composition (percentage depending on the position, for instance, the academic staff, administrative staff members, students), and the powers of these institutions.**

The main decision-making institutions of the University are the Constitutional Assembly, the Senate, the Council, the Rector, and the Academic Arbitration Court. See Table X.

Table 1.2.1.

*Terms of election, representation, and terms of office of the main decision-making bodies of the UL*

	Term of election	Total number of participants	Academic staff representation	General staff representation	Student representation
Constitutional Assembly	3 years	200	65%	10%	25%
University Council	4 years	11	45.5%		
Senate	3 years	50	76%	4%	20%
Rector	4 years	1	100%		
Academic Arbitration	3 years	5	80%		20%

For information on main decision-making institutions of the UL, its composition and competence, see Section 1.2 of the *UL Quality Management Handbook*. (*The Quality Management Handbook* is available in the section *Other Attachments*)

The governance structure of the UL: [LV](#), [ENG](#)

### **1.3. Description of the mechanism for the implementation of the quality policy and the procedures for the assurance of the quality of higher education. Description of the stakeholders involved in the development and improvement of the quality assurance system and their role in these processes.**

The [Quality Policy](#) and the resulting [Quality Action Policy](#) are a set of quality-related principles, objectives and the actions necessary for their achievement. The UL quality is defined as a measure of excellence, which characterises the ability to meet and exceed the visible and future needs of the involved parties, as well as to ensure the compliance of processes with the requirements of the relevant science branch, and international standards recognised in the organisation management.

**The quality management system of the UL** is implemented in accordance with the principles of the *Total Quality Management* (TQM), integrating the approach of excellence into the corporate culture of the University. For the implementation of TQM, the UL uses an internationally recognised and practically applicable quality management methodology – the *European Foundation of Quality Management* (EFQM) *Excellence Model*. The quality management system is enhanced in the core activities areas by developing internal quality assurance systems integrated into the quality management system and based on current sectoral standards and frameworks. The internationally recognised *Results-Approach-Deployment-Assessment-and-Refine* (RADAR) methodology is used

to ensure the cycle and continuity of quality management at the UL, and the *Plan-Do-Check-Act* (PDCA) approach is used in quality assurance systems.

**Fig.1.3.1.** *Hierarchy of the Quality Policy and Action Policies at the University of Latvia*

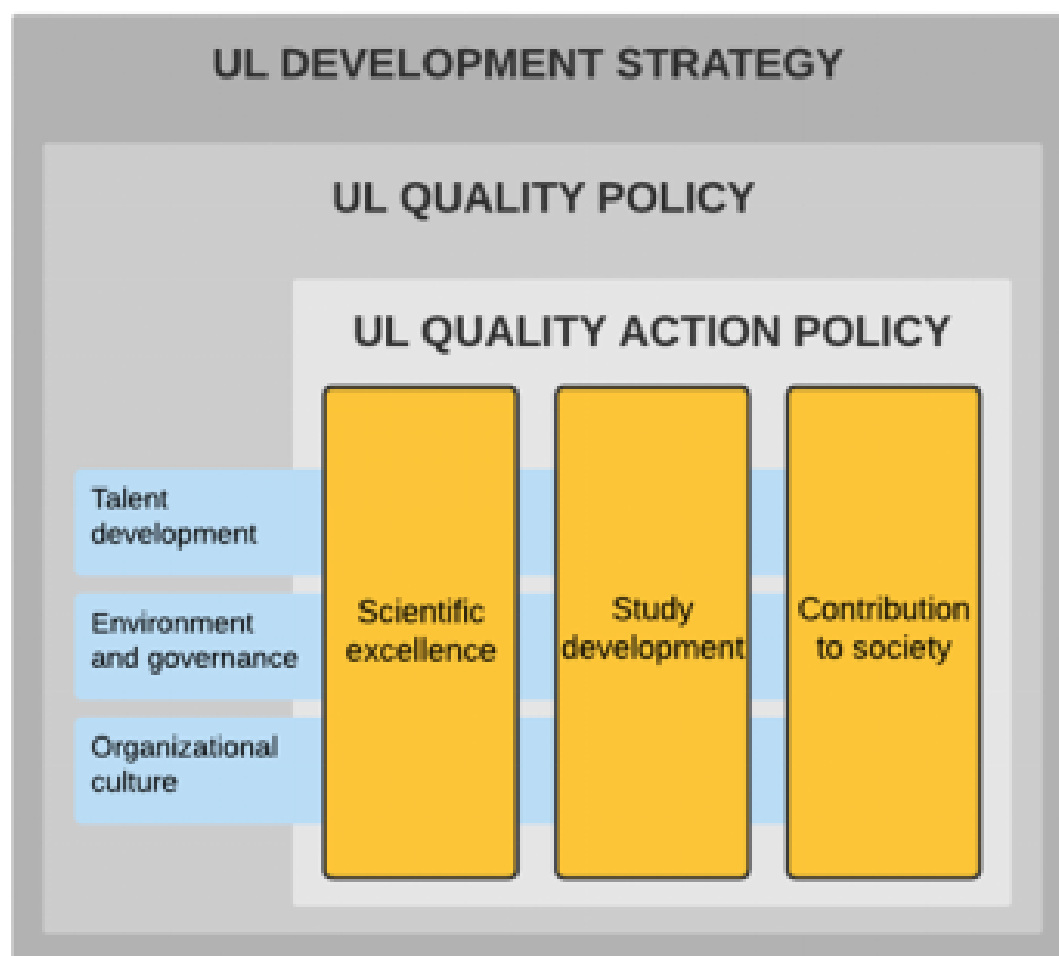
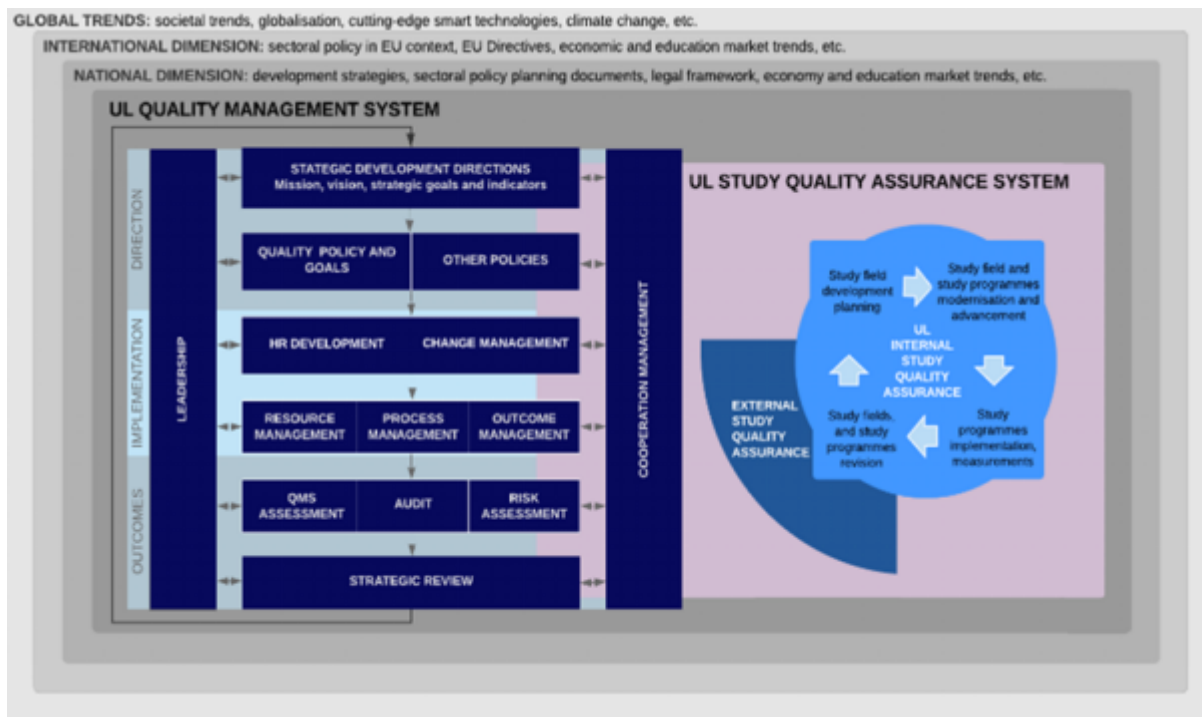


Figure 1.3.2. provides a diagram of a quality management system with an integrated quality assurance system for studies. For a more detailed description of the *UL Quality Management System*, see Section 2.1 of the *UL Quality Management Handbook*. (The *Quality Management Handbook* is available in the section *Other Attachments*)

**Fig. 1.3.2.**

***The UL Quality Management System and Principles of the Quality Assurance System***



To ensure the quality of higher education, the UL implements the Quality Assurance System for Studies, which includes procedures for planning, ensuring, measuring, and evaluating the quality of higher education in accordance with the requirements of national legislation, the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (EHA), as well as for internal needs. The UL provides planning for the development of the study field and improvement of the existing study programmes for a period of 6 years. The procedure for the implementation of study programmes is established in the internal legal acts of the UL, including the development of new study programmes, admission requirements, matriculation and registration for studies, development, implementation and review of study courses and modules, planning, implementation and assessment of study internship, organisation of assessments and final examinations, rotation, the principles of academic integrity and their observance, exmatriculation, awarding of diplomas and certificates, the recognition of knowledge, skills, competence acquired through non-formal and informal learning or in professional experience, recognition of learning outcomes achieved in the previous education, and referencing of academic activity at the UL, the procedure for conducting surveys, submission of student proposals and complaints, contestation of administrative decisions, doctorate process, etc. The UL ensures that the measurements and data necessary for quality assessment and improvement are collected and used for both immediate corrective action and regular evaluation and planning of further improvement. The 6-year study field development plan is monitored annually, the measurements are analysed, and the SWOT is discussed, if necessary, by introducing changes to the operational study programme implementation plans, to the study field plan or, when assessing the overall development of study fields within the framework of the UL Strategic Control, to the UL Strategic Action Plans. For more information on studies quality assurance, see Section 3.1 of *the UL Quality Management Handbook*. For the breakdown of responsibilities for quality management and assurance, see Section 2.5 of *the UL Quality Management Handbook*.

The UL quality assurance system is based on the participation of key stakeholders in the quality assessment and improvement of the University of Latvia activities. Stakeholders of the UL are natural or legal persons, domestic and international, who use the services of the UL or whose socio-economic situation is affected by the activities of the UL. The main stakeholders are defined in Article 12 of *the UL Quality Policy*. For the description and examples of the roles of key stakeholders in quality management, see Section 3.2, sub-section 1.2 (Table 3.6) of *the UL Quality Management*

**1.4. Fill in the table on the compliance of the internal quality assurance system of the higher education institution/ college with the provisions of Section 5, Paragraph 2(1) of the Law on Higher Education Institutions by providing a justification for the given statement. In addition, it is also possible to refer to the respective chapter of the Self-Assessment Report, where the provided information serves as justification.**

1.	The higher education institution/ college has established a policy and procedures for assuring the quality of higher education.	<p>The UL has formulated the Quality Policy, which is detailed in the Quality Action Policy in line with its strategic core activities.</p> <p>For quality assurance of higher education, the Studies Quality Assurance System (in compliance with ESG) has been implemented and integrated into the Quality Management System (in compliance with EFQM). For more information, see Part I, Section 1.3 of this document and Section 3.1 of the UL Quality Management Handbook (The Quality Management Handbook is available in the section Other attachments)</p> <p>The establishment, maintenance, and improvement of the UL quality management system are performed by the management and heads of core structural units (deans of faculties) and their delegated employees. The Academic Department is responsible for the establishment, implementation, and improvement of the study quality assurance system, in close cooperation with the heads of study fields and directors of study programmes. Two collegiate committees have been established for quality assessment with the participation of the UL stakeholders: The Quality Advisory Committee and the Study Programme Quality Assessment Committee. For more information, see Section 2.5 of the UL Quality Management Handbook.</p>
2.	A mechanism for the creation 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.	<p>The establishment and internal approval of study programmes are stipulated in the Regulations of the University of Latvia on Study Programmes and Continuing Education Programmes (the UL Senate Decision No 102 of 24.04.2017). For more information, see Section 2.4 of this report, as well as sub-section II of Section 3.1 the UL Quality Management Handbook .</p> <p>Periodic quality review of study programmes is stipulated in the Procedure for Preparation of Annual Reports on UL Study Fields (the UL Order No 1/290 of 14.07.2020). For more information, see Section 2.4 of this report, Section 3.1, sub-sections IX, and X of the UL Quality Management Handbook .</p>

3.	<p>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 made public.</p>	<p>Information related to learning outcomes, including assessment, is contained in course descriptions, the preparation and updating of which, as well as the rules for their publication, are stipulated in the UL course development and updating procedure. The conduct and assessment of entrance and final examinations, as well as the assessment and recognition of learning outcomes achieved in previous education or professional experience, are regulated by the relevant regulations of the University. For more information, see Part II Section 1.4. of this report.</p> <p>The desired ethical and fair conduct and justice are ensured at the University of Latvia by internally regulating issues related to academic freedom and academic integrity, electing and ensuring the Academic Arbitration Court, and ensuring the operation of the Academic Ethics Committee, as well as regulating the principles of protection of intellectual property rights. For more information, see the Quality Management Handbook, Section 3.2, sub-section 2.1.</p>
4.	<p>Internal procedures and mechanisms for assuring the qualifications of the academic staff and the work quality have been developed.</p>	<p>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 the UL Personnel Management Policy. Accordingly, the development of academic staff is planned for the medium term, and training plans are drawn up for the year. The qualification requirements of the staff are defined in the internal regulatory enactments of the UL in accordance with the external regulatory enactments, and the requirements for ensuring the quality of work – within the framework of regular staff appraisal, including the analysis of students' satisfaction with the delivered study courses, as well as the results of scientific activity. For more information on attracting, engaging, developing and retaining staff: see the UL Quality Management Handbook, Section 3.2, sub-section 3.2.</p>

5.	<p>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.</p>	<p>Information on students' achievements is accumulated in the information system of the University of Latvia (hereinafter – ULIS) and analysed in the framework of study course implementation (including student-centred approach) and study programme improvement. Satisfaction of students and graduates with the study programme is monitored through communication activities of staff involved in the implementation of study programmes, representation of students and graduates in decision-making and advisory bodies, as well as by conducting surveys in accordance with the Procedure for the Organisation of Regular Surveys to Evaluate the Study Process at the University of Latvia (the UL Order No 1/334 of 22.08.2016). For more information on the involvement of stakeholders in quality assurance see Section 3.2, sub-section 1.2 of the UL Quality Management Handbook . Issues related to the efficiency of academic staff, available study resources and their costs are monitored in the core structural units (faculties, institutes, etc.) as well as centrally. For more information on study information management, see Section 3.1, sub-section VII of the UL Quality Management Handbook .</p> <p>The UL performance management system introduced and implemented at the University of Latvia monitors key performance indicators of the UL considering which further strategic decisions are made. For more information, see Section 3.2, sub-section 7 of the UL Quality Management Handbook .</p>
6.	<p>The higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field whilst implementing their quality assurance systems.</p>	<p>The development of each study field is planned in accordance with the 6-year development strategy of the UL. The monitoring of the plan and the evaluation of its effectiveness are carried out within the framework of the annual self-assessment of the study field. These processes take place at the level of the respective Study Field Council, the core structural unit(s) implementing the study field (a study field may be implemented by several faculties), as well as at the level of the administration and the Senate.</p> <p>The UL provides the external evaluation required by the legislation, obtaining additional external quality certificates for individual programmes. For more information, see Part II, Section 2.4 of this report.</p> <p>To promote the quality and competitiveness of the study programmes of the UL, the University of Latvia creates and finances internal grant projects (Fund for improvement of the study quality of the UL), as well as attracts external funds (European Social Fund (<a href="https://www.ozolzile.lu.lv/projekti/eiropas-socialais-fonds/">https://www.ozolzile.lu.lv/projekti/eiropas-socialais-fonds/</a>), Erasmus+ (<a href="https://www.ozolzile.lu.lv/projekti/erasmus/">https://www.ozolzile.lu.lv/projekti/erasmus/</a>)).</p>



## 2.1. Management of the Study Field

**2.1.1. Aims of the study field and their compliance with the scope of activities of the higher education institution/ college, the strategic development fields, as well as the development needs of the society and the national economy. The assessment of the interrelation of the study field and the study programmes included in it.**

Pursuant to the mission and vision of UL, as well as the development directions and strategic goals of UL defined in the [UL Strategy 2021-2027](#), the development plan of the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology defines the development goals of the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology. They are structured according to the six UL development directions and UL strategic development goals of principal activities and institutional development. The goals emphasize the priorities of the study field within the framework of the UL strategic goals, focusing on the challenges to be solved at the study field level. The entire academic staff of the study field was involved in the goal development process. The implementation of the study field development goals is managed and monitored by the heads of departments in cooperation with the head of the study field.

*Table 2.1.1.1. Goals of the sociology, political science and anthropology study field, and their relevance to UL development directions and strategic goals*

No.	UL development directions	UL strategic goals	Study field goals
<b>Development of principal activities</b>			
M1.	Scientific excellence	Internationally recognized research university	To ensure the international recognition of the research implemented in study field and the international recognition of the study programmes
M2.	Study development	A unique study offer and high competitiveness of graduates	To implement individualized, inclusive, student-centred and research-based studies
M3.	Contribution to society	University activities as a basis for the growth of Latvia	To form the study field as a knowledgeable, reliable and supportive partner for Latvian society and democratic development
<b>Institutional development</b>			
M4.	Talent development	Development- and excellence-oriented personnel policy	To promote staff excellence and cooperation in science, industry, teaching and training of pedagogues
M5.	Environment and governance	Green thinking, attractive, sustainable university environment and effective administrative support	To provide an open, collaborative and creative study and research environment

M6.	Organizational culture	Inclusive, cooperation- and innovation-focused culture	To promote innovations for the development of studies and research
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To achieve the goals of the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field, based on the UL Strategy 2021–2027 and the Strategy of the Faculty of Social Sciences (hereinafter – FSS) 2022–2027, the following specific tasks have been defined:

- **To promote internationally recognized research** (to ensure the study field academic staff renewal, involving internationally recognized professionals; to regularly organize international events (conferences, seminars, etc.) related to the study field and research therein; to promote the success of the academic staff in attracting research funding, including funding from foreign sources; to support the increase in the scientific research of academic staff (with a doctoral degree) reflected in the proportion of higher-rated publications; to support the growing international scientific contribution of academic staff; to increase the participation of growing academic staff in international scientific conferences with reports)
- **To promote the international recognition of the studies** (to create and provide an offer of courses available to ERASMUS+ students every semester at the level of the study field; to increase the number of foreign students)
- **To promote individualized and inclusive studies** (to research and select a suitable support system for first-year students of bachelor's programmes; to continue to ensure accessibility of the environment for students with reduced mobility)
- **To promote the development of a student-centred study process** (to improve the quality of the study process and feedback on the results of student surveys and the measures taken (at least once a year hold an open meeting of the study field council, where teaching staff and students discuss the survey results and decide on solutions together); to increase the number of courses that actively use student-centred learning methods)
- **To implement science-based studies** (to measure the growth of students' knowledge and skills in courses in all programmes, including determining prior knowledge; to promote the demand for higher-level studies and the selection thereof)
- **To actively cooperate with schools, pupils and teachers** (to acquire feedback on the knowledge of school graduates, to implement school-related extracurricular activities, involving students)
- **To maintain contact with graduates of the study field** (to monitor work experience of graduates in the specialty and to maintain active communication with graduates in Latvia and abroad)
- **To inform the public about current events related to the themes pertaining to the study field** (to explain the current events that are related to the study field-related themes in the media and distribute information pertaining to the study field using social networks)
- **To improve the teaching skills of the staff** (to organize events in which lecturers share their experience in teaching and raise the qualifications of lecturers for student-centred education)
- **To strengthen the scientific capacity of the staff and its application in the study process** (to encourage the development of the research capacity of lecturers by using sabbaticals and teaching staff exchange programmes; to promote the experience of UL doctoral students in the implementation of the study process corresponding to the themes of the study field)
- **To improve the cooperation between the staff of the study field and the industry** (to organize events on the implementation of internships, elaboration of final theses and research in cooperation with companies, institutions)

- **To promote internal cooperation and inter-institutional cooperation** (to prepare thematic lectures, events with the participation of industry representatives)
- **To promote the use of creative and innovative competences, methods and tools in academic work** (to organize the innovation laboratory and design sprint for advancement of the study field)

The direction of the study field development has been defined in compliance with the “Latvian Sustainable Development Strategy until 2030” (approved by the *Saeima* on 10 June 2010), which particularly emphasizes the importance of social sciences, “National Development Plan 2021–2027” (approved by *Saeima* decision No. 418/Lm13 of 02.07.2020), the programme “Guidelines for the Development of a Cohesive and Civically Active Society 2021–2027” (CM Order No. 72 of 05.02.2021), “Cultural Policy Guidelines 2022–2027 “Cultural State”” (CM Order No. 143 of 01.03.2022), “Science, Technology Development and Innovation Guidelines 2021–2027” (CM Order No. 246 of 14.04.2021), “Digital Transformation Guidelines 2021–2027” (CM Order No. 490 of 07.07.2021).

The relevance of the programmes of the study field “Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology” is determined by the current and strategic needs and development trends of the society and economy of Latvia as a member of the European Union. Ensuring sustainable development cannot be achieved without taking into account the social context and social aspects of changes. The study programmes implemented in the study field prepare academically educated and professionally qualified professionals to meet the requirements of Latvian society, the state and municipalities. These professionals have acquired in-depth knowledge of the socio-economic and political processes taking place in society, are proficient in theories and research methods, have acquired skills in collecting and analysis of social information., understanding of international politics and diplomacy, European Union society and socio-economic, political processes, Latvia's place therein, have mastered the ability to solve current problems related to European integration processes.

The study field development planning and implementation complies with the needs of the labour market. As a result, competitive professionals who are in demand in all areas of specialization are prepared in the study programmes of the study field. Graduates of the study field programmes are prepared to work in state and non-governmental organizations, various international institutions, structures related to the European space and the European Union. They are equally qualified to carry out research activities and participate in socio-political processes at the international, regional and local levels, who able to realize their professional and human potential and competitive in the labour market. Highly qualified professionals who are familiar with the methods of obtaining, gathering and analysing social information, have acquired the ability to analyse various social processes taking place on a regional and national scale, capable to understand them in the framework of European Union and in global context, are necessary both for work in Latvia and for the representation of national interests in international institutions. Diplomacy professionals are required by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, as well as the EU foreign affairs service. Today, in both the public and non-governmental sectors, there is still a lack of people who are able to analytically evaluate the development trends of society and formulate policy proposals. As the private sector develops, the demand for professionals in the field of management also increases, requiring professionals capable of gathering and analysing social information, evaluating social, economic and political processes from the perspective of the sciences represented in the study field.

Employers of graduates from the study field include state administrative institutions (e.g., the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Latvia, the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Latvia and the public sector in general), the parliament, the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Latvia, non-governmental

institutions, interest representation groups (e.g. Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) and Employers' Confederation of Latvia (LDDK)), independent institutions (Bank of Latvia, State Audit Office), municipalities, state and private mass media, public relations companies, market and social research companies (SKDS, Kantor TNS), international institutions (European Union institutions, NATO (e.g. Stratcom)), UN, etc.

**2.1.2. SWOT analysis of the study field with regard to the set aims by providing explanations on how the higher education institution/ college expects to eliminate/ improve weaknesses, prevent threats, and avail themselves of the given opportunities, etc. The assessment of the plan for the development of the study field for the next six years and the procedure of the elaboration thereof. In case there is no development plan elaborated or the aims/ objectives are set for a shorter period of time, information on the elaboration of the plan for the development of the study field for the next assessment period shall be provided.**

**Table 2.1.2.1. SWOT analysis of the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field**

Strengths	Weaknesses
1. More than 25 years of experience in implementing sociology, political science and anthropology study programmes in Latvia.	1. Insufficient financial provision (low amount of funding allocated from the state budget, insufficient number of students).
2. The teaching staff of the study field are the country's leading scientists in their field, including scientists with international experience.	2. Insufficient international recognition (impacts attracting teaching staff with international experience – including visiting professors, – and results in a small number of foreign students).
3. UL FSS material and technical base, methodological provision, wide availability of resources in the implementation of the study process, availability of e-environment and digital resources.	3. The narrow specialization of scientists in the study of the political and socio-economic processes of Latvia and the Baltic states affects international recognition.
4. Interdisciplinarity of the direction, for example, the implementation of the joint doctoral study programme Social Sciences.	4. Weak renewal of academic staff.
5. Active cooperation with the employers in the sphere corresponding to the study field.	
Opportunities	Threats

1. Relocation to House of Letters in Torņakalns (as a socially important venue for discussion, interdisciplinarity, enabling sustainable management and progress towards a climate-neutral faculty).	1. Decrease in the number of students due to demographic processes and economic migration.
2. Renewal of academic staff by attracting young scientists to the combined doctoral study programme Social Sciences and post-doctoral programmes.	2. Understanding the declining importance of social sciences at the political and societal level, reorienting students to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) study programmes.
3. Involvement of graduates, employers, foreign research partners and guest teaching staff in the improvement of the content of the study programme, promoting the compliance of the content with the demand of the labour market and its trends.	3. Global competition – students choose to study at higher education institutions abroad.
4. Increasing research funding from international funds (Horizon, COST, Jean Monnet, Norwegian Funds, etc.).	4. Potential, unpredictable side effects and socioeconomic consequences of a global pandemic.
5. The centralized support of the UL for scientific activity, the involvement of employers in the implementation of the doctoral study programme is being increased.	
6. Cooperation with universities of the Baltic Sea countries, involvement in the development of joint study programmes (awarding of a joint diploma to graduates of the programme).	

The study field development plan was elaborated by a working group led by the heads of the Department of Political Science, the Department of Sociology and the Department of Anthropology and the head of the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology. It was discussed in the working group for preparation for accreditation, in the departments of the study field and in the council of the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field. The study field development plan and goals are reviewed by the study field council once per academic year. The development plan for 2022–2027 consists of the general tasks and specific sub-tasks defined for achieving each goal of the study field. The plan also specifies those responsible for their implementation. The plan contains defined measurable indicators to be achieved and the respective values at the first year of the plan's implementation and in each of the following years. See the Appendix Study field development plan.

A strategy for improving the weaknesses identified in the SWOT analysis has been developed in the study field development plan. The insufficient financial provision is to be partially obviated by (1) promoting the success of the academic staff in attracting research funding (Development plan point 1.1.3.) and reducing student dropout (2.1.1.). Staff regeneration will be advanced through international professionals and growth of young, local lecturers in the new joint doctoral study programme (1.1.1.). With the regeneration of the study field academic staff (1.1.1.), regularly attended international scientific events (1.1.2 and 1.1.6), and the increase in the proportion of

highly rated publications (articles in Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) Q1 and Q2 scientific journals) in scientific research of the staff (1.1.5.), two indicators in the SWOT analysis section of weaknesses will be improved: the insufficient international recognition and the narrow specialization of scientists in the study of the political and socio-economic processes of Latvia and the Baltic states. The academic staff's scientific contribution will be evaluated by following the growth of scientists' Hirsch index in Scopus, WoS and Google Scholar (1.1.4 and 1.1.5.).

The relocation of the Faculty of Social Sciences, and thus the study field, to the new University of Latvia Academic Centre in Torņakalns in the summer of 2024 will ensure extensive opportunities for development. Six UL faculties of humanities and social sciences will be located in the House of Letters: Faculty of History and Philosophy, Faculty of Education, Psychology and Art, Faculty of Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Business, Management and Economics, and Faculty of Theology. It is planned that three institutes will also be located in the new building: Institute of Latvian History, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, and Latvian Language Institute. UL Student Business Incubator, UL Interdisciplinary Centre for Educational Innovation and UL Library will also be relocated to the new building. All faculties will be housed in one building, and cooperation among structural units will be possible not only within the House of Letters, but also in the House of Nature and House of Science. The House of Letters will also provide a more accessible environment for all students (2.1.2.).

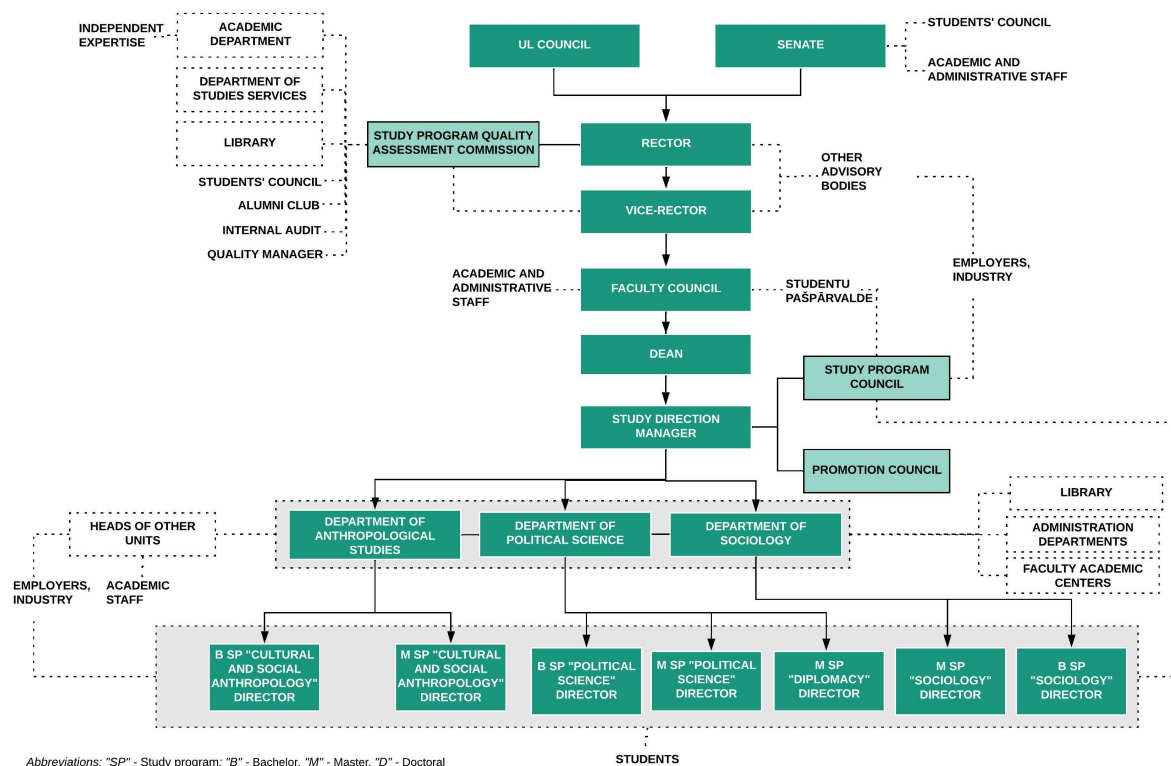
The new joint doctoral study programme in "Social Sciences" and post-doctoral programmes enable faster regeneration of academic staff (1.1.7 and 2.3.3) and offer new opportunities for cooperation with employers and other partners, for example, creating new, relevant interdisciplinary courses (2.3.1), and for cooperation between students, doctoral students, teaching staff and the community, for example, by introducing scientific afternoon seminars (2.3.4). There are also opportunities to augment research funding from international funds (1.1.3) and increase the number of foreign exchange students by expanding the number of courses taught in English (1.2.1) and developing a new interdisciplinary BSP module taught in English (for example, "Understanding Russia" module, which could be interesting to international students). There are also similar opportunities to develop a joint study programme, awarding the graduates a joint diploma, with other higher education institutions of the Baltic Sea countries (1.2.4).

The "threats" identified in the SWOT analysis have also been evaluated in the development plan and opportunities to reduce them have been examined. In a situation of demographic decline, it is important to reduce student dropout by ascertaining detailed reasons for dropping out (2.1.1), providing an improved study environment (2.1.2), developing a support system for students (2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.1.5), improving study processes (2.2.1) and providing feedback between student survey results and actions (2.2.2). Diminishing understanding of the importance of social sciences at the political and societal level will be prevented by developing the study field as a knowledgeable, reliable and supportive partner for Latvian society. Cooperation with schools, pupils and teachers will be strengthened in joint seminars (3.1.1) and activities involving students and pupils (3.1.2). The study field will maintain closer ties with graduates (3.2.1 and 3.2.2), and the teaching staff will continue to explain the topics of the study field to the public (3.3.1 and 3.3.2). In the conditions of global competition, it is crucial to promote the teaching staff, programmes, national and international recognition of the study field (1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.4, 1.1.5, 1.1.6, 1.2.1, 1.2.3, 1.2.4), provide a modern, competitive study environment (2.1.2), enhance the study process (2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.3, 2.3.4), advance teaching skills (4.1.1., 4.1.2.) and scientific capacity (4.2.1., 4.2.2.) of staff and promote innovations for the development of studies and research (6.1.1.). The possible side effects of Covid-19 (for example, the transition to remote studies) could be mitigated by more effectively using the digital skills and competences newly acquired during the pandemic (2.2.1 and 2.2.2).

**2.1.3. The structure of the management of the study field and the relevant study programmes, and the analysis and assessment of the efficiency thereof, including the assessment of the role of the head of the study field and the heads of the study programmes, their responsibilities, and the cooperation with other heads of the study programmes, as well as the assessment of the support by the administrative and technical staff of the higher education institution/ college provided within the study field.**

Collegiate responsibility for the administration of the study field lies with the UL decision-making bodies – the Senate, the UL Study Programme Quality Assessment Commission (headed by vice-rectors), faculty councils and study programme councils, which evaluate study quality and decide on study quality assurance measures. The governance of the University of Latvia is responsible for the quality of studies, delegating responsibility for the functioning of the study quality assurance system to the Academic Department. Responsibility for the quality of the study field and the study programmes implemented therein lies with the head of the study field and dean, study programme directors, and sub-programme directors. Each lecturer is responsible for the quality of the content and implementation of the course, research activities and professional advancement. The students' responsibility is defined in their rights and obligations to promote the achievement of UL goals and excellence in studies, participating in the UL collegial institutions and regularly expressing their opinion in student surveys. See the governance scheme of the study field of the University of Latvia and the study programmes included therein – Fig. 2.1.3.1.

Figure 2.1.3.1. Management scheme of the study field of the University of Latvia and the study programmes included therein



*The Regulations on the Management of Study Fields at the University of Latvia* (approved by the decision of UL Senate No. 70 of 27.01.2020) determine the procedure for the management, quality

assurance and development of study fields at UL, the functions and operating principles of the Study Field Council, qualification requirements, duties, responsibilities and rights of the head of the study field, director of the study programme, and the sub-programme director of the study field.

Each UL study programme has a **study programme director** who directs the development and implementation of this study programme. The study programme director is approved by the Senate on the proposal of the Faculty Council representing the respective field of science. The study programme director is a member of the Study Field Council of the respective field of science and coordinates his/her activities with the Head of the Study Field and Study Field Council. The director of the study programme is accountable for his/her activities to the dean of the faculty. The responsibilities of the study programme directors include ensuring a well-functioning, sustainable operation of the study programme in accordance with the procedures specified by the University of Latvia and other responsibilities. If the study programme covers several sub-programmes, the **sub-programme director** may be approved by the decision of the Faculty Council in each sub-programme. The sub-programme director is approved by the Faculty Council. If several faculties are involved in the implementation of the study programme, the sub-programme director shall be approved by the Faculty Council of that faculty, which awards the corresponding degree or qualification on the proposal of the deans of the faculties involved in the implementation of the programme. The sub-programme director is accountable for his/her activities to the study programme director. The responsibilities of the sub-programme director include, in cooperation with the study programme director, organizing and managing the development and implementation of the sub-programme, as well as preparing the documentation required for the approval, licensing and accreditation of the sub-programme.

The competence of **the head of the study field** is to ensure the management and development of the study field. The head of the study field is approved by the rector on the proposal of the dean of the faculty. The head of the study field is accountable to the Study Field Council and the dean. The heads of study fields, in co-operation with the study programme directors and the director of the UL Regional Centre (in cases when the study programmes included in the study field are implemented in the UL branches), ensure the revision, development planning and implementation of study programmes included in the study field. The heads of study fields organize the work of study field councils, as well as regularly organize preparation of annual study field reports and the submission for review and approval thereof by the Study Field Council and the Faculty Council. The heads of study fields in co-operation with the study programme directors and the UL Department of Study Services ensure the accreditation and re-accreditation of the study field and perform other duties.

**The Study Field Council** is a collegial study field management body, which supervises academic, professional (including residency) and doctoral study programmes of all levels within the respective study field. The head of the study field, all the directors of the study programmes corresponding to the study field, the representatives of the students in the respective programmes (not less than 20% of the composition of the Study Field Council, promoting the representation of all levels of study programmes, as well as the largest possible number of study programmes, nominated by the Student Council), representatives of employers and co-operation partners of the study field (candidates are nominated by the heads of structural units, heads of fields, study programme directors and sub-programme directors). The composition of the Study Field Council may be complemented by involving graduates of the study field programmes who are not involved in the implementation of the study field, as well as by professors, associate professors and other qualified professionals (candidates are nominated by the heads of structural units, heads of fields and study programme directors). The Study Field Council approves the development strategy of the study programmes of the given field, evaluates and submits the conceptualisation of new study



programmes for approval to the Study Programme Quality Assessment Commission, evaluates and submits for Faculty Council's approval the annual reports of study fields, as well as changes in study programmes.

**Faculty Councils**, consisting of representatives of the academic and general staff, who are elected for three years, and student representatives, who make up at least 20% of the councillors, decide on academic, economic, financial, and other activities of the faculty that are within the competency of the faculty or must be passed on to the Senate.

**The Study Programme Quality Assessment Commission** (hereinafter – SP QAC) assesses the performance of UL study fields and study programmes, as well as makes proposals to the Faculty Council and UL governance on the further development of the programmes. This commission reviews study programmes and provides opinions thereof, evaluates applications of new study programme concepts, new study programmes and programme closure proposals, significant changes in accredited study fields that require a decision of the SP QAC, as well as applications for new study modules and sub-programmes. When evaluating the concepts of new study programmes, annual reports of study programmes and study fields, the SP QAC is guided by the opinion of anonymous, independent experts. The SP QAC consists of vice-rectors, Chairperson of the Academic Commission of the Senate or his/her authorized representative, director and representatives of the Department of Study Services, a representative of the Department of Study Service, internal auditor, quality manager, representative of the Academic Department, representative of the UL Library, a representative delegated by the Student Council and a representative delegated by the UL Alumni Club

Starting the implementation of the UL Strategy 2027, based on the efficiency audit of the administrative structural units performed in 2021, in November 2021 the UL Administration was significantly reorganized, thus strengthening the strategic and quality management functions in the structural units of the Administration. One of the most significant changes is the integration of the Department of Studies of the University of Latvia and the Department of Science of the University of Latvia, forming the Academic Department, thus strengthening the unity of higher education and science. The UL Administration includes the following units: Academic Department, Department of Study Service, Department of Communication, Legal Department, Department of Human Resources, Department of Information Technology, Department of Finance and Accounting, Document Management Division, Infrastructure Management Division, Real Estate Revenue Division, Institutional Data Analysis Centre, Project Support Centre, Academic Centre Development Programme, Study Development and Management Improvement Programme. The UL Administration also includes UL chancellor, internal auditor, quality manager, the head of the labour safety system, and the information technology security manager. The study process is also supported by the Culture Centre, the Sports Centre and the Pre-Studies Training Centre, which are under the supervision of the Head of the Administration.

**The Academic Department** has the key role in management of the study field. The Academic Department consists of the Academic Policy Division, the Science Project Division, the Study Quality Assurance Division and the Lifelong Learning Division. The competence of the Academic Department is to monitor the requirements of the regulatory enactments in force in the Republic of Latvia and changes therein, national and European Union development policy documents, as well as standards and good practices in the field of academic activities and lifelong learning. development of regulations and supervision of their implementation in these fields, to ensure the development, implementation of studies, as well as scientific quality assurance systems (or processes), monitoring and continuous improvement of their implementation, Ensuring regular review of academic and lifelong learning processes and risks, necessary control and identification and provision of preventive measures in accordance with the practice implemented by the

University of Latvia, it ensures analytical identification of the results of academic activities and lifelong learning and the opportunities for their improvement, development of proposals for the Governance of the University of Latvia. The Department of Study Quality Assurance monitors the observance of all study levels and internal regulation of lifelong learning, coordinates the medium-term development plan of studies and lifelong learning in cooperation with faculties, manages its implementation, monitors and provides methodological support in developing new study programmes and implementing and improving existing programmes; processes in studies and lifelong learning, organizes and coordinates external quality assessment, ensures centralized administration of doctoral student admission, doctoral studies and promotion process, provides support in the process of implementation and improvement of studies and lifelong learning at all levels, evaluates study and lifelong learning programme results and competitiveness, and participates in resource evaluation.

**The Study Service department** consists of the Academic Services Division, the Admissions Division and the Mobility Division, which are competent to organize and ensure the matriculation and exmatriculation of national and international students, the circulation of study documents and their registration, maintain the graduation documentation (qualification) register, including diplomas and graduates register, to provide students with social, cultural and other support functions, as well as to provide consultations and information to students on social security, to inform potential applicants and candidates about the study process and study organization, as well as to ensure the administration and implementation of mobility programmes. The Head of UL Quality control and Internal Auditor also participate in the development, maintenance, implementation, evaluation and improvement of the study quality management system.

(Regulations of UL Administration, p.50-51, approved by Resolution No. 1-4 / 559 of the UL Senate of 15.11.2021). Pursuant to the new UL Administration Regulations, the **UL Academic Competence Development Centre** is being established within the Department of Human Resources, whose functions will include advancing and improving staff development, career and succession planning systems, implementing staff growth promotion measures, as well as providing methodological management of UL structural units in matters of academic staff management.

Cooperation with the **students' self-government of the faculty**, which represents the interests of the students in the activities of the faculty, including in solving the issues of the academic, social and cultural environment, plays an important role in the management of studies. Members of the Student Self-government are represented in the **UL Student Council**, thus participating in the management of the University of Latvia.

**The Study Programme Quality Assessment Commission** (hereinafter – SP QAC) assesses the performance of UL study fields and study programmes, as well as makes proposals to the faculty council and UL governance on the further development of the programmes. This commission reviews and provides opinions on study programmes, including evaluation of applications for new study programme concepts, new study programmes and closure proposals, significant changes in accredited study fields that require a decision of the SP QAC, as well as applications for new study modules and sub-programmes. When evaluating the concepts of new study programmes, annual reports of study programmes and study fields, the SP QAC is guided by the opinion of anonymous, independent experts. The SP QAC consists of Vice-Rectors, Chair of the Academic Commission of the Senate or his/her authorized representative, Director of the Academic Department and its representatives, a representative of the Department of Study Service, Internal Auditor, quality manager, a representative of the UL Library, a representative delegated by the Student Council and a representative delegated by the UL Alumni Club.

The centralized support of UL and the support of the administrative and technical staff of the Faculty of Social Sciences ensured for the study field “Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology”

corresponds to the requirements for implementation and development of its programmes. The head of the study field cooperates with the directors of the study programmes within the Council of the Faculty of Social Sciences, the Study Field Council and at the department meetings. The study coordinators of the study field “Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology” study programmes provide comments and additions within their competence in the process of developing new normative acts to ensure that the specific document corresponds to the real situation. The study coordinators also help students explain the nature and meaning of the UL normative acts.

**2.1.4. Description and assessment of the requirements and the system for the admission of students by specifying, inter alia, the regulatory framework of the admission procedures and requirements. The assessment of options for the students to have their study period, professional experience, and the previously acquired formal and non-formal education recognised within the study field by providing specific examples of the application of these procedures.**

***Student admission procedures and requirements:***

- [Terms of Admission at University of Latvia](#)
- [Terms of Admission and Criteria for Undergraduate](#)(available only in Latvian)
- [Terms of Admission and Criteria for Postgraduate Studies](#)(available only in Latvian)
- [Terms of Admission and Criteria for Doctoral Studies](#)
- [The Procedures for the Initiation of Studies in Subsequent Study Stages at the University of Latvia](#)(available only in Latvian)

***Normative regulations governing recognition procedures:***

- [Regulations on the recognition of knowledge, skills, competence acquired outside of formal education or in professional experience, recognition of study results achieved in the previous education, and referencing of academic activity at the University of Latvia](#)
- [University of Latvia procedure for recognition of competencies developed outside formal education or through professional experience and learning outcomes achieved in previous education](#)

The admission process at the University of Latvia and, consequently, also within the study programmes in the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology is regulated by the Admission Regulation and its subordinate orders, which determine the procedures for the given academic year:

1. admission requirements and criteria for undergraduate programmes;
2. admission requirements and criteria for higher-level study programmes;
3. admission requirements and criteria for doctoral programmes;
4. admission requirements and criteria for residency study programmes;
5. admission procedure for the academic year;
6. an estimate of the registration fee;
7. tuition fees in programmes;
8. number of study places for admission;
9. procedure for the development of entrance examination materials;
10. composition of the Admission Committee;
11. composition of the entrance examination boards;

## 12. date and place of entrance examinations.

Admission procedures vary by study level. **Enrolment in undergraduate studies** is centralized through the Single Enrolment in Undergraduate Programmes, which integrates the enrolment in 12 higher education institutions in Latvia. The competition for study places is based on the results of the centralized examinations or the secondary education certificate grades of the persons who have acquired secondary education before 2004, who have been exempted from the centralized examinations or have completed their secondary education abroad. In the case of study programmes that do not have relevant centralized examinations, additional requirements for specific grades on the certificate are set, and the programmes requiring special skills or aptitude set an additional entrance examination. As a result of the competition, applicants are ranked according to their scores. Programmes may provide benefits to the winners of National Olympiads and other contests (for more information on admission requirements, see the description of each study programme).

For example, the BSP Political Science and Sociology admission conditions give additional points to the winners of the 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> place in the field of political science of the Scientific research conference of Latvian secondary school students, and to the 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> place winners of the UL FSS School of Young Politicians.

**Enrolment in master's degree programmes** is decentralized, at each faculty, but with uniform deadlines. Enrolment is based on grades obtained during undergraduate studies. In programmes that allow for prior education in various fields, the entrance examination is used to determine the correspondence of the candidate's prior knowledge to the field of the study programme.

- MSP Cultural and Social Anthropology contest evaluation formula: weighted average grade ( $20 \times 10 = 200$ ) + bachelor thesis or diploma thesis grade ( $20 \times 10 = 200$ ) + entrance examination ( $1 \times 600 = 600$ ). An additional condition for the entrance examination: submission of a written essay on the topic: Studies in Anthropology: Motivation of My Choice and Research Interests.
- MSP Diplomacy: entrance examination ( $1 \times 1000 = 1000$ ), the minimum number of points in the entrance examination for admission is 400; Those who have obtained a bachelor's degree or a second-level professional higher education in political science can participate in the competition with the following evaluation formula: weighted average grade ( $60 \times 10 = 600$ ) + total (or average) grade of the final examinations ( $40 \times 10 = 400$ ).
- MSP Political Science: entrance examination ( $1 \times 1000 = 1000$ ), the minimum number of points in the entrance examination for admission is 400; Those who have obtained a bachelor's degree or a second-level professional higher education in political science can participate in the competition with the following evaluation formula: weighted average grade ( $60 \times 10 = 600$ ) + the total (or average) grade of the final examinations ( $40 \times 10 = 400$ ).
- MSP Sociology: entrance examination ( $1 \times 1000 = 1000$ ), the minimum number of points in the entrance examination for admission is 500; Those who have obtained a bachelor's degree in sociology from UL can participate in the competition with the following evaluation formula: weighted average grade ( $60 \times 10 = 600$ ) + total (or average) grade of the final examinations ( $40 \times 10 = 400$ ).

**Admission to doctoral studies** takes place centrally. The applicant must submit the topic of the promotion thesis and the name of the approved supervisor. The applicant's eligibility is assessed by the doctoral council of the field. The matriculation in DSP Social Sciences takes place after the presentation of the topic of the doctoral thesis (in Latvian or English) at the doctoral study programme council, evaluating the applicant's level of knowledge in the respective field of social sciences and in a foreign language, as well as the quality of the planned scientific research and

compliance with the priority research directions of UL and science in Latvia. During admission interviews, the applicants are ranked according to the total number of obtained points.

The requirements and criteria in the study programmes are reviewed and updated annually, and in accordance with Article 46 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, they are published on the website of the University of Latvia by November 1.

The UL provides an opportunity to commence studies also in subsequent study stages, in accordance with the Procedure for commencing studies in subsequent study stages at the University of Latvia (UL Order No. 1/128). A precondition for commencing studies in subsequent study stages is the recognition of previously acquired study courses or knowledge, skills, competencies, learning outcomes acquired in previous education, which is regulated by the Regulations on UL Procedure for Recognition of Competencies Developed Outside Formal Education or Through Professional Experience and Learning Outcomes Achieved in Previous Education as well as the recognition and alignment of academic activity (UL Senate Decision No. 2-3/86 of 28 June 2021) (hereinafter – the Regulations) and the UL Procedure for the recognition of study courses and knowledge, skills and competencies acquired in study courses and outside formal education or through professional experience and learning outcomes achieved in previous education (UL Order No. 1-4/543 of 04.11.2021). Based on the student's application, the possibility to recognize study courses acquired at another higher education institution in Latvia or abroad or during the previous study period at the University of Latvia is considered. According to Clause 8 of the Regulations, previously acquired study courses may be recognized at the same or lower study level. On 01.04.2022, amongst all active students in the study field, there have been 19 students who have had their study courses recognized, but since the previous accreditation period in 01.01.2013, the recognition of courses was performed for 212 students.

The higher education institutions from which recognition has been carried out to BSP Political Science: Panteion University (Greece); University of Mannheim (Germany); Riga Technical University (Latvia); National University of Public Service (Hungary); Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences (Latvia); University of Helsinki (Finland); Umeå University (Sweden); Latvian National Defence Academy; Zeppelin University (Germany); Bahçeşehir University (Turkey); Sciences Po – (France); University of Genoa (Italy); University of Warsaw (Poland); University of Hamburg (Germany); Linnaeus University (Sweden); Umeå University (Sweden); Latvian Academy of Sport Education; Northern (Arctic) Federal University (Russia); Latvian Academy of Culture; University of Rostock (Germany); Østfold University College (Norway); Riga Stradiņš University (Latvia); University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire (USA); University of Tartu (Estonia); Kocaeli University (Turkey); Charles University in Prague (Czech Republic); University of Naples Federico II (Italy); Lille Institute of Political Studies (France); Riga Graduate School of Law (Latvia); University of Vienna (Austria);

When applying to commence studies in subsequent stages, the application must be filled in and the necessary documents must be attached. The Recognition Committee for the assessment and recognition of competencies acquired outside formal education or through professional experience and learning outcomes achieved in previous education (hereinafter – the Recognition Committee) or the director of the programme, if the student renews their studies in the same UL programme, assess and recognise the previously acquired study courses, the learning outcomes in terms of correspondence to the learning outcomes of the given UL study programme. The study courses are recognized if their volume in credit points in both comparable study programmes is equal or if the number of credit points in the previously acquired study course is higher. The total volume of additional study courses to be acquired may not exceed 20 credit points. Acquisition of additional study courses or taking examinations is a paid service. For students from another higher education institution or college, when commencing studies in the subsequent stages of studies at UL, the budget funding for studies is not maintained. Final examinations passed at other higher education

institutions are not recognized.

Upon the application of the applicant, UL evaluates and recognizes the knowledge, skills, competencies acquired outside formal education or through professional experience, and the learning outcomes achieved in previous education. When submitting an application, documents confirming the achieved learning outcomes must be enclosed/attached – certificates, employer's confirmations, recommendations, project results, job descriptions, etc. The learning outcomes achieved through professional experience may be recognised only for the part of the relevant study programme comprising the internship or for the learning outcomes to be achieved in a study course or study module of a study programme that provide evidence of the practical knowledge acquired. In some cases, to recognize the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through professional experience as appropriate outcomes of the course of the given study programme, the applicant may be required to take the examinations provided for in the relevant study course or part thereof. In the Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology study field there has been no case of equalization of professional experience, and mobility internship has not been equalized.

Recognition of study courses in the bachelor's study programme most often takes place in the following cases – when the student returns from the exchange programme (Erasmus + or others), as well as the cases when the persons matriculated in the bachelor's study programme may apply for recognition of study courses taken during previous studies, provided that their scope and content are appropriate to the existing courses of the given study programme. Students have every opportunity to have their acquired courses recognised, if they have not succeeded in completing their studies at another higher education institution. In these cases, the Recognition Committee compares the scope and content of the previously acquired study courses and makes a decision on the possibility to recognise the study courses. In some cases, previously acquired study courses are recognized for students whose studies in the study programmes of the study field belong to the second or a further higher education programme. For example, if a student has already taken a Civil Protection course while studying in a bachelor's study programme in chemistry, then this course does not have to be taken a second time in bachelor's study programme Political Science. Likewise, when re-entering studies after a study break, courses are recognized pursuant to the changes in the study programme plan.

In master's programmes, on the other hand, the recognition of study courses is most often performed in cases when students have returned from mobility programmes, participated in various projects, such as Summer School, or have entered the given programme from other higher education institutions in Latvia where they have not completed their studies. In these cases, the programme director or the Recognition Committee compares the scope and content of the previously acquired study courses and makes a decision on the possibility to recognize the study courses. In MSP of the Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology study field, the most frequent cases of recognition concern the study courses taken in the Erasmus programme at foreign universities.

The doctoral programme also offers the opportunity to recognise previously completed courses. In this programme, however, such applications are rarely received, and the recognition of study courses has been mostly performed on the return from Erasmus + studies or due to changes in the study programme plan. Furthermore, academic activities performed outside the doctoral study programme can be equated to the requirements of the UL doctoral study programme. The criteria and procedure for this alignment are also set out in the regulations. In the first academic year of the DSP Social Sciences, one alignment has been made with the courses acquired at the Institute of Sociology of the Jagiellonian University (Poland).

The opportunity to recognize learning outcomes from previous education (including further

education programme) or professional experience is less frequently used. Information on the procedure for recognizing the results acquired in non-formal education or professional experience can be found on the UL website. Students have been informed about such an opportunity, however, those studying in the study field have not used this opportunity during the reporting period. In terms of studies, students mostly enrol in bachelor's study programmes immediately after graduating from secondary school, hence, they have not yet acquired any professional experience that could be aligned with the study courses to be acquired.

For the UL students who use the opportunity to study or complete an internship within the framework of various international exchange programmes, the recognition and crediting of learning outcomes acquired during mobility is carried out in accordance with the above-mentioned procedure regulating recognition at UL, as well as the Procedures for Organising ERASMUS+ Programme Mobility at the University of Latvia (UL Order No.1/363 of 18.12.2014). In accordance with these regulations, the following is taken into account in the recognition of learning outcomes acquired through mobility: 1) compliance of the learning outcomes acquired during the mobility with the conditions of the international exchange programmes; and 2) compliance of the learning outcomes acquired during the mobility with the requirements of the UL study programme. The comparison of the learning outcomes acquired during the mobility is performed by the director of the respective study programme or the Recognition Committee on the basis of grade transcripts from the partner university or confirmation from the place of internship. After assessment, the recognised learning outcomes are filed with the student's fulfilled academic obligations.

All exchange students must receive the programme director's approval of a preliminary mobility plan for their course or placement before going on mobility. If changes are made to this plan during the exchange programme, these must be coordinated with the study programme director. The preliminary study or internship plan also stipulates the process of alignment, the study programme director approves the study courses chosen by the student at the foreign higher education institution and notes with which study course from the student's study plan at UL these courses will be substituted or assimilated to. If the student participates in the internship mobility, before going on the mobility, the student coordinates with the respective study programme director the procedure of internship recognition. If the internship is provided for in the UL study plan, then the internship mobility is treated as an internship from the UL programme. During the reporting period, no recognition for internship mobility has been carried out within the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology.

All procedures are made public and available in the UL System of Normative Acts, which is available to every UL employee and student by registering with the assigned username and password.

#### **2.1.5. Assessment of the methods and procedures for the evaluation of students' achievements, as well as the principles of their selection and the analysis of the compliance of the evaluation methods and procedures with the aims of the study programmes and the needs of the students.**

In conformity with the Law on Higher Education Institutions of the Republic of Latvia, the UL internal regulation Procedure for Development and Updating of Study Courses at the University of Latvia stipulates that information on the conditions, aims, tasks, requirements for obtaining credit points, study content, organization and tasks of the students' independent work, planned learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, competence) and their assessment methods and assessment criteria

are included in all study course descriptions, which are available to students in the UL Information System (LUIS) and UL e-learning environment. The recording of the assessment of students' performance takes place in the respective study course e-environment. UL has formulated the learning outcomes for each study programme and for each study course as a set of knowledge, skills and competence. The courses in study programmes are developed in accordance with the principles of gradation and succession. To that end, the expected learning outcomes are mapped at the study programme and study course levels (see appendices 25, 33, 42, 51, 59, 67, 75, 83).

At the beginning of studies, students are informed of the organisation and implementation of studies in the relevant study programme, while upon commencing the acquisition of each individual study course, the academic staff inform students specifically about the organisation, content, requirements, learning outcomes, examinations and evaluation criteria, as well as explain the integral quality of the study course for achieving the overall outcomes of the study programme. The students can become acquainted with the criteria and conditions for the assessment of student achievement and the binding procedures in the course descriptions and e-learning environment, as well as at the beginning of each course during the first lecture when each lecturer introduces students to the course organization, briefly describes the requirements for intermediate assessments and final examinations, explains grading criteria and examination procedures, without changing these requirements and grading criteria throughout the semester.

The Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology study field uses oral, written, as well as combined study and assessment methods in the study courses and examinations. The evaluation criteria for grading have been previously published, discussed and provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate to what extent they have achieved the expected study results. In all courses, the final grade (grade) is formed cumulatively, i.e., by evaluating the student's work during the entire semester and performance in the examination. When evaluating the students' work, the course lecturers also provide their comments and validation for the evaluation. In all the programmes of the field, learning outcomes were completely revised in 2018, and a rubric-type evaluation is used as a priority evaluation of individual test within a course, where the evaluation of each task is made up of criteria resulting from the indicators to be achieved within the course and the degree of their achievement.

The organization of the study course examinations and the assessment of the students' achievements is performed in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the Procedure for Organizing Study Course Examinations at the University of Latvia (University of Latvia Senate Decision No. 211 of 29.06.2015.) elaborated pursuant to the UL Constitution and applicable to the assessment of the learning outcomes of full-time and part-time students enrolled in UL study programmes at all levels.

There are two types of examinations in each study course: interim examinations (the total score of the interim examinations constitute not less than 50% of the total score) and the final examination of the study course (the score constitutes not less than 10% of the total score). Examinations can be conducted in written or oral form, or in a combined form (written and oral). For the assessment of student achievements, the chosen form of testing and methods corresponds to the teaching methods used in the study process both during contact lessons and in the organization of students' independent work.

Taking an examination is a mandatory requirement for obtaining credits for the acquisition of a study course. The procedures and criteria for the assessment of interims are determined by the structural unit responsible for it in accordance with the profile of the study course. The study course acquisition grade is calculated in the UL centralised recording system according to the algorithm specified in the course description, taking into account the assessments obtained in the interim and



final examinations, and it is recorded in the examination report.

Types of interim assessment include quizzes, individual work, practical work, laboratory work, reports, presentations and other types of work according to the profile of the study course. The number and type of interim assessments are specified in the description of the study course. To be assessed on the acquisition of a course, the assessment obtained for the examination is to be positive. The acquisition of a course may be positively assessed even if the examination has been failed but this possibility has been specified in the study course description. The overall assessment of course acquisition is calculated in the UL e-studies environment according to the algorithm specified in the course description, taking into account the assessments obtained in interim tests and examinations.

In accordance with the profile of the study course, the requirements for attending classes may also be determined.

At the end of each study course, there is a final examination: examination or defence (course paper, final project, term paper, field course, internship). The procedure of defence and assessment of study paper, final thesis project, term paper, field course and internship is stipulated in UL normative acts.

The learning outcomes are evaluated on a 10-point scale. If permitted by external regulations, learning outcomes can be assessed as “passed” or “failed” with the permission of the UL vice-rector. The course is considered to have been successfully completed, i.e., the assessment is positive, if the grade on the 10-point scale is not lower than “4” (almost satisfactory) or it is “passed”. In this case, the student earns credit for acquisition of the course.

The criteria described above in the 10-point scale are used for the evaluation of students' knowledge, skills and competence in each study course. The criteria for each study course are based on the learning outcomes and assessment descriptions (see Table 2.1.5.1) published in Procedures for the Development and Actualization of Study Courses at the University of Latvia.

**Table 2.1.5.1.**

**Assessment in the 10-point system**

<b>Acquisition level</b>	<b>Grade notations</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
		(pursuant to Cabinet Regulations No. 141, 512, 240 and the UL Senate Decision No. 211 of 29.06.2015)
<b>very high acquisition level</b>	<b>10 (with distinction)</b>	knowledge, skills and competence exceed the requirements of the study programme, study module or the study course and testify to the ability to carry out independent research and deep understanding of problems
	<b>9 (excellent)</b>	knowledge, skills and competence fully comply with the requirements set for the study programme, study module or the study course and the students possess the ability to use the acquired knowledge independently

<b>high acquisition level</b>	<b>8 (very good)</b>	the requirements of the study programme, study module or the study course are completely met, though in certain issues the students do not have an understanding deep enough to use the knowledge independently for solving more complex problems
	<b>7 (good)</b>	in general, the requirements of the study programme, study module or the study course are met but occasionally the inability to use the acquired knowledge independently is established
<b>average acquisition level</b>	<b>6 (almost good)</b>	the requirements of the study programme, study module or the study course are met, but there is a lack of deep understanding of the problem and inability to use the acquired knowledge
	<b>5 (satisfactory)</b>	in total, the study programme, the study module or the study course is acquired but there is insufficient knowledge of certain issues and inability to use the acquired knowledge
	<b>4 (almost satisfactory)</b>	in total, the study programme, the study module or the study course is acquired, however, there is insufficient understanding of some basic concepts and there are considerable difficulties in practical application of the acquired knowledge
<b>low acquisition level</b>	<b>3 (weak)</b>	the knowledge is superficial and incomplete; the student is unable to use it in specific situations
	<b>2 (poor)</b>	superficial knowledge of only some issues; most of the study programme, study module and the study course are not acquired
	<b>1 (very, very poor)</b>	no understanding of the fundamentals of the course and almost no knowledge of the study programme, study module or the study course

The needs of students and the relevance of assessment methods and procedures to the achievement of the objectives of study programmes are analysed and developed, taking into account the experience of academic staff, by analysing the results achieved by students and the results of surveys conducted over several academic years. Students in the surveys recognise the importance of clearly formulating the learning outcomes and defining the evaluation criteria, as well as the regular feedback on student achievements in the study process. In order to ensure this, the academic staff systematically analyse their experience, collaborate with colleagues, analyse student achievements and revise course descriptions, as well as e-learning environment, elaborating the evaluation criteria which correspond to the planned learning outcomes, thereby providing validation for the assessment.

The compliance with the basic principles for the assessment as stipulated by Republic of Latvia Cabinet regulations No. 141 of 20.03.2001 Regulations on the State Standard for First Level Professional Higher Education, No. 512 of 26.08.2014 Regulations on the State Standard for Second Level Professional Higher Education, and No. 240 of 13.05.2014 Regulations on the State Standard of the Academic Education is Considered in Evaluating the Learning Outcomes:

- **the principle of openness of the evaluation and clarity of requirements** – the University has established a set of requirements for evaluating learning outcomes in line with the aim and objectives of the study programme as well as the aim and objectives of study courses;
- **the principle of the possibility of reviewing the evaluation** – the University has established the procedures for reviewing the obtained assessment;

- **the principle of mandatory evaluation** – it is necessary to obtain a positive assessment of the content of the entire study programme;
- **the principle of the variety of types of testing used in the evaluation** – different types of testing shall be used in the evaluation of the acquisition of the study programme;
- **principle of conformity of assessment** – in the course of testing, the student is given an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge, skills and competence in relevant tasks and situations. The volume of content to be included in the tests corresponds to the content specified in the course programmes.

The basic criteria for the evaluation of final papers are determined by the UL Order No. 1/38 of 03.02.2012 On the development and defence of the final papers (bachelor's, master's, diplomas and qualifications) at the University of Latvia (amendments: UL Order No 1/69 of 26.02.2015). Additional criteria may be determined for the evaluation of final papers, which shall be approved by the Faculty Council on a proposal from the relevant Study Programmes Council.

The organization and evaluation of the final examinations in the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology are provided in detail in UL FSS Methodological Instructions of 2022. These requirements have been developed in accordance with the Regulations on final examinations at the University of Latvia (approved by UL Senate decision No. 183 of 27.12.2011) (University of Latvia, 2011) and Requirements for the development of final theses (bachelor's, master's theses, diploma theses and qualification theses) and defence at the University of Latvia (approved by UL Order No. 1/38 of 03.02.2012) (University of Latvia, 2012), and regulates uniform requirements for the content, design and defence of theses in UL FSS (Appendix 89).

The defence of the final thesis takes place in an open session of the final examination committee. The composition of the commission is approved each year by order of the UL rector. The chair and deputy of the commission are persons with a doctoral degree. The members of the bachelor's final examination commission must be representatives of the academic staff with a doctoral degree or master's degree. In the master's academic study programmes, the members of the final examination commission, except for the secretary, must have a doctoral degree or the academic title of assistant professor. The chair of the final examination commission of the professional master's studies and at least half of the commission members must be industry professionals. At least half of the commission members must have a doctoral degree.

The schedule of the examination commission is drawn up by the study coordinator.

The final thesis can be defended by all students who, by the end of the semester registration week, have completed their academic commitments for the previous semesters. If the study plan envisages acquisition of the study courses in the last semester as well, then the academic commitments for these study courses must be completed no later than eight weeks before the defence of the thesis. The list of students who are allowed to take the final examination is approved by the instruction of FSS dean.

When preparing to defend the thesis, the student has the right to become acquainted with the review of the thesis and reviewer's questions at least 24 hours before the defence of thesis.

The following procedure is observed in the defence of the final thesis:

- the author's presentation (up to seven minutes), characterising the research problem, theoretical basis, proposed hypothesis, research questions, introducing the progress of the thesis elaboration, the obtained results, and the main conclusions. It is also advisable to prepare handouts or demonstration material;
- answers to the questions of the reviewer, commission members and others present. Each question is answered as soon as it is asked. No more than 10 minutes are allowed for

questions and answers;

- speech/feedback of the scientific supervisor of the thesis, describing the thesis development process, work style, skills and abilities to conduct independent research, evaluation of the final result (according to the course description);
- speech of the reviewer, in which the thesis is evaluated according to the thesis evaluation criteria described in chapter 7. The reviewer concludes the speech with an evaluation, stating whether the thesis meets the requirements and the applicant should be awarded a bachelor's or master's degree. If the reviewer cannot attend the meeting, the secretary of the commission or the chair of the commission reads the previously submitted written review;
- concluding remarks – the author responds to the reviewer's remarks and, if necessary, defends his/her position.

The following is taken into account in evaluation of the final thesis:

- compliance of the thesis with quality criteria;
- the presentation of the author of the thesis (the skill to present the conducted research in a scientific, concentrated and reasoned manner, formulate conclusions, indicate the possible future research directions);
- answers to questions and the ability to debate.

After the completion of the defence procedure of all the theses provided for in the schedule, the chair of the commission announces a break in the course of the open session and announces the time of its resumption. During the break, a closed session of the committee takes place, where members of the committee decide on grades (in a 10-point system). If the scientific supervisors or reviewers of the theses cannot participate in the closed session, they must submit their assessment to the secretary of the commission before the beginning of the session. The decision on grades is made by open voting, with a simple majority vote. If there is an equal number of votes “for” and “against”, the vote of the chair of the commission is decisive. The final examination is evaluated with one grade on a 10-point scale. The lowest passing score in each part of the final examination is 4 (almost satisfactory).

In the continuation of the open session of the examination commission, the general results of the defence of the final theses are announced – the course of the defence and its results are briefly described, without mentioning the evaluations of individual theses. The grades are not publicly announced, instead, they are recorded in the minutes of the meeting and in the documentary pages of the second copy of the final thesis, and the authors of the final theses are notified individually.

The student has the right to file a complaint:

- 1) about the progress of defending the course paper;
- 2) for an error in the course paper defence evaluation process.

The complaint and documents confirming the circumstances indicated in the complaint must be submitted within five working days from the announcement of the evaluation results to the member of the teaching staff who has evaluated the process of defending the course work, in LUIS or e-study environment. The complaint is considered within five working days from the date of receipt of the application.

Upon considering a complaint, one of the following decisions may be made:

- to assign a different assessment;
- pursuant to the proposal of the member of the teaching staff, the dean of FSS makes a decision on the repeated defence of the course paper, if significant procedural violations

- have been committed in the defence of the course paper;
- to reject the complaint.

The student has the right to file an appeal:

- if the dean of FSS has not given permission to the student to take the final examinations;
- regarding the conduct of procedure of the final examination.

The appeal and documents confirming the circumstances indicated in the appeal must be submitted to the chair of the FSS Appeals Commission within three working days after the announcement of the results of the final examination or the refusal to include the student in the list of students who are allowed to take the final examinations. The FSS Appeals Commission examines the student's application within three working days after receiving the application. The appellant is invited to the commission meeting. The commission's decision is issued to the student in writing.

Upon consideration of the appeal, one of the following decisions may be made:

- to permit the student to take final examinations (if the dean of FSS had not given a permission to take final examinations);
- to allow the final examination to be retaken (if an appeal was submitted regarding the conduct of the final examinations);
- to reject the appeal.

#### **2.1.6. Description and assessment of the academic integrity principles, the mechanisms for compliance with these principles, and the way in which the stakeholders are informed. Specify the plagiarism detection tools used by providing examples of the use of these tools and mechanisms.**

UL respects the principles and standards of fair and responsible conduct as stipulated in The Academic Ethics Code of the University of Latvia, (UL Senate decision No. 2-3/46 of 26.04.2021) and in the Regulations on Academic Integrity at the University of Latvia (UL Senate decision No. 2-3/48 of 26.04.2021) and publicly available to UL students and staff,

In order to improve the comprehension of the current problems in the field of academic integrity and to develop the competence required for implementation of academic integrity in research activities and the study process, in 2021 the University of Latvia developed a continuing education course on Academic Integrity (the course is 1 credit point or 16 academic hours). As part of the course, lectures, discussions and case analysis are planned on the principles of academic integrity, their implementation in various fields of science, types of plagiarism and their prevention, other types of violations of academic integrity, such as data falsification and conflicts of interest, fundamental principles of research ethics, as well as ethics in the process of scientific publishing.

To prevent violation of academic integrity principles, UL has developed the Unified Computerised Plagiarism Control System (hereinafter – System), (UL Order No. 1/125 of 22.04.2014). The System verifies students' final research papers and theses. Likewise, the procedure has been established to determine further course of action (Appendix to UL Order No 1/125 of 22.04.2014) in the event of finding indications of plagiarism.

UL as the developer of the system and its operator constantly updates the System and provides other higher education institutions of Latvia with the opportunity to use the System on the basis of a cooperation agreement. Currently, based on the cooperation agreement, seven higher education

institutions in Latvia, Daugavpils University, Liepaja University, Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies, Riga Stradiņš University, Rezekne Academy of Technologies, University College of Economics and Culture, as well as Riga International School of Economics and Business Administration use the System.

The system automatically compares the final theses uploaded to the systems of these higher education institutions, incl. materials available on the Internet, and in the event of a certain percentage match, the study programme directors are sent an overview of these test results, whereby the same text fragments from different authors can be viewed simultaneously. The programme directors pass this information on to the appointed supervisor and reviewer of the respective paper for review and, in the event of a suspected breach of academic integrity, pass on the results of the analysis to the final examination commission for final consideration.

The study programmes of the study field use the system established by UL and examine final theses (diploma theses, bachelor's, master's and doctoral theses), as well as course papers and drafts of theses submitted for pre-defence. Written reports submitted within courses are not checked. If text matches are found during the check, study programme directors, supervisors and reviewers of the respective paper or thesis are informed in accordance with UL regulations and procedures. The final decision is made by the study programme director. In February 2022, a working group of UL experts was established, which evaluated three products (Turnitin, StrikePlagiarism and PlagiarismCheck) and gave a recommendation to UL governance. Procurement was prepared in April of 2022. The new system will be integrated into Moodle and will allow each teaching staff member to work individually with the papers submitted in their courses, incl. written reports. The cooperation of several higher education institutions in the sphere of unified computerized plagiarism control promotes a more effective scrutiny of study papers in each higher education institution and in Latvia as a whole. This system works successfully in practice, raising the standing and quality of the diploma papers.

The academic staff of the study field promotes students' comprehension of the principles of academic integrity. In the first study week at UL FSS, the first-year students are introduced to the study process, lecturers and the principles of academic integrity. Bachelor's, master's and doctoral level students acquire knowledge about academic integrity and ethics in study courses. Academic staff provide advice on issues of academic integrity and timely feedback when supervising course papers, bachelor's, master's and doctoral theses.

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

### **2.2.1. Assessment of the efficiency of the internal quality assurance system within the study field by specifying the measures undertaken to achieve the aims and outcomes of the study programmes and to ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field and the relevant study programmes.**

The functioning of a sustainable study programme that meets the objectives of the study field and study programme goals is ensured by systematically defining and implementing quality assurance procedures, including continuous monitoring and analysis of the implementation of the study programme and the use of measurements for the prompt implementation of preventive and improvement measures. The provision of management levels involved in the quality assurance of

the study programme allows the programmes to be implemented in a predefined form according to predefined procedures, reacting promptly to possible changes in the situation, with quality-related decisions being taken collectively or according to the division of competences. An important methodological tool for quality assurance is the Quality Management System Manual of the University of Latvia, which identifies in detail the practice of the University of Latvia in ESG implementation (UL Quality Management System Manual, Chapter 3).

The following activities are the most relevant for the implementation of quality improvement measures within the internal quality assurance system:

- A new, joint doctoral study programme in Social Sciences was developed and implemented in accordance with the procedure for the development of study programmes and their approval specified in the UL Quality Management System Manual (3.1.2);
- A student-centred study approach has been developed and introduced in the study programmes of the study field in accordance with Chapter 3.1.3 of the UL Quality Management System Manual. For example, an update of the study course descriptions of the study field has been carried out, formulating precise learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, competences). Students are also involved in promoting research. For example, in 2020, the 1<sup>st</sup>-year students of the bachelor's study programme Political Science developed a study on Latvian society's outlook on the Covid-19 pandemic. In the study courses "Introduction to International Politics" and "Introduction to Public Administration" students conducted an applied study on the current challenges caused by Covid-19 for the country and society. The study consisted of several thematic blocks: a representative survey of public opinion; review of the operation and communication of state institutions under conditions of crisis; media communication and disinformation under conditions of pandemic;
- The evaluation of the work results achieved by professors and associate professors of the study field has been initiated in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 129 of 25.02.2021 Procedure for the Evaluation of the Scientific and Pedagogical Qualifications or Artistic Creativity of a Professor or Associate Professor Candidate and of a Professor or Associate Professor in Office. Teaching staff members are provided with staff training and internship opportunities. For example, the European Social Fund project No. 8.2.2 Strengthening the Academic Staff of Higher Education Institutions in the Fields of Strategic Specialization. Within the framework of the 1<sup>st</sup> round of professional development activities, the following professional development activities have been carried out:
  - The teaching staff members have improved their proficiency of English language (216 academic hours) – 3 members of academic staff;
  - Completed traineeship (100 or 200 hours) – 2 members of academic staff;
  - Participated in courses (course length 9–16 academic hours) – 9 members of academic staff

The aforementioned activities correspond to UL Quality Management Handbook, Chapter 3.1.5;

- The construction of the House of Letters has commenced, which is a decisive step for the modernization of the infrastructure of the study field and the promotion of new cooperation, and corresponds to Chapter 3.1.6 of the UL Quality Management Handbook – provision of learning resources;
- Every year, a centralized survey of students and graduates is conducted regarding the quality of the study course. In 2022, a survey of employers of the study field is conducted. Cooperation and dialogue with employers has been embarked upon. These activities comply with Chapter 3.1.7 of the UL Quality Management Handbook – information management;
- UL FSS website is regularly updated and supplemented with information about the study programmes, teaching staff and students of the study field in compliance with Chapter 3.1.8

of the UL Quality Management Handbook;

- Study programmes are continuously evaluated and improved according to Chapter 3.1.9 of the UL Quality Management System Manual. For example, new study courses, annual study course reports and other relevant documents are discussed with employers, students and teaching staff at the meetings of the Study Field Council.

The issues of quality assurance of the study field are considered and discussed in the departments, Study Field Council (in which teaching staff, employers, graduates and students are represented) and in the FSS Council. The quality assurance system of the study field functions effectively and in accordance with the goals of the study field.

**2.2.2. Analysis and assessment of the system and the procedures for the development and review of the study programmes by providing specific examples of the review of the study programmes, the aims, and regularity, as well as the stakeholders and their responsibilities. If, during the reporting period, new study programmes have been developed within the study field, describe the procedures of their development (including the process of the approval of study programmes).**

Normative regulations, where the procedure and actions that should be followed during the creation and revision process of study programmes are stated in the:

- [Regulations on University of Latvia Study and Continuing Education Programmes](#)
- [Procedure for Preparation of the Annual Reports of the Study Fields of the University of Latvia](#) (available only in Latvian)

The DSP in Social Sciences approval process was as follows: (1) The working group that developed the DSP programme submitted it for approval to the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology Study Field Council. (2) The programme was approved by the Study Field Council and submitted for further approval to the Faculty Council. (3) Following approval of the study programme in the Faculty Council, the study programme was submitted to the UL Quality Evaluation Committee and formatted according to the requirements of the “rules for the licensing of study programmes”. Two independent experts were appointed by the Chairman of the Quality Assessment Committee. (4) On the basis of the independent expert evaluations, the Quality Assessment Committee analyzed the quality and compliance of the study programme with the requirements of the regulatory documents and voted to approve the study programme and pass it up to the Senate. (5) The UL Senate heard a report from the Chair of the Quality Assessment Committee and decided to approve the application for a license. (6) Implementation of the new study programme in Social Sciences was assigned to the programme director, appointed by the Senate, and the Dean of the faculty.

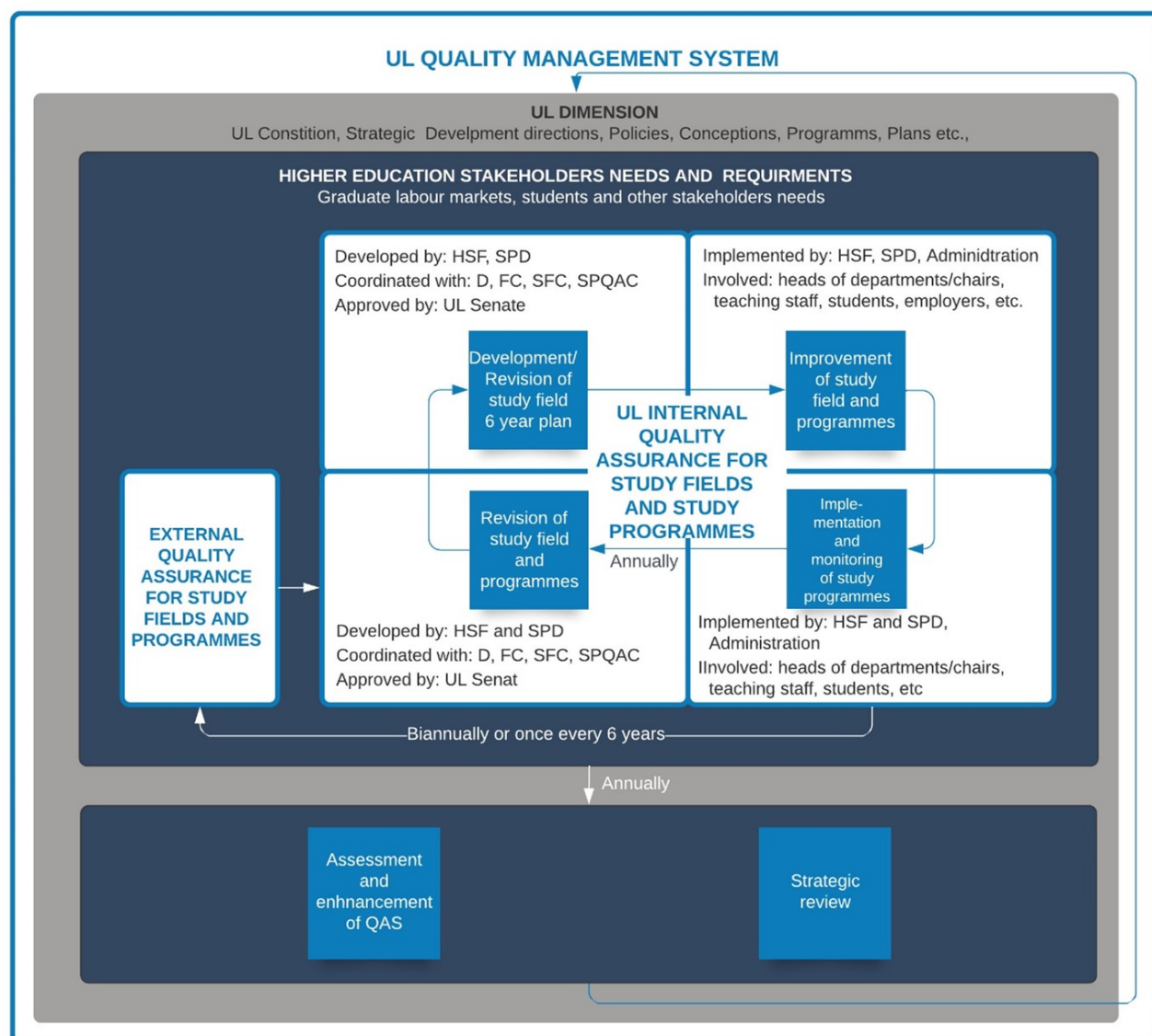
The quality of the study field and its study programmes is managed through a Plan-Do-Check-Act or Deming Cycle, planning the development and improvement of the study field over a six-year period, cascading its goals and objectives down to the level of each study programme and regularly monitoring the requirements of stakeholders for effective planning, needs and proponents, in accordance with the UL Development Strategy, taking into account national and international sectoral policies and trends, as well as the impact of global environmental trends on the activities of UL to the level of study programmes.

**Within the framework of UL quality assurance system** (see Fig. 2.2.2.1), the development of the study field and the interconnection of study programmes therein, the establishment of new



study programmes, as well as the learning outcomes of each existing study programme are planned, monitored, evaluated and reviewed, ensuring the involvement of all levels of the study field management, as well as representatives of key stakeholders in the quality assurance of studies. The review of study programmes is regulated by the procedure for preparation of the annual reports of the study fields of the University of Latvia (UL Order No. 1/255 of 13.07.2018).

Fig. 2.2.2.1. Quality assurance system for the study fields implemented by the University of Latvia and the study programmes included in it



Abbreviations and acronyms:

D - dean, FC - faculty council, SFC - study field council, HSF - head of study field, SP QAC -study programmes quality assessment commission

The development of new study programmes is regulated by the Regulations of Study Programmes and Continuing Education Programmes of the University of Latvia (approved by the UL Senate Decision No. 102 of 24.04.2017), it is implemented in several stages, including coordination and evaluation at all levels of governance involved in the quality assurance of studies twice - by coordinating and approving the study programme concept, as well as coordinating and approving the study programme characteristics at the end of the process. For a detailed description of the development of the programme and the content of the concept, see the Quality Management Handbook , Chapter 3.1, Section II. (*The Quality Management Handbook* is available in the section *Other attachments*)

In the process of self-assessment and development of new study programmes, responsibilities are divided between the study programme directors, the head of the study field, the Study Field

Council, the Faculty Council, the Academic Department and the Study Programme Quality Assessment Commission, as well as the Senate.

UL heads of study fields in cooperation with the directors of study programmes, prepare annual study field self-assessment reports (hereinafter – Self-assessment report) (procedure approved by UL Order No 1/373 of 16.09.2016.). Self-assessment reports are approved by the faculty councils and submitted to the Academic Department. The Academic Department checks self-assessment reports for compliance and them to the SP QAC composed of all vice-rectors, the Chair of the UL Senate Academic Committee, the UL student representative, the UL Alumni Club representative, the UL Library representative, the Quality Manager, the Internal Auditor, as well as representatives of the Academic Department and the Department of Study Service. The self-assessment reports reflect the implementation of the programmes, developments, newly introduced changes and evolution thereof, as well as the assessment by stakeholders, both in terms of student survey results and the assessment expressed by employers. In the process of self-assessment of study programmes, as well as development of a new study programme, the Academic Department also provides for independent expertise, the implementation of substantiated proposals of which is considered at the SP QAC meeting. Accreditation self-assessment reports are prepared using the annual self-assessment results. The recommendations of the Accreditation and Licensing Evaluation Expert Group and the Study Quality Commission are evaluated by the Study Field Council, preparing a plan for the implementation of expert recommendations, which is agreed with the SP QAC. More information on the content of the self-assessment of study programmes and the process of ensuring external accreditation is available in Sections IX and X of Chapter 3.1 of the UL Quality Management Handbook .

During the review period of the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology, a new joint doctoral study programme Social Sciences was developed. The doctoral study programme Social Sciences was created under the operational programme Growth and Employment, specific objective 8.2.1 project Creation of Internationally Competitive Study Programmes Promoting the Development of Latvia's National Economy at the University of Latvia. The development of the programme was started on the basis of the previous doctoral study programmes Communication Science, Sociology, Political Science, developing the concept for the new doctoral study programme Social Sciences, which was approved at the UL SC QAC meeting on 11 October 2020. The elaboration of the concept was carried out by the study programme development working group, which consisted of representatives of the DSP Communication Science, Sociology, Political Science, FSS Dean's Office and FSS Advanced Social and Political Research Institute (ASPRI). Teaching staff of the relevant fields from the Department of Information and Library Studies, the Department of Communication Studies, the Department of Political Science, the Department of Sociology of the Faculty of Social Sciences, as well as from the Faculty of Computing, the Faculty of Humanities, the Faculty of Education, Psychology and Art are involved in the development of study courses of the study programme.

The study programme has been developed:

1. taking into account the content of the previously existing study programmes, best practice examples and achievements, expert recommendations during the accreditation process of the three former doctoral study programmes, the opinion of the directors of the doctoral study programmes functioning at FSS;
2. analysing the offer of similar study programmes in Latvia and the nearest neighbouring countries, taking into account the best practice examples in the implementation of doctoral study programmes of EU countries and the USA;
3. taking into account the dynamics of the number of students at UL as a whole and at FSS in the past, as well as future perspectives;

4. analysing the results of surveys of students and graduates of study programmes to date;
5. taking into account the ten Salzburg principles for building a knowledge society in Europe of the European University Association (EUA),<sup>[1]</sup> World Bank expert recommendations (2016–2018);<sup>[2]</sup>
6. taking into account the requirements and recommendations for ensuring the quality of studies and research, the need to ensure academic integrity;<sup>[3]</sup>
7. the content of the programme, its components, structure, the competence to be achieved as a result of acquiring the programme have been created and discussed both with industry experts, representatives of the UL administration, as well as with the social partners of the field.

In the initial stages of the development of the programme project, on 23 January 2020, FSS held a seminar with faculty lecturers of the target project Creation of Internationally Competitive Study Programmes Promoting the Development of Latvia's National Economy at the University of Latvia, involving the representatives of administration and employers (National Library of Latvia, Research Centre SKDS, Technopolis Group, State Probation Service, Kantar TNS), to discuss the experience of foreign universities (of Great Britain and Denmark) in the implementation of doctoral programmes and the principles and possible structure of creating a new programme. An Associate Professor from Aarhus University (Denmark) participated in the seminar and spoke about the experience of Danish universities in the creation and implementation of doctoral study programmes in social sciences. The concept of the doctoral study programme Social Sciences was supported by student representatives, as well as employers at the seminar, with particular emphasis on the interdisciplinary nature of the programme and the expansion of employment opportunities for programme graduates.

<sup>[1]</sup> Salzburg II Recommendations. European Universities' Achievements since 2005 in Implementing the Salzburg Principles, 2010

<https://eua.eu/component/attachments/attachments.html?task=attachment&id=1881>

<sup>[2]</sup>

<https://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/petijums-par-augstakas-izglitiba-parvaldibu-sadarbiba-ar-pasaules-banku> (available only in Latvian)

<sup>[3]</sup> The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), Quality Code, Chapter B11: Research Degrees, 2018, p. 11-12:

[https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/advice-and-guidance-research-degrees.pdf?sfvrsn=b424c181\\_2](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/advice-and-guidance-research-degrees.pdf?sfvrsn=b424c181_2)

**2.2.3. Description of the procedures and/or systems according to which the students are expected to submit complaints and proposals (except for the surveys to be conducted among the students). Specify whether and how the students have access to the information on the possibilities to submit complaints and proposals and how the outcomes of the examination of the complaints and proposals and the improvements of the study field and the relevant study programmes are communicated by providing the respective examples.**

In keeping with the principles of democracy and equality, and in line with the UL Quality Assurance Policy, all stages of the study process, from admissions to final thesis, the participation of applicants and students in the evaluation of the UL study process is ensured. In matters relating to

the admission procedure, UL applicants have the right to lodge complaints with the Chair of the Admission Board.

The right of UL applicants to lodge complaints regarding irregularities in the admission procedure are governed by Admission Regulations at the University of Latvia (UL Senate Decision No. 2-3/68 of 31.05.2021), specifying the procedures for the lodging, processing and appeal of the complaint.

To ensure the quality of the study process, in 2022 the UL reworked the Procedure for the Submission and Resolution of Students' Proposals and Complaints (the UL Order No 1/21 of 18.02.2002) of 2002 and replaced it with the Order of Submitting and Examining Proposals and Complaints of the Students (the UL Order No 1-4/501 of 28.09.2022.) (available only in Latvian) (hereinafter – the Procedure). This procedure defines the form in which students, individually or in a group, can submit proposals and complaints. It also defines the order in which proposals and complaints are registered and reviewed. Proposals and complaints can be submitted to faculty deans or vice rectors (in case they concern the deans work or if the submission may unfavourably influence the future studies). The procedure stipulates that replies to proposals and complaints are to be submitted within the deadline set in the [Law on Submissions](#). It should be noted that this Procedure states that faculty deans and vice rectors submit the report on received proposals and complaints, as well as the decisions made regarding them in the previous academic year, to the quality manager by the end of each academic year. The quality manager of the UL assesses those reports, analyses tendencies, and prepares report to the Management of the UL.

Procedure for the organisation of study course examinations at the University of Latvia (UL Senate Decision No. 211 of 29.06.2015) has been developed and implemented for the comprehensive evaluation of UL study processes, determining the right of students to file complaints regarding the implementation and assessment for interim and final examinations, and the procedures for handling these complaints. The student has a right to submit the complaint to the member of academic staff who has evaluated the examination, within five working days from announcement of the assessment on LUIS (on condition that the student has requested a validation for the assessment from the academic staff prior to submitting the complaint). The lecturer must review the application within 5 working days. If the lecturer considers that the student's application is not substantiated, they shall submit the application to the head of department for consideration and decision.

As regards the evaluation of graduation examinations, Regulation on graduation examinations at the University of Latvia (UL Senate Decision No. 183 of 27.12.2011) has been drawn up, which stipulates that the students are entitled to appeal if the dean has not given them permission to take the final examinations or to submit an appeal against the final examination procedure.

The University of Latvia also has an Academic Court of Arbitration, whose regulations provide for the opportunity to apply to this collegial institution regarding any study-related issues, including control over adherence to the principles of assessment.

The students have the right to appeal against the UL order on the ex-matriculation in conformity with the University of Latvia state budget subsidized study place competition (rotation) procedure (UL Senate Decision No. 381 of 24.05.2010), whereas Procedure for application for tuition fee discounts (UL Order No. 1/89 of 14.04.2009) provides students with an opportunity to contest the decisions on granting or refusing tuition fee discounts within one month from notification issued to the student by submitting a written application addressed to the rector of the University of Latvia, to be considered by the Rector within one month.

The procedure for discontinuing studies at the University of Latvia (UL Senate Decision No.178 of 01.12.2008) provides for the right to appeal against the decision of the dean refusing to grant a

student a study break. Procedure for the commencement of studies in the subsequent stages of studies at the University of Latvia (UL Order No. 1/128 of 08.06.2009) provides for the right to appeal against the decisions made by the dean within a specified period of time.

In compliance with the rights of students outside the study process, for those students who use the UL dormitories, the Internal regulations of the University of Latvia dormitories (UL Order No. 1/171 of 30.06.2009) define the rights and obligations of students, including the right to submit complaints about problems in dormitories. The service-hotel-related and catering issues are addressed by the dormitory superintendent.

Every student has the right not only to use the right provided by the Code of Academic Ethics of the University of Latvia (UL Senate Decision No. 2-3/46 of 26.04.2021) to address the Academic Ethics Committee of the University of Latvia about possible ethical violations, but also to submit proposals for improvement of the Code and its implementation to the Academic Ethics Committee of the University of Latvia.

The proposals and complaints concerning all processes are registered with the structural units or commissions where they are submitted, and further supplemented by notes regarding the outcomes of the enquiry taken and respective resolutions.

At the normative level, the Regulations on visiting students from Latvian higher education institutions (UL Order No. 1/17 of 25.01.2006) have defined the principle that visiting students have the same rights and obligations as the students of UL, consequently, the system of submission and consideration of complaints and proposals is equally applicable to these students.

It follows from the above that the centralized segment of the UL Complaint and Proposal Submission and Review System encompasses all the components of every student's study life, as it applies to enrolment at the UL, throughout the full cycle of studies, and final examinations.

Students in the BSP Sociology, MSP Sociology, BSP Cultural and Social Anthropology, MSP Cultural and Social Anthropology have not submitted complaints since 2013, whereas appeal has been submitted – to the FSS Appeal Commission on 16.06.2021. the appeal of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year student of BSP Sociology has been submitted concerning the defence of the bachelor's thesis. The appeal was rejected because no violations were found to have taken place during the final examination. In BSP Political Science, MSP Political Science and MSP Diplomacy three complaints have been received since 2013, all of them in 2018 concerning the “tactless behaviour” of one leading researcher. Appeals for the defence of final theses were not submitted.

Since 2013, no student proposals have been received in BSP Sociology, MSP Sociology, BSP Cultural and Social Anthropology, MSP Cultural and Social Anthropology. BSP Political Science, MSP Political Science and MSP Diplomacy since 2013 have received a total of one student proposal. Pursuant to the Regulations for the implementation of UL epidemiological safety measures during the spread of Covid-19 (approved by UL Order No. 1-4/180 of 09.04.2021) paragraph 14.4, one student has submitted an application with a request to postpone the deadline for elaboration and defence of the bachelor's thesis due to the conditions brought about by Covid-19 to the autumn semester of 2021 – the application of the student enrolled in part-time extramural studies was rejected as unfounded, because the student had not completed all study commitments, and that prevented her from registration for preparation of a bachelor's thesis in the spring semester of 2021, as well as precluded that student from taking the final examination pursuant to the instruction of the dean of FSS.

**2.2.4. Provide information on the mechanism for collecting the statistical data, as developed by the higher education institution/ college. Specify the type of data to be collected, the regularity of collection, and the way the information is used to improve the study field. Describe the mechanism for obtaining and providing feedback, including with regard to the work with the students, graduates, and employers.**

To control, analyse and forecast the dynamics of the number of students, twice a year, UL collects the following data:

- the data characterizing the number of applicants and matriculated students and their profile, such as secondary education institution, year of graduation from that institution, assessment obtained in secondary education examinations, age, gender, previous higher education and the assessment obtained in examinations thereof;
- the number of students, broken down by faculties, study programmes, study levels, study years, forms and types of studies, source of study financing, status of studies – ex-matriculated on the grounds of academic non-compliance, ex-matriculated on the grounds of financial non-compliance, ex-matriculated on the grounds of completion of studies, on academic leave.

In order to control the progress of students' studies and the implementation of the programme, UL collects data regarding:

- intermediate assessment and final assessment of study courses acquired by the students, broken down by type of examination, final results of final examinations, weighted average grade; the data are collected once a semester;
- completion of the study programme in compliance with the requirements set for the acquisition of the programme, broken down by study semesters, parts of the programme (mandatory part, restricted elective part, free elective part and others, according to the structure of the programme); the data are collected once a semester;
- students' academic failures in credit points, by semesters, parts of the programme, study courses; the data are collected once a semester;
- compliance with the tuition fee schedule provided for in the student agreement, broken down by study programmes and semesters.

In order to obtain information for planning and efficient use of study resources, the following statistical information is collected with regard to study programmes:

- financing of study places, broken down by state-funded, UL-funded and student-funded study places;
- the number of student scholarship recipients and the number of the student loans, as well as the students who receive student loans;

In order to prevent violations of the principles of academic integrity in UL students' final theses and doctoral theses, UL ensures automatic examination of all the submitted final theses and doctoral theses by using the Unified computerized plagiarism control system, comparing their content with the other final theses submitted to UL and other higher education institutions accumulated in the System.

Some cases of plagiarism have been detected in the study field during the reporting period.

For example, in 24.12.2020 in BSP Cultural and Social Anthropology, a 1<sup>st</sup>-year student submitted a plagiarised paper instead of an individual study (examination). The violation was a repeated one,

and the consequences had already been explained to the student. After the plagiarism was discovered, a report was submitted to the dean and it was asked to provide for retaking the final examination for a fee. The dean made a decision requiring the student to retake the examination. On 16.06.2021, a case of plagiarism was found in an essay submitted by a 1<sup>st</sup>-year student of BSP Cultural and Social Anthropology – a completed report form was submitted to the dean, and since it was a repeated violation and the student had already been warned, it was decided to have the work re-written and to request an additional essay on preventing plagiarism.

Since 2013, no reports have not been submitted involving breach of academic integrity in the papers submitted by the students either in BSP Sociology or MSP Sociology. Since 2013, the following reports on breach of academic integrity in papers submitted by the students have been submitted within BSP Political Science and MSP Political Science, as well as MSP Diplomacy:

- In 2017 – 1 report on plagiarism in a bachelor's thesis – the student was expelled for a significant breach of the rules of internal order for students; and 1 report on plagiarism in a master's thesis – the student was expelled for a significant breach of the rules of internal order for students;
- In 2018 – 1 report on plagiarism in a bachelor's thesis – a student was expelled for a significant breach of the rules of internal order for students;
- In 2020 – 1 report on plagiarism in a bachelor's thesis – the student was expelled for a significant violation of internal rules for students.

In order to evaluate the satisfaction of students, graduates and employers with the quality of studies and the learning outcomes, as well as to implement the necessary improvement measures, the UL organizes and compiles data from the following surveys:

- a survey at the beginning of studies, which is conducted electronically once a year. The survey aims to obtain information for the improvement of student attraction activities. The tasks of the survey are: (1) to find out students' motivations for choosing a university and study programme, (2) to find out sources of information about studying at the University, (3) to obtain an assessment of the application and registration process, and (4) to find out the socio-demographic portrait of respondents who have started their studies. Data on each study programme are collected in LUIS, whereas in UL as a whole data are collected and analysed by the Academic Department. The results of the survey are presented to the UL governance and administration, departments and faculty administration, and the necessary improvement measures are proposed by the UL governance, faculty administration and programme directors in cooperation with the Academic Department;
- a survey of the first-year students on their first study experience, also conducted electronically once a year. The survey aims to obtain information for the improvement of the study environment and the promotion of student adaptation. The tasks of the survey are: (1) to find out students' opinions on different aspects of studies and (2) to find out students' opinions about what support is needed when starting studies. Data on each study programme are collected in LUIS, whereas in UL as a whole data are collected and analysed by the Academic Department. The results of the survey are presented to the UL governance and administration, departments and faculty administration, and the necessary improvement measures are proposed by the UL governance, faculty administration and programme directors in cooperation with the Academic Department;
- in order to find out students' opinions about the content of the study courses and to obtain the evaluation of the work of the teaching staff, every semester an electronic survey is conducted on the study courses, including study internship, term papers and final papers. Data on each study programme are collected by LUIS and are available to the teaching staff, programme directors and the dean of the faculty, the Academic Department. The data is

analysed by the programme directors, the dean, and the necessary improvement measures are proposed by the programme director, the dean, and the Study Field Council. The results are used to prepare annual reviews of study fields, as well as to develop study programme development plans;

- in order to obtain students' evaluation of the study programme for its further development, improvement of the study process, improvement of the quality and study environment, a survey of the students of the last study year on the study programme as a whole is conducted. The survey is conducted electronically once for each study programme. The data collection on each study programme is performed by LUIS and is available to the programme directors and the dean of the faculty. The data is analysed by the programme directors, the dean, and the necessary improvement measures are proposed by the programme director, the dean, and the Study Field Council. The results are used in the preparation of annual study field reviews, study field self-assessment reports for the field accreditation and re-accreditation, and in the preparation of study programme development plans;
- in order to identify the main reasons for discontinuation of studies and to facilitate the reduction of drop-out rates, a survey of students who have expressed a wish to discontinue studies or have already discontinued studies is conducted. The survey is conducted electronically (in some cases, in paper form) throughout the academic year. Data are collected and analysed by the Academic Department once a semester. The results of the survey are presented to the UL governance and the administration of the faculty;
- the aim of the alumni survey is to obtain an assessment of alumni satisfaction with the quality of the programme, the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired at UL, the contribution of the programme they have graduated to their employment, as well as their plans to continue their studies. The survey is carried out by the programme directors at their discretion using a questionnaire prepared by the Academic Department;
- the aim of the employer survey is to determine how employers assess the relevance of the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired by UL graduates to the requirements of the labour market. The survey is carried out at the discretion of the programme directors using a questionnaire prepared by the Academic Department.

By implementing the recommendations of the foundation “Academic Information Centre”, the Study Quality Commission and evaluation expert groups, and the recommendations of UL internal audit, a review of the survey system has taken place, implementing the following tasks: 1) to carry out regular evaluation of the effectiveness of surveys; 2) to develop proposals for streamlining the acquisition and use of student feedback; 3) to update the procedure for conducting regular surveys. Consequently, the UL student survey system has been reviewed and evaluated, and the following results have been achieved: 1) the content of survey questionnaires revised; 2) the methods of collecting survey results appropriate to requirements of UL selected; 3) the measures defined for effective use of survey results; 4) the necessary changes in LUIS formulated, as well as the updates to the regulatory framework. Until 01.05.2022, the following has already been completed: 1) updating and abbreviated survey questionnaires; 2) the revised and approved new version of the Procedure of regular surveys for the evaluation of the study process at the University of Latvia, whereby the availability of survey results to students and their representative organizations (UL Student Council and faculty self-governments) is clearly stipulated; 3) a methodology has been created for revision of course surveys, which should be completed by 2023, reducing their number from 4 to 2, as well as shortening the survey questionnaires.

All the aforementioned survey forms are used in the analysis and updating of the study programmes within the UL study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology. A survey of students and graduates about the quality of the study course is conducted annually. Every year, the head of the study field, in cooperation with the study programme directors, prepares a report on



the operation of the study field and the programmes therein during the academic year. In the process of preparing the report, statistical data is collected and analysed, and the obtained information is used for the evaluation and improvement of the study field. The report includes the following statistical data, which are collected and analysed annually:

- number of students in programmes, showing the total number, the number of students matriculated in the first academic year, the number of graduates, drop-out rate, separately identifying different forms, types and languages of study;
- outcoming and incoming mobility of students, their participation in exchange programmes;
- composition of the teaching staff, indicating the position, number of academic staff with a doctoral degree, mobility of teaching staff;
- the ratio of students to teaching staff;
- the number of employers in the sector involved in the implementation of the programme;
- summary and analysis of the results of the student survey about the courses and the programme as a whole.

Statistical data are constantly used in the work and development planning of the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology. The data compilations of graduates, students and employers are provided in Appendix 8. Data collections are used to improve study programmes, teaching and assessment methods. Student evaluations affect the exclusion of low-quality study courses from the programme.

Table 8.1 (Appendix Survey analysis) summarizes **the survey data (on year of graduation) of the graduates** of the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology. Surveys are conducted regularly and in centralised manner, using the UL electronic system. Graduate survey data show relatively high stability in the quality assessment of study programmes. Graduates are generally satisfied with their choice of the study programme of the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology (fluctuations 75%–87% during the reporting period) and believe that the courses included in the study programme complement each other, forming a systematic understanding of the field (74%–82%), that the study courses have been interesting and useful (80%–89%), that the teaching staff has been competent and knowledgeable (86%–94%), and express satisfaction with the offered lectures by guest lecturers (70%–81%). Graduates also positively evaluate the opportunity to “express an assessment of the courses included in the programme” (79%–89%).

In the previous accreditation of the study field “Sociology and Political Science”, experts recommended to improve e-resources of the field. The data of the graduate survey shows a rapid improvement in the indicator “E-courses were well prepared and made the study process easier for me” (from 56% in 2015/2016 to 79% in 2020/2021), and a more moderate improvement in the indicator “Information necessary for studies in LUIS was easy to find” (from 74% in 2015/2016 to 81% in 2020/2021).

The graduate survey data also points to specific weaknesses that the course instructors should resolve. For example, skills and knowledge should be more adapted to the requirements of employers (the rating of the indicator “I use the knowledge and skills acquired during my studies at work” varies from 39% to 57%, while the rating of “The study programme prepared me for the labour market” – from 44% to 58%).

**The survey of employers** (Table 8.2 in Appendix Survey analysis) reveals that employers value the theoretical knowledge of graduates highly, whereas the practical skills of graduates they assess slightly more critically. Relatively lower assessment was given to “ability to work with numbers and mathematical operations”, “ability to make decisions and validate them” and “ability to plan, manage and organize work of others”. Relatively higher ratings were given to “ability to acquire

new knowledge and skills”, “ability to find and process information”, “ability to work with a computer”, “communication skills (oral communication, business correspondence, report preparation, presentation, etc.)”, “ability to work in the team” and “responsible attitude towards work”.

The survey also points to shortcomings in the cooperation of the study field with employers, whose involvement in the “development and improvement of study programmes” and “cooperation in research and/or the use of technical facilities of UL” should be increased, and they should also be asked to attend “forums and conferences organized by UL” more frequently. The possibilities of eliminating these shortcomings are described in the Study Field Development Plan.

Table 8.3. (Appendix Survey analysis) provides **the average evaluations of the study courses** given by the students (lowest evaluation – 1, highest – 7). Overall, students give the study courses a positive evaluation (similar to the survey of graduates). In academic year 2020/2021, only 1 (out of a total of 64) master's level courses and 1 (out of a total of 92) bachelor's level courses were rated below 5 points.

In the second part of Appendix 8, the data of graduates, students and employers are analysed at the level of study programmes.

**2.2.5. Specify the websites (e.g., the homepage) on which the information on the study field and the relevant study programmes is published (in all languages in which the study programmes are implemented) by indicating the persons responsible for the compliance of the information available on the website with the information published in the official registers (State Education Information System (VIIS), E-platform).**

The target audience of the UL website <https://www.lu.lv/en/> (hereinafter referred to as the website) is the prospective and current students of UL, employees, cooperation partners, researchers, scientists and the general public.

The website is intended for access to and storage of public information, providing its visitors with an opportunity to acquaint themselves with the activities of UL in the digital environment on the internet.

The website consists of the following sections:

- ROTATING NEWS – important information of the University of Latvia through the visual identity of the University of Latvia, which has certain parameters and strengthens the image of the University and promotes its visibility in the digital environment.
- NEWS AND EVENTS – news and events at the UL. Information is prepared by the Department of Communication in coordination with other UL structural units.
- DISCOVER UL – information about studies, extracurricular activities, research.
- STUDIES – with subdivisions:
  - College study programmes,
  - Bachelor's study programmes,
  - Master's study programmes,
  - Doctoral study programmes,
  - Residency.

The information is prepared and posted on the website by the Department of Communication in

cooperation with the Academic Department and the Department of Study Service.

The STUDIES section in Latvian provides information on programme goals, objectives, study outcomes, programme volume and duration, programme language, information about employment opportunities after graduation, as well as programme study plans. In case of questions, the contact details for inquiries are provided. This section also contains study-relevant information under the heading STUDY PROCESS – Academic calendar, Lecture timetable, Tutorials, Key documents and forms, Information on mobility to higher education institutions abroad, Recognition of experience/education, Lifelong learning opportunities, as well as references to UL e-learning environment and the UL information system LUIS.

The section contains information about the offer of the University of Latvia Libraries, Career Centre, Student Council activities.

The two subsections STUDENT LIFE and EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES inform both current and potential students about service hotels, meals, car and bicycle parking, mentor support, and provide information for people with disabilities. There is a wide range of information on how to enrich one's extra-curricular life with sport, culture.

The ADMISSION section contains information for pupils, as well as the prospective and current students. In this section, the pupils can get acquainted with the events and creative competitions organized by the faculty of their interest, the participation wherein and successful performance can give additional admission points. The prospective students can obtain the information on all levels of programmes, admission requirements, study loan and scholarship information, as well as opportunities for the recommencement of studies on the website. The prospective students can familiarize themselves with the most frequently asked questions and answers, information on Career Centre activities, preparatory courses and classes for pupils.

Other sections – Science, Cooperation, About Us. They provide more information about UL activities in research, projects, conferences, cooperation partners, normative acts, strategy.

The website [www.lu.lv/par-mums/dokumenti/pasnovertejuma-zinojumi/](http://www.lu.lv/par-mums/dokumenti/pasnovertejuma-zinojumi/) (available only in Latvian) contains annual self-assessment reports of the study field.

The websites of the structural units (faculties) provide information on the programmes offered by the respective faculty and on the research activities of the faculty. Content blocks exactly correspond to the ones on the main UL website, but more specific information is posted about the activities of the respective faculty.

UL FSS has its own website <https://www.szf.lu.lv/en/>, which in 2022 has been supplemented with the page of the virtual exhibition in Latvian language, dedicated to the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of FSS <https://www.szfizstade.lu.lv/> (available only in Latvian). The faculty has its own accounts on social network platforms Facebook (with more than 3000 followers), Instagram (more than 800 followers), Twitter (almost 2000 followers) and Youtube, where almost 50 different videos are published.

As of this year, the website of the faculty is available in both Latvian and English. It summarizes the most important information about the opportunities to study in various UL FSS study programmes at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels, as well as the offers of cooperation universities and Erasmus+ programmes. The descriptions detail the conditions for successful studying and completing the studies, including links to LU.lv, where additional information is available. A special section for pupils in Latvian language is dedicated to competitions and courses for secondary school students, which can facilitate obtaining a state-budget-funded place at UL FSS. Current academic calendars, study and lecture plans, as well as information on lecturers' appointment times are published separately for students. Information about almost all lecturers and guest lecturers is

published on the website, as well as the contact information of the dean's office, UL FSS Student Self-Government, as well as other units and persons relevant to students.

Finally, the most important events and current affairs of the faculty are published separately in the sections News and Calendar, reporting on the latest publications, guest lectures, events and other plans of interest to current and prospective students, as well as teaching staff. During the pandemic, FSS Life subsections – Kivi TV, Avantūra, etc., were less relevant, but with the resumption of active on-site lectures, information with lively illustrations and videos about studies and life at UL FSS will be updated and renewed.

The faculty website can be reached from the UL website via the faculty reference.

If the text to be posted on the site is submitted in a foreign language other than English, a translation of the text into Latvian or a short summary must be attached.

The heads of the UL structural units are responsible for the preparation, correctness and updating of the information on the website within the competence of the structural units they manage. The content administrators of the structural units' websites are responsible for maintaining the website, posting the updated information and revising it regularly. For a given faculty, the person responsible for content placement is the marketing or public relations professional or coordinator who administers the current website, or an employee who has completed a short TYPO 3 content placement course under the guidance of the Department of Information Technology.

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

**2.3.1. Provide information on the system developed by the higher education institution/ college for determining and redistribution of the financial resources required for the implementation of the study field and the relevant study programmes. Provide data on the available funding for the scientific research and/or artistic creation activities, its sources and its use for the development of the study field.**

The UL system for financing the study field and the corresponding study programmes is based on the Law on Higher Education Institutions, Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 994 of 12.12. 2006 Procedures for Financing Higher Education Institutions and Colleges from the State Budget, Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 445 of 05.07.2016 Regulations on Remuneration of Teachers and other external and internal regulatory enactments.

For the successful implementation of the study fields, UL must provide for sufficient financial resources for the entire study process, including the remuneration of the teaching staff, the library and other resources related to the implementation of studies, as well as the development of the study programme. The main costs related to the implementation of the study process are the remuneration of the teaching staff and the costs related to the organization of the study process.

The remuneration of the teaching staff includes:

- Costs of contact hours (e.g., lectures, seminars, applied and laboratory work);
- Supervision of independent work, consulting and examination costs;
- Costs of methodical work (preparation for lessons, preparation of new courses, etc.);
- Student work management and evaluation costs, including the costs of reviewing;

- Internship management and organization costs;
- Costs of research work of the teaching staff to ensure the development of new study materials;

The standards regulating the composition of the remuneration of the teaching staff (standards of the planning and accounting of the workload of the academic staff) at UL are determined by the order of the rector for the entire university. Taking into account the specifics of studies and available resources, the administrations of the faculties may set different standards in coordination with the vice-rector of the respective field.

#### Costs related to the organization of the study process:

- General staff costs include the costs of study support staff remuneration, organization and provision of faculty operation;
- Other costs include the rest of the direct costs pertaining to the specific study programme, such as rent of external services, premises, additional equipment, transport, etc.;
- Infrastructure costs – costs of premises, including utilities, repairs and maintenance;
- The costs of property and services include the material and methodological provision of the study programme, including technical equipment, visual materials, professional development (experience exchange trips, training), etc.;
- Indirect costs include the costs of the University's overall operational support (IT, finance, staff, marketing, etc.) and investment in development.

In order to estimate the amount of funds required for financial provision, UL calculates the cost of each study programme according to the methodology developed by UL, which takes into account all the costs of providing the study process described above and information on the specific study programme plan, involved teaching staff, planned number of students, etc., thus ensuring the reliability of the forecasts.

### **Financing of studies at the University of Latvia - sources of funding**

To provide the necessary funds for the conduct of studies, the University of Latvia uses (1) the state budget subsidy (taking into account the base funding, programme level and study field) from the Ministry of Education and Science and (2) tuition fees.

Tuition fees at the University of Latvia are determined, taking into account:

- the cost of the study place, taking into account all the costs of the study process;
- tuition fees for similar programmes at other higher education institutions;
- the interest of potential self-funded students in the study programme;
- the estimated financing of the study place from the state budget;
- the opinion of the UL Student Council.

Tuition fees are set at the end of each year for the next academic year to ensure timely availability of information. The student's fee does not change during the studies, unless the fees vary from year to year in the programmes, but even then, they are all defined at the beginning of the studies.

Income from lifelong learning or other services, as well as the accumulated funds of structural unit, may also be used for curriculum development (development of new courses, improvement of existing courses, methodological support and other curricular aspects). If necessary, financial support can be obtained from the UL Study Quality Improvement Fund, where a sum is set aside annually in the UL budget to address various faculty issues, including the development of new study programmes and the development of existing study programmes.

Indirectly, research funding sources for academic staff are also channelled to the development of

study programmes, e.g., for research activities, participation in international projects, publication of scientific articles, preparation of international project applications, organisation of scientific events at UL, implementation of research development projects and fulfilment of long-term commitments, etc. By participating in these activities, academic staff increase their professional and research competence, often involving students, which has a positive impact on the quality of the study process.

For data on available funding for a specific study programme, see Section 3 of the current report (3.3).

### **Financing of studies at UL - reallocation of funding received**

All the income received from the state budget and tuition fees, as well as from other sources used for financing the study process, after prior deduction of indirect expenses for centralised costs in accordance with the current redistribution procedure, shall be allocated by UL for use by the faculties.

Faculties manage their own funding within the current year's budget. The dean of the faculty and the executive director are responsible for the rational use of financial resources and for operational financial management.

Actual returns are recorded at the faculty level, without separating results for each programme or study field. At the same time, the administration of the faculty monitors the outcomes of the study process, the dynamics of the number of students and the factors influencing it, the balance of the cost of a particular programme with the state budget subsidy and tuition fees and, if required, makes the necessary adjustments in the organisation of the study process to ensure the long-term viability and development of the study field of the faculty.

Financial resources aimed at developing the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field come from three sources: (1) UL; (2) the study process; (3) research grants. They are linked to competitive international, national and university projects. The source of these resources include the European Union and other international organizations, The State Education Development Agency (VIAA), the Latvian Council of Science (LZP), government ministries, UL and so on. UL's support includes subscriptions to social science databases, computer equipment, software, multimedia studio materials, and financial support for developing new study courses and programs as well as renewing existing course content. Research investments come from EU and national Latvian research programs, effective cooperation agreement programs, and specific UL funding e.g. for biennial Human Development Reports. UL also has specific funds made available for the development of doctoral study programs including financing of hardware and software (e.g. NVivo qualitative data analysis software), guest lecturers and support for PhD student travel to summer schools and conferences.

Table 2.3.1.1. Investment in Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology Study Field Study Program Development. 2016-2021

<b>Investment Type</b>		
UL (EUR)	Study program (EUR)	Investīcijas zinātnē Research (EUR)
135 052	146 257	1 094 114

For details on the funding of specific study programs, see the descriptions of bachelor's, master's and doctoral programs.

**2.3.2. Provide information on the infrastructure and the material and technical provisions required for the implementation of the study field and the relevant study programmes. Specify whether the required provision is available to the higher education institution/ college, available to the students, and the teaching staff.**

The study programmes of the Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology study field are currently being implemented in the premises of FSS at Lauvas iela 4, however, after the relocation, in 2024, the study field will be housed in the new facilities – House of Letters in the UL Academic Centre in Torņakalns, sharing the premises with other UL faculties and research institutes of Latvia.

The Faculty is open every work day from 08:00-22.00 and from 8:00-18:00 on Saturdays.

UL FSS study and scientific processes take place in 4693.1 m<sup>2</sup> of rooms equipped for teaching, administrative and research processes, which constitutes 57.9% of the total area of the entire building. The auditorium fund for ensuring the study process is 2122.2 m<sup>2</sup>, which consists of 25 auditoriums of different sizes and dimensions (see Table 2.3.2.1), which are jointly used by all study programmes implemented in the faculty. 14 out of 25 auditoriums are fully or partially equipped with modern stationary multimedia projectors, computers and sound equipment. To ensure the study process in auditoriums that are not equipped with a projector and computer, the faculty uses portable equipment sets.

**Table 2.3.2.1. Study premises of the UL Faculty of Social Sciences**

Size of auditorium	Number	%
up to 50 seats	9	36.0%
51-80 seats	12	48.0%
81-120 seats	2	8.0%
121 and more seats	2	8.0%
TOTAL	25	100.0%

In order to provide the applied part of the study process, a certain proportion of the learning process is implemented in two accordingly equipped UL FSS computer classrooms (a total of 65 student workstations) and in the multimedia studio. The material and technical base of computer classes and multimedia studio – computers, licenses and programs – is continuously renewed from year to year according to the proposals of the academic staff and the financial situation of the faculty. One of the computer classrooms with 30 workstations was completely renovated in February 2022.

In computer classrooms, the students have an access to MS Office (Word, Powerpoint, Excel, Teams etc.), IBM SPSS Statistics, Adobe Creative Cloud (Premiere, Photoshop, InDesign etc.), Nvivo, Gephi, Protégé, MultiTes, UCINet programmes.

Individual offices are offered to professors, associate professors and study programme directors to ensure more comfortable reception of students and confidentiality of conversations. Guest lecturers have a room on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the faculty building. A recreation room with kitchenette equipment is

available for academic staff on each floor.

In order to ensure a high-quality and continuous study and research process, the evaluation of required investments in the improvement and renewal of the material and technical base is continuously carried out.. The faculty's infrastructure, as well as material and technical base can be assessed as good.

**2.3.3. Provide information on the system and procedures for the improvement and purchase of the methodological and informative provision. Description and assessment of the availability of the library and the databases to the students (including in digital environment) and their compliance with the needs of the study field by specifying whether the opening times of the library are appropriate for the students, as well as the number/area of the premises, their suitability for individual studies and research work, the services provided by the library, the available literature for the implementation of the study field, the databases available for the students in the respective field, the statistical data on their use, the procedures for the replenishment of the library stock, as well as the procedures and possibilities for the subscription to the databases.**

#### ***General description of the UL Library***

The Library of the University of Latvia is included in the Library Register of the Ministry of Culture (BLB1000) and accredited as a library of national significance until 2022.

#### ***Access to UL Library information resources and services, opening hours***

The basic principle of the library is the accessibility of its services to every user.

The services are provided in the 8 branch libraries of the University of Latvia Library in accordance with the regulations for the use of the University of Latvia Library (Order of the Rector of the University of Latvia No. 1-4 / 9 of 07.01.2021). According to the terms of use, the services can be used by UL students, lecturers, staff, other libraries, students of other universities, as well as any resident. The UL Library provides free basic services and paid services.

The opening hours of branch libraries are tailored to the convenience of users. On weekdays 9:00–20:00, in some branch libraries 9:00–18:00, Saturdays 9:00–17.00 The Natural Sciences Library and the House of Science Library are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Three branch libraries are open to customers all year round, including during the summer.

In the Natural Sciences Library, the UL staff has the opportunity to use free access to the collection, self-service facility for home delivery of books, extending the borrowing deadline and return, computers, mobile phone charging. In the House of Science Library, the following facilities are available to UL staff 24 hours a day: the open-access collection, two self-service machines for home delivery of books, extending the borrowing deadline and return of books, and a self-service wall for the use of portable computers. The UL Library is the first in the Baltic states to provide such a facility and service. The self-service facility is equipped with 36 portable computers. UL staff can check-out and borrow the portable computers by using student or employee ID cards at any time of the day, and use them for 6 hours – not only in the library area, but in the entire building.

The premises of the Faculty of Social Sciences Library housing the collection of social sciences are open at convenient times for students 60 hours per week. The open-access collection is available to users. The UL FSS Library is located in three rooms with a total area of 544 m<sup>2</sup>.



The UL FSS Library offers its users 84 workstations, including 18 computer workstations.

### **Free basic services**

- Electronic ordering/reservation/renewal of information resources in the Electronic Union Catalogue of Latvian libraries of national significance (hereinafter – the Union Catalogue) and obtaining information resources for use on-site in the library's reading room or to take home.

The service is available to users registered with the UL Library via the Union Catalogue from any mobile device and from any location with internet access.

- Delivery of information resources

When ordering information resources from any library through the Union Catalogue, the academic staff, researchers and doctoral students of UL can specify the most convenient place to receive the reserved information resource – the branch library. For other users, this option is available only when ordering information resources from the Repository.

- Self-service

Self-service scanning is available in all branch libraries. 5 branch libraries have self-service facilities for borrowing/returning/extending the return deadline of the books. The House of Science Library has a self-service computer wall with 36 portable computers.

- Use of open access reading rooms, computers and the Internet

In the reading rooms, it is possible to use a collection of reference literature and periodicals, stationary and portable computers (both UL Libraries' and users' personal computers), Internet connection, including WI-FI, which operates in all UL buildings. The UL FSS Library offers its users 84 workplaces (18 computerized ones and 66 workplaces without computers).

- Night subscription, booking of information resources

The purpose of the "Night Subscription" service is to provide an opportunity to use certain information resources outside the UL Library free of charge from its closing time until its opening. The information resource can be reserved in advance for certain hours. If the information resource is not returned on time, a contractual penalty is applied for the delay in accordance with the price list of paid services of the UL Library.

- Delivery of information resources during summer

Once a week, users can receive the information resources reserved in the Union Catalogue from the Repository in the most convenient branch library (Library on Raiņa bulvāris, Library of Natural Sciences, Library of House of Science).

- Inquiries and consultations

Information services for users – consulting, reference, training and research support constitute one of the main areas of work of the UL Library. The consultant of the UL Library and the staff of branch libraries provide bibliographic, thematic, factual, address, clarifying and other references and consultations to the UL students, academic, research and general staff of UL.

The Chief Reference Consultant of UL Library (Library on Aspazijas bulvāris) provides the official and general information service of the UL Library. Users are consulted electronically: info-bibl@lu.lv, by telephone: 28623551, WhatsApp 28623551 via Skype – address: UL Library Consultant. Advice is also provided by any member of Library staff on-site at the library or by telephone, or via Skype.

In cases of uncertainty, users can also use the options available in the Library section of the UL

portal: "Ask a Librarian", "Frequently Asked Questions", "Have Your Say" (available in Latvian).

- User training

The training is organized with the aim of developing users' skills to work independently, to find, evaluate and use information resources and e-environment tools. The library actively works with target audiences – students of all study levels, academic, research and general staff to promote information literacy, as well as to provide in-depth knowledge and skills in working with electronic resources.

The library organizes and conducts presentations, lectures in classrooms and computer classes, as well as remotely, organizes practical study tours in the library so that users acquire the skills to work with open-access collection, self-service equipment and office equipment – self-service scanners, copiers, thus improving the competence of independent learning.

Special attention is paid to foreign students. The library has prepared and conducts presentations in English "Step by step, UL Library – for you!", the skills of using e-resources are acquired in lessons conducted in computer classes.

The following classes are provided for the students of the bachelor's study programmes: presentation "Step by step: Library for you", lessons "Electronic Union Catalogue and Primo for success of your studies" (90 min.), "Get to know e-resources" (90 min.), "E-resources in the field" (90 min.), e-course "Introduction to information literacy" (Part C course).

Students in master's study programmes and residency students have training in "E-resources in the field" (90 min.), providing in-depth skills for working with the electronic resources of their respective field.

The following training opportunities are provided for students in doctoral study programmes: "Introduction to the Scientific Publication Process" (90 min.), "Bibliography and Citation Management Tools" (90 min.), "Using the Web of Science and Scopus Databases in Studies and Research" (90 min.).

The following training opportunities are provided for academic and research staff: "Bibliography and Citation Management Tools" (90 min.), "Using the Web of Science and Scopus Databases in Studies and Research" (90 min.), "Entering Publications and Editing the List of Publications in LUIS" (90 min.), "Depositing of Research Results in the UL Repository of E-resources" (90 min.).

UL Library staff also offers training for students at UL branches: In Alūksne, Bauska, Cēsis, Jēkabpils, Kuldīga, Madona and Tukums.

### ***Paid services***

The list of paid services and the price list of the University of Latvia Library have been approved by the Rector of the University of Latvia on August 10, 2021, by Order No. 1-4 / 387 on the pricing of paid services of the University of Latvia Library.

- Compilation of a list of information resources

The professionals of the UL Library prepare a list of information resources on the topic of interest to the user, for example, in the process of elaborating a study or another assignment. The user can order the list by filling in the electronic application form.

- Interlibrary Loan (hereinafter – IL) and International Interlibrary Loan (IIL) services

The UL Library offers its users to order information resources that are not available in the libraries of the LU from other libraries in Latvia using the IL and worldwide using the IIL service. It is also

possible to receive electronic copies of scientific articles in the form of printouts and by e-mail.

### ***Library collection, replenishment procedure***

The collection of UL Library is created in accordance with the study fields and research at UL, the requirements of study programmes, providing information at all levels of studies at UL – bachelor's, master's, doctoral and scientific research areas. Purchasing e-resources is a priority in building a collection.

Purchase of new information resources in the collection (purchase of books, subscription to databases and periodicals) is carried out in accordance with the funding allocated centrally by UL, which is approved annually by the UL order. The allocated funding is used to purchase the necessary books, to pay for databases subscribed to in the fields of science, and to subscribe to periodicals.

The library provides acquisition of information resources on the orders of the UL academic staff, on the proposal of the students' self-government or the Library staff, which are entered in LUIS and approved by the dean or the executive director of the faculty.

In 2022 Library users have access to **1.8 million** items of information resources. According to the study and research infrastructure of UL, the collection of the UL Library is located in 8 branch libraries and in the Repository.

### ***Literature available in the library for the implementation of the study field***

According to the aggregated data, as of 1 January 2022, the information resources available in the collection of the UL Library for the study field “Politics, Sociology and Anthropology” encompass **26 426** titles in **60 485** printed copies of information, mostly in English, Latvian, Russian, as well as other languages. Information resources that have been included in the collection during the last 5 years from 1 January 2017 to 1 January 2022, are indicated in the collection of the UL Library as a whole and in the collection of the Faculty of Social Sciences library. Information on available resources in anthropology also includes the publications in the collection of the Library of Humanities.

**Table 2.3.3.1 Collection of printed editions of the UL study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology in the UL Library**

<b>Printed editions for the UL study field of political science Total as on 01.01.2022.</b>						
Printed editions (titles/copies)			Division of editions according to language (titles/copies)			
Books	Serials Periodicals	Other types of publications	Latvian	English	Russian	Other
11246/19655	724/9928	429/600	1944/8424	7088/15674	1558/3001	1809/3084
Total in UL Library: <b>12 399</b> titles = <b>30 183</b> copies, of which:						
<b>In the Faculty of Social Sciences Library: 4 166</b> titles = <b>6 514</b> copies						
3981/5840	148/605	37/69	666/1508	3217/4685	202/236	81/85

**Increase in printed resources for the UL study field of political science  
within the period from 01.01.2017 to 01.01.2022.**

Printed editions (titles/copies)			Division of editions according to language (titles/copies)			
Books	Serials Periodicals	Other types of publications	Latvian	English	Russian	Other
1518/1826	69/201	99/116	382/455	737/1050	219/258	348/380
Total in UL Library: <b>1 686</b> titles = <b>2 143</b> copies, of which:						
In the Faculty of Social Sciences Library: <b>443</b> titles = <b>529</b> copies						
434/511	4/8	5/10	110/144	282/318	34/34	17/33

**Printed editions for the UL study field of sociology  
Total as on 01.01.2022.**

Printed editions (titles/copies)			Division of editions according to language (titles/copies)			
Books	Serials Periodicals	Other types of publications	Latvian	English	Russian	Other
11327/21377	410/3700	295/591	1753/9318	6718/10935	2111/3416	1450/1999
Total in UL Library: <b>12 032</b> titles = <b>25 668</b> copies, of which:						
In the Faculty of Social Sciences Library: <b>5 026</b> titles = <b>8 162</b> copies						
4878/7768	72/277	76/117	556/1803	3944/5725	358/461	168/173

**Increase in printed resources for the UL study field of sociology  
within the period from 01.01.2017 to 01.01.2022.**

Printed editions (titles/copies)			Division of editions according to language (titles/copies)			
Books	Serials Periodicals	Other types of publications	Latvian	English	Russian	Other
1318/1693	52/282	49/77	313/721	867/1053	116/132	123/146

Total in UL Library: <b>1 419</b> titles = <b>2 052</b> copies, of which:						
In the Faculty of Social Sciences Library: <b>715</b> titles = <b>900</b> copies						
695/830	7/47	13/23	127/246	534/599	29/29	25/26
<b>Printed editions for the UL study field of anthropology</b> <b>Total as on 01.01.2022.</b>						
Printed editions (titles/copies)			Division of editions according to language (titles/copies)			
Books	Serials Periodicals	Other types of publications	Latvian	English	Russian	Other
1819/3022	69/1528	67/84	527/2231	324/449	889/1591	215/363
Total in UL Library: <b>1 955</b> titles = <b>4 634</b> copies, of which:						
In the Faculty of Social Sciences Library: <b>91</b> titles = <b>133</b> copies						
90/132	-	1/1	26/56	46/58	17/17	2/2
In the Library of Humanities: <b>265</b> titles = <b>354</b> copies						
256/324	5/24	4/6	80/147	144/157	14/23	27/27
<b>Increase in printed resources for the UL study field of anthropology</b> <b>within the period from 01.01.2017 to 01.01.2022.</b>						
Printed editions (titles/copies)			Division of editions according to language (titles/copies)			
Books	Serials Periodicals	Other types of publications	Latvian	English	Russian	Other
234 / 261	26 / 161	37 / 30	75 / 192	45 / 56	84 / 94	93/110
Total in UL Library: <b>297</b> titles = <b>452</b> copies, of which:						
In the Faculty of Social Sciences Library: <b>9</b> titles = <b>9</b> copies						
9 / 9	-	-	1 / 1	8 / 8	-	-
In the Library of Humanities: <b>42</b> titles = <b>49</b> copies						

### **Level of digitization of the collection**

The UL Library in cooperation with the UL Information Technology Department provides free online access to the UL e-resource repository <http://space.lu.lv>. A mobile version of the repository is also available for user convenience. The UL Library, authors of publications, UL structural units or representatives of UL editions regularly place electronic versions of their publications, digitized information resources with cultural and historical value, doctoral dissertations of UL teaching staff and their summaries in UL e-resources repository to ensure free and constant online access to UL scientific achievements.

Digitized publications, which are subject to copyright, are offered for use by the Library of the University of Latvia in on-site library reading rooms.

The e-resources repository currently contains more than 8 618 publications that correspond to the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology.

### **E-resources**

According to the UL strategic plan, the UL Library increases the share of e-resources and develops remote access to e-resources.

By modernizing the availability of electronic resources, the latest technology web service "Primo Discovery" and SFX has been introduced in the UL Library.

In total, in 2021, 42 e-resource platforms were available at the University of Latvia (both e-book platforms – VLeBooks, ProQuest Ebook Central, and e-journal databases – Cambridge Journals Online (available archive until 31.12.2018), Emerald eJournals Premier (available archive until 22.04.2020), JSTOR I-XII, XIV, XV and Life Sciences Collections, HeinOnline, Oxford Journals Online, Sage Journals, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink Contemporary Journals, Taylor & Francis Social Science & Humanities Library, Physical Review Journals, Westlaw, Wiley Online Library E-Journals Full Collection and separately purchased e-journals, and Lursoft Newspaper Library NEWS.LV, reference resources – LETA online news, LETA Archive and Nozare.lv, Letonika, tools – SAGE Research Methods, Passport, Orbis, Overleaf Commons, MarketLine, mixed-format databases – ClinicalKey, Culturethèque, European Pharmacopoeia, LVS Latvian Standards Online Reading Room, OECD iLibrary, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, ScienceDirect, Scopus, UpToDate, Web of Science Core Collection). In total, 17 477 full-text e-journals (including individual subscriptions), about 205 306 e-books, almost five million full texts and abstracts of dissertations and master's theses worldwide are available. 174 verified open access databases with multi-format materials are available at UL.

Every year, the UL Library offers an average of 110 new electronic resources. In total, 1555 e-books have been acquired by the UL Library as on 11.02.2022, the number of e-books available in the subscribed ProQuest Ebook Academic Complete collection ~ 211 355.

Once a year, the UL Library evaluates and analyses the usability of subscribed databases. Likewise, the UL Library regularly provides trial access to various databases, on average about 15 accesses to trial e-resources are organized per year. The aggregated information about e-resources is available on the website of the UL Library in the sections E-resources A to Z and E-resources by discipline, as well as in "My portal" section Databases.

UL offers an opportunity to use the subscribed electronic information resources (databases, e-book platforms) outside the UL computer network by logging in with the LUIS username and password.

As on 11.02.2022, UL Library collection does not offer e-publications subscribed to individually by FSS and containing materials in conformity with the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology.

### **Subscribed multidisciplinary e-resources of particular sectors that include the materials for the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology**

- **Izglītība un Kultūra** – a professional weekly newspaper that provides up-to-date information on education and cultural activities in Latvia and abroad. *Available online in My portal, section Libraries: The latest issues of journal "Skolas Vārds", "Pirmsskolā", "Skolas Psihologija" and "Izglītība un Kultūra" for download*
- **Jurista Vārds** – the largest periodical, specialized publication dedicated to law and justice in Latvia. *Available at the UL Library, Raiņa bulvāris, Rīga.*
- **MarketLine** – statistical data database, which contains statistical data on more than 3000 important cities of the world from various social and macroeconomic aspects of statistical data. *Available at the UL Library, Aspazijas bulvāris, Rīga.*
- **Orbis** – the database provides statistical information on approximately 300 million global companies, public and private companies. *Available at the UL Library, Aspazijas bulvāris, Rīga.*
- **Passport** – the information resource published by the company Euromonitor International in international business and marketing, economics, international relations, tourism, and social sciences. *Available at the UL Library, Aspazijas bulvāris, Rīga.*

### **Subscribed multidisciplinary e-resources that include the materials for the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology**

- **Cambridge Journals Online** – Cambridge University Press full-text database of multidisciplinary e-journals that offers seeking information in more than 300 scientific journals, as well as related online resources. The full texts in such fields as politics, sociology, anthropology, history, culture, art, philology, philosophy, mathematics, computer science, economics, finance, law, psychology, physics, chemistry, biology, ecology, geology, medicine, etc. are available in the database. *UL has an access to e-resource archive up to 31.12.2018.*
- **Culturetheque** – a digital library developed by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a wide range of resources in French language, includes materials on news, news reports.
- **EBSCO Central & Eastern European Academic Source** – offers full texts of more than 400 multidisciplinary journals in fields such as politics, information and library science, literature, linguistics, sociology, anthropology, medicine, law, history, philosophy, culture, computer science, education, economics, etc., which refer to the region of Central and Eastern European countries.
- **Emerald eJournals Premier** – multidisciplinary e-journal full-text database containing information in such fields as library and information science, sociology, history and archaeology, linguistics, cultural and literary studies, education, business, etc. *UL has an access to e-resource archive up to 02.2020.*
- **JSTOR** – a database of journals, books and primary sources. JSTOR offers the journals published by the leading publishing houses: Sage Publications, Springer, Taylor & Francis, Blackwell Publishing, Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press, John Wiley & Sons etc. The chronological coverage of journals reaches back to the beginning of their publication. Several extensive collections of materials are available as part of the UL subscription.
- **LETA - Ziņas, Arhīvs and Nozare.lv** – a Latvian-language resource, which offers an opportunity to efficiently search news releases, photos, videos, press releases, articles from Latvian press publications, statistics and other information.
- **Iv** – reference and translation database, which includes encyclopaedias, dictionaries, image,

audio and video collections, a full-text library of Latvian literature.

- **Lursoft Laikrakstu bibliotēka NEWS.LV**- the library of electronic versions of Latvian newspapers provides access to current and archival articles of **more than 100**
- **OECD iLibrary** – a full-text database that collects books, articles, reports and statistics published by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.
- **Oxford Journals Online** – the collection provides access to more than 350 widely recognised and leading Oxford University Press journals published in collaboration with the world's leading scientific organizations. The database includes full-text journals with high citation index indicators in various sciences – social sciences, humanities, natural and life sciences.
- **ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global** – the world's largest database of dissertations and master's theses contains over five million works in various fields, including humanities, social sciences, natural and life sciences.
- **ProQuest Ebook Central Academic Complete Collection** – collection of electronic books of the company “ProQuest, available on the ProQuest Ebook Central platform. It has approximately 211 355 e-books by leading publishers across all industries, including many university publishers.
- **SAGE Journals** – the full-text journal database of publishing house SAGE, featuring articles from more than 1 100 journals. The database encompasses various sciences, including politics, communication science, history, philosophy, literary theory and others.
- **Sage Research Methods** – a library of research methods with more than 1000 books, reference collections, journal articles and other resources from the world's leading scientists in the social sciences and humanities. SAGE Research Methods is an important online tool for researchers. Two collections are available at the University of Latvia – SAGE Research Methods – Books and Reference, and SAGE Research Methods Cases.
- **ScienceDirect** – database of the publishing house Elsevier of humanities and social sciences, as well as other sciences. The database contains information on several thousand journals and books published by Elsevier. The full texts of about 2650 journals are accessible to the University of Latvia, mostly available from 2002 to the latest issue of the journal, as well as more than 350 e-books.
- **Scopus** – database of bibliographic and citation information of multidisciplinary scientific releases by the publishing house Elsevier, containing entries about more than 21 000 journals, 86 000 e-books and 6.8 million conference materials, as well as 27 million patents.
- **SpringerLink Contemporary Journals** – full-text database of Springer Nature journals. It offers UL scientific and academic staff, as well as students access to more than 6 million articles from more than 3400 journals, encompassing social sciences, humanities, and natural and life sciences.
- **Web of Science** – the database contains the most relevant scientific information on more than 12 000 journals, offering bibliographic and citation information for articles, abstracts and other information. Encompasses social sciences, humanities, natural and life sciences.
- **Wiley Online Library E-Journals Full Collection**– offers access to more than 8 million full-text articles in more than 1 600 peer-reviewed multidisciplinary journals, including social sciences, humanities, natural and life sciences.

### **E-books available in the UL Library, which include information resources for the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology**

- **VLeBOOKS** – e-book platform, where a total of **202** e-books purchased by the UL Library from the world's leading publishing houses are available, which include materials for the provision of the study field (for example, Oxford University Press, Wiley-Blackwell, Routledge, Springer, Edward Elgar, Polity Press, and others).



- **ProQuest Ebook Central Academic Complete Collection** – a subscription of a collection on the e-book platform ProQuest eBook Central, which altogether provides access to **78 394** sources that correspond to the requirements of the study field, of these, **6 220** editions have been published in the period from 2016 to 2021. The subscription also provides access to **95** separately purchased e-books to supply the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology, released by the world's leading publishing houses (e.g., John Wiley & Sons, Taylor&Francis Group, SAGE Publications, BRILL, Springer International, etc.), of which **44** have been published in the period from 2017 to 2021.

### Open-access resources containing information for the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology.

*Ad\*Access, Artstor Digital Library Public Collections, Bookyards, Cambridge Dictionaries Online, Cogent OA, De Gruyter Open, Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB), Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), eBook Open Access (OA) Collection (EBSCOhost), Europeana, Eurostat Data, Google Scholar, Harvard Digital Collections, IMF iLibrary, Internet Library of Early Journals, Journals for Free, Journal of Anthropology, Database of the Central Statistical Office of the Republic of Latvia., OAPEN, Online Dictionary of Social Sciences, Open Dissertations, Open Research Library, Palgrave Open, Periodika.lv, Politikas plānošanas dokumentu datubāze (Database of policy planning documents, Latvia POLSIS), Project Gutenberg, Zenodo*

**Table 2.3.3.2 Usage statistics of the databases subscribed by UL for 2021 (on the next page)**

Title	Subscription period	Usage assessment and trends
<b>UL centralized funds (UL order) - multidisciplinary databases</b>		
<b>EBSCO Central &amp; Eastern European Academic Source Complete</b>	01.01.2021–31.12.2021.	Database subscription validation: the database contains a large number of publications by UL teaching staff. Usage dynamics – increasing (on average + 64.53 %) <i>Subscribed for 2022.</i>
<b>JSTOR</b>	01.09.2020–31.08.2021.	Database subscription validation: high-quality scientific content, a unique database of archival articles. Costs – low. Usage dynamics – increasing (on average + 6.12 %) <i>Subscribed for 2022.</i>
<b>LETA Arhivs and Nozare.lv</b>	01.01.2021–31.12.2021.	Database subscription validation: subscribed to meet the requirements for UL within the KISC consortium. Costs – low. Usage dynamics – decreasing (on average – 22.11 %) <i>Subscribed for 2022.</i>
<b>LETA online ziņas</b>	01.01.2021–31.12.2021.	Database subscription validation: subscribed to meet the requirements of UL, an important source of Latvian news. Costs – very low. Usage dynamics – decreasing (on average – 22.14 %) <i>Subscribed for 2022.</i>
<b>Letonika</b>	01.01.2021–31.12.2021.	Database subscription validation: an important source of information in the Latvian language on the Internet, subscribed pursuant to KISC consortium requirements. Costs – very low. Usage dynamics – increasing (on average + 20.42 %) <i>Subscribed for 2022.</i>
<b>Lursoft Laikrakstu bibliotēka NEWS.LV</b>	01.05.2021–31.01.2022.	Database subscription validation: access to current and archive articles of Latvian newspapers. Costs – average. <i>Subscribed for 2022.</i>

<b>Oxford Journals Online</b>	01.01.2021-31.12.2021.	Database subscription validation: an authoritative database of the university publisher of global level recognition and high scientific standing. Costs – average. Usage dynamics – decreasing (– 16.22 %) <i>Subscribed for 2022.</i>
<b>OECD iLibrary</b>	01.01.2021-31.12.2021.	Database subscription validation: Latvia is a member state of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and by subscribing to the database, UL provides access to complete information about the organization and its activities. Costs – average. Usage dynamics – decreasing (– 21.27 %) <i>Subscribed for 2022.</i>
<b>ProQuest Ebook Central Academic Complete Collection</b>	01.01.2021-31.12.2021.	Database subscription validation: the e-book database provides access to approximately 211 355 publications from leading publishers in all industries, including many university presses. Costs – very low. Usage dynamics – increasing (on average + 56.26 %) <i>Subscribed for 2022.</i>
<b>SAGE Journals</b>	01.01.2021-31.12.2021.	Database subscription validation: subscribed pursuant to KISC consortium requirements, ensuring access to peer-reviewed journal articles published by one of the world's leading publishing houses. Costs – low. Usage dynamics – increasing (+ 20.96%) <i>Subscribed for 2022.</i>
<b>SAGE Research Methods</b>	01.01.2021-31.12.2021.	Database subscription validation: a unique tool of research methods in the social sciences. Costs – low. Usage dynamics – increasing (on average + 12.77 %) <i>Subscribed for 2022.</i>
<b>SpringerLink Contemporary Journals</b>	01.01.2021-31.12.2021.	Database subscription validation: Substantiation for subscribing to the database: request of UL students and academic staff; one of the leading databases of peer-reviewed publications in the world in various branches of science. Costs – low. Usage dynamics – increasing (+ 7.79 %) <i>Subscribed for 2022.</i>
<b>Taylor&amp;Francis Social Science&amp;Humanities Library</b>	01.01.2021-31.12.2021.	Database subscription validation: a valuable database of the world-class scholarly publisher in the social sciences and humanities. Costs – low. Usage dynamics – decreasing (on average – 8.96 %) <i>Subscribed for 2022.</i>
<b>VLeBOOKS</b>	01.01.2021-31.12.2021.	E-book purchase and access platform. Usage dynamics – increasing (on average + 84.70 %)
<b>Wiley Online Library E-Journals Full Collection</b>	01.06.2021-31.12.2022.	Database subscription validation: is subscribed at the request of UL representatives in accordance with UL Order No. 1-4/182. Costs – low.  <i>Subscribed for 2022.</i>
<b>Department of Study Services</b>		
<b>ProQuest Dissertations&amp; Theses Global Full Text</b>	01.11.2020-31.10.2021.	Database subscription validation: the only database of its kind available. Costs – average. Usage dynamics – decreasing (on average – 18.17 %) <i>Subscribed for 2022.</i>
<b>Financing of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia (within the framework of the national license)</b>		
<b>ScienceDirect</b>	01.01.2021-31.12.2021.	Usage dynamics – decreasing (on average + 13.40 %)
<b>SCOPUS</b>	01.01.2021-31.12.2021.	Usage dynamics – decreasing (on average – 15.84 %)
<b>Web of Science Core Collection</b>	01.01.2021-31.12.2021.	Usage dynamics – decreasing (on average – 36.32 %)

The collection of the library overall corresponds to the implementation of studies and the

development of scientific research, because every year it is supplemented with the most current information resources in accordance with the informational preferences and requirements of academic staff and students.

**2.3.4. Provide a description and assessment of information and communication technology solutions used in the study process (e.g., MOODLE). If the study programmes within the study field are implemented in distance learning, the tools specially adapted for this form of study must also be indicated.**

Contemporary ICT provides great opportunities for the development of educational processes, and allows the implementation of new projects and the introduction of new systems to ensure that the study process is as successful as possible. The use of ICT in the educational process is one of the ways to increase learning motivation.

The UL Department of Information Technology provides UL students and employees with the application package MS Office 365, which is a cloud-based technological solution. Office 365 offers the students and employees with the best tools for modern study work, such as Outlook, Forms, OneNote, Sway, as well as the Office program package, which includes Word, Excel and PowerPoint programs.

In addition to MS Office 365, UL students and employees are provided with software such as SPSS, Question Pro, Autodesk, MathWorks MatLAB, Esri ArcGIS, etc.

One of the Office 365 online applications, Microsoft Teams, is used to ensure the remote study process and distance learning programmes, which enables conducting lectures online, recording lectures, and communicating with students online.

In addition to the MS Teams program for the remote study process, UL offers its students and employees the UL information system BigBlueButton (hereinafter referred to as the BBB system), which is an open-source web-based online video conferencing system. BBB provides UL online event organization for UL staff, including students and visitors to UL events, and can be used as an integrated solution both in the e-study system (only users registered in the course) and outside the e-study system, where connection to the UL web conference server is required in a web browser <https://bbb.lu.lv>

UL has two e-education environments – [studijas.lu.lv](https://studijas.lu.lv) and [edu.lu.lv](https://edu.lu.lv). The e-study environment [studijas.lu.lv](https://studijas.lu.lv) is intended for implementing and managing the study process, and the e-education platform [edu.lu.lv](https://edu.lu.lv) is designed for e-education projects, events and courses, as well as distance learning programmes.

The open-source e-study environment Moodle is used for both e-education environments. Moodle is a modular object-oriented dynamic learning environment, currently – the most methodologically and pedagogically effective, and furthermore – the most economically advantageous e-study solution. In the Moodle e-study environment, courses have been created, giving the students an access to the necessary study materials and activities. It is possible for teaching staff to evaluate students as well as to register study attendance.

For the purposes of data storage during the study process, both students and employees can use UL-provided Office 365 cloud service OneDrive in the amount of 1TB. OneDrive is Microsoft cloud service that connects all the files of a user. It enables saving and protecting user's files, share them

with other users and access them from anywhere on all the user's devices.

For data transfer, UL offers its students and employees a bulk file transfer system [store.lu.lv](https://store.lu.lv). This system enables transferring files that cannot be sent by email due to their size, but is not intended for long-term file storage.

### **2.3.5. Provide information on the procedures for attracting and/or employing the teaching staff (including the call for vacancies, employment, election procedure, etc.), and the assessment of their transparency.**

- [Regulatory Enactments on Academic and Administrative Positions at the University of Latvia](#) (available only in Latvian)
- *Regulations of the UL Professors Council* (available only in Latvian, available in section *Other attachments*)
- *Procedures for the Recruitment of Unelected Teaching and Research Staff at the University of Latvia* (available in section *Other attachments*)

Nominally, there are three teaching staff groups at UL: academic staff who are elected to academic positions, interim academic staff (both interim teaching staff carrying out the duties of elected academic positions and visiting academics), as well as adjunct lecturers.

In the case of elected academic positions, as well as the acting academic staff, the recruitment and selection are regulated by *Regulatory Enactments on Academic and Administrative Positions at the University of Latvia*. According to these regulatory enactments, the following academic positions exist at the University of Latvia: professor, associate professor, assistant professor, leading researcher, lecturer, researcher, assistant, research assistant.

Decisions on the need for certain positions are made by the faculties. Competitions for elected academic positions are announced openly. Public calls for applications for the elected academic positions, including the function and terms of reference for the respective position, are published on the UL website <https://www.lu.lv/par-mums/vakances/>, internationally advertised vacancies: <https://www.lu.lv/en/about-us/vacancies/>, and also in National Scientific Activity Information System and State Employment Agency of the Republic of Latvia vacancy portal. Any person who conforms to the requirements specified by the *Law on Higher Education Institutions* may apply for the position.

The applicants for academic positions must deliver an open lecture, which is evaluated by two reviewers, who issue their opinion on the quality of the lecture. The election procedure is carried out either by the decision-making body of the relevant unit (in the case of assistants, research assistants, researchers, senior researchers, lecturers, and assistant professors – by the respective Faculty Council), however in the case of associate professors and professors – by the relevant Professors Council. Elections must take place within two months from the date of the call for applications. The personalities – docents, lecturers, assistants, senior researchers, researchers, and research assistants – are voted on by secret ballot. Professors and associate professors are voted openly (Based on the amendments to Section 33(2) of the Law on Higher Education adopted on 05.11.2020 (entered into force on 01.01.2021)). An applicant who has received more than half of the votes of the members present with the right to vote shall be considered elected. According to the Law on Higher Education Institutions, teaching staff members are elected for a term of 6 years. At the end of the term, the faculty decides on the need to announce a new competition. There are

no restrictions regarding the term of office.

In accordance with the UL regulatory enactments, minimum requirements are set for all applicants for academic positions, i.e., knowledge of the official language in accordance with the requirements in the legislation, proficiency in foreign languages to the extent necessary for the performance of academic duties and continuous improvement of one's academic and research qualifications. Other requirements differ across academic positions, for instance, to qualify for the position of assistant professor, the candidate has to have a doctoral degree, while the requirements for associate professors are more demanding, i.e., they must have considerable academic and pedagogical experience, an extensive list of publications and experience in scientific research projects.

If, pursuant to the proposal of the structural unit, the Senate decides not to publish vacancies, a visiting lecturer may be recruited; while if an adjunct lecturer is more relevant to the development plans and needs of the faculty, a contract is concluded with that lecturer for a specified period (usually for the duration of the study course). In such cases, the decisions relating to recruitment and selection of the candidates are taken by the structural units, i.e., faculties. In these cases, only the control to ensure that the remuneration set by the structural unit complies with internal and external rules and regulations is centralised.

The rector of the University of Latvia concludes an employment agreement with the person elected for the entire term of office.

During the reporting period, there have been significant changes in the composition of the teaching staff in the study programme. Five professors and one associate professor have retired. During the reporting period, in accordance with the [Regulatory Enactments on Academic and Administrative Positions at the University of Latvia](#), the following positions were elected for the first time to the positions of assistant professor, associate professor and professor (a detailed analysis and assessment of changes in the composition of teaching staff for the reporting period are provided in Characterisations of Study Programmes, sections X.4.3):

**In the Department of Sociology, within the period 2013-2022 the persons elected for the first time in the following positions:**

Associate professor, elected on 22.10.2021.

Assistant professor, elected on 16.12.2019.

Assistant professor, elected on 16.12.2019.

Associate professor, elected on 08.05.2017.

Associate professor, elected on 08.05.2017.

Assistant professor, elected on 19.12.2016.

**In the Department of Political Science, within the period 2013-2022 the persons elected for the first time in the following positions:**

Professor, elected on 22.10.2021.

Professor, elected on 20.05.2020.

Associate professor, elected on 10.04.2015.

**In the Department of Anthropology, within the period 2013-2022 the persons elected for the first time in the following positions:**

Lecturer, elected on 09.04.2018.

Lecturer, elected on 09.04.2018.

Lecturer, elected on 07.11.2016.

Assistant professor, elected on 13.05.2019.

Assistant professor, elected on 05.12.2016.

Associate professor, elected on 02.05.2016.

Assistant professor, elected on 07.01.2013.

In 2021, the evaluation of professors and associate professors of the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology commenced in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers regulation Procedure for the Evaluation of the Scientific and Pedagogical Qualifications or Artistic Creativity of a Professor or Associate Professor Candidate and of a Professor or Associate Professor in Office (No. 129 of 25.02.2021). The Council of Professors of Communication Science, Political Science and Sociology of UL evaluated the six-year work and qualifications of an Associate Professor and an Assistant Professor. It was recognized as corresponding to requirements, and they were elected to the position of professor and associate professor respectively

**2.3.6. Specify whether there are common procedures for ensuring the qualification of the academic staff members and the work quality in place and provide the respective assessment thereof. Specify the options for all teaching staff members to improve their qualifications (including the information on the involvement of the teaching staff in different activities, the incentives for their involvement, etc.). Provide the respective examples and specify the way the added value of the possibilities used for the implementation of the study process and the improvement of the study quality is evaluated.**

The UL Strategy 2021-2027 emphasizes that the goal of the development and excellence-oriented personnel policy is to ensure the development, growth and renewal of academic and general staff, to create a performance-based human resource management system, which will also include competitive and motivating remuneration, to improve academic staff career development opportunities, to create a system for attracting local and foreign academic staff, as well as new talents, and to promote international mobility.

The professional development of the UL academic staff is organised in accordance with the Republic of Latvia Cabinet regulation No. 569 of 11.09.2018 Regulations on the Necessary Academic and Professional Qualifications of Pedagogues and Professional Competence Development Procedures, where paragraph 16 states: "Educators of higher education and colleges shall, by the end of the term of their election, undertake a vocational development programme on innovation in the higher education system, or the higher education didactics, or the management of educational work at 160 academic hours. (including at least 60 contact hours). Professional development may include international mobility and participation in conferences and seminars relevant to the purpose of the professional development, as evidenced by submitted documents", as well as the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 129 of 25.02.2021 Procedure for the Evaluation of the Scientific and Pedagogical Qualifications or Artistic Creativity of a Professor or Associate Professor Candidate and of a Professor or Associate Professor in Office.

The qualification requirements and tasks of the academic staff of the University of Latvia are

included in Regulatory Enactments on Academic and Administrative Positions at the University of Latvia, while the quality/performance of the academic staff of the University of Latvia is evaluated in accordance with University of Latvia Academic Remuneration Regulations (Senate Decision No. 14 of 30 May 2016) and University of Latvia Research Remuneration Regulations (Senate Decision No. 71 of 27.01.2020).

The UL Academic Department and the UL Adult Education Centre of the Faculty of Education, Psychology and Art (UL AEC) on a daily basis provide informative, consultative and methodological support to the UL academic staff in the field of the higher education didactics. UL AEC offers a vocational development programme Didactics of Higher Education: Modern Theories and Practices, as well as continuing education programmes Pedagogical Aspects of the Development of Study Programmes in Higher Education, Professional Development of the Competence of the Student Trustee, and others.

After completing the continuing education programme Methodology for formulation and evaluation of the learning outcomes, programme directors and academic staff purposefully update their study courses and map the results of study programmes and study courses. This continuing education programme has been completed by an Associate Professor.

The UL academic staff has the opportunity to advance their English language skills in the continuing education programme "Professional English language enhancement course for academic staff" at the Centre for Applied Linguistics of the UL Faculty of Humanities. During the latest years, this course has been mastered by three members of the academic staff.

Young lecturers and doctoral students of various UL doctoral study programmes increasingly benefit from the opportunity to study the continuing education programme "Introduction to the work of a lecturer" every spring semester. In the spring semester of 2022, this course is attended by 16 doctoral students (8 of these are from the new joint DSP Social Sciences).

To stimulate collegial learning and identify good practices in teaching, UL offers the continuing education programme "Promoting the collegial experience exchange of academic staff", where academic staff perform peer observation, thereby in a targeted manner promoting the exchange of teaching experience among academic staff and contributing to organisational growth of UL. The teaching staff of UL study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology will be actively involved in the continuing education programme in the coming years.

Lecturers who work with first-year students are defined as a special target group in the continuing education of lecturers at UL, therefore they are also offered the continuing education programme Professional development for work with first-year students. In recent years, research assistant Aleksandra Kjakste (who works with students of the Erasmus programme as the external relations coordinator of the UL FSS) and research assistant Māra Neikena have acquired this programme.

In particular, academic staff in continuing education programmes welcome the opportunity for study process modelling, testing new teaching methods and mutual sharing of their experience.

With the funding of the European Union in the period from 2018 to 2023, several study programmes for teaching staff members are being implemented:

1. Development of online learning and digitization of learning content (target group – academic staff);
2. Innovations to improve the quality of the learning process (target group – academic staff);
3. Academic integrity (target group – heads of study fields and directors of study programmes).

In recent years, these programmes have been mastered by a research assistant (Field-specific interactive solutions for creating lectures), an associate professor (Development of digital skills of

academic staff, and Academic integrity), an associate professor (E-study environment Moodle, Interactive methods in remote studies, Professional foreign language), and lecturer (Planning of remote lessons, Field-specific interactive solutions for creating lectures. Practical recommendations for working in a digital environment, E-study environment Moodle, Development of competencies of academic staff in the field of leadership).

All programmes have been developed by previously analysing the professional development needs of lecturers in the context of higher education development trends. Within the framework of the implementation of the professional development system of UL academic staff, the UL Academic Department conducted an electronic survey of the UL academic staff, assembling information about the current professional development needs of lecturers of all faculties. Furthermore, several lecturers expressed their willingness to participate in the development of continuing education content and offering it to their colleagues in accordance with professional and didactic development needs.

After the implementation of each programme, a survey of its participants and evaluation of the results is carried out. Participation in continuing education programmes is a voluntary choice of lecturers or a recommendation from the faculty management. The faculties also organize thematic seminars for their academic staff on topics relevant to the development of lecturers.

The professional development activities of the UL academic staff have been included in the University of Latvia Academic Staff Development Plan 2018–2020, as well as in the University of Latvia Academic Staff Development Plan 2021–2023.

In order to determine the professional development needs of the academic staff of the University of Latvia in the field of the pedagogical activity, the UL Department of Studies at the end of 2017, and the University of Latvia Programme for Study Development and Governance Improvement in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2020 and in the spring of 2021 conducted a survey of academic staff, including heads of study fields and study programme directors, the results of which were taken into account when developing a study plan for the development of academic staff competencies, including the project of the operational programme Growth and Employment SO 8.2.2, the 1<sup>st</sup> round Renewal and Competence Development of Academic Staff at the University of Latvia, the 2<sup>nd</sup> round – Motivated, Modern and Competitive Academic Staff of the Study Field “Education, Pedagogy and Sport” at the University of Latvia, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> round Strengthening the Capacity of the Doctoral Studies of the University of Latvia within the Framework of the New Doctoral Studies Model in order to effectively plan and ensure the enhancement of the competences of academic staff. The following outcomes are to be achieved by December 2023:

- the system of recruiting and selecting the UL academic staff has been improved;
- the average age of teaching staff has been reduced and the age structure is approaching the EU average<sup>[1]</sup>, with at least 1/3 of academic staff aged between 35 and 49;
- improved scientific performance indicators;
- a model for the renewal and succession system of academic and research staff has been developed and implemented;
- a professional development system for the UL academic staff has been developed and introduced.

When planning the growth and development of the academic staff, UL concentrates equally upon the identification of the most capable students in the UL study programmes and raising of their motivation to become involved in academic work (both teaching and research) already during their studies. In this context, UL has developed requirements and selection criteria for attracting new doctoral students to the project operational programme Growth and Employment SO 8.2.2, the 1<sup>st</sup>



round Renewal and Competence Development of Academic Staff at the University of Latvia, the 2<sup>nd</sup> round – Motivated, Modern and Competitive Academic Staff of the Study Field “Education, Pedagogy and Sport” at the University of Latvia, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> round Strengthening the Capacity of the Doctoral Studies of the University of Latvia within the Framework of the New Doctoral Studies Model (SO To strengthen academic staff of higher education institutions in strategic specialisation areas):

1. A doctoral student studying in the last year of an accredited doctoral study programme, as well as a doctoral student who is a Latvian citizen studying in an accredited doctoral study programme outside Latvia, and a scientific degree candidate;
2. Successfully acquired number of credit points required in the first two/three years of study/ or, for a doctoral degree candidate, successfully completed studies in DSP;
3. Participation in an international scientific conference with a presentation/report;
4. Publication of at least one scientific article in an international edition;
5. English language skills at least at C1 level;
6. Successful passing of the doctoral examination in English;
7. Positive feedback from the supervisor of the doctoral thesis about the doctoral student as a potential lecturer;
8. Leadership traits and interest in UL research and course delivery.

Targeting the growth and development of foreign academic staff, UL has developed requirements and selection criteria for recruitment of foreign academic staff:

1. Persons who have been employed in an academic position in one of the accredited foreign higher education institutions during the previous five years;
2. A doctoral degree in the relevant field of science or a doctoral degree equivalent thereto;
3. Relevant scientific and academic work experience;
4. Ability to work in the e-learning environment;
5. Participation in at least three international conferences with a presentation/report;
6. Published monographs and scientific articles, including in indexed international editions with citation count (at least three);
7. Participation or involvement in research projects;
8. Excellent command of foreign languages, especially English, ability to use them in studies and methodological work.

For successful and unified implementation of study programmes at the University of Latvia, a special study programme for heads of study fields and programme directors was developed, its implementation took place from 12 to 28 October 2021, headed by an international accreditation expert from Poland and representatives of the Latvian Higher Education Quality Agency.

While developing the Study Field Self-Assessment Report, information was collected about the promotion of development and qualification improvement opportunities used by the lecturers during the reporting period. The results of are summarized in Table 2.3.6.1.

**Table 2.3.6.1.**

**Evaluation of promotion of development of teaching staff (improvement of didactic skills and qualifications)**

No.	Criteria / academic year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
1.	Improvement of language skills[2]	3	2	1	5	8	5

2.	<b>Didactics in higher education institutions (training)[3]</b>	9	7	10	9	11	24
3.	<b>Attendance of various summer schools</b>	1	2	4	2	2	-
4.	<b>Teaching lectures and study courses within the Erasmus and Erasmus + programmes</b>	1	2	1	-	-	-
5.	<b>Participation in Erasmus or other staff development programmes</b>	4	5	3	3	1	-
6.	<b>Attending international scientific conferences (report)</b>	36	42	40	47	19	31
7.	<b>Attending national level scientific conferences (report)</b>	13	15	15	27	10	29
9.	<b>Membership in professional organizations</b>	22	22	23	23	24	23
10.	<b>Participation in various national scientific editorial boards</b>	3	3	3	3	3	3
11.	<b>Participation in various international scale organizational committees</b>	2	2	2	3	2	5
12.	<b>Participation in various national organizational committees</b>	-	1	1	1	1	2
18.	<b>Other</b>	7	8	11	13	11	18

***More detailed information is reflected in CVs of teaching staff members***

The academic staff members of the study field have extensive international experience, including studies and teaching courses at foreign universities, participating in international projects and research, English language proficiency. Foreign language courses are attended less frequently. Unfortunately, teaching staff members do not make extensive use of the opportunities offered by the Erasmus and Erasmus+ programmes (see Table 2.3.6.2.).

**Table 2.3.6.2.**

**Study field “Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology” outgoing/incoming mobility of lecturers 2013-2021**

<b>Outgoing mobility</b>	<b>Incoming mobility</b>
<b>2013/2014</b>	

University of Dublin (Ireland) Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universität Greifswald (Germany)	St. Petersburg State University (Russia) Universidade da Beira Interior (Portugal) University of Wroclaw (Poland) (PolZ) Kocaeli University (Turkey) (PolZ) University of Mannheim (Germany) University of Messina (Italy)
<b>2014/2015</b>	
St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Turnovo (Bulgaria) University of Wroclaw (Poland) Tallinn University (Estonia) Universitete Libre de Bruxelles (Belgium)	Bahçeşehir University (Turkey) (PolZ)
<b>2015/2016</b>	
Kaunas University (Lithuania) Humboldt University (Germany) University of Bialystok (Poland) Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universität Greifswald (Germany) University of Zagreb (Croatia)	0
<b>2016/2017</b>	
Kaunas University (Lithuania) Free University of Brussels (Belgium) Mykolas Romeris University (Lithuania)	University of Wroclaw (Poland) Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universität Greifswald (Germany)
<b>2017/2018</b>	
Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universität Greifswald (Germany)	University of Rennes; Faculty of Law and Political Science (France) University of Teramo (Italy) Vytautas Magnus University; Faculty of Political Science and Diplomacy (Lithuania)
<b>Academic year 2018/2019</b>	
Mykolas Romeris University (Lithuania) Charles University (Czech Republic) Baltic Defense College (Igaunija) Vytautas Magnus University (Lithuania)	Marie Curie-Skłodowska University (Poland) Research Institute of UE-Varna (Bulgaria) The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
<b>Academic year 2019/2020</b>	
The University of Rouen Normandy (France) (mobility implemented in a distance mode – online)	Maria Curie-Skłodowska (Poland) University of Lodz (Poland)
<b>Academic year 2020/2021</b>	
0	0

On the other hand, teaching staff more frequently have used the academic and professional development opportunities offered by UL. For instance:

- Development of digital skills of academic staff;
- Research activities and publishing skills;
- General interactive solutions for creating lectures;
- Learning analytics;
- Public speaking, basics of rhetoric and presentation (at the level of improved skills) for cooperation with industry and audience;
- Commercialization;
- Conducting remote lectures;
- Planning of remote lessons;
- Renewal of academic staff and improvement of competences at the University of Latvia;
- Professional development for work with first-year students;
- Methodology for formulation and evaluation of the learning outcomes;
- Using the UL e-study environment in the study process;
- Practical recommendations for working in a digital environment;
- Field-specific interactive solutions for creating lectures;
- E-study environment Moodle;
- Development of competencies of academic staff in the field of leadership.

The teaching staff members of the study field have also used the development opportunities offered by other higher education institutions and organizations. For instance:

- Baltic Computer Academy – Data analysis with R programming language;
- International College of Cosmetology – work seminar for ICC educators. Management and development of scientific works. Plagiarism and compliance with copyright in the works of students and teachers;
- Elsevier seminar Good Practices of Scientific Publication;
- Online teaching skills improvement seminar at the Riga Graduate School of Law.

Junior teaching staff members have also improved their knowledge in various summer schools, such as:

- The 6<sup>th</sup> Milan International Summer School Political Communication and Electoral Behaviour – University of Milan, International Communication Association Political Communication Division (2018);
- British Economic and Social Research Council – seminar ESRC Research Methods Festival 2018;
- Nordic Baltic Doctoral Network in Social Work summer school Multi-disciplinarity and Multi-positioning in Social Work Research – Balancing Closeness and Distance, Tallinn (2018);
- Spring school for doctoral students Media, Culture and Power: European Cultural Perspectives – Catholic University of Lisbon in cooperation with Lund University and Stoderthorn University. Catholic University of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal (2017);
- Summer school for doctoral students Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe. Interdisciplinary Perspectives and Research Methodologies – University of Osijek, Osijek, Croatia (2016);
- University of Ljubljana (Slovenia) – Sampling, Weighting and Estimation in Survey Methodology (2017).

The teaching staff of the study field are members, participants and representatives of professional organizations. For example, one professor served as the president of the US-based Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies (from 2020 to 2022). An associate professor is a board member of the European Sociological Association RN03 (Research Network “Biographical Perspectives on European Societies”) (for the entire accreditation period, as of 2021 – deputy coordinator of the

researcher network) and on the board of the Latvian Sociological Association (2014–2018 – chair of the board; 2018–2022 – deputy chair of the board). An assistant professor is the chair of the board of the Latvian Sociological Association.

[1] Eurydice report Modernisation of Higher Education in Europe: Academic Staff – 2017.

[2] For example, mastering a foreign language in courses, classes.

[3] Professional development courses, trainings, lectures in pedagogy, higher education didactics, work with students, etc.

### **2.3.7. Provide information on the number of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the relevant study programmes of the study field, as well as the analysis and assessment of the academic, administrative (if applicable) and research workload.**

The qualification of the UL academic staff involved in the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field fully corresponds to the implementation of the study programmes in the study field. A total of 96 lecturers implement the programmes. 42 teaching staff members representing the UL academic staff are involved in the implementation of the study field: sixteen professors, thirteen associate professors, nine assistant professors and four lecturers. The leading researchers and researchers of the UL scientific institutes, doctoral students, doctoral scientific degree candidates, freelance teaching staff and high-level professionals who are involved in the teaching of individual study courses as adjunct lecturers are also involved in implementation of the programmes (see Appendix teaching stuff).

56 (58%) lecturers involved in the implementation of the programmes hold a doctoral degree. This ensures a high quality academic education. The Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field is characterized by a solid core of staff and changes in personnel during the reporting period have been minor. Furthermore, the personnel composition within the study field has been supplemented with new teaching staff elected as professors, associate professors, assistant professors and lecturers. The generational change of teaching staff is progressing successfully. Professors from other UL faculties with a high reputation in academic work and research are also involved in the implementation of the programmes.

Each elected teaching staff member teaches 3–5 study courses and in parallel supervises study assignments, bachelor's theses, master's theses, doctoral theses and internships. The involvement of teaching staff in the teaching of study courses is organized and ensured by FSS departments and their management. Distribution of workloads is at the discretion of the heads of departments. The workload also includes supervising bachelor's theses (16 h/year), master's theses (24 h/year) and doctoral theses (50 h/year), as well as reviewing bachelor's, master's and doctoral theses (2–20 h/per thesis). The 28 members of teaching staff involved in the study field simultaneously are a part of the elected research staff of FSS ASPRI. The research workload is on average 0.2–0.5 of the total load, paid from the funding of the research projects attracted in the tenders and project competitions. The workload of the elected study field teaching staff consists of both pedagogical work and research, which ensures that the teaching staff conveys the latest research findings to the students in their lectures. Active work in projects and a proportionate, balanced workload between science and studies is a characteristic feature of the work of the study field teaching staff members.

The national language proficiency of the academic staff involved in the programme implementation

of complies with the requirements of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 733 of 07.07.2008. The English language proficiency of academic staff is at a high level, the staff members regularly improve their knowledge of foreign languages – both by reading lectures at foreign universities and by attending English language classes organized by UL.

**2.3.8. Assessment of the support available for the students, including the support provided during the study process, as well as career and psychological support by specifying the support to be provided to specific student groups (for instance, students from abroad, part-time students, distance-learning students, students with special needs, etc.).**

The students of UL are offered academic support, career development support and psychological support.

The aim of academic support is to provide students with information and advice on study-related issues throughout the entire period of studies. Academic support includes the implementation of the first study year support programme, advice on the study process (content of study programme, choice of study courses, documents regulating study process at UL), information on tutorials, counselling and workshops on study skills (notetaking, reading for academic purposes, active listening, exam anxiety, time management, use of libraries and Internet resources).

Academic support in academic matters is managed centrally by the UL Department of Study Service and the responsible persons within the respective faculties: director of the study programme, study advisor, trustee, mentor, coordinator, academic staff, and the UL Student Council and faculty student self-governments. Advice on the use of library and Internet resources is provided by the UL Library. Table 2.3.8.1 displays examples of key tasks to be performed by structural units/staff involved in student support.

**Table 2.3.8.1. Examples of key tasks to be performed by student support structural units/staff**

Structural unit/staff	Key tasks
Faculty student self-government	To ascertain the interests and problems of UL FSS students, offer solutions to problems; to promote enhancement of the public life and education process at UL FSS; within the framework of its competence, to represent and advocate the interests of UL FSS students in the matters of academic, material and cultural life in the University of Latvia, its structural units, as well as in other state and municipal institutions; to cooperate with the UL FSS governance in defending and harmonizing student interests; to represent the interests of UL FSS students in the Student Council of the University of Latvia (hereinafter – UL SC), UL FSS Council and UL FSS study programme councils; if necessary, within the scope of its competence, provide opinions on issues affecting the rights and interests of UL FSS students; within the scope of its competence, to represent UL FSS students in Latvia and abroad.

Trustee/Curator	Informs students of the current developments in the study process, provides individual support to those students who face difficulties in integrating into the academic environment of UL, initiates adaptation and team-building measures.
Coordinator, study advisor	Provides study advice, assists in day-to-day issues related to the study process, files study records, advises on the Information System of the University of Latvia (LUIS).
Mentor	A senior student who helps the first-year students adapt to the study environment and share their experience.
Student Council (SC)	The purpose of the SC is to represent UL students and to advocate their rights and interests. The SC represents the students' interests in academic issues by electing student representatives to the decision-making bodies of the University of Latvia, considering issues related to the study process and its improvement.
Study programme director	Organises and manages the development of a study programme in accordance with the requirements of the specific scientific or economic sector, cooperates with employers and internship sites in matters of study content, evaluates and approves individual study modules and individual study plans, etc.
Department of Study Service	Organises the admissions process, advises the staff and students on mobility programmes, study, social and cultural issues, advises and organises career coaching and consultancy. Organises adaptation measures for students provides training for trustees, mentors, organises cooperation with employers, etc.

The aim of career development support is to provide students with comprehensive support and develop their lifelong skills to identify their interests, abilities, skills, experience, thus enabling them to make informed decisions as regards education and/or occupation, and ensuring that they can condition their future career, study and life paths. Career development support is provided by the Career Centre of the UL Department of Study Service in collaboration with the respective faculties.

The Career Centre provides the following services to students:

- Individual counselling for future studies and careers, setting up an individual career plan, providing support for the transition between different levels of education and from education to the labour market;
- Workshops for career planning skills (Improvement of career planning and development skills, My first job interview, Stress management, etc.);
- Internet resource – Career Centre home page (information available in both Latvian and English) <https://www.karjera.lu.lv/> and <https://www.karjera.lu.lv/eng/> provides up-to-date information on career planning issues, occupational information and the labour market;
- The electronic resource “E-career” <https://ekarjera.lu.lv/lv> (available only in Latvian), which enables students to efficiently find internship opportunities and jobs by adding their CVs to a database and assists employers in recruitment of employees by listing information on job vacancies in their enterprise in the database.

Psychological support is provided by the Department of Study Service. A psychologist-consultant provides psychological support to students in solving personal and study issues arising from studies (relationship issues, conflict resolution, emotional difficulties). A psychologist offers individual

counselling and telephone counselling.

Special events aimed at international students are organised in cooperation with the ESN (Erasmus Student Network), thus introducing international students to Latvian culture and traditions and promoting international and domestic student interactions.

The assessment of infrastructure accessibility for persons with disabilities has been conducted in cooperation with non-governmental organisation "Apeirons". The acquired results are taken into account both in the construction of the new infrastructure and in the provision of study programmes. In order for students with functional limitations to be able to study at the Faculty of Social Sciences, the entrance is equipped with an elevator, and lectures for the courses attended by students with functional limitations are planned in the auditoriums on the first floor.

The general staff of UL FSS is involved in the implementation of the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field: dean, executive director, two heads of departments, three study coordinators, engineer-IT professional, faculty secretary, consultant, faculty administrator, faculty public relations professional, external relations coordinator (ERASMUS), photographer, deputy executive director for studies. Students are served by the main librarian and two librarians in the UL FSS library. The maintenance management staff of FSS consists of four security guards, two cloakroom attendants and a street sweeper.

During the period of the Covid pandemic, students were given the opportunity to apply for a scholarship of 200 euros per month intended for mitigating the economic consequences caused by Covid-19. The said scholarship was awarded to those whose income had decreased due to the economic consequences of Covid-19 on the day of application and who did not receive any state social benefits intended to mitigate the economic consequences of Covid-19. During the remote study process, students who did not have access to appropriate technical equipment at their place of residence were given the opportunity to use the computer classrooms equipped at the faculty in compliance with all epidemiological regulations. In cases where, during the Covid pandemic, due to an emergency situation or epidemiological safety conditions, students could not complete their final theses within the deadlines set by the UL, they were given the opportunity to postpone the submission/defence of the final thesis to the next semester, without considering it an academic debt.

The interests of students in the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field are also represented by the UL FSS Student Self-Government. Its task is to represent the students of the faculty both at the national and international level, to advocate and represent the interests of the students in matters of academic, material and cultural life at UL and other state and economic institutions. The representatives of the student self-government have the right to participate in the decision-making bodies of the UL at all levels, as well as the right to participate as observers in the tests and examinations. The representatives of the student self-government in the UL Senate, the Faculty Council and the Constitutional Assembly have the right of veto in matters affecting the interests of students. The FSS Student Self-Government consists of the Culture and Sports Commission, the Academic Commission, the Social Affairs Commission, the Public Relations Commission, as well as the self-government chairperson, deputy and office administrator. Each of the commissions supports students by organizing events, informing students about news important to them, helping to solve problems or promoting cooperation with the elected student representative of their respective year. Student self-government promotes academic integrity by informing students about the dangers of plagiarism. The Sports Subcommission organizes orienteering competitions, sports games, championships of various sports disciplines, and other activities. The Social Affairs Commission organizes "warm paws" week, blood donor week, and other social initiatives. The Culture Commission is responsible for organizing the Pre-Aristotle



Festival, welcoming of the newly enrolled students, the acoustic Christmas, the Spring Ball and the New Members' seminar. The Marketing Subcommission attracts sponsors to supplement the budget for celebrations and events. If students have any difficulties concerning studies, the study process, teaching staff, etc., student self-government hears the complaints and resolves the problems. Student self-government at the faculty or university level addresses the issues related to students' rights or interests.

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

### **2.4.1. Description and assessment of the fields of scientific research and/or artistic creation in the study field, their compliance with the aims of the higher education institution/ college and the study field, and the development level of scientific research and artistic creation (provide a separate description of the role of the doctoral study programmes, if applicable).**

Scholarly research in the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field is organized according to the UL Strategy 2016–2020, the UL Strategy 2021–2027 and FSS Strategy. Social sciences is one of the four research directions in the UL Development Strategy.

During the reporting period, FSS research is coordinated by the Advanced Social and Political Research Institute (ASPRI) founded in 2004, with interdisciplinary projects in the foreground. The main research directions at ASPRI:

1. Latvia in international relations, especially relations with Russia and the new European neighbours;
2. democracy and minorities;
3. regional development in Latvia;
4. media, information and culture.

Within the reporting period, the Centre for Diaspora and Migration Research (CDMR) has been incorporated into ASPRI. In the research activities of ASPRI, cross-cutting topics still remain topical, just like during the previous period of activity. The first of them is human development – the expansion of individual freedom of choice, which is closely related to overcoming inequality, civic participation and sustainable development. The second topic is related to the examination of the post-Soviet and post-socialist context of Latvia's current development in a comparative context. The third topic – social aspects of interaction between individuals and technologies.

In sociology, research interests are realized within three main subthemes: (1) the study of social structure; (2) studies of attitudes of values and norms; (3) theory and organization of social work.

In political science, research is organized within four main subthemes: (1) democratic theory and democratic evaluation, democracy and social integration processes; (2) public administration and policy analysis; (3) Latvian political processes in a comparative context; (4) Latvia in international relations.

Until 2022, the anthropology programmes were implemented at the UL Faculty of Humanities. The main research subthemes: (1) violence, prevention of violence and non-violence; (2) medical anthropology, health; (3) family and gender; (4) social inclusion; (5) judiciary and justice.

Viens no DSP "Sociālās zinātnes" mērķiem ir sagatavot augsti kvalificētus speciālistus patstāvīgām darbam zinātnē un augstākajā izglītībā. DSP realizācijā iesaistīti mācībspēki, kuri vienlaicīgi ir arī pētnieki SZF Sociālo un politisko pētījumu institūtā un citās pētniecības iestādēs, kā arī dažādās sabiedriskajās institūcijās, nodrošinot izglītības sasaisti ar zinātnei un sabiedrisko praksi. DSP ietvaros izstrādātie promocijas darbi būs vērsti uz strapdisciplinaritāti un kas orientētas uz sabiedrības problēmjautājumu un vajadzību analīzi, sekmēs inovatīvu sociālo produktu izstrādi, procesu vadība, risinājumu virzīšana valsts un pašvaldību institūciju un nevalstisko organizāciju aprītē.

#### **2.4.2. The relation between scientific research and/or artistic creation and the study process, including the description and assessment of the use of the outcomes in the study process.**

Linking scientific research with the study process is implemented in three ways:

1. One of the goals in the ASPRI development strategy 2020–2024 is to **purposefully and systematically promote the connection of studies and research - to involve students in research**. For example, to propose topics of course papers, bachelor's, master's theses within the research directions of ASPRI or to offer students (especially master's and doctoral students) opportunities to participate in the research conducted by the academic staff of the study field in case of availability of appropriate funding. For instance:

- In 2017 and 2018, students in MSP Sociology and MSP Cultural and Social Anthropology in the courses Biographical Method in Social Sciences and Humanities, and Analysis of EU Social Policy prepared interviews for the NRP project Innovation and Sustainable Development: Latvia's Post-Crisis Experience in a Global Context (SUSTINNO). The study process and the work environment were linked – a biographical approach and an art-based approach were used to raise the issue of former prisoners' integration into society in a cooperation project with the NGO *Svētā Lūkas atbalsta biedrība*. Students conducted life story interviews with former prisoners (in the course Biographical Method in Social Sciences and Humanities). Three thematic events were held, involving discussions with experts representing various fields about the integration of former prisoners into society. In each event, actors acted out one life story;
- Professor Tālis Tisenkopfs actively involves students in various research projects. For example, in 2021, students of UL MSP Sociology and Erasmus+ exchange students were involved in the autumn school organized by the Baltic Study Centre (BSC) – hackathon Collaboration for Smart and Sustainable Territorial Development within the study course Sustainable development. The hackathon was held in English and lecturers from BA School of Business and Finance participated in its implementation. The hackathon used research materials and examples from the BSC project EKIP (Enacting user-centred knowledge partnerships for smart and sustainable territorial development), LCS grant No. lzp-2020/2-0133). As part of the hackathon, students developed their individual innovation projects;
- Academic staff from the Department of Political Science of the University of Latvia and ASPRI researchers participated in the study Subjective Security Perception of the Inhabitants of Latvia: Impact on Creation of Security Policy (conducted within the framework of the project LZP-2018/1-0480 supported by the Latvian Council of Science in 2018–2021). The empirical research was conducted by the doctoral and BSP students of the Department of Political

Science. The innovative nature of the theoretical analysis framework of subjective security research and the obtained empirical data have aroused the interest of other cooperation partners, and as a result a new international project Creation of Unified Study Courses in the Field of Societal Security (Needs-Based Education and Studies in Societal Security – 2020-1-SE01-KA203-078013) has been created and supported by the Swedish Council for Higher Education, and the coordinating institution is the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

2. Teaching staff of the study field use the results of their own and colleagues' research and newly created knowledge, regularly developing or **improving the content of study courses**;

3. Students are involved in **research during the development of course papers, bachelor's theses, master's theses and doctoral theses**. In master's level studies, for example, in MSP Cultural and Social Anthropology, the potential research project of each prospective student is evaluated during the applicant selection process. For the student, this project and research area serves as a basis for the study process, enabling to apply theoretical approaches and methods in elaboration of their own project, which concludes with a completed master's thesis.

#### **2.4.3. Description and assessment of the international cooperation in the field of scientific research and/or artistic creation by specifying any joint projects, researches, etc. Specify those study programmes, which benefit from this cooperation. Specify the future plans for the development of international cooperation in the field of scientific research and/or artistic creation.**

The organization of international scientific conferences and the involvement of teaching staff in international research programmes are the main tools for promoting international cooperation.

Teaching staff of the study field are involved in the international scientific conference Riga Readings in Social Sciences (RRSS) both as organizers and as participants. During the reporting period, three conferences have been held, each with its own thematic focus. The last RRSS conference 15 Years After the Great Enlargement – What is EU For? took place in November 2019.

Conferences are purposefully created as an international level platform for discussions and dissemination of the results of academic research in social sciences, attracting international scientists, young scientists and doctoral students, especially those focused on studies of the Baltic Sea region. The 2018 conference *Baltic Sea Region: One Hundred Years On* was particularly successful, bringing together 150 participants as speakers and listeners. In September of 2014, the member organization of the Association of European Migration Institutions (AEMI) Latvians Abroad – Museum and Research Centre (LaPa) in cooperation with the UL FSS Advanced Social and Political Research Institute (ASPRI) organized the conference Migrants and Refugees – Past and Present. The conference was financially supported by the Ministry of Economy – Latvian Tourism Development Agency and “Riga 2014” International Cultural Conference Support Programme. In 2017, the 12<sup>th</sup> Conference on Baltic Studies in Europe (CBSE) brought together more than 250 researchers of social sciences and humanities from all over the world, whose research concerns the Baltics.

All students of the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field benefit from the involvement of teaching staff in international research programmes. Students are also involved in various projects. For example, Latvia has renewed its participation in ESS – the implementation of the European Social Survey programme – after a long interval, resuming participation in the 9<sup>th</sup> round and preparing for the 10<sup>th</sup> round (national coordinator of the programme in Latvia) and

Implementation of the European Values Study in Latvia.

The Ministry of Education and Science (hereinafter- MES) has concluded a cooperation agreement with UL on the implementation of the study of the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (OECD PIAAC). On the other hand, the purpose of the research programme SUSPLACE (Sustainable Place Shaping) named after Marie Skłodowska-Curie was to train 15 early-stage researchers at six different European Universities in the Netherlands, Belgium, Wales, Portugal, Finland and Latvia in innovative, interdisciplinary approaches to study and further enhance sustainable place-shaping practices. As part of the SUSPLACE project, UL FSS has employed two young researchers who will delve into the topics of creating sustainable places in Latvia and elsewhere in Europe.

Other important projects: The working group headed by a Professor of political science . Ikstens participates in the second research cycle of the international programme PIAAC (2018-2024). An associate professor has headed the Konrad Adenauer Foundation-funded international research project Defence Policy and the Armed Forces in Times of Pandemic (2020-2021) and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation-funded international research project Deterring Russia in Europe (2017-2018). From 2019 to 2021, an associate professor participated in the H2020 project Cultural Heritage and Identities of Europe's Future (CHIEF) and from 2018 to 2020 – in the Nordplus project From Past to Present: Migration and Integration Through Life-Stories' Network.

Future international collaboration, as elaborated in the study field's development plan, is aimed at continuing to regularly organize international events (workshops, seminars, guest lectures, etc.), as well as enable academic staff and advanced-level students to network and enhance their international research collaboration by attending more academic conferences, taking sabbaticals and entering faculty exchange programs at partner universities with the aim of increasing the number of international research projects and publications in Scopus and WoS Q1 and Q2 journals.

**2.4.4. Specify the way how the higher education institution/ college promotes the involvement of the teaching staff in scientific research and/or artistic creation. Provide the description and assessment of the activities carried out by the academic staff in the field of scientific research and/or artistic creation relevant to the study field by providing examples.**

Teaching staff involved in the implementation of the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field, who participate in international research programmes, provide all students studying in the study field with additional in-depth, research-based knowledge and information about the latest trends in research in the following areas:

- Sociology: (1) the study of social structure; (2) studies exploring attitudes of values, norms; (3) social work theory and organization;
- Political science: (1) theory of democracy and evaluation of democracy, democracy and social integration processes; (2) public administration and policy analysis; (3) political processes of Latvia in a comparative context; (4) Latvia in international relations;
- Anthropology: (1) cultural anthropology and the culture of anthropology: contemporary society as viewed by anthropologists.

Academic staff are supported in their research activities by (1) performance funding (scholarships for young scientists), (2) financial support for publications and (3) financial support conference

participation:

Performance funding is awarded to PhD students and ABD doctoral candidates undertaking new research and preparing research publications internationally cited journals with a high impact factor. Special priority is given for articles to be published in journals indexed to the Web of Science or Scopus databases, and with an impact factor no lower than the average for the field of research. (there will be five grants of EUR 6500 each in 2023). FSS research staff (lead researchers, researchers, research assistants), can apply for support for travel expenses to international conferences and seminars in Latvia and abroad, covering travel, accommodation and *per diem* conference expenses up to EUR 1000 (per year).

Research publication grants are available on a competitive basis. Awards of EUR 500-1,000 from UL funds are available to FFS academic staff to support their research publications (e.g. participation in conferences, to support costs of publication).

FFS research staff (elected leading researchers, researchers, scientific assistants), receive financial support for participation at international scientific conferences/seminars in Latvia and abroad, covering travel, accommodation and *per diem* conference expenses up to EUR 1000 per year.

During the reporting period, teaching staff of the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology have published at least 256 publications in peer-reviewed scientific publications, 530 publications indexed in Scopus, Web of Science or ERIH+ databases (see Appendix 13). During the reporting period, teaching staff the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology have participated in at least 362 conferences with papers, of which 200 were international conferences.

From 2016 to 2021, teaching staff of the study field participated in at least 31 UL, national and international projects. An important direction of activity is involvement in the international research programme ESS – European Social Survey programme, which is described in greater detail in section 2.4.3. Under the leadership of an associate professor of the Department of Sociology, the European Values Study project is being implemented in Latvia. Human Development Reports have been published in Latvia since 1995 – as of 2005, its preparation is conducted under the leadership of the UL FSS ASPRI in cooperation with partners from the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology, other study fields of UL, as well as other higher education institutions and entities in Latvia.

ASPRI projects from 2017 to 2020 in the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology:

1. A-20092-ZF-N-960 Children Born of War – Past, Present, Future – CHIBOW;
2. A-20525-ZF-N-960 COMPACT: From research to policy through raising awareness of the state of the art on social media and convergence (H2020-ICT-2016-2);
3. A-20109-ZR-N-960 SUSPLACE: Sustainable Place Shaping;
4. A-20658-ZR-N-960 Probation Observatory. Networking and Training;
5. AC-20979-ZF-N-960 European Values Study in Latvia;
6. A-2931-ZF-N-960 Mobility and inclusion in a multilingual Europe;
7. FP-20631-ZF-N-960 Implementation of the 9<sup>th</sup> round of the European Social Survey (ESS) in Latvia;
8. FP-20710-ZR-N-960 **Promoting cooperation in order to ensure high-quality solutions for research and development tasks required in the national economy;**
9. FP-20739-ZF-N-960 **Cultural IMAGINation at the Crossroads of Diversity and Change (IMAGINE);**
10. FP-21061-ZF-N-960 **Ensuring the operation of the UL Centre for Diaspora and Migration Research in 2020;**
11. L-20617-ZR-N-960 **Integrated national-level measures for strengthening the**

**representation of Latvia's research and development interests in the European research space (1.1.1.5./17/I/002);**

12. L-20869-ZR-S-960 **Science meets Parliaments - Science meets Regions;**
13. L-20978-ZF-N-960 Implementation of European Values Study in Latvia;
14. C-20206-ZF-N-960 Financial support of the Baltic Bonus programme for a submitted project application "Innovative Gender Equality Strategies for Modernization in the Baltic States" (InnGES-BalticS);
15. C-20207-ZF-N-960 Financial support of the Baltic Bonus programme for a submitted project application "Social Entrepreneurship for Sustainability" (SOCIALgreen);
16. S221-ESS226-ZR-N-960 **Harnessing the Economic Potential of the Diaspora;**
17. S240-ESS263-ZF-N-960 **Comparative study of foreign ministries in the Baltic and Nordic countries (2012-2015);**
18. R21-ETS20-SA-N-960 Social Empowerment in Rural Areas (SEMPRE);
19. Y3-VPP2s-ZF-N-960 **Development of a sustainable and cohesive Latvian society: Solutions to the challenges of demography and migration (sub-project - FSS);**
20. Y3-VPP7-ZR-N-960 **Prospective technologies for sustainable and safe services;**
21. Y3-200092-ZF-N-960 NRP project Innovation and Sustainable Development: Latvia's Post-crisis Experience in a Global Context (SUSTINNO);
22. Y5-AZ117-ZF-N-960 Sustainable development of the nation and quality of life (FSS);
23. Y9-B233-ZP-N-960 **Human Development Report;**
24. Z-LZP12-ZF-N-960 Subjective Security Perception of the Inhabitants of Latvia: Impact on Creation of Security Policy;
25. FP-21085-ZF-N-960 Implementation of the 10<sup>th</sup> round of the European Social Survey (ESS) in Latvia (**ESSLV10**);
26. FP-21159-ZF-N-960 **Ensuring the operation of the UL Centre for Diaspora and Migration Research in 2021;**
27. L-21221-ZR-N-960 Evaluation of the causes of the decrease in voter activity and the factors influencing them (stage 1);
28. L-21125-ZR-N-960 Conducting an extended study of Latvian and diaspora researchers;
29. Y3-VPP22-ZF-N-960 Innovative and Inclusive Governance for Promoting Public Involvement, Trust, and Communication;
30. Y3-VPP23s-ZF-N-960 New solutions in the study of demography and migration processes for the development of the Latvian and European knowledge society – a new NRP sub-project together with UL FGES;
31. Z-LZP96-ZF-N-960 **Diaspora Diplomacy and the Global Pandemic (Birka/Kļaviņš).**

**2.4.5. Specify how the involvement of the students in scientific research and/ or applied research and/or artistic creation activities is promoted. Provide the assessment and description of the involvement of the students of all-level study programmes in the relevant study field in scientific research and/ or applied research and/or artistic creation activities by giving examples of the opportunities offered to and used by the students.**

As far as possible, students of different levels of study programmes are involved in the implementation of projects: doctoral students, master's students and bachelors of social sciences students. The involvement of students in research projects has an important role in developing research capacity and regenerating teaching staff.

Students are involved in research activities in several ways. Students in the Bachelors and Masters degree programmes receive lists of relevant research topics. Bachelors students can choose the topics of their course papers (shorter research papers that prepare them for writing a longer bachelors degree) under the direction of an academic member of staff with research interests in this area, and ideally develop the theme through several course papers to the bachelors dissertation level.

In the first years of study, bachelor's programme students have the opportunity to participate in research projects as volunteers (e.g. collecting data). Unfortunately, most master students work in parallel with their studies and rarely participate in research projects. However, PhD students in the new DSP "Social Sciences" can receive support for research activities such as undertaking new research, conference participating and publication (section 2.4.4 has more detail).

Involvement of students in research activities has several forms:

- In 2019/2020, the students of the BSP Sociology in the study course Practice of Sociological Research of the LAS Fundamental and Applied Research Programme project Ready for Change? Sustainable Management of Common Natural Resources participated in the field work, interviewing farmers who farm in the territory of the Gauja National Park. Students of UL FSS BSP Sociology also cooperated with Latvian municipalities, thus promoting the transfer of knowledge from UL to the wider society and municipalities. For example, in 2014, the 2<sup>nd</sup>-year students of UL FSS BSP Sociology conducted a study commissioned by the City Development Department of Riga City Council. The topic of the study commissioned by the City Development Department of the Riga City Council was Criteria for Choosing a Place of Residence for the Inhabitants of Pierīga. The main task of the students was to find out what were the reasons why people did not choose Riga as their place of residence. Pierīga was chosen as the research site because it is the only region of Latvia where an increase in the number of people can be observed. The students worked in three groups, each researching separate aspects of this issue – site selection, daily practices and rootedness. Students developed a research project (questionnaire, field work plan) under the guidance of the course instructors conducted research, data analysis and developed recommendations. In the conclusion, substantial findings were presented, which were well received by the representatives of the City Development Department of Riga City Council. The survey was conducted in Babīte, Garkalne, Ķekava, Mārupe and Stopiņi regional communities, as a result of which 170 valid questionnaires and 10 semi-structured interviews were obtained. Five students of the Erasmus programme (from Italy, Spain and Germany) also participated in the study, performing observations and analysis of visual materials as part of the study. Another example – in 2018, the client was the Department of Education, Culture and Sports of the Riga City Council and the research topic was Opportunities for Leisure Activities and Involvement of Young People in Riga. The results of the research were used in developing the Riga City Development Programme for Working with Young People 2019–2023;
- During the study process, students in the courses Applied Research and Applied Research I of BSP Cultural and Social Anthropology complete a full cycle of applied or academic research. In recent years, research has been carried out in the framework of the research projects of the department, for example, on academic violence ([Accountability, Well-Being and Study Relationships in Higher Education](#), 2021, available only in Latvian language), in cooperation with various state institutions (for example, with the Republic of Latvia *Saeima* – [Comparative Analysis of Factors of Registered and Unregistered Cohabitation](#), 2015, available only in Latvian language), in cooperation with the Association of Latvian Commercial Banks (3-year contract, within the framework of which several studies have been carried out, exploring financial literacy, e.g., [Financial Literacy in Households](#), 2013, available only in Latvian

language). During this research, students meet with the client, plan the research and, after completing it, present it to the client and media representatives;

- Thesis topic packages are offered to students in bachelor's study programmes and master's study programmes. Bachelor's programme students can choose a topic for a course paper (and later – for a bachelor's thesis) under the guidance of a particular teaching staff member and are encouraged to consider how this topic is developed in a course paper and later-- in a bachelor's thesis.

Students of the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field have ample opportunities to publish and popularize their research:

- In 2015, UL FSS and Rīga Stradiņš University, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia and the Latvian Platform for Development Cooperation, announced a competition for research papers on development cooperation, in which students from all Latvian higher education institutions were invited to participate. The competition was organized as part of the European Year of Development (EYD2015) programme of events, and its purpose was to motivate Latvian students to conduct research in the field of development cooperation and to provide their perspective on EU and Latvian development cooperation policies. The competition of research papers was implemented with the financial support of the European Union and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia within the framework of the European Year for Development 2015 National Action Programme. The 3<sup>rd</sup>-year student of BSP Political Science won the first place in the student research paper competition. His research paper was dedicated to the analysis of the “resource curse” concept and the application of this concept in the region of sub-Saharan Africa;
- The Department of Political Science of UL FSS annually announces the research competition Innovation Award in International Policy Research, which is held in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia. Research works – papers, course works, bachelor's theses, master's theses in Latvian or English, written during a given study year, can be submitted to the competition. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia presents the Innovation Award in International Policy Research;
- Research by students of BSP and MSP Political Science of UL FSS is regularly published in the journal of the Latvian Association of Political Scientists *Latvijas intereses in Europas Savienībā*, which is funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia;
- In 2018, UL FSS created a new research event – a series of lectures (FSS Readings) held *Kaņepes kultūras centrs*, which is a popular venue amongst young people. In these lectures, graduates of the faculty talked about their bachelor's and master's research and assessed what society could learn from the research. For example, in November 2018, political science students talked about “national peculiarities of politics in Latvia”.

**2.4.6. Provide a brief description and assessment of the forms of innovation (for instance, product, process, marketing, and organisational innovation) generally used in the higher education institution, especially in study field subject to the assessment, by giving the respective examples and assessing their impact on the study process.**

The most significant product innovation of the study field is a new doctoral study program (hereinafter – DSP) in Social Sciences, developed in the 2020/2021 academic year and licensed in 2021, replacing three DSPs in Sociology, Political Science, as well as DSP Communication Science in



the Information and Communication Sciences study field. The creation of the DSP Social Sciences consolidates the DSPs of UL existing at the time (Communication Science, Political Science, Sociology) in order to ensure (1) a unified, interdisciplinary approach to the preparation of young professionals and the acquisition of generally applicable skills; (2) promotion of cooperation between separate areas of science; as well as (3) effective use of funds. DSP Social Sciences will continue to provide higher education of all three levels in social sciences.

Innovations in the study work process are related to the introduction of a student-centred teaching method, whereby students are more intensively involved in the study process, solving cases of problem situations, preparing presentations, conducting individual and group research. During the reporting period, the UL Moodle e-environment was further developed and used more frequently, enabling the easy transfer of study programmes to remote learning during the pandemic, which, in turn, made it possible to supplement study course resources with video lectures and other interactive materials. The assessment system is increasingly being integrated into the Moodle e-course platform. The learning outcomes of the study programmes have also been completely reworked. The learning outcomes of the programme are reflected in the results to be achieved in each course, allowing students to see the role of each course and task, as well as their level of performance in achieving the overall programme results. To make it easier for students and teaching staff members to follow the development of each performance in a given group of results, the results are grouped and numbered. By implementing the internal quality assurance policy, students are provided with the opportunity to actively participate in the improvement of the study process. UL has approved rules and procedures for submission and consideration of student suggestions or complaints and appeals. In certain cases, the students can address the UL Academic Ethics Committee, if the students believe that lecturers, students or other representatives of the UL community have committed unethical actions. The results of centralized student surveys are evaluated and taken into account in the improvement of the study process. Individual evaluation of course content is a part of every course, which serves as a good tool for regular improvement of course content and detection of weak points. Information about the assessment that students have given to each course is available to the study programme director and is discussed with the lecturers after the completion of the course.

In BSP and the MSP Cultural and Social Anthropology in academic year 2017/2018, rubric assessment systems were developed in all courses (in the e-study platform or in more complex cases in separate assessment templates), matching the assessment system with the study programme goals and the course learning outcomes, thereby creating a single descriptive standard for assessment. As research shows, such an assessment system improves both the assessment quality and student satisfaction with the assessment. Student satisfaction has increased, but it has been observed that foreign students who have previously participated in a student-centred training process value the transparency of this assessment more highly.

The most important marketing innovations are:

- In 2020, the schools for young professionals School of Young Politicians and School of Young Sociologists were established, and they are successfully continued every year. For example, in 2022, free classes led by a team of well-known professionals and UL FSS teaching staff took place remotely on the Zoom platform from 29 January 2022. The purpose of these classes (Schools of Young Professionals) is to provide motivated secondary school students with a stepping stone and valuable knowledge that can be useful when starting their next stage of education and career. At the School of Young Politicians, the secondary school students delved into the future challenges of Latvia and the European Union, finding out what political corruption is and how to fight it, participated in the innovation laboratory and discussed international security. At the School of Young Sociologists, the secondary school

students were acquainted with the field of sociology, learned more about sustainable development management, and also participated in practical lessons on social media research, migration issues and world (dis)order;

- FSS student admission campaign on social networks, which runs simultaneously with the UL admission campaign;
- In order to encourage and motivate graduates of the FSS BSPs to continue their studies at the master's degree programmes, students who start their studies with personal financing receive a 5% tuition fee discount for the first study year.

## **2.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation**

**2.5.1. Provide the assessment as to how the cooperation with different institutions from Latvia (higher education institutions/ colleges, employers, employers' organisations, municipalities, non-governmental organisations, scientific institutes, etc.) within the study field contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field. Specify the criteria by which the cooperation partners for the study field and the relevant study programmes are selected and how the cooperation is organised by describing the cooperation with employers. In addition, specify the mechanism for the attraction of the cooperation partners.**

Cooperation partners of the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field are selected according to the specifics and requirements of the study field, its study programmes and research, and taking into account the partners field of activity and reputation. Partner engagement takes place through a number of activities - study programme directors and academic staff attend sectoral events (conferences, discussions), participate in policy-making, and organize seminars, guest lectures and conferences and other networking opportunities. This cooperation is aimed at achieving the objectives and learning outcomes of the study field and its programmes.

**Forms of cooperation and organisation:** Partners are involved in the evaluation of study programmes in the accreditation process, in study field councils (thus partners can influence the teaching as well as the development of study programmes and courses, allowing fields of study to develop hand in hand with contemporary trends and requirements in the sector), public discussions, research, conferences and other activities. At the same time, academic staff also participate in conferences and seminars organized by state and local government institutions, organizations and other higher education institutions, as well as giving advice and consultation.

The main cooperation partners in the reporting period:

- **Other higher education institutions of Latvia.** For example, as part of the preparation process of Human Development Report, cooperation has taken place with Liepaja Academy of Pedagogy, Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies, Daugavpils University and Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences;
- **Professional organizations.** Teaching staff of the study field participate in the research, preparation of publications and events of the professional organizations of the sector. For example, in 2017, UL Department of Sociology in cooperation with the Latvian Sociological Association (LSA) held a public educational and scientific event dedicated to internet surveys or CAWI (computer assisted web interview). Sociologists and LSA members presented papers.

The teaching staff of the study field regularly publish articles in the journal of Latvian Association of Political Scientists *Latvijas intereses Eiropas Savienībā*;

- **State and local government institutions.** UL Centre for Diaspora and Migration Research is located in FSS. Its operation is based on innovation and interdisciplinary cooperation between the faculties of the University of Latvia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia and other Latvian and international institutions, as well as diaspora researchers around the world. The centre operates with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For example, in 2019, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted a presentation of the latest studies of UL Centre for Diaspora and Migration Research, developed in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Two studies were presented during the event. Investment of Diaspora in Latvia and Opportunities for Its Appraisal – the study provides the most comprehensive view of diaspora investment in Latvia in recent years, outlining the diverse areas of diaspora investment, as well as highlighting opportunities and challenges in evaluating diaspora investment, analysing world practice and data available in Latvia. Circumstances and Conditions of Return – inhabitants of Latvia are among the most mobile in Europe, and although emigration rates are still high, more and more people who have left are returning to Latvia. The study identifies the needs, motivation and integration of different groups of remigrants, as well as provides recommendations for remigration support and integration of remigrants. Particular focus of the study is upon remigration experience of young people and seniors, problems and their solutions;

Teaching staff of the study field cooperates with **various organizations**. For example, in 2018, under the auspices of the project supported by EU Research and Innovation Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions programme and titled Building Sustainable Places (SUSPLACE), a scientific-applied seminar was organised in cooperation with Kalnciema Quarter with the aim of finding practical recommendations, policy proposals for the sustainable development and creative revitalization of the historical Āgenskalns market. The renovation process of Āgenskalns market is currently relevant and as yet unprecedented in the city of Riga, involving professionals from various fields in modelling its development. On the part of SUSPLACE, 14 young sustainability researchers, 11 professors and four non-academic partners from six different European universities, one non-governmental organization and two companies in the Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal, Finland, Wales and Great Britain participated. Latvia is represented in the SUSPLACE project by sociologists from the UL Faculty of Social Sciences. Riga City Council, RSU international business, law and social innovation expert, Riga tourist office Live Riga, independent architect, representatives of the Ministry of Culture, State Inspection for Heritage Protection, Āgenskalns neighbourhood association participated as partners – stakeholders in the development of the Āgenskalns market. Further examples include the cooperation implemented by Associate Professor Baiba Bela with the association Museum and Research Centre “Latvians Abroad”. In the study course Migration and Integration, museum staff gave a guest lecture on the Latvian diaspora. Assistant Professor Renārs Felcis cooperates with the NGO *Zaļā brīvība* in international and local projects on climate change and its social effects. One professor develops individual, non-institutionalized cooperation with the scientific institute “Baltic Studies Centre (BSC), for example, by involving doctoral students in the autumn school Social Innovations in and for Sustainable Food Provision held in Latvia on 5–9 November 2018 and jointly organised by BSC and The European Society for Rural Sociology, and involving UL doctoral and master's students in academic writing camps organized by BSC.

**2.5.2. Provide the assessment as to how the cooperation with different institutions from abroad (higher education institutions/ colleges, employers, employers’ organisations, municipalities, non-governmental organisations, scientific institutes, etc.) within the study**

**field contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field. Specify the criteria by which the cooperation partners suitable for the study field and the relevant study programmes are selected and how the cooperation is organised by describing the cooperation with employers. In addition, specify the mechanism for the attraction of the cooperation partners.**

The Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field has established good cooperation with several international foreign institutions. Regular cooperation with international partners takes place in all the study programmes in the study field and is focused on exchange of staff and students, joint projects, and organizing conferences, lectures and seminars. International cooperation partners are selected according to the specifics of the study field, its study programmes and research. They have an essential role in achieving the goals and learning outcomes of the study field. The main mechanisms used in identifying and recruiting partners is study programme director and academic staff participation in international scholarly organizations (such as the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies), international conferences and seminars as well as participating in international policy processes, international organizations and other international networking opportunities (such as diplomatic events at embassies).

International cooperation promotes both student and staff mobility, strengthens the international competitiveness of students, academic staff and the study field's study programmes, as well as promoting exchanges of contemporary academic practices and contributes to developing a sustainable partner network.

The most significant examples of institutionalized cooperation:

- Since 2008, students of BSP Political Science, who have chosen to study the course Models of Democracy, go on an exchange study trip to the University of Greifswald. The main task of the trip is group work. The students of the Institute of Political Science and Communication Science of the University of Greifswald take a similar course to the students of FSS, in the framework of which they are introduced to the diverse theories of democracy. The main purpose of the trip is to expand the knowledge of the theories of democracy which the students have acquired in the lectures, as well as to give students the opportunity to expand their international experience and improve their knowledge of the English language, as well as to unite the course team. Students from both universities are divided into mixed groups, thus promoting closer cooperation between the two universities. Each group is assigned a theory of democracy, within the framework of which research questions about an actual problem must be formulated. In the final phase of the project, University of Greifswald students visit Riga to participate in the final group discussion;
- Since 2014, UL Department of Political Science organizes Training Programme for Young Professionals for Ukrainian Students at the University of Latvia – Spring School of European Union Studies – Domestic and Foreign Policy. The programme is implemented with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs within the framework of the state budget programme 07.00.00 Development Cooperation Projects and International Assistance. Ukrainian students attend lectures taught by the department's teaching staff, and also go on study visits to various state administration institutions. The aim of the Spring School is to support Ukraine in its European integration efforts and democratization process, providing an opportunity for Ukrainian students to study in the European Studies module of UL FSS bachelor's study programme Political Science, while supporting the strengthening of cooperation in regional development and research dedicated to European integration. During

the pandemic, the programme was implemented remotely. From 20 September to 3 December 2021, 96 students from various Ukrainian universities (for example, Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University, Poltava Law Institute, Oles Honchar Dnipro National University, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Institute of International Relations of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University) participated in the intensive training project for Ukrainian students at UL – Young Professionals` School: Studies of the European Union – Internal and Foreign Policy. The lectures were conducted online, giving the opportunity to involve a large number of students;

- Under the auspices of UL FSS department of Political Science operates Latvia-China Academic Exchange Centre – One Belt, One Road Initiative, which was founded in 2015 together with the cooperation partner – the North China Institute of Science and Technology (NCIST). The mission of the centre is to strengthen cooperation in the fields of education and science. Exchanges of teaching staff and students have taken place. In 2016 and 2017, UL FSS Department of Political Science hosted more than 40 students from China in the summer school of European studies. Young people represented the cooperation partner university of the Department of Politics – North China Institute of Science and Technology. As part of their studies, the students explored the current issues of the European Union. The most significant achievements of European integration, its management and challenges were analysed. In parallel with their studies, students were introduced to the history and culture of Latvia. On 24–27 November 2017, an international symposium One Belt, One Road Initiative was held in China at the Harbin Institute of Technology. Faculty members of the UL FSS Department of Political Science participated in the event.

**2.5.3. Specify the system or mechanisms, which are used to attract the students and the teaching staff from abroad. Provide the assessment of the incoming and outgoing mobility of the teaching staff in the reporting period, the mobility dynamics, and the issues which the higher education institution/ college faces with regard to the mobility of the teaching staff.**

Foreign students are recruited at the university level, within the framework of student exchange programmes (e.g., Erasmus+). BSP Cultural and Social Anthropology and MSP Cultural and Social Anthropology successfully attract foreign fee-paying students in full-time regular programmes. The directors of all programmes collect information about the courses taught in English during each semester. Subsequently, this information is collected at the faculty level by the international exchange programme coordinator, and then at the university level it is disseminated amongst the foreign students who have arrived in the respective semester. Foreign students contact the lecturer of the particular course for additional information. During the 2021/2022 academic year at least 12 study courses were taught in English in the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology. The development plan of the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field envisages a gradual increase of the number of courses taught in English and developing a specialized interdisciplinary bachelor's study programme module for Erasmus+ students in the amount of one semester.

Foreign lecturers also recruited within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme as well as through the professional contacts of academic staff. Foreign lecturers teach those courses where local teaching resources are limited, as well as in newly developing areas of the study field. This is a valuable contribution that brings new knowledge and skills to the study process.

The incoming mobility of teaching staff during the reporting period corresponded to the needs of study programmes. During the reporting period, 24 guest lecturers, who were purposefully invited to teach a specific study course or part of it, gave lectures in the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology. For example, an Associate Professor, head of the Human Trafficking Research Laboratory at Millikin University, USA, taught a new course on gender and politics to the students of BSPs Political Science and Sociology during the spring semester of 2020 in the framework of the Fulbright Programme of the United States. The Department of Political Science in cooperation with the UL Centre for Judaic Studies has hosted guest lecturers from Israel, for example, a Professor from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, who presented the guest lecture series Introduction to Foreign Policy of Israel in 2019. From 2014 to 2018, the lecturers of BSP Cultural and Social Anthropology and MSP Cultural and Social Anthropology participated in the Wenner-Gren Institutional Development Project titled Development of the Field of Anthropology in the Baltic states. The project is implemented in cooperation with the University of Latvia, Riga Stradiņš University, Tallinn University, Vytautas Magnus University and the University of Manchester. In 2017, the University of Tartu joined the project. Within the framework of the project, three exchange visits per year were organized, focusing on doctoral-level training and didactics of anthropology. 40 guest lecturers gave lectures within the project.

During the reporting period, 21 teaching staff members of the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field taught lectures at the higher education institutions abroad. For example, in the period from 2014 to 2018, the lecturers of BSP Cultural and Social Anthropology and MSP Cultural and Social Anthropology participated in the Wenner-Gren Institutional Development Project Development of the Field of Anthropology in the Baltic states.

Student mobility indicators have been generally constant during the reporting period, although better indicators have been achieved in attracting foreign students. During the reporting period, 93 bachelor's level students and 44 master's level students of the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field participated in outgoing mobility activities (mostly within the framework of Erasmus and Erasmus+ programmes). During the reporting period, the study field has enrolled 529 bachelor's level students and 107 master's level students. The large number of incoming bachelor's students is explained by the special cooperation of UL FSS Department Political Science with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia over many years. The training project for Ukrainian students at UL – Young Professionals` School: Studies of the European Union – Internal and Foreign Policy has been running since 2014. The aim of the project is to provide support to Ukraine in its European integration efforts and the democratization process, as well as to prepare students for work in Ukrainian public administration institutions. During the programme, students acquire knowledge about the implementation of public administration and democratization reforms, Europeanization, principles of EU functioning.

Students are regularly informed about mobility opportunities. Programme directors, in cooperation with course lecturers, have provided the opportunity to integrate the courses acquired at foreign higher education institutions into the study programmes implemented in the study field, both by equating the courses acquired at foreign higher education institutions, and also by making it as easy as possible for students to fulfil their academic obligations after returning from studies abroad. At the same time, it should be noted that outgoing mobility is made complicated by students' professional careers in Latvia – a large number of students are working (especially the master's level students) and are reluctant to forfeit their job and the professional career they have started. Bilateral Erasmus agreements have been concluded with 100 foreign higher education institutions for the exchange of students and teaching staff (mobility) within the study programmes of the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field. The main cooperation partners are universities with a similar international ranking to UL. Cooperation agreements with high ranking,

international universities are more complicated to agree as they seek agreements with similar ranking institutions.

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

**2.6.1. Assessment of the fulfilment of the plan regarding the implementation of the recommendations provided by the experts during the previous accreditation of the study field, as well as the assessment of the impact of the given recommendations on the study quality or the improvement of the study process within the study field and the relevant study programmes.**

The execution of the implementation plan of the recommendations given by the experts in the previous accreditation and licensing procedure of the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field is summarized in detail in Appendix 19 - Recommendations.

Bachelors and masters programmes in political science and sociology received only two recommendations in the previous accreditation exercise. Both recommendations were quickly enacted – data analysis resources were expanded with purchases of SPSS and Nvivo licenses (which have been renewed until the current day) while study programme e-resources were expanded and regularly reviewed and renewed.

The Culture and Anthropology programmes received a total of twelve recommendations, ten of which have been enacted while two, on the possibility of including modules from other programmes (recommendations 6 and 12), are beyond the competence of the programme director and study field council. Both bachelors and masters programmes have been redesigned and updated (recommendations 1, 7 and 8), measures have been taken to support first year students and address student drop outs (recommendations 2 and 9). Three recommendations (3, 5 and 11) were focused on research capacity (increasingly engaging both students and academic staff in research and attracting more funds and projects to the programme). Steps have also been taken to greater engagement with employers (recommendation 4) and to develop a mentoring system for new lecturers (recommendation 10).

**2.6.2. Implementation of the recommendations given by the experts during the evaluation of the changes to the study programmes in the respective study field or licensed study programmes over the reporting period or recommendations received during the procedure for the inclusion of the study programme on the accreditation form of the study field (if applicable).**

The doctoral study programme Social Sciences was developed in the 2020/2021 academic year and licensed in 2021, replacing the previous doctoral study programmes Sociology, Political Science, as well as the doctoral study programme Communication Science of the study field “Information and Communication Sciences”. The creation of the doctoral study programme Social Sciences is validated by the need to consolidate the UL doctoral study programmes existing at the time

(Communication Science, Political Science, Sociology) in order to ensure (1) a unified, interdisciplinary approach to the preparation of young professionals and the acquisition of generally applicable skills, (2) promotion of cooperation between separate areas of science, (3) effective use of funds. The doctoral study programme Social Sciences will continue to provide higher education of all three levels.

In compliance with national education policy, the bachelor's study programme Cultural and Social Anthropology and the master's study programme Cultural and Social Anthropology had to change study fields. The changes were made in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 793 of 11 December 2018 Regulations Regarding Opening and Accreditation of Study Field, which stipulate that anthropology programmes are to be included in the study field Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology field. Since at the time of approval of the classification, anthropology programmes in Latvia were not implemented in such the thematic group of sectors, until now they were implemented under the auspices of the study field "Language and Culture Studies, Native Language Studies and Language Programmes, awarding the graduates with a humanities degree in anthropology. After adding study programmes to the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field, graduates of the programme will be awarded a bachelor's degree in social sciences according to the group of programmes.

The DSP in Social Sciences received five recommendations during the licencing process. The first recommendation was addressed through the formalization of concrete rules and procedures that formalised existing practices regarding the recruitment of co-supervisors and advisors, as well as the possibility for PhD students to apply for research fellowships and research grants/funding. The second recommendation on content fragmentation in a methods course was addressed through an updated and more detailed course description. The next recommendation (to inform students and staff about changes in the three existing DSPs) was addressed through extended seminars with existing DSP students and a special DSP Council meeting. The fourth recommendation had two parts. The first (to allow students the opportunity to gain a narrower recommendation) is in process as the new DSP programme addresses these needs through international doctoral schools, the opportunity to spend time abroad at a foreign university, the recruitment of specialized advisors or consultants and a more focused reading list for the specialized examination. The plan to attract more foreign lecturers is also in process, as outlined in the Development Plan. Finally, an employer engagement plan has been developed in the Development Plan.



# Annexes

I - Information on the Higher Education Institution/ College		
Information on the implementation of the study field in the branches of the higher education institution/ college (if applicable)		
List of the governing regulatory enactments and regulations of the higher education institution/ college	List of the main internal normative acts and regulations of the University of Latvia.docx	LU galveno iekšējo normatīvo aktu un regulējumu saraksts.docx
The management structure of the higher education institution/ college	Structure of University of Latvia.docx	LU pārvaldības struktūra.docx
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.1. Management of the Study Field		
Plan for the development of the study field (if applicable)	Development plan.pdf	Studiju virziena "Socioloģija, politoloģija, antropoloģija" attīstības plāns.pdf
The management structure of the study field	Structural scheme of the study field.jpeg	Studiju virziena "Socioloģija, politoloģija, antropoloģija" pārvaldības struktūra.pdf
A document certifying that the higher education institution or college will provide students with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution/ college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.	Study continuation agreements.pdf	5. pielikums. Dokumenti, kas apliecina, ka augstskola studējošajiem nodrošinās iespējas turpināt izglītības iespējas.7z
A document certifying that the higher education institution or college guarantees compensation for losses to students if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme license is revoked due to actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.	Refund and Compensation Policy.pdf	Rectora apliecinājums, zaudējumu kompensācija.edoc
Standard sample of study agreement	Study agreements.pdf	Studiju līgumi.pdf
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System		
Analysis of the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers	Survey analysis.pdf	Studējošo, absolventu un darba devēju aptauju rezultātu analīze.pdf
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field		
Basic information on the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study field	SOC_POL_ANTRO teaching stuff.xls	SOC_POL_ANTRO macībspeku tabula.xls
Biographies of the teaching staff members (Curriculum Vitae in Europass format)	CV ENG.pdf	SOC_POL_ANTRO_CV LV.pdf
A statement signed by the rector, director, head of the study programme or field that the knowledge of the state language of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programmes within the study field complies with the regulations on the state language knowledge and state language proficiency test for professional and official duties.	Declaration_Latvian language.pdf	Apliecinājums_valsts_valodas_zinasanas.edoc
A statement of the higher education institution/ college on the respective foreign language skills of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programme at least at B2 level according to the European Language Proficiency Assessment levels (level distribution is available on the website www.europass.lv, if the study programme or part thereof is implemented)	Declaration_English.pdf	Augstskolas apliecinājumu par mācībspēku attiecīgo svešvalodu prasmi.edoc
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation		
Summary of quantitative data on scientific and/ or applied research and / or artistic creation activities corresponding to the study field in the reporting period.	Data table.pdf	Kvantitatīvo datu tabula.pdf
List of the publications, patents, and artistic creations of the teaching staff over the reporting period.	List of publications.pdf	Macībspeku publikācijas.pdf
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation		
List of cooperation agreements, including the agreements for providing internship	List of cooperation agreements.pdf	Sadarbības līgumu saraksts ar citām institūcijām.pdf
Statistical data on the teaching staff and the students from abroad	Statistics about foreign students.pdf	Statistikas dati par ārvalstu studējošajiem un mācībspēkiem.pdf
Statistical data on the incoming and outgoing mobility of students (by specifying the study programmes)	Mobility data.pdf	Statistikas dati par studējošo mobilitāti.pdf
Statistical data on the incoming and outgoing mobility of the teaching staff	Mobility of lecturers.pdf	Macībspeku mobilitāte.pdf
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.6. Implementation of the Recommendations Received During the Previous Assessment Procedures		
Report on the implementation of the recommendations received both in the previous accreditation and in the licensing and/ or change assessment procedures and/ or the procedures for the inclusion of the study programme on the accreditation form of the study field.	Recommendations.pdf	Rekomendāciju izpildes pārskats.pdf
An application for the evaluation of the study field signed with a secure electronic signature	APPLICATION for the Assessment of the Study Field Sociology, political science and anthropology.docx	Iesniegums AIC studiju virziena "Socioloģija, politoloģija, un antropoloģija" novērtēšanai (D.Auers).edoc
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme		
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period		
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard		
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme		Kursu_kartejums KSA MSP.xlsx
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	Study plan SOC MSP.pdf	SOC MSP plāns.pdf
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules		KSA BSP kursu apraksti.pdf
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)		
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
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 (if applicable)		

## Other annexes

Name of document	Document
Kvalitātes vadības rokasgrāmata	Kvalitātes_vadibas_rokasgramata_14_10_2022.zip
Quality Management Handbook	Quality Management Handbook_14_10_2022.zip
Kārtība par nevēlēto mācībspēku un zinātnieku pieņemšanu darbā	Kartiba_par_neveleto_macibspeku_un_zinatnieku_pienemsanu_darba.doc
Procedures for the recruitment of unelected teaching and research staff at the UL	Procedures for the recruitment of unelected teaching and research staff at the UL.doc
Latvijas Universitātes profesoru padomes nolikums	Latvijas Universitātes profesoru padomes nolikums.doc
Iepriekšējās akreditācijas atzinums/Conclusion of previous accreditation	AKRED_REKOMEND_2012.pdf

# Sociology (45314)

Study field	<i>Sociology, Political Science, and Anthropology</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Sociology</i>
Education classification code	<i>45314</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>Academic master study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Baiba</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Bela</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>baiba.bela@lu.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Asociētais profesors</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>29447405</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>To prepare highly qualified professionals for independent work in research as well as management of a research group, for doctoral studies, as well as for relevant professional activity in the state, municipal, non-state and private sectors.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. Train highly qualified specialists in the field of sociology so as to serve the needs of Latvia's society and sustainable development;</i></li> <li><i>2. Ensure learning about the latest achievements and innovative approaches in sociology and its subsectors, the theory of sociology, and social science research methods;</i></li> <li><i>3. Develop scholarly research and analytical skills among students in the field of sociology, training them to take independent part in scientific and research work in sociology and the relevant areas of professional work, also facilitating their ability to work on scholarly and applied projects;</i></li> <li><i>4. Develop in students the skill of critically evaluating, integrating, using and creating new knowledge when facing complicated or unpredictable circumstances in contacts among various areas;</i></li> <li><i>5. Develop in students the skills of identifying and analysing social problems so as to come up with and evaluate action policies in response while also facilitating the skill of dealing with specialised problems and their resolution;</i></li> <li><i>6. Facilitate in students a scientific and humane understanding of a democratic society.</i></li> </ol>

Results of the study programme	<p>1. Demonstrate a highly specialised knowledge and understanding of major and recent theories in sociology, as well as in-depth knowledge and understanding of one or more subfields of sociology.</p> <p>2. Demonstrate a comprehensive and thorough knowledge of social science research methods, quantitative and qualitative research strategies and mixed methods research designs.</p> <p>3. Apply critical thinking and a scientific approach to the analysis and study of social life, including working at the interface between different fields, and demonstrate a deep understanding of major social problems and development challenges in different areas of social life.</p> <p>Skills:</p> <p>4. Can independently apply sociological theories and social science research methods to conduct research and create new knowledge that describes, reveals and explains developments in society.</p> <p>5. Can independently identify, select, analyse and integrate information from different fields according to research objectives, professional interests or work tasks in complex or unpredictable circumstances, and contribute to solving major societal problems and promoting sustainable change.</p> <p>6. Can explain and critically discuss complex or systemic aspects of sociological theory, social research findings and societal issues in writing and orally with specialists and non-specialists.</p> <p>7. Can independently direct the development and specialisation of own competencies in sociology and related fields and take responsibility for the management and results of group work.</p> <p>Competence:</p> <p>8. Independently formulate, critically analyse and solve complex social issues and scientific questions in sociology, generate new knowledge and contribute to the development of research methods in the social sciences.</p> <p>9. Can integrate knowledge from different fields, respect research ethics and understand the ethical responsibility for the potential impact of sociologist's professional activity and sociological research on the environment and society.</p> <p>10. Demonstrate a deep understanding of major societal issues and challenges and the ability to engage with them and promote sustainable change.</p>
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	Master's thesis

## Study programme forms

### Full time studies - 2 years - latvian

Study type and form	Full time studies
Duration in full years	2
Duration in month	0
Language	latvian

Amount (CP)	80
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>A bachelor's degree or a second-level vocational higher education (or equivalent) in in sociology and cultural studies. A bachelor's or master's degree or a second-level vocational higher education (or equivalent) to higher education in the social sciences, business, law, humanities or arts and an entrance examination. A bachelor's or master's degree or a second-level vocational higher education, or equivalent to higher education in other other academic fields, relevant work experience in sociology or a relevant sector and an entrance examination.</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Master's degree of Social Sciences in Sociology and Cultural Studies</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	-

### Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
University of Latvia	RĪGA	RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050

### 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

**3.1.1. Description and analysis of changes in the parameters of the study programme made since the issuance of the previous accreditation form of the study field or issuance of the study programme license, if the study programme is not included on the accreditation form of the study field, including changes planned within the evaluation procedure of the study field evaluation procedure.**

The code of the master's degree programme Sociology (MSP Sociology) has changed in accordance with changes in Latvia's education classification, as related to amendments to Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 322, Regulations on Latvia's education classification," as issued in Rīga on 13 June 2017 (Protocol 30 18. §), this being in line with Article 21.1 of the Law on statistics, Article 14.1.1. of the Law on education, and Article 3.6 of the Law on universities (in accordance with the 2 October 2018 version of MK Regulation 616). In accordance with these regulations, the accreditation document that is issued for educational programmes includes third, fourth and fifth code digits (224, 225, 310, 763), which will remain valid no later than on December 31, 2022. The code of the master's degree programme Sociology was 45310, but under the new rules it must be 45314. The name of the degree has also been changed to "academic master's degree in sociology and cultural studies." This reflects the more thorough recognisability of social and cultural anthropology, because Latvia's education classification still lists social anthropology as a sub-sector of sociology even though the academic study programme is being developed independently of the field of sociology.

Name of the study programme	<i>Master's degree programme Sociology</i>
Programme code	<i>45314</i>
Scope (KP, including ECTS)	<i>120 ECTS, 80 KP without changes</i>
Type, and duration of programme	<i>Full time studies -2 years</i>
Language of study programme	<i>Latvian</i>
Place	<i>Raiņa Boulevard 19, Rīga, LV-1586</i>

Director	<i>Assoc Prof Baiba Bela</i>
Degree, professional qualification or both	<i>Social science master's degree in sociology and cultural studies (Mg.Soc.),</i>

**3.1.2. Analysis and assessment of the study programme compliance with the study field. Analysis of the interrelation between the code of the study programme, the degree, professional qualification/professional qualification requirements or the degree and professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements. Description of the duration and scope of the implementation of the study programme (including different options of the study programme implementation) and evaluation of its usefulness.**

MSP Sociology is fully in line with the sociology, political studies, anthropology field of study. The very title of the programme demonstrates that it belongs to one of the area of society that are listed in the name of the study field. The UL MSP Sociology trains competent, competitive and highly qualified specialists in the field of sociology. Social process researchers and analysts are and will continue to be necessary as Latvia's economic and social development move toward the European Union's standards of quality of life. Government institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGO) lack people who can evaluate and forecast social development trends in an analytical and critical manner. As the private sector develops, there is also an increased demand for market research specialists.

The name of the MSP Sociology is also in line with the programme's content and parameters – the code, the goals and missions, the learning outcomes and the enrolment requirements, all of which are organically linked and mutually integrated. The study code is based on Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 322, "Regulations on Latvia's education classification," as approved in Riga on 13 June 2017 (Protocol No 30 18. §). The first two digits in the code, 45, refer to the master's degree that is to be earned after earning a bachelor's or professional bachelor's degree. The study programme lasts for two years, which means that the total study process lasts for at least five years (in that the bachelor's degree programme lasts for three years). The last three digits in the code, 314, apply to the thematic group "Social sciences, commercial sciences and the law," the thematic area "Social and human behaviour science," and the programme group "Sociology and cultural studies." Accordingly, the degree which students earn is a master's degree in sociology and cultural studies. The level of the programme is in line with EKI Level 7 and LKI Level 7, and that is because of the descriptors of this level of qualification, as well as sociology as an area of science in which there are specifically formulated programme goals, missions, learning outcomes and study content.

MSP Sociology is aimed at training highly qualified specialists who can do independent work in research projects and research groups, continue their academic career by enrolling in the doctorate programme, or work in areas of professional activity that are in line with sociology at the state, local government, NGO and private sector after earning a master's degree in sociology and cultural studies. This goal, the descriptors of the level of qualifications, the specifics of sociology as an areas of science, and the scientific, social and economic needs of Latvia present the following missions for the programme: (1) educate highly qualified sociological specialists in Latvia so as to serve Latvia's social and sustainable developed needs. In order to ensure that students can independently

engage in high level research projects and gain in-depth and expanded knowledge about the sector, the next programme missions are: (2) educate students about the latest trends and innovative approaches in contemporary sociology and its subsectors, as well about related theories and social science research methods, and (3) develop skills among students in engaging in research and analytical work so as to prepare them for independence scholarly and research work in the field of sociology and other, related areas of professional work. The missions of the programme are also formulated in accordance with the achievable learning outcomes, including (4) the skill of critically evaluating, integrating, using and creating new knowledge under complicated or unpredictable circumstances and when various fields coincide; (5) the skill of identifying and analysing social problems so as to establish and evaluate the relevant policies, as well as to promote independent skills at resolving problems. For specialists in the social and human activity area it is also important to (6) facilitate a scientific and humane understanding of a democratic society among students.

The learning outcomes of the programme are formulated so as to make sure that the programme's goals and missions have been achieved. The outcomes are formulated in accordance with what students must know, understand and be able to present after the learning process has ended. Learning outcomes are formulated so as to check whether students have achieved them or not. The second and third mission are closely linked to **knowledge**: students must be able to 1) demonstrate a highly specialised knowledge and understanding of major and recent theories in sociology, as well as in-depth knowledge and understanding of one or more subfields of sociology; 2) Demonstrate expanded and in-depth knowledge about social science research methods, quantitative and qualitative research strategies, and the design of mixed research methods; 3) Apply critical thinking and a scientific approach to the analysis and study of social life, including working at the interface between different fields, and demonstrate a deep understanding of major social problems and development challenges in different areas of social life.

The third, fourth and fifth missions are closely linked to what students must be able to do and what attitudes they must prove after the completion of the programme. Students must demonstrate the following **skills**: 1) Can independently apply sociological theories and social science research methods to conduct research and create new knowledge that describes, reveals and explains developments in society; 2) Can independently identify, select, analyse and integrate information from different fields according to research objectives, professional interests or work tasks in complex or unpredictable circumstances, and contribute to solving major societal problems and promoting sustainable change; 3) Can explain and critically discuss complex or systemic aspects of sociological theory, social research findings and societal issues in writing and orally with specialists and non-specialists; 4) Can independently direct the development and specialisation of own competencies in sociology and related fields and take responsibility for the management and results of group work. Students must also demonstrate the following areas of **competence**: 1) Independently formulate, critically analyse and solve complex social issues and scientific questions in sociology, generate new knowledge and contribute to the development of research methods in the social sciences; 2) Can integrate knowledge from different fields, respect research ethics and understand the ethical responsibility for the potential impact of sociologist's professional activity and sociological research on the environment and society; 3) Demonstrate a deep understanding of major societal issues and challenges and the ability to engage with them and promote sustainable change. Everything together allows us to achieve the main task - to prepare highly qualified specialists in sociology for the needs of Latvian society and sustainable development.

Enrolment requirements are meant to recruit students who will be able to complete the content of the programme successfully and achieve the planned learning outcomes by completing missions and achieving goals. Students are required to hold a bachelor's degree, a second-level professional degree or a comparable higher education. There are narrower requirements in terms of which thematic group of education must be the one in which the student has had a previous education.



This is aimed at strengthening in-depth knowledge about linkages among various areas, thus providing graduates with broader opportunities in the labour market. Applicants take an entrance exam which allows the programme to learn about their motivations, their scholarly interests and their knowledge about sociological theories and methods. The grading formula for applicants is  $(1 \times 1000 = 1000)$ . The minimal number of points for admission to the programme is 500. Those with a bachelor's degree from the LU, in turn, can take part in the competition with this grading formula: the average weighted grade  $(60 \times 10 = 600)$  + the final or average grade on the final exam  $(40 \times 10 = 400)$ . An additional requirement is a *Curriculum vitae*. This is meant to make sure that the applicant's previous experience with education, civic activities and employment are in line with their chosen field of studies.

The study programme takes up two years (four semesters), and full-time students earn 80 KP (120 ECTS). This is an optimal period of time to cover the content of the programme, and the aim is to achieve learning outcomes and fulfil the missions that have been given.

### **3.1.3. Economic and/ or social substantiation of the study programme, analysis of graduates' employment.**

Sociology is an area of science that is of great importance in any democratic society. It illustrates the configuration of social life, helps to understand models which are being the visible social phenomena, allows one to take a critical look at what is happening in society, and helps to discover the importance thereof. Sociology also has a predictive value in that it can point toward possible models of social development in future.

The importance and justification for the master's degree programme Sociology are determined by priorities listed in Latvia's developmental planning documents – movement toward equal opportunities, quality of life and an inclusive society; Latvia's socioeconomic situation with a high level of poverty and a large proportion of people who face risks of social alienation, uneven regional development that is strengthened by rapid aging in the population, a low birth rate and a high level of emigration; and the need to develop excellence when investigating social processes.

Latvia's sustainable development strategy 2030 (LIAS 2030) is the hierarchically highest long-term developmental planning document in Latvia. It defines the vision of developing Latvia into a flourishing, active and responsible community of citizens (Saeima (2010)). Approved on 10 July 2010 by the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia. See [https://pkc.gov.lv/sites/default/files/inline-files/Latvija\\_2030\\_6.pdf](https://pkc.gov.lv/sites/default/files/inline-files/Latvija_2030_6.pdf) (Only in Latvian). LIAS 2030 covers the following priorities: investments in human capital; a change in the education paradigm; an innovative and effective economy; nature as capital for the future; prospects for spatial development; innovative governance with public participation; and development of the cultural field. Sociology as a sector of science makes a key investment in studying all of these issues, and the content of the study programme particularly focuses on sustainable relationships between the environment and society, an understanding of and examination of regional development, as well as aspects related to public participation and governance.

From the medium-term perspective, the Latvian National Development Plan 2021-2027 (NAP 2027) sets out strategic goals which Latvia plans to achieve by 2027 and was approved by the Latvian parliament on 2 July 2020 (Saeima (2020)). See <https://www.pkc.gov.lv/lv/nap2027> (Only in Latvian)). The document states that there are four areas of necessary and fundamental changes and growth – equal rights, quality of life, a knowledge-based society, and a responsible Latvia. The

master's degree programme Sociology trains specialists who can prepare high-quality research projects and offer data-based justifications for specific policy steps and the direction in which they are moving. This also helps to achieve planned goals by helping to ensure knowledge-based growth.

The study programme also makes an important investment in the ability of the LU to achieve its strategic goals and to be successful. This, in turn, is a prerequisite for the growth of Latvia's higher education and science system, the sustainable development of society, and the development of a knowledge-based economy which respects the boundaries of the planet's ecosystems and strikes a balance between the environment and the needs of society.

Graduates of the study programme have successfully found jobs, and they are making a key investment when working for national governance, at research companies in the private sector, or by continuing their scientific career. Expanded and deeper knowledge about social functions and social management allow grads to develop their careers at various government ministries (graduates have been employed by the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Welfare and the Interior Ministry). Expanded and deeper knowledge, skills and competence related to research methods make it possible to develop a career in the private sector, where applied and market research are necessary. Graduates have been employed by leading research companies such as Kantar, SKDS, Latvijas Fakti, Norstat, etc. Expanded and deeper knowledge about conceptual explanations of social processes and the latest theories, skills and competence about research methods enable careers in the world of science. Graduates can continue their studies by enrolling in doctoral programmes in Latvia or elsewhere in the world or by becoming involved in scholarly research during their period of studies and afterward.

#### **3.1.4. Statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down into different study forms, types, and languages.**

MSP Sociology is a niche programme with relatively few students. Since Latvia's government began to shift state higher education financing to refinance the STEM sector, the sociology MSP has had only 15 slots for students whose tuition is covered by the state. Between 2010 and 2015, the number of such slots declined by one-half, and one result has been a decline in the number of students from 25 in 2015 to just 15 in 2012. Each year the programme enrolls some 10 students, and during the first semester, one or two of them have their tuition covered by the faculty's budget. This approach amortises the risk of students dropping out and thus hindering the programme's sustainability and stability. Students in the master's degree programme range from young people aged 22 or 23 who have enrolled right after finishing their bachelor's degree studies to older people who have families and children and have decided that the time has come for professional improvements. This creates greater diversity in learning and in exchanges of thoughts, but it also increases the risk of dropouts. The proportion of those who drop out has been significant against the comparatively small number of students – two or three (or very seldom four) students drop out during the first semester, there is stability during the second and third semester, but then one or two drop out during the last semester because they cannot handle the job of writing a master's thesis. Asked in surveys why they have dropped out, respondents most often say that they cannot handle full time studies and their job. Others cite personal reasons such as family circumstances, health problems, etc. The director of the programme discusses these reasons

individually with each student who drops out, and this analysis is essential so as to improve the programme and to reduce the incidence of students dropping out. The formulation “personal circumstances” does not really make clear what those reasons are.

Full-time studies mean that students also have full-time jobs. Latvia does not have appropriate financial support for studies, and that means that students do their homework in the evening and on weekends. This is too much of a burden for many students, and that has particularly been true since the crisis, when many employers cut staffing numbers, which meant that those who kept their jobs had a greater workload. Personal reasons include the idea that work and studies cannot be merged with family obligations. This is particularly true among those who have preschool or school age children. Other say that the overload of work has created serious health problems for them. Students who have dropped out have sometimes said that other universities assign less homework and scholarly literature studies along with fewer contact hours. At the same time, however, surveys of graduates do not suggest that the workload has been an excessive onus. This, in turn, suggests that not all students take the process seriously. Less often do students say that their problem has to do with language skills. Some students who speak Russian at home have done very well, while others have had to drop out because their Latvian language level is not sufficient to understand what is being said in lectures and to do independent work. There are also those who have insufficient English language skills, which is a problem because the vast majority of literature in the field of sociology is in English. Other reasons for dropping out are very rare. Some graduates of the bachelor’s degree programme in sociology who have enrolled in the master’s degree programme have said that some courses copy the content of bachelor’s degree courses. Between 2012 and 2016, much work was done to avoid such overlaps. Conversations were held with instructors so as to improve the content of courses. Another very rarely cited reason relates to students who have come from other study programmes and have found that sociology really is not that interesting to them. In 2021, the long-lasting Covid crisis had a deleterious effect on enrolment, with several bachelor’s degree students claiming that distanced studies reduced their motivations. One student said that she was afraid to take public transport, lest she become infected, but she also rejected the requirement that she be vaccinated. This student applied for the programme, but did not really start her studies.

Reasons cited by those who drop out during the last semester are a bit different. Some have health problems, others find it impossible to write a perfect master’s thesis as they wished to do, others have problems with planning time and suffer from procrastination that does not allow them to start the work in a timely manner and also finish it on deadline. Sometimes such students return to their studies after a while and successfully complete the programme.

Of the 10 or so students who are enrolled in the programme, six to eight, on average, are graduated. This suggests that those who survive the first semester are sufficiently interested in the content of the studies and are successful at merging work and life so that they can complete their studies. Dropping out is slightly less common among those who already have jobs in the sector, because the things that they learn help them in their everyday work. Their interest in sociology in specific is deeper and more durable, and this makes it easier to overcome work-life balance difficulties.

A more detailed review of trends related to student numbers can be found in Appendix 73, “Statistical data about students in the master’s degree programme ‘Sociology,’” with year-by-year information about those who enrolled, those who dropped out and those who earned their degree.

*Table 3.1.4.*

*Dynamics of the number of students*

Reporting period (as of Oct. 1)	Enrolled			Students						Earned degree		
	Total	Among enrolees		Total	Study year		Among students		Dropouts	Total	Of all who earned degree	
		Subsidy	Tuition		1	2	Subsidy	Tuition			Subsidy	Tuition
2021	9	9	0	15	9	6	15	0	3	9	9	0
2020	9	9	0	18	8	10	18	0	5	6	5	1
2019	11	10	1	19	12	7	16	3	6	6	6	0
2018	11	11	0	20	11	9	20	0	7	4	4	0
2017	10	10	0	20	12	8	17	3	7	8	8	0
2016	11	11	0	23	13	10	20	3	5	8	8	0
2015	14	13	1	25	14	11	22	3	8	10	8	2

**3.1.5. Substantiation of the development of the joint study programme and description and evaluation of the choice of partner universities, including information on the development and implementation of the joint study programme (if applicable).**

## 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

**3.2.1. Analysis of the content of the study programme. Assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators with the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study courses/ modules and compliance with the needs of the relevant industry, labour market and with the trends in science on how and whether the content of the study courses/ modules is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science.**

The structure and content of the study programme are based on Cabinet of Ministers Reg 240, "Regulations on the state academic education standard," as adopted on 13 May 2014 (Protocol No 28 18.¶).

The study programme leads to 80 KP (120 ECTS), with mandatory (Section A) courses amounting to 50 KP (75 ECTS), with 30 KP (45 ECTS) applying to theoretical courses and 20 KP (30 ECTS) applying to the master's thesis, mandatory elective (Section B) courses amounting to 28 KP, and free (Section C) courses leading to 2 KP. Students can also take courses on environmental protection and civil defence if they have not done so during their bachelor's degree studies. These are necessary to earn a 7.LKI education. Courses in the study programme are aimed at achieving the

programme's goals and learning outcomes. Mapping of the courses show that the learning outcomes are achieved in each study course. Course descriptions include information about the name of the course, the number of credits, the total number of hours and contact hours, the number of lectures and seminars, the language in which the course is to be taught, the person who designed the course, the course goals, missions and achievable learning outcomes, requirements for a passing grade, criteria for evaluating learning outcomes, a brief description of assignments, as well as information about course planning course content (not available to students), the mandatory literature for the course, additional sources of information, as well as information about periodicals and other sources of information.

Sociology is a new and small sector in Latvia. This differs from the situation in Germany, the Netherlands or Great Britain, where there are many sociology programmes, large numbers of students and large numbers of sectoral professionals, with sociology having been an important field of study throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These diverse programmes usually specialise in subsectors of sociology, which would be impossible and also undesirable in Latvia. The higher education sector has experienced an economic crisis, as well as free market competitions, and the only sociology master's degree programmes to survive have been the one at the UL and on at the LLU, which specialises in the sociology of organisations. The UL programme understands the need to develop the sector further, and so it tries to ensure as broad an approach as possible. Still, the LU develops its programme in accordance with its strength – excellence in research. Areas of specialisation in sociology are developed in partnership with the topics that are studied at the UL FFS Institute for Social and Political Research – social welfare and inequality, migration and integration, environment and sustainability, development of the nation, and regional development.

The content of the mandatory (Section A) portion of the master's degree programme ensures learning outcomes that include in-depth learning about theoretical ideas, as well as the development of research abilities and skills in the field of sociology. The programme was developed on the basis of responses from graduates, as well as recommendations from students and employers. There was also a study of the latest trends at comparable study programmes in Europe (the University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands and Humboldt University in Germany). What was evident was that there was a movement toward a larger number of credits for courses which truly allow students to gain in-depth knowledge about a specific area while also being more targeted in focusing on the issues that have been selected. That's why the LU programme now has a course on modern social theories which has been expanded to 6 KP (10 ECT). This involves an examination of theoretical ideas in the sector. Another course focused on the analysis of social problems has also been expanded to 6 KP (10 ECTS), and it involves the testing of theoretical ideas. Also strengthened have been research method courses to 8 KP (12 ECTS) (data analysis, international comparative research). There are two courses which integrate theoretical ideas and their testing, and they are dedicated to the public as global and local, but important issues in Latvia – migration and sustainable development. Course content is developed so as to achieve the stated goals of the programme – to train highly qualified specialists who can do independent research work and educate students about the latest trends and innovative approaches in contemporary sociology and its subsectors, also teaching students about the theory of sociology and the research methods that are used in the social sciences.

Similarly, the content of the mandatory elective part (Section B) has been developed in accordance with the planned goals and missions. Some courses are devoted to in-depth learning about research methods (Discourse analysis; Multidimensional analysis in sociology) so as to develop scholarly research and analytical skills among students, also preparing students for independent scholarly and research work in the field of sociology and in corresponding areas of professional work. Courses that are devoted to analysis of timely problems develop skills in students to critically

evaluate, integrate, use and create new knowledge under complex or unpredictable circumstances (Analysis of EU social policies; Social administration). Courses which students can choose from other study programmes expand the choice in Section B, ensuring knowledge and understanding about links between various areas. The course Business communication, for instance, strengthens links with the field of communications. Local governments in Europe and Latvia strengthens links with political science, while Introduction to science and technology studies strengthen links with social anthropology. This approach not only expands the available choices for students, but also makes it possible to more thorough use of the FFS intellectual resources. Because many students and graduates work in the niche of market research, the course Marketing research and consumer behaviour ensures very necessary knowledge for the labour market. These courses are taught by professionals from the sector who work with market research on an everyday basis. The courses are aimed at developing skills among students in terms of identifying and analysing social problems, organising and evaluating action policies, and facilitating independent skills at dealing with problems. See Appendix "The study plan of the master's degree programme 'Sociology.'"

All of the courses and the master's degree thesis strengthen knowledge, skills and competence, which make it possible to achieve the programme's primary missions – educating highly qualified sociology specialists for the needs of the people of Latvia and for sustainable development, as well as to develop in students a scientific and humane understanding of a democratic society. In the spring of 2022, Russia's propaganda war which lasted for 22 years and its aggressive invasion of Ukraine show most vividly what happens to a society if it lacks a humane understanding of a democratic society, as well as critical thinking and analytical discussions about processes in society. The LU master's degree programme Sociology has graduates who provide significant intellectual capital in Latvia's labour market. The programme has also made a key investment in the development of the personalities of students so that they can develop analytical and critical thinking so as to strengthen the fundamental values of a humane and democratic society.

**3.2.2. In the case of master's and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation. In the case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels (if applicable).**

MSP Sociology awards a social science master's degree in sociology and culture studies. The degree is based on the ability of the student to demonstrate knowledge, skills and competence so as to confirm the achievement of the programme's learning outcomes. The content of the courses is based on theoretical ideas in the field of sociology, the latest trends in the social sciences and specifically sociological research methods, achievements related to empirical research, as well as critical analysis of social problems. Students are expected to do independent work during the study process. There are other types of examinations, as well, and this and the master's thesis show that the student can make use of the theories and research methods that have been studied so as to independently deal with complex research issues in the field of study. This includes, for instance, the latest ideas about migration theories and empirical research results about various aspects of migration (economic migration, forced migration, the integration of migrants, diasporas and identity, transnationalism). This relates to the course "Migration and integration." Several master's theses have been written about migration issues. This has been in partnership with the UL FFS SPPI national research programme "Latvia's heritage and future challenges for the country's

sustainability” and its sub-programme “Development of a sustainable and consolidated society in Latvia: Solutions to demographic and migration challenges.” These theses have demonstrated the fact that students have a good command over the latest sociological ideas in terms of theory, methods and empirical research in the specific subject area. Another example focuses on the latest ideas about sustainable development, with empirical research being conducted about various aspects of a sustainable environment, the economy and its social aspects. These issues are taught in the course “Sustainable development,” and they have been demonstrated in theses such as “Veganism as a social movement in Latvia” (2020), and “Opportunities and motivations among the people of Riga in purchasing sustainable products” (2021).

**3.2.3. Assessment of the study programme including the study course/ module implementation methods by indicating what the methods are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. In the case of a joint study programme, or in case the study programme is implemented in a foreign language or in the form of distance learning, describe in detail the methods used to deliver such a study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.**

As is the case throughout the LU, the master’s degree programme Sociology uses oral, written and combined study and grading methods in the courses that are taught and the exams that are conducted. The study process is based on student-centred teaching and learning principles, among them the need for students to be actively involved in the process by helping each other to learn and by becoming involved in research via micro-research and research together with researchers in the sector. The study process involves a range of methods, including lectures, seminars, fieldwork, field trips, independent work, debates, group work, tests, papers, etc. The methods are chosen in accordance with the goals, missions and learning outcomes of each course. This means that the methods will differ from course to course.

The study process involves a diversity of ways in which knowledge is obtained and strengthened, including introductory lectures, interactive lectures, summarising lectures and lectures focused on problem. Practitioners and professionals from the sector and from various institutions are invited to deliver certain lectures, thus encouraging a merger between theory and practice. There is extensive use of practical assignments, seminars, individual and group work, discussions and work on projects. Field trips to organisations in the sector are less common at the master’s degree level, because the studies are organised in the evening, which is later than the working hours of businesses. Employers are also involved in offering and improving courses. They are asked to lead seminar discussions, and sometimes classes involve visits to places of employment to exchange experiences. Some courses do organise field trips to strengthen links between theory and practice, and at the master’s degree level these can be organised on Saturdays. The Covid-19 pandemic meant that all guest lectures and visits were online, and, just as was the case with classes, this involved the MS-Teams platform. This also made it easier to invite guest lecturers from abroad to deliver lectures.

Successive courses allow students to analyse and study in-depth the issues that are of interest to them. This facilitates the research competence of the students. All courses include seminars which encourage students to appear before their course mates to present their information and to develop discussion skills. The study process is dominated by methods in which students do their

work so that they can achieve their learning outcomes in terms of strengthening their knowledge, skills and competence. This involves an independent search for information about the topic at hand, data extraction and analysis, etc. The study process uses methods that facilitate the ability of students to deal with assignments related to communications studies, resolving real problems in the sector and modelling situations. Here are a few specific examples of each of the aforementioned and diverse study methods, with examples of how unification between theory and practice is strengthened in various courses and sectors.

There have been partnerships with non-governmental organisations to deal with social inclusivity issues, as well as the practice use of a biographic approach. During the 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 academic year, there was very successful cooperation with the St Luke Support Association, which helps former prisoners to reintegrate themselves into society. The association asked the sociologists of the LU FFS to support the visibility of its work. During the 2017/2018 academic year, master's degree students in the sociology programme recorded life stories by interviewing former prisoners. During the next academic year, with financing from the US embassy, students worked with the St Luke Association to organise three events related to how former prisoners could return to society. The recorded life stories were adapted to a solo actor performance, after which there was a thematic discussion involving experts from various areas. During this project, students visited the association at Bārdzīņu Street 2. That is where one of the event was organised. The final event was held at the UL building at Kalpaka Street 4.

Field trips are organised each year so as to gain and strengthen knowledge. This is part of the "Sustainable development" course. A Marie Curie grant made it possible to partner with the private sector in this course, and this provided support to young researchers as part of the SUSPLACE (Sustainable Place Shaping) project. There were several educational fieldtrips in 2018 and 2020 to visit farmers in Latvia who use sustainable methods. Students also visited local government at which sustainable development strategies were important. On October 10, 2020, programme professor organised a field trip so as to introduce students to practical examples of sustainable locations and territories. Students visited a perma-culture farm, "Zadiņi," in the Smiltene Administrative District, also visiting the administrative district's council. At the farm, students were welcomed by a former SUSPLACE project researcher, who talked about the activities of the farm and the community approach in developing locations. The chairman of the Smiltene Administrative District Council and a development specialist talked about the district's development plans, projects and examples in the broader context of urban and rural development. Students also visited specific infrastructure objects, places and companies. On October 30, 2021, a guest lecturer organised sustainable development examples in the urban environment of Rīga. He led trips to the Free Riga-supported urban creative block at Ķīšezers, as well as the Āgenskalns Market, which was developed by the Kalnciems Block. Students also met with participants of the IN-HABIT project.

Collaboration with the government sector mostly involves guest lectures. Mandatory (Section A) courses relate to specialisation in various sectors, including "Migration and integration," "Sustainable development," etc. Special thought is given to a linking theory and practice. A consultant at the Developmental Planning Department of the Trans-Sector Coordination Centre is a regular lecturer on the "Sustainable Development" course, and informs students about how development documents are prepared and explains how goals related to sustainable development are practically implemented in the public administration system. The course also regularly partners with NGOs such as the Latvian Platform for Developmental Cooperation and the Green Freedom. Both have provided informational materials and guest lectures. During the 2020/2021 academic year, a guest taught the "Global Governance" course. Other guest lecturers have included a director of the Platform for Developmental Cooperation, a women's peace and security specialist at UN Women (Beirut, Lebanon), an ambassador to the UN in Geneva, a director of the Swiss office in



Syria on behalf of Doctors Without Borders, an office director for a European Commissioner. During the 2021/2022 academic year, an Associate Professor taught the course “Migration and integration,” and guest lecturers included a senior researcher at the LU Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, a director of the Social Statistics Department at the Central Statistics Board, a project director for the Rīga City Council Department of Education, Culture and Sports Department’s Cultural Board Public Integration and Participation Department, a director of a Latvian Cultural Centre in the UK, a curator of the “Latvians in the World” museum, and a researcher at Autonomous University of Barcelona (Spain). The Covid-19 pandemic meant that a distanced or combined process in full-time courses. This made it possible to invite a greater number of guest lecturers from organisations outside of Latvia, because links to the lecture are possible from anywhere in the world with the MS-Teams platform.

Section B courses also involve a wide variety of methods aimed at obtaining and strengthening knowledge, including guest lectures and (less often) field trips. There are individual research projects, analysis of actual social issues or incidents, discussions, seminars, group work and other methods. In order to strengthen the knowledge, skills and competence of students with compatibility with labour market demands in the market research sector, the course “Marketing research and consumer behaviour” is taught by professionals who hold a doctorate in sociology. Guest lecturers are also invited from various companies. During the 2020/2021 academic year, these included the Machine Learning Lab, AskFM, the Data School, the Rait Group, and If Insurance. Individual research projects are organised so as to resolve true problems in the sector and to model situations in the market research area, with this being linked to research of marketing or consumer behaviour.

A similar approach is taken in other courses, taking into account the specifics of the relevant field. This strengthens the knowledge, skills and competence of students, which are in line with labour market demands in the public opinion research sector and in the area of applied and fundamental scholarly research. In 2015/2016, for instance, students were involved in the national research programme “Innovation and sustainable development: Latvia’s post-crisis processes in the global context (SUSTINNO),” and its project “The social dimension and social innovations in sustainable development.” In partnership with the course “Biographic methods in the humanities and social sciences,” interviews were recorded with people who were subject to the risk of poverty and alienation. Analysis of these interviews in relation to various aspects of social policy in the course “EU social policy analysis.” The topics that were reviewed included resolutions to real problems and analysis of various areas of social policy – housing policies, employment policies, family policies, social aid and services for target group needs, an inclusive labour market for people with disabilities, and other important issues. The result was that students gained in-depth and expanded understanding and skills in identifying social problems, extracting appropriate data so as to study them, analyse the information in connection with other sources of information and research in the relevant area, action policies and normative regulations related to the specific issue, and prepare a report on the selected issue and present it before the group.

The physical environment of the study programme has gradually changed. Auditoriums can be easily adapted for group work or individual work, and students can make use of digital technologies. Most instructors use methods which encourage active student participation, critical thinking and reflection. To facilitate the study process and independent studies, the E-study environment is used. Each course has an E-study environment (Moodle) which provides students with access to course materials, assignment descriptions, educational materials related to the topic of the courses, and the assignments that will have to be completed (tests, forums, seminars, conferences, etc.). Grades given in all courses for tests and final exams are recorded along with comments in the E-study environment that is available to all students.

The student-centred approach actualises study programmes and study courses, particularly focusing on a purposeful formulation of learning outcomes, encouraging instructors and students to have a dialogue about the content of the studies, the forms of organisation and the methods. Properly formulated learning outcomes facilitate the understanding and co-responsibility of learning, self-evaluation and an understanding of the grades that have been received. Instructors use appropriate methods, testing forms and grading criteria in pursuit of the study goals and planned learning outcomes. There are various forms related to final exams – presentation of individual work (e.g., in the courses “Sustainable development” and “Migration and integration”, group work and presentation thereof (“Marketing research and consumer behaviour.” At the same time, traditional written exams and essays are very useful in training the ability to analytically justify one’s views (“Human rights and social rights.” This helps to strengthen skills related to critical analysis, and this is of use when preparing the master’s thesis. Oral exams (“Contacts with various target groups in social work”), in turn, facilitate contact skills and a reaction ability to answer questions posed by the instructor. Instructors are obliged to regularly supplement the E-study content and update it with important information about theoretical literature, publications and lecture materials. The more active use of digital technologies was actualised by the emergency situation related to the Covid-19 pandemic. This also encouraged the more effective use of the digital environment in the study process and communication.

Students in the study process receive support and reciprocal links with their instructors. Grading criteria are published in advance. This allows students to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the expected learning outcomes. Understandable and properly formulated study programme and course outcomes facilitate the understanding and co-responsibility for their learning, self-evaluation and an understanding of the grades that they have received.

The student-centred educational principles facilitate student mobility (recognition of learning outcomes). Students are involved in research initiated by academic personnel and take part in social activities in society, thus gaining important experience in terms of putting what they have learned to practice. An international quality assurance policy means that the study programmes are implemented so that students are encouraged to be actively involved in ways of improving the study process. There are procedures whereby students can submit proposals and deal with complaints and student appeal reviews. Improvements in the study process are evaluated and taken into account with the results of student surveys. Students are happy to make recommendations on how the study programme and process can be improved in conversations with instructors and programme directors. The student-centred approach is strengthened by dialogue among the programme director, instructors and students about the content, forms of organisation and methods of the study content.

Requirements related to earning credits, information about the testing forms that are to be used, and grades are provided in the course description for each course. These are available in the LU Information System (LUIS) and the E-studies environment. Grading criteria are presented to students during the first lectures of each course.

Instructors in the study programme make use of LU procedures in the grading system (the study course testing organisation procedure at the University of Latvia). See [https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user\\_upload/LU.LV/Dokumenti/Dokumenti\\_LV/3.\\_STUDIJU\\_UN\\_ZINATNES\\_PROCESU\\_REGLAMENTEJOSIE\\_DOKUMENTI/9\\_STUDIJ\\_3.PDF](https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_LV/3._STUDIJU_UN_ZINATNES_PROCESU_REGLAMENTEJOSIE_DOKUMENTI/9_STUDIJ_3.PDF).

(Only in Latvian)

Study results are evaluated on the basis of two indicators – the quality indicator (grades on a 10-point scale in accordance with the state academic education standard requirements), and the quantity indicator – credits after the total number of hours devoted to each learning subject.

The final grade in each course must be successful in order to earn credits. The grade must not be lower than 4 (nearly average). Particular focus is devoted to the issue of test grades being successful.

The final grade is based on the final exam (oral or written) along with tests during the study course, individual work, appearance at seminars, fulfilment of seminar assignments, papers, etc. The overall grade of the study course takes into account the fact that tests during the semester must make up 50% of the final grade, while the grade for the final exam must not make up less than 10% of the final grade.

Grading frequency depends on the scope and specifics of each course. Final grades in all courses are cumulative, evaluating the student's work throughout the semester and the achievements in the exam. In evaluating the work of students, instructors also provide commentary and an explanation of the grade.

The programme ends with the master's thesis and its defence, which also are graded on a 10-point scale. In defending the thesis, there are grading criteria that are formulated in the FFS methodological instructions (University of Latvia, Faculty of Social Sciences, 2018. Methodological instructions for annual papers, bachelor's theses, master's theses and dissertations, Rīga).

**3.2.4. If the study programme envisages an internship, describe the internship opportunities offered to students, provision and work organization, including whether the higher education institution/ college helps students to find an internship place. If the study programme is implemented in a foreign language, provide information on how internship opportunities are provided in a foreign language, including for foreign students. To provide analysis and evaluation of the connection of the tasks set for students during the internship included in the study programme with the learning outcomes of the study programme (if applicable).**

**3.2.5. Evaluation and description of the promotion opportunities and the promotion process provided to the students of the doctoral study programme (if applicable).**

**3.2.6. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the marks of the final theses.**

Universities usually choose one of two strategies in selecting topics for final assignments of students. Students must choose a subject area which relates to the priority research areas of the university that they are attending and the research interests of the instructors, or they are completely free to choose their own topic. Given that sociology is a comparatively new field of study in Latvia and that there is a small number of professionals in the sector, the UL encourages

students to choose topics that are in line with their own interests, issues in society and aspects of the labour market, this aimed at facilitating the further development of the field of sociology. The result of this is that there is a fairly broad range of topics which students have chosen.

In 2021, for instance, theses were written about market research ("Factors motivating clients of Company X to monitor electronic sports"), labour market issues during the pandemic ("Changes in internal communications at Company X during the Covid-19 pandemic"), political sociology ("The ideological orientation and views about freedom of speech of the people of Latvia; adaptation of the Kerlinger Index to measure liberalism and conservatism in Latvia"). One thesis focused on an issue which relates to the area of sports sociology, which is all but invisible in Latvia ("The meaning of social networks in the development of the career of professional athletes"). The author of this latter work is continuing her studies at the doctoral level. Two theses were written in partnership with the SPPI – one about sustainability ("Opportunities and motivations to purchase sustainable goods in Riga"), and the other about migration ("Support for Re-migrants in Cēsis, Valmiera and Smiltene"). Others had to do with quality of life ("The understanding of people in Rīga about the quality of indoor air and steps to take to improve it"), and social welfare ("Experiences of young people who have attained maturity about being abandoned during childhood").

The broad range of thesis topics over a broader range of years can be seen in the ones that were chosen in 2017. These focused on social issues ("Creative blocks as a social phenomenon in an urban environment"; "Professional education communities in Latvia's education system"), labour market issues ("Risk perception in real estate insurance; "The role of the social and human capital of university graduates in shaping the quality of work"), new aspects of sociology such as medicine sociology ("Social functioning after the insertion of an aorta valve prosthesis in the later post-surgery period"), gender sociology ("Reasons for the establishment of alternative models of masculinity and the views of men about same"), and regional development and quality of life, both of them subject areas of interest to the SPPI ("Links to place and quality of life: The Ikšķile Administrative District"; "The geographic mobility and belonging to place of residents of the Cēsis and Limbaži administrative districts").

Grades given to master's theses usually range from 7 (good) to 10 (outstanding). During the accreditation period, a few theses received a grade of 6 (nearly good), and only one received the grade of 5 (average). Significant programme requirements mean that students who are not really motivated in the learning process usually don't even get to the point of writing a master's thesis. High grades for the theses that are written show that graduates are capable of using sociological theories and social science research methods independently; they can successfully engage in research work, create new knowledge, and explain issues to the public. Programme graduates were well suited for the labour market in sociology and in related areas.

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

**3.3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples.**

The master's degree programme is organised at the UL FFS. A broader look at resources is in Chapter II.3. of this report, and so here the focus will be on the most important issue – scientific literature for students. The resources at hand are fully in line with achieving the goals of the study programme and ensuring a high-quality study process. This applies to rooms, technologies, and software that are needed in the study process. The amount of information that is available for the process is commendable. The FFS library, where the social science collection is held, is open for 60 hours per week to serve the interests of students. Users have free access to the collection. The library is in three rooms with 544 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space. The library has 84 workstations, including 18 with computers.

These are the free services that are offered at the library:

Electronic ordering/reservation/usage deadline extension at the joint catalogue of libraries of national importance (hereafter – joint catalogue), as well as the receipt of information resources to use at the reading room of the library or at home. These services are available to registered users at the UL Library.

There is access to the delivery of information resources. Academic personnel, researchers and doctoral students can order information resources from the joint catalogue and from any library, indicating the sectoral library that would be the most convenient place to receive the reserved information resource.

Users have access to self-service scanning services.

There is access to informative literature and periodicals, desktop and laptop computers (both those of the library and those of users), as well as Internet connections, including Wi-Fi, which operates in all buildings of the UL.

The “Night Subscription” service is aimed at ensuring free access to certain information resources outside of the LU Library from the moment when it is closed until the moment when it is opened. Such resources can be reserved in advance, indicating the specific hours when the user wishes to access them.

Information resources can also be delivered during the summer. Users can receive information resources reserved in the joint catalogue once a week at their most convenient sectoral library (the one in Raiņa Boulevard, the Natural Sciences library, the House of Science library).

Users have access to informational services such as consultations, provision of reports, training and support in the field of research. These are among the fundamental duties of the UL Library. Consultants at the library can offer bibliographic, thematic, factographic, addressal, precising and other types of information and consultations to LU students, as well as academic, scientific and general personnel. Students make more active use of such consultations when working on their independent projects, annual papers or bachelor's thesis.

User training is organised so as to help them to develop their skills of working independently and so that they can find, assess and use all information resources and E-environment tools. The library works actively with its target audiences – students at all levels, as well as academic, scientific and general personnel. This is aimed at information skills and offering in-depth knowledge and skills when it comes to working with electronic resources. During the first semester of studies, the library organises presentations for social work programme students, as well as activities in auditoriums and computer classrooms. Students from affiliates have access to such meetings in a distanced system. The aim of the training is to ensure that users have the skill to work with the freely available collection, self-service systems and office equipment such as self-service scanners and copiers. This helps to improve individual learning competence.

Faculty members use the electronic Moodle E-environment to distribute study materials and to receive, examine and analyse work that students have submitted. Moodle supplements the LU information system (LUIS), ensuring the entry of grades. Students use the LUIS to register for courses electronically. Support from a methodologist is available if there are questions or problems in this regard. The methodologist is also prepared to support students when it comes to organisational aspects of the study process, providing consultations on various related issues.

The UL FFS has appropriate rooms for the study process. Most faculty members in KSA MSP have elected posts at the UL FFS, and they have high-quality offices and adequate support. Guest instructors have access to workspaces that are provided by the UL FFS. They can spend time there, prepare for their classes and offer individual consultations to students.

The study plan for each cohort of students is shaped in the long term when students begin their studies, which last for three years. Faculty members use the electronic Moodle E-environment to distribute study materials and to receive, examine and analyse work that students have submitted. Moodle supplements the LU information system (LUIS), ensuring the entry of grades. Students use the LUIS to register for courses electronically. Support from a methodologist is available if there are questions or problems in this regard. The methodologist is also prepared to support students when it comes to organisational aspects of the study process, providing consultations on various related issues.

As of January 1, 2022, the LU Library (LUB) has 26,426 titles related to the sociology, political science and anthropology study field, as well as 60485 copies of printed works, mostly in English, Latvian, Russian and other languages. Information resources that have been added to the collection between January 1, 2017, and January 1, 2022, are listed in the collection of the LU library and the collection of the library of the FFS. Information about resources in the field of anthropology is also seen in the collection of the Library of Humanities.

*Table 3.3.1.1.*

*Print information resources for the UL Sociology study field as of January 1, 2022*

Print publications (titles, number)			Publications by language (issues, copies)			
Books	Periodicals	Others	Latvian	English	Russian	Other
11,327/21377	410/3,700	295/591	1,753/9,318	6,718/10,935	2,111/3,416	1,450/1,999
UL Library as such: <b>12,032</b> titles = <b>25,668</b> copies, among them:						
Faculty of Social Sciences Library: <b>5,026</b> titles = <b>8,162</b> copies						
4,878/7,768	72/277	76/117	556/1,803	3,944/5,725	358/461	168/173

*Table 3.3.1.2.*

*Added print information resources for the UL Sociology study field between January 1, 2017 and January 1, 2022*

Print publications (titles, number)			Publications by language (issues, copies)			
Books	Periodicals	Books	Periodicals	Books	Periodicals	Books
1,318/1,693	52/282	49/77	313/721	867/1,053	116/132	123/146

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UL Library as such: **1,419** titles = **2,052** copies, among them:

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Faculty of Social Sciences Library: **715** titles = **900** copies

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695/830	7/47	13/23	127/246	534/599	29/29	25/26
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The LUB also offers access to the following electronic resources:

1. The UL E-resource repository;
2. Databases of magazine publishers, etc.;
3. E-book platforms: Since 2022, the LU has had access to 42 E-resource platforms such as VLeBooks, ProQuest Ebook Central and others that are particularly convenient for distanced studies. There is also a wide selection of E-journal databases, and the ones that are used most often in the field of sociology are Cambridge Journals Online, EBSCO, JSTOR, Oxford Journals Online, Sage Journals, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink Contemporary Journals and the Taylor & Francis Social Science & Humanities Library. These databases and E-book platforms can be used in the LU network or outside the LU compute network, linking to them with the LUIS user name and password.

The LUB has a state-of-the-art technology web service, Primo Discovery and SFX so as to ensure that the electronic resources are more conveniently available. One link can lead to search results from all of the LUB databases.

The library collection satisfied the needs of the study programme and the needs of scholarly research. It is supplemented each year with the most important information resources in accordance with the information needs of academic personnel and students.

### **3.3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific base support, including the resources provided within the framework of cooperation with other science institutes and higher education institutions (applicable to doctoral study programmes) (if applicable).**

### **3.3.3. Indicate data on the available funding for the corresponding study programme, its funding sources and their use for the development of the study programme. Provide information on the costs per one student within this study programme, indicating the items included in the cost calculation and the percentage distribution of funding between the specified items. The minimum number of students in the study programme in order to ensure the profitability of the study programme (indicating separately the information on each language, type and form of the study programme implementation).**

MSP Sociology has all of the aforementioned informative, material and technical support (see Section 2.3.1).

#### **Programme revenues**

UL uses the following resources for the master's degree programme "Sociology:

- 1) A national budget subsidy from the Ministry of Education and Science, which was EUR 2,445

during the 2021/2022 academic year for full-time studies;

2) Tuition fees that are based on all of the factors mentioned in the section about finances, with the tuition fee during the 2021/2022 academic year being EUR 2,350 per year for full-time studies.

Given this, it is expected that the total budget for the study programme will be EUR 39,100 per year, as seen in Table 4.

*Table 3.3.3.1.*

*Forecast programme revenues per year, EUR*

Type	Number of students	Tuition/subsidy	Total
Full-time (subsidy)	16	2445	39,123
Full-time (tuition)			
<b>Total</b>			<b>39 123</b>

### **Programme costs**

The base cost of UL study programmes is based on UL methodology so as to evaluate how much resources are needed to ensure financial assurance. This takes into account the study process costs mentioned in Section 2.3.1, as well as information about the study programme plan, the faculty members, the planned number of students and other aspects, thus ensuring the believability of the forecasts.

#### Programme costs for full-time studies

These calculations for the MSP Sociology are based on data about students during the 2021/2022 academic year. There were 15 full time students in the programme, after the accreditation, there was the study programme plan, as well as the planned structure of academic personnel. Based on this data, the total annual costs of the program are 41 883 EUR and their structure (percentage distribution) is shown in Table 3.3.3.2.

*Table 3.3.3.2.*

*Costs in the programme*

Line item	% of total
Faculty members	53%
General personnel	11%
Other costs	0.2%
Infrastructure	10%
Property and services	1.8%
Indirect costs	24%



Figure 3.3.3.1. the cost of the study program (vertical axis) depending on the number of students (horizontal axis), the tuition fee (green line) and the state budget subsidy (blue line) are visually represented with a red line.

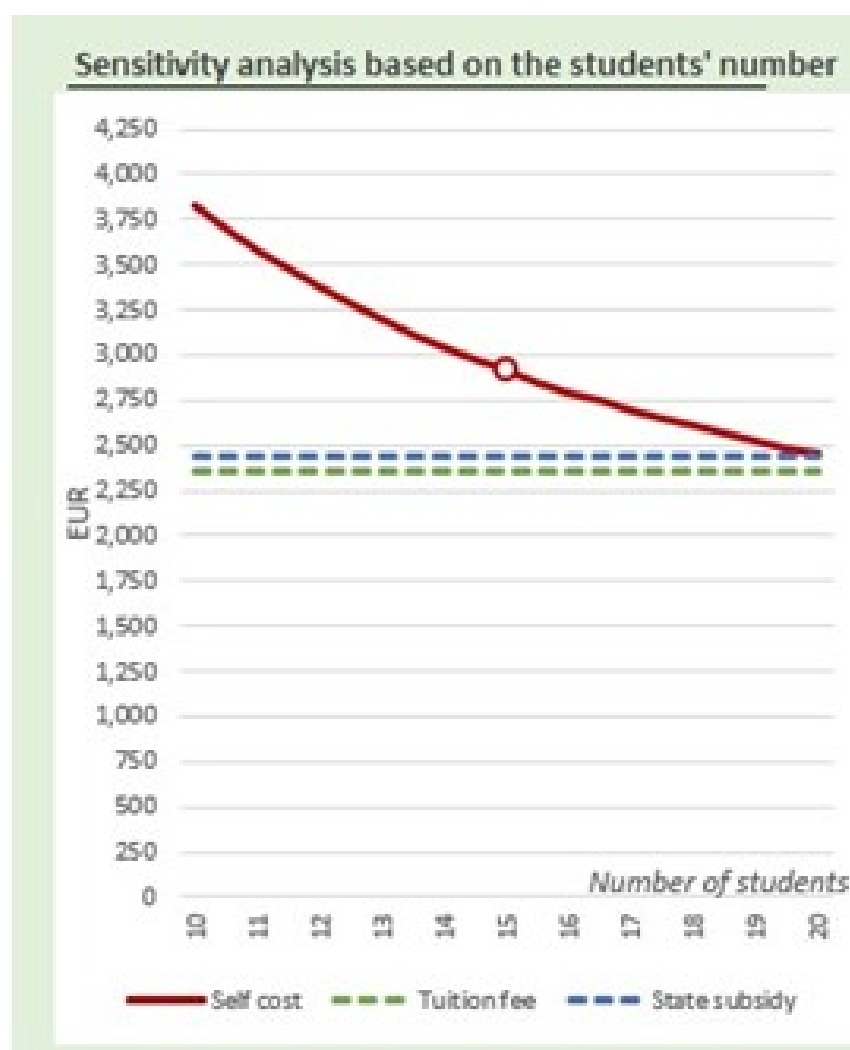


Figure 3.3.3.1. The base cost of the master's degree study programme Sociology with the number of full-time students and **the number of students**.

Based on the cost structure and the total number of students 20, the cost of the program per student (base cost) is 2910 EUR per year.

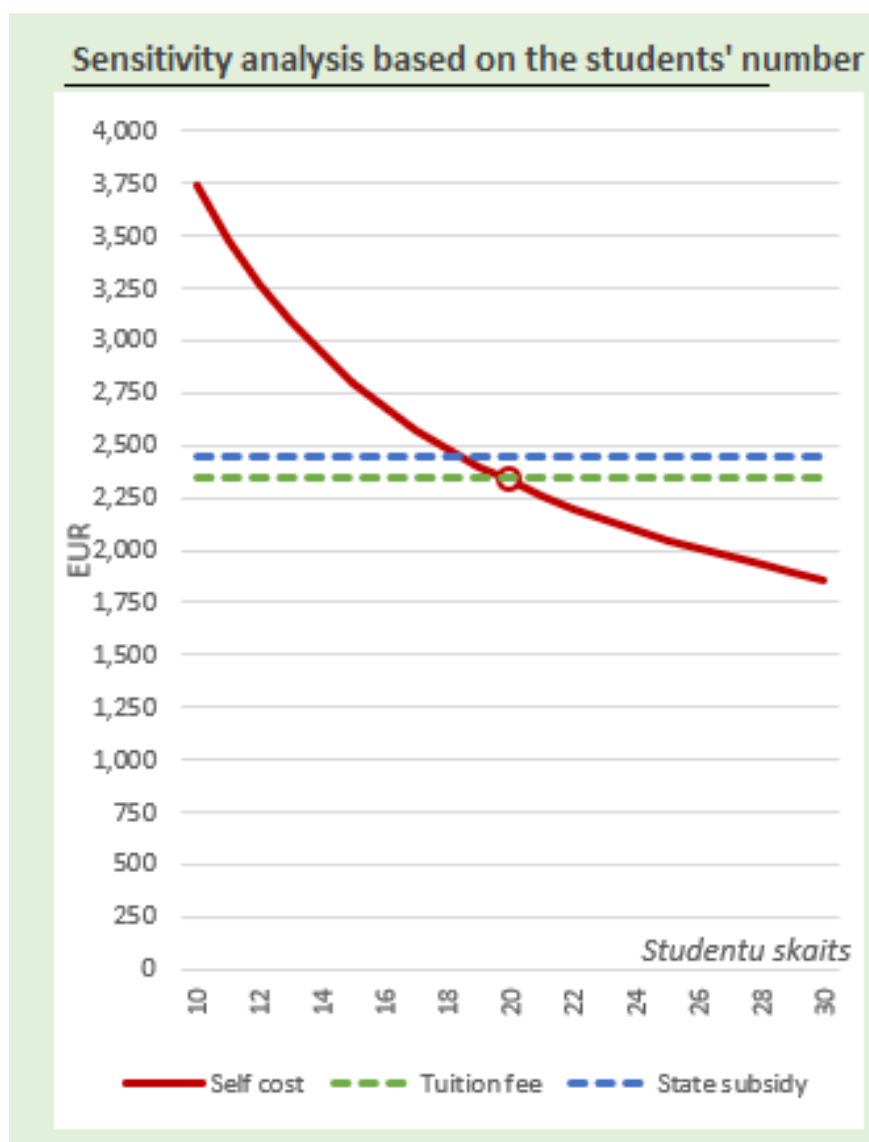


Figure 3.3.3.2. depicts the base cost of the study programme on the basis of student numbers and a comparison with the proposed tuition fee and budget subsidy if the number of tuition-paying students is increased.

These calculations show that if the programme is to be profitable and students have a high-quality study process with the current national subsidy and tuition fee, the number of students in the programme (in all courses) should be at least 19. If only students with subsidies were in the programme, there would have to be 19 of them. The programme would be profitable with at least 16 students who receive studies and at least three who pay their own tuition.

### Summary of revenues and costs

Table 3.3.3.3. is a summary of the programme's revenue on the basis of the type of studies, the national subsidy and tuition fees, and the expenditures of the programme given the present number of students.

Table 3.3.3.3. Results of the programme

Type	No. of students	Tuition/subsidy	Total revenues	Total costs
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Full-time (subsidy)	16	2,445	39,120	46,560
Full-time (tuition)		2,350		
<b>Total</b>			<b>39,120</b>	<b>46,560</b>

These data show that the profitability of the study programme must have a greater number of students who pay their own tuition. There are plans to achieve this by being more active in marketing so as to attract applicants, explaining the content of the programme, the skills that are to be learned, and the opportunities which exist in the labour market. Financial support for the development of the programme can also be received from the LU Study Quality Improvement Fund.

### 3.4. Teaching Staff

**3.4.1. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members (academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.**

Elected academic personnel mostly teach courses in the study programme, with professionals from the sector being added to the mix in some courses. All faculty members hold a doctorate, with three professors, six associate professors, four docents, one researcher with a doctorate and two professionals from the sector with a doctorate (the study courses “Discourse analysis” and “Marketing research and consumer behaviour”). Among all of the instructors there are only two professionals from the sector who are not elected personnel at the UL. Co-operation among sectors is facilitated by involving instructors from the Department of Political Science, the Department of Communications Studies and the Department of Anthropology in the programme. This ensures an interdisciplinary approach in the field of sociology, ensuring the inter-sectoral co-operation and knowledge sector contact areas at the EKI 7 level and the LKI 7 level.

The high academic qualification of the lecturing staff contributes significantly to achieving the aimed study results. A PhD indicates in-depth knowledge of specific academic fields and issues relevant to achieving the results of studies in concrete courses. Long-term experience in research and study work provides a high understanding of the role and functioning of higher education, which in turn contributes to the implementation of research-based studies and the transfer of knowledge from research to work with students.

**3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff**

**over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.**

There have been key changes during the reporting period in the composition of faculty members. Three professors (two of them from the Department of Sociology) have retired, while three new instructors have been hired (two of them in the Department of Sociology). Two docents have become associate professors. This indicates a balanced, successful and gradual replacement of generations, which ensures high quality and the sustainability of the programme. It was also ensured during the reporting period that all faculty members in the programme (except one person from a related area) hold a doctorate, and that is of decisive importance in ensuring the quality of studies at the master's degree level.

The replacement of generations has also meant a few adjustments to the content of the studies. During the next accreditation period, there will not be a course taught by a retired professor ("Transnational societal management" and a course on "Policy analysis"). In the former case, the relevant topics related to globalisation and transnational management have been integrated into the new course "Contemporary social problems and social transformations" and the course "Sustainable development." In the latter case, there is a course with a comparable title, and the content of the course in the bachelor's degree programme, with the director thereof insisting that this course be taught at that level. The arrival of new instructors has substantially improved the quality of the course "Multivariate Analysis in Social Sciences," and it has also developed a new course, "Contemporary social theories," along with a completely new course, "Contemporary social problems and social transformations". This is possible thanks to support for movement toward a larger number of courses in the obligatory (Section A) part of the programme so that the vitally important courses involve a greater number of instructors. This, in turn, ensures greater mobility and an ability to go on sabbaticals so as to strengthen research excellence. This has been less possible until now specifically because there have been problems with replacing faculty members if they are gone for a longer period of time. The younger generation of faculty members has very enthusiastic people who get along well with students and provide new growth capacity for the programme.

**3.4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members, involved in the implementation of doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals or peer-reviewed monographs may be additionally specified. Information on the teaching staff included in the database of experts of the Latvian Council of Science in the relevant field of science (total number, name of the lecturer, field of science in which the teaching staff has the status of an expert and expiration date of the Latvian Council of Science expert) (if applicable).**

**3.4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying**

**the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).**

**3.4.5. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study programme and study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).**

The master's degree programme Sociology faculty members teach UL FFS Department of Sociology mandatory (Section A) courses, and also teach in-depth research methods in linked mandatory elective (Section B) courses. In order to ensure broader choices in Section B and to make more full use of the intellectual capital of the UL FFS while also ensuring the level of linked areas that are necessary at the master's degree level, faculty members from other UL FFS departments are part of the programme. Because students choose Section B courses during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> semester, voting on the ones that are offered, all of the indicated faculty members never take part in the implementation of the programme simultaneously.

Partnerships among faculty members are based on meetings at the Department of Sociology Studies, including ongoing discussions about teaching achievements and problems, confirmation of the academic calendar, approval of topics for master s theses, and analysis of the study process and the learning outcomes. Links among courses are also discussed at department meetings or in informal conversations or E-mail correspondence. Courses that are taught by two instructors ("Sustainable development," "Migration and integration" and "Multivariate Analysis in Social Sciences" during the reporting period), involve content implementation and co-operation planning during the registration week, and this remains intensive throughout the course so as to ensure the integrity of its content. Teamwork is to be expanded during the next accreditation period, because in addition to other benefits, it would make it possible to plan sabbaticals in a more flexible way. Microsoft Office One Drive Excel files are used to ensure a harmonised approach to the individual work of students, with each one marking down the planned dates for submitting work in the specific course. This makes it possible to have more even planning without creating an excessive burden upon students, which would happen if all of the work had to be submitted at the same time and during the last week of the semester, for instance.

The study field sociology, political studies, anthropology has a council which provides a platform for broader strategic discussions about how to develop the content of the studies and how to improve the programme. Instructors from other UL FFS departments are involved in this, which facilitates co-operation and exchanges of views while also enriching the intellectual environment of the programme. Most of the co-operation and communications occur between faculty members and the programme director. There is more direct communication and collaboration among faculty members who are involved in the council of the field of studies.

A important partner in the scholarly work is the UL FFS Institute for Social and Political Research. Faculty members who are involved in the programme conduct scholarly work, and the involvement of the results thereof in the content of courses means grand applications, involvement of students in research work, linking assignments at courses to specific research goals and missions, organising

publications, and planning and taking part in conferences. A partnership with professionals in the sector is strengthened by bringing them in as guest lecturers for some lecturers, as well as allowing them to teach certain courses.

The UL FFS will move to the Writing House of the UL Academic Centre during the 2023/2024 academic year, and that will improve co-operation with faculty members and scientific institutes from other faculties. This will also offer a more modern study environment, including more convenient access to the broad range of scholarly literature at the Latvian National Library.

When it comes to the relationship between faculty members and students, the most important forms include lectures, seminars, internships, practical work, group work individual consultations, individual assignments and advice for the thesis. There are small groups of students in the programme (5-10 of them during the second semester and 15-20 during the first and third semester, with most of the lectures being integrated for financial reasons during the first and second semester). This enables an individualised approach toward students, organising interactive lectures, where there is sufficient time and opportunity for each student to pose questions and to discuss the subject material, as well as effective seminar work (because of the small number of students, each student has an opportunity to speak up at each seminar). The small number of students also makes it possible for all of them to develop their debate skills, to express their views and to be actively involved in the process. Some courses arrange chairs in a circle so that students are evenly arranged and are encouraged to take part in the dialogue. Individual co-operation relates to the master's thesis, where of decisive importance is the success of the collaboration between the academic advisor and the student when preparing the thesis and being ready to defend it. On average, each faculty member advises one or two master's theses per year. Given the workload of the faculty members in other programmes and in advising theses, this is a commensurate burden which allows the faculty members to do this work at a high level of quality and with the necessary individualised approach.

At this writing, during the fall semester of the 2022/2023 academic year, there were 15 students in the programme, and the proportion of students and faculty members is approximately 1:1. If only the elected faculty members of the UL FFS, as opposed to all of those who are involved in the mandatory elective (Section B) courses, the students choose 30 KP, and the proportion between faculty members and students is lower – 1:2.5.

# Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	Diploma SOC MSP.pdf	SOC MSP diploma pielikums.pdf
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	Statistics SOC MSP.pdf	SOC MSP statistikas dati.pdf
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard	Education standard SOC MSP.pdf	SOC MSP izglitibas standarts.pdf
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	Mapping of the study courses SOC MSP.xlsx	Kursu_kartejums SOC MSP.xlsx
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	Study plan SOC MSP.pdf	SOC MSP plāns.pdf
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	Study courses SOC MSP.pdf	Sociologija_MSP_kursu_apraksti_LV.pdf
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)		
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
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 (if applicable)	Study field declaration SOC MSP.pdf	SOC MSP apliecinajums 55. pants.edoc

# Diplomacy (45312)

Study field	<i>Sociology, Political Science, and Anthropology</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Diplomacy</i>
Education classification code	<i>45312</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>Academic master study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Toms</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Rostoks</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>toms.rostoks@lu.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Asociētais profesors</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>29557994</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>To train academically educated and qualified professionals in the field of diplomacy who are competitive in the public and private sector labour markets.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to ensure the implementation of the most significant achievements in the theory and practice of diplomacy, for-<i>e</i>ign policy and international relations during the study process;</li> <li>- to offer students in-depth knowledge of the historical and theoretical aspects of diplomacy and the necessary skills and abilities for solving practical prob-<i>l</i>ems;</li> <li>- to provide opportunities to cultivate students' skills in the study process, applying the acquired theoretical knowledge in the identification and analysis of practical problems of di-<i>p</i>lomacy and international relations;</li> <li>- to teach and evolve the knowledge and skills, which enable students to achieve good quality performance in the chosen specialty in the Republic of Latvia Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other state administrative institutions, international institutions and the pri-<i>v</i>ate sector, where diplomatic skills are required;</li> <li>- to implement MSP Diplomacy in ac-<i>c</i>ordance with the requirements of Latvian diplomacy and regional priori-<i>t</i>ies (EU, NATO, USA, Russia);</li> <li>- to develop the students' understand-<i>i</i>ng of the diverse aspects of a diplo-<i>m</i>at's activity, the opportunities and limitations of diplomacy as a profes-<i>s</i>ion.</li> </ul>



Results of the study programme	<p><b>Knowledge:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. demonstrate awareness of different types of diplomacy, foreign policy and decision-making, theories and current developments in international relations, and Latvia's opportunities in European and world politics;</li> <li>2. know and independently apply social science research methods.</li> </ol> <p><b>Skills:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. analyse and critically evaluate academic texts in diplomacy, foreign policy and international relations;</li> <li>4. critically appraise the work of diplomats and their relations with the public;</li> <li>5. develop an appropriate research design, use appropriate research methods, work independently and in a team, communicate research findings in writing and orally in Latvian and English.</li> </ol> <p><b>Competence:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. understand and apply academic ethics in practice;</li> <li>7. critically evaluate research findings, adapt to new situations, develop ideas, assess the work of others, respond to the assessment of own performance, collaborate with others.</li> </ol>
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	Master's thesis

## Study programme forms

### Full time studies - 2 years - latvian

Study type and form	Full time studies
Duration in full years	2
Duration in month	0
Language	latvian
Amount (CP)	80
Admission requirements (in English)	A bachelor's degree or a second-level vocational higher education (or equivalent) in political science A bachelor's or master's degree or a second-level vocational higher education (or equivalent) to higher education in the social sciences, humanities, law or business and an entrance examination. A bachelor's or master's degree or a second-level vocational higher education, or equivalent to higher education in other academic fields, relevant work experience in the public sector and an entrance examination.
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	Master's degree of Social Sciences in Political Science
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	-

### Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
University of Latvia	RĪGA	RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050

### 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

**3.1.1. Description and analysis of changes in the parameters of the study programme made since the issuance of the previous accreditation form of the study field or issuance of the study programme license, if the study programme is not included on the accreditation form of the study field, including changes planned within the evaluation procedure of the study field evaluation procedure.**

There have been changes in two parameters of the master's study programme in Diplomacy (hereinafter – MSP Diplomacy). First, the code of the study programme has changed in accordance with the changes in the Latvian education classification pursuant to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 322 of 13.06.2017 “Regulations on the Classification of Latvian Education”. The MSP Diplomacy code has changed from 45310 to 45312. Second, the awarded degree has changed from a master's degree of social sciences in diplomacy, to a master's degree of social sciences in political science (see Table 3.1.1.). Other parameters such as study field, programme duration, language, admission conditions have remained unaltered since the previous accreditation.

*Table 3.1.1.*

*Changes in the MSP Diplomacy degree programme.*

<b>Programme parameters</b>	<b>MSP Diplomacy accredited in 2013</b>	<b>MSP Diplomacy proposed for accreditation</b>	<b>Validation</b>
Degree to be awarded	Master's degree of social sciences in diplomacy	Master's degree of social sciences in political science	Pursuant to CM Regulation No. 322 of 13.06.2017 “Regulations on the Classification of Latvian Education” and CM Regulation No. 240 of 13.05.2014 “Regulations on the state standard of the academic education”.
Study programme code according to classification of Latvian education	45310	45312	Pursuant to CM Regulation No. 322 of 13.06.2017 “Regulations on the Classification of Latvian Education”.

Since the previous accreditation in 2013, the purpose, tasks and learning outcomes of MSP Diplomacy have also been revised, however, these changes have mainly been of a specifying nature and have not fundamentally altered the goals, tasks and learning outcomes of the programme.

*Table 3.1.1.2. Changes in goals and tasks of MSP Diplomacy*

<b>Goal of MSP Diplomacy accredited in 2013</b>	<b>Goal of MSP Diplomacy proposed for accreditation</b>	<b>Substantiation</b>
<p>The goal of MSP Diplomacy is to prepare academically educated and qualified diplomacy professionals for the requirements of Latvian society, state and local governments, as well as the private sector, who will be competitive in the labour market.</p> <p>A secondary goal is to reinforce the master's level studies of diplomacy in Latvia. The implementation of the master's study programme Diplomacy contributes to transfer of diplomacy studies to Latvia, thereby promoting improvement and analysis of the quality of external relations management.</p>	<p>The goal of MSP Diplomacy is to prepare academically educated and qualified diplomacy professionals for the requirements of Latvian society, state and local governments, as well as the private sector, who will be competitive in the labour market.</p>	<p>The goal of the programme was updated in 2021, improving the learning outcomes of the programme.</p>
<b>Tasks of the accredited MSP Diplomacy</b>	<b>Tasks of the revised MSP Diplomacy</b>	<b>Substantiation</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to ensure the implementation of the most significant achievements of the theory and practice of diplomacy in the study process, offering students in-depth knowledge of the theoretical aspects of diplomacy and the necessary skills and abilities for solving practical problems;</li> <li>- to provide opportunities to cultivate students' skills in the study process, applying the acquired theoretical knowledge in the identification and analysis of practical problems of diplomacy and international relations;</li> <li>- to teach and evolve the knowledge and skills, which enable students to achieve good quality performance in the chosen specialty in the Republic of Latvia Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other state administrative institutions, international institutions and the private sector, where diplomatic skills are required;</li> <li>- to implement MSP Diplomacy in accordance with the requirements of Latvian diplomacy and regional priorities;</li> <li>- to develop the students' understanding of the diverse aspects of a diplomat's activity, the opportunities and limitations of diplomacy as a profession.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to ensure the implementation of the most significant achievements in the theory and practice of diplomacy, foreign policy and international relations during the study process;</li> <li>- to offer students in-depth knowledge of the historical and theoretical aspects of diplomacy and the necessary skills and abilities for solving practical problems;</li> <li>- to provide opportunities to cultivate students' skills in the study process, applying the acquired theoretical knowledge in the identification and analysis of practical problems of diplomacy and international relations;</li> <li>- to teach and evolve the knowledge and skills, which enable students to achieve good quality performance in the chosen specialty in the Republic of Latvia Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other state administrative institutions, international institutions and the private sector, where diplomatic skills are required;</li> <li>- to implement MSP Diplomacy in accordance with the requirements of Latvian diplomacy and regional priorities (EU, NATO, USA, Russia);</li> <li>- to develop the students' understanding of the diverse aspects of a diplomat's activity, the opportunities and limitations of diplomacy as a profession.</li> </ul>	<p>The tasks of the programme were updated in 2021, improving the learning outcomes of programme in accordance with the latest achievements of political science and implementing the transition to student-centred education.</p>
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**3.1.2. Analysis and assessment of the study programme compliance with the study field. Analysis of the interrelation between the code of the study programme, the degree, professional qualification/professional qualification requirements or the degree and professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements. Description of the duration and scope of the implementation of the study programme (including different options of the study programme**

## **implementation) and evaluation of its usefulness.**

UL FSS implements the academic MSP Diplomacy since 2012. The programme has three connections to the “Sociology, political science, anthropology” study field. First, MSP Diplomacy one of the subfields of political science – international politics – is examined in depth within the study programme. In the entry of the Latvian National Encyclopaedia, political science is defined as follows: “Formally, political science belongs to the social sciences, while maintaining a connection with the humanities. The main subfields of political science are political theory, comparative politics, public administration and international politics.”<sup>[1]</sup> Thus, the contents of MSP Diplomacy corresponds to international politics, one of the subfields of political science. Further, the fundamental components that form the studies of international politics are international relations, foreign policy and diplomacy.

Second, MSP Diplomacy offers many courses, the content of which fully correspond to the subfield of international politics. For example, courses in the programme include “Multilateral diplomacy and international organizations”, “Development stages of diplomacy”, “Current topics in EU politics”, “Latvia in world politics”, “Decision-making in foreign policy”, “Public diplomacy”, “Intercultural communication in diplomacy”, “Current issues of international relations”, “Theories of international politics”, “USA and Europe: Comparative politics, institutions and society”, “US foreign policy: Past, present, future”, “Policy of Russia in the CIS and Baltic states”, “Crises and their management in international politics”, “Current issues of contemporary diplomacy”, “National security challenges and solutions”, “Strategy and tactics of political negotiations”, “Protocol and etiquette in the era of diplomatic transformation”, “Policy of international economic relations”, “International relations and media” (altogether – 60 credit points). MSP Diplomacy also includes courses belonging to other branches of social science and political science, however, the component of international politics is predominant in this study programme.

Third, the studies within the framework of the MSP Diplomacy are aimed at acquiring in-depth knowledge, skills and competence in international relations, foreign policy and diplomacy. The programme introduces students to the key theories of international politics; the current affairs of international relations; foreign policy decision-making; the current events of EU; multilateral diplomacy and international organizations (including NATO); the history of diplomacy; the subfields of political science: comparative politics, public administration and international politics; the current issues of modern diplomacy; different types of diplomacy; diplomatic protocol and etiquette; national security and crises in international politics; the foreign policy of Russia and the United States; international economic relations and economic diplomacy. The named topics reflect the most important theoretical aspects of international relations, foreign policy and diplomacy studies, as well as the key topics and actors for Latvian foreign policy. Gradual acquisition of the courses ensures the achievement of the learning outcomes. Indeed, the learning outcomes are interrelated, and in the course of the studies, students obtain knowledge about diplomacy, foreign policy and international politics, as well as the necessary skills and competences that are expected from the graduates of MSP Diplomacy.

MSP Diplomacy enrolls students who have obtained at least a bachelor's degree or a second-level vocational education or a comparable higher education. The formula for ranking applicants is the following: Entrance examination ( $1 \times 1000 = 1000$ ). The minimum number of points for admission is 400. Applicants with a bachelor's degree or a second-level vocational higher education in political science are evaluated with the following formula: weighted average grade ( $60 \times 10 = 600$ ) + the total (or average) grade for the final examination ( $40 \times 10 = 400$ ). Applicants for studies in MSP

Diplomacy must also provide a CV. The entrance examination is a discussion of the following topics: 1) If the applicant has written a bachelor's dissertation in international relations, the first part of the conversation will take place on the subject of the bachelor's dissertation and its conclusions; 2) The applicant's knowledge of theoretical and contemporary issues in international relations and diplomacy (theory of international relations), international relations in practice, and the transformation of diplomacy); (3) the candidate's planned master's dissertation theme. These topics allow for a comprehensive assessment of applicants' existing knowledge of the theoretical and practical aspects of international relations, foreign policy and diplomacy, thereby allowing examiners to assess the applicants' readiness to study at the Master's level.

The duration of the MSP Diplomacy is 2 years of full-time regular studies. Part-time regular and part-time extramural studies are not offered. The duration of studies enables students to examine the theoretical and empirical aspects of international relations, foreign policy and diplomacy during their studies. Students can fully devote the fourth study semester to writing the master's thesis (20 credit points). MSP Diplomacy corresponds to the study field "Sociology, political science, anthropology", and the courses offered within the programme ensure a comprehensive acquisition of knowledge in the subfield of international politics.

The title of the master's degree programme "Diplomacy" confirms to the programme's content and its leading parameters – the code, the degree that is to be obtained, the goals and the missions, the learning outcomes and the enrolment requirements, all of which are organically linked and mutually integrated. The code of the study programme is based on Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 322, "Regulations on Latvia's education classification", as adopted in Rīga on 13 June 2017 (Protocol No 3 18. §). According to the abovementioned decree, the first two digits of the code of the study programme 45312 indicate the level of the study programme – master degree, while the remaining three digits indicate that the study programme is part of the thematic area "Social sciences, commercial sciences and law", more specifically the master study programme "Diplomacy" is part of the study programme group "Social and human behaviour sciences". In accordance with all of this, the degree that is to be earned is a master's degree in political science. This level of the education programme is in line with EKI level 7 and LKI level 7, in accordance with the descriptors of this level of qualification and with political science being a specific area of science in which there are formulated programme goals, missions, learning outcomes and study content.

[1] Ijabs, I. Politoloģija Latvijā. Nacionālā Enciklopēdija, 2021.

<https://enciklopedija.lv/skirklis/8486-politolo%C4%A3ija-Latvij%C4%81> (Available only in Latvian language)

### **3.1.3. Economic and/ or social substantiation of the study programme, analysis of graduates' employment.**

MSP Diplomacy focuses on one specific subfield of political science. Foreign policy and diplomacy have played a central role in the development of Latvia both after the First World War, when Latvia became a sovereign and internationally recognized sovereign state, and also after the collapse of the Soviet Union, when diplomacy and foreign policy enabled Latvia's involvement in international cooperation and becoming a member state of the EU and NATO, thereby strengthening its security and creating a predictable environment for economic development. A successful and professional foreign policy and diplomatic corps are an essential prerequisite for development, especially as contemporary diplomacy has outgrown traditional perceptions of a diplomat as an employee of the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs who represents the interests of his/her country in another country. Today, the knowledge and skills of diplomacy are useful not only for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but also for employees of other ministries and state institutions who are regularly involved in international negotiations. Knowledge of diplomacy is instrumental for employees of large municipalities and companies that implement international cooperation with partners abroad. Courses focused on mastering international economic relations, economic diplomacy and negotiation skills are also implemented within the MSP Diplomacy. The “National Development Plan of Latvia for 2021-2027” defines and formulates the strategic vision for the development of the country and identifies the goals to be achieved. Part of the goals defined in this strategic planning document envisage the creation of a favourable external environment and increased foreign investment in order to meet national development goals.<sup>[1]</sup>

Assessments given by students, graduates and employers is an essential element of the quality assessment of MSP Diplomacy. The following paragraphs provide information about the student, graduate and employer surveys, identifying how these surveys are used in developing the quality of studies. The small number of students means that feedback from the students is also received through informal discussions.

Student surveys are conducted at different stages of the study process. An initial survey is conducted at the beginning of studies, while further surveys are conducted at the conclusion of each semester, with students providing an evaluation for each course attended. A separate survey is conducted at the end of the first study year, where students provide feedback on their experience in the first year of study. A post-graduation survey is conducted in which students evaluate their study experience in the programme over two years. Those students who choose to discontinue their studies are also surveyed on the reasons for exmatriculation. Because the majority of students also work during their master's studies, the most common reason for discontinuing their studies is the inability to combine studies with work. The results of all surveys are available to the study programme director. Since the scope of this section is limited, the following paragraphs focus on the analysis of the results of the graduate survey conducted in 2021. The results of the student surveys are considered in a generalized way, while the results of the employers' survey are examined in the broader analysis of the study field “Sociology, political science and anthropology”. Taking into account that there are a number of employers who employ not only the graduates of MSP Diplomacy, but also the graduates of BSP “Political Science” and MSP “Political Science” (and possibly also those who have graduated sociology study programmes), the results of the employers' survey cannot be applied solely to one specific study programme.

The results of the student surveys for the last six years reveal three major topics of importance. First, at the beginning of the reporting period, the students had noted that in a number of courses, instructors used the Moodle incompletely, however, gradually these complications have been resolved, and especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, the lecturers became more active in using the virtual study environment. Second, students have been relatively critical regarding the number of elective courses, noting that there should be more. As a result the courses “US foreign policy: Past, present, future”, “National security challenges and solutions”, “International relations and media”, “Digital political communication” and “Political risk management” have been added to the programme. Taking into account the increasing salience of Russia's foreign policy, the course “Policy of Russia in the CIS and Baltic states” has been increased from 2 to 4 credit points. Third, at the beginning of the reporting period, students were relatively critical about the possibilities of combining studies and work.

When the first students enrolled in MSP Diplomacy in 2012, lectures were organized on work day evenings. However, students had repeatedly expressed their desire to study at weekends. As a result, beginning from 2018 lectures have been organized on two evenings (usually Thursday and

Friday) and Saturdays (from 09:00 to 16:00). In preparation for the adoption of the decision on the reorganization of the study process, BSP “Political Science” students were polled on their preferences to study on weekday evenings or at weekends (two weekday evenings and Saturdays) at the Masters level. Most students preferred to study on weekends, and the choice was made in favour of this solution. To sum up, the opinion of the students regarding the progress of the programme implementation is ascertained in various ways, and, as far as possible, it is taken into account with the aim of improving the study process.

In order to get a better idea of the opinion of MSP Diplomacy graduates about the study programme, a graduate survey was conducted at the end of 2021. This study programme does not have state-budget-financed places, consequently, the number of graduates of the programme is small, and this largely explains the relatively modest number of respondents (14) completed the questionnaires. The following paragraphs discuss the most significant results of the graduate survey. The analysis does not employ tables or graphs. Information on the answers given by graduates is given in percentages, thus the results are comparable with the results of surveys of graduates of other study programmes. 93% of respondents were satisfied that they chose this programme (the sum of the answer options “completely agree” and “rather agree”). Likewise, 93% of respondents have a good overall impression of the programme quality. 79% of respondents agree that during their studies they had the opportunity to discuss the latest trends and achievements in the field. 79% of the respondents would recommend the MSP Diplomacy to others, and 79% of the respondents believe that the knowledge acquired within the programme prepared them for the labour market. 93% of respondents agree that the study process influenced their personality, contributing to the development of qualities that later were useful when entering the labour market. It is significant that 93% of respondents believe that the education they have received contributed to their employment. 79% of the respondents apply the knowledge acquired during their studies at work, and 79% of the respondents have worked for a salary in the field related to the acquired programme.

The knowledge acquired within the programme has received a high assessment, with 93% of respondents rating the theoretical knowledge acquired in the programme as good or very good. On the other hand, 64% of respondents assessed the practical knowledge acquired during the course of studies as good or very good (while 21% of respondents assessed it as poor). 86% of respondents believe that MSP Diplomacy has contributed to their ability to acquire new skills, while 79% of respondents think that the programme has helped them identify and solve problems. 100% of the respondents believe that the studies have contributed to their ability to find and process information, and 86% of the respondents have recognized that the studies have helped them develop the ability to make decisions and substantiate them.

The graduate survey also provides information on the employment of graduates of the MSP in Diplomacy. 79% of the graduates surveyed have been employed in a field related to the study programme, and those who have not been employed in a relevant field have not done so because they could find relevant employment, but for other reasons. It should be noted that 71% of graduates employed in a field related to the study programme work in public administration, which is generally consistent with the range and content of the study courses offered in the study programme.

The general conclusion about the economic and social justification of MSP Diplomacy is that the programme is necessary, based on the needs of public administration for highly qualified employees with in-depth knowledge in international relations, foreign policy and diplomacy. A large number of respondents work in the relevant field. The results of the graduate survey also indicate that the overall level of satisfaction with studies is high.



**3.1.4. Statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down into different study forms, types, and languages.**

Since 2012 MSP Diplomacy has been implemented only as a full-time regular (FTR) study programme. The number of students in the programme during the reporting period has been quite constant at around 20 students. It should be noted that even during the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of students did not significantly decrease. The popularity of MSP Diplomacy could improve in the next few years, when UL FSS will relocate to the “House of Letterds” building in the new campus in Torņakalns in 2023. A more modern and dynamic study environment could make the study programme attractive to a larger number of students.

*Table 3.1.4.1. Statistical data on students studying in the academic master's study programme Diplomacy - distribution of matriculated and studying students by year.*

Reporting period (the data as at 1 October)	Matriculated			Persons studying					
	Total	Of the total number of matriculated persons		Total	Years of studies		Of the total number of students		Dropouts (number within the period from 30 August of the previous year to 1 October of the reporting year)
		state-budget funded	self-funded		1	2	state-budget funded	self-funded.	
2021	14	0	14	20	13	7	0	20	6
2020	6	0	6	18	8	10	0	18	1
2019	13	0	13	19	11	8	0	19	6
2018	5	0	5	20	9	11	0	20	4
2017	13	0	13	21	16	5	0	21	5
2016	5	0	5	21	6	15	1	20	10
2015	13	1	12	36	16	20	1	35	8

UL FSS has invested extensive efforts in attracting students to the study programmes taught at the faculty, and MSP Diplomacy also benefits from these activities. In the past, these efforts were mainly focused on the organization of advertising campaigns, Open Door Days and study programme director replies to emails from prospective students. UL FSS Open Door Day was also organized during the Covid-19 pandemic, although in 2020 and 2021 it took place remotely, which had the advantage of easing the participation of those who live outside Riga or chose to remain at

home due to the pandemic. However, the Open Door Day and other study programme promotion events organized by UL FSS are mostly attended by senior secondary school students, hence, the contribution of these events to attracting graduates of bachelor's programmes to MSP Diplomacy is limited.

The information in Table 3 includes information on student dropouts. Students complete a special form, which is attached to the application for exmatriculation, explaining their reasons for dropping out and also have exit interviews with the programme director. First, there are some students who have different expectations of the overall direction and content of the programme. Second, the most important reason for exmatriculation consists of personal considerations or the inability to combine studies with work. Although there is no exact data characterising this issue, it can be assumed that most students work, since there are no state-funded places in the programme, and all students study at their own expense. Even if graduate surveys indicate that satisfaction with the quality of the study programme is high, the rigorous requirements and heavy study load may prove to be an insurmountable obstacle for some students. Third, it is difficult to judge the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on student dropout rates. In 2020 only one student left the programme, but in 2021 this increased to 6 students. Discussions with students reveal that the transition to remote studies at least initially contributed to student retention (during the pandemic many students experienced a sharp increase in workload at their workplaces), but the relatively high dropout rate in 2021 could be due to the requirements of government and UL regarding the mandatory vaccination for attending the studies in person. Furthermore, in 2021/2022, the transition to remote studies could reduce students' interest in continuing their studies.

*Table 3.1.4.2. Statistical data on those studying in the academic master's study programme Diplomacy – distribution of students who have obtained a degree or qualification by year.*

Reporting period (the data as at 1 October)	Study form and language	Number of students who obtained degree or qualification		
		Total	Of the total number of students who obtained degree or qualification	
			state-budget-funded	Self-funded
2021	FT, Latvian	6	0	6
2020	FT, Latvian	6	0	6
2019	FT, Latvian	9	0	9
2018	FT, Latvian	4	0	4
2017	FT, Latvian	9	1	8
2016	FT, Latvian	10	0	10
2015	FT, Latvian	13	0	13

Within the reporting period, the students of MSP Diplomacy have used the exchange opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ programme, with an average of one student going on exchange every academic year (see Table 5 below). Exchange study opportunities enhance the attractiveness of the programme. In total, 10 students have benefitted from “Erasmus+” exchange opportunities in the

period from the autumn semester of 2013 to the spring semester of 2022. Unfortunately, there is no accurate information about incoming mobility, as all incoming students are registered at MSP “Political Science”, amounting to a total of 72 foreign students during the reporting period. It can be assumed that some of these students have also attended courses offered at MSP Diplomacy in English, however, there is no exact data on the number of such students.

*Table 3.1.4.3. The number of students in MSP Diplomacy in the “Erasmus+” exchange programme during 2015–2022.*

	<b>2015/ 2016</b>	<b>2016/ 2017</b>	<b>2017/ 2018</b>	<b>2018/ 2019</b>	<b>2019/ 2020</b>	<b>2020/ 2021</b>	<b>2021/ 2022</b>
Austria						1	
Hungary					2		
Italy	1						
Czech Republic		1					
<b>Total in programme</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

**3.1.5. Substantiation of the development of the joint study programme and description and evaluation of the choice of partner universities, including information on the development and implementation of the joint study programme (if applicable).**

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

**3.2.1. Analysis of the content of the study programme. Assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators with the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study courses/ modules and compliance with the needs of the relevant industry, labour market and with the trends in science on how and whether the content of the study courses/ modules is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science.**

Pursuant to Art. 20 of CM Regulation No. 240 of 13.05.2014 “Regulations on the state standard of the academic education”, the mandatory part of the master’s study programme, except for the development of the master’s thesis, includes the study of the theoretical knowledge in the selected

sphere of the field of science or its subfield, and the approbation of theoretical knowledge in the aspect of the current problems of the chosen field of science or its subfield in the amount of no less than 12 CP, if the volume of the master's study programme is 40 CP, and no less than 24 CP, if the volume of the master's study programme is 80 CP.

For the guidelines, principles, structure and methodology of the field represented by MSP Diplomacy, the courses amounting to 28 CP are provided for the mandatory part of the programme: "Multilateral diplomacy and international organizations", "Development stages of diplomacy", "Current topics in EU politics", "Latvia in world politics", "Decision-making in foreign policy", "Public diplomacy", "Intercultural communication in diplomacy", "Current issues of international relations", "Theory of international relations". The courses in the restricted elective part of the programme enable the students to choose from a range of courses that make up a total of 40 CP: "USA and Europe: Comparative politics, institutions and society", "US foreign policy: Past, present, future", "Policy of Russia in the CIS and Baltic states", "Crises and their management in international politics", "Current issues of modern diplomacy", "National security challenges and solutions", "Fundamental questions of political theory", "Political process in Latvia", "Strategy and tactics of political negotiations", "Protocol and etiquette in the era of diplomatic transformation", "Policy of international economic relations", "International relations and media", "Digital political communication", "Political risk management".

In terms of structure, the study programme consists of 3 parts: mandatory part A in the amount of 56 CP, including the master's thesis in the amount of 20 CP, part B consisting of restricted elective courses in the amount of 22 CP and part C formed by free elective courses in the amount of 2 CP. By coordinating the choice with the programme director, students can select courses from other programmes implemented at UL, and these courses can be considered as equal to Part B of the MSP Diplomacy.

The content of courses is regularly reviewed and course descriptions are regularly updated. The programme director has access to the evaluations of the courses provided by the students at the end of each semester, yielding feedback from the students about each course. After completing the MSP Diplomacy programme, students fill out a questionnaire with questions addressing their satisfaction with the study programme as a whole. In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, student surveys were organized several times with the aim of establishing whether students in these difficult circumstances preferred to study in-person or remotely. The results of the surveys confirmed that the students of the programme preferred remote studies, and the wishes of the students were taken into account when organizing the study process during the pandemic.

The different courses contribute to the achievement of different study programme goals, enabling the students who are enrolled in the programme to achieve the required learning outcomes. Most courses ensure the acquisition of specific knowledge of international relations, foreign policy and diplomacy, while at the same time ensuring that students acquire the necessary skills regarding the application of knowledge in research and professional activities. During their studies, students also obtain considerable competences, gaining an understanding of the professional activity and responsibility of diplomats and international relations analysts. A mapping of learning outcomes can be found in Appendix Mapping of the study courses. This confirms that a variety of knowledge, skills and competences are evenly acquired during the entire period of studies.

MSP Diplomacy offers a wide range of courses belonging to the field of international politics with an emphasis on the importance of diplomacy in the organization of international relations, as well as the various types of diplomacy. The content of the programme is divided into two parts. The first part (A courses) is common to all students, and their completion is mandatory. The A part of the program includes courses that focus on the analysis of the most important theoretical and some

practical aspects of international relations, foreign policy and diplomacy. The second part is the restricted elective part (B courses), which yields further in-depth knowledge acquisition on various issues of international relations, diplomacy and foreign policy. Part B includes courses aimed at analysing the foreign policy of international actors important to Latvia such as the USA and Russia. There are no separate study modules within the MSP Diplomacy, which is due to the relatively small number of students in the programme. However, students with specific academic and research interests, e.g. US foreign policy, Russian foreign policy, EU foreign policy, the transformation of diplomacy today, economic diplomacy, multilateral diplomacy within the EU or NATO, can specialize in their areas of interest by preparing research papers in particular courses, and choosing the topic of the master's thesis.

**3.2.2. In the case of master's and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation. In the case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels (if applicable).**

In accordance with Art. 20 of CM Regulation No. 240 of 13.05.2014 "Regulations on the state standard of the academic education", the mandatory part of the master's study programme, except for the elaboration of the master's thesis, includes the research of theoretical knowledge of the selected sphere of the respective field of science or its subfield, and approbation of this theoretical knowledge in the aspect of the current problems of the selected field of science or its subfield in no less amount than 12 credit points, if the volume of the master's study programme is 40 credit points, and in no less amount than 24 credit points, if the volume of the master's study programme is 80 credit points.

For the guidelines, principles, structure and methodology of the field represented by MSP Diplomacy branch, the mandatory part A of the programme assigns 36 CP, which consist of the following courses: "Multilateral diplomacy and international organizations", "Development stages of diplomacy", "Current topics in EU politics", "Latvia in world politics", "Decision-making in foreign policy", "Public diplomacy", "Intercultural communication in diplomacy", "Research structure and implementation", "Current issues of international relations", "Theory of international relations".

Regarding the courses specific to the field, in the restricted elective part B of the programme the students must obtain 22 CP. The choice must be made from the following selection in the amount of 38 CP: "USA and Europe: Comparative politics, institutions and society", "US foreign policy: Past, present, future", "Policy of Russia in the CIS and Baltic states", "Crises and their management in international politics", "Current issues of modern diplomacy", "National security challenges and solutions", "Fundamental questions of political theory", "Political process in Latvia", "Strategy and tactics of political negotiations", "Protocol and etiquette in the era of diplomatic transformation, International economic relations policy, "International relations and media", "Digital political communication", "Political risk management". In conclusion, MSP Diplomacy graduates earn a master's degree of Social Science in Political Science, and the part A and part B courses included in the programme correspond to the subfield of international politics, which encompasses issues of foreign policy and diplomacy.

The aforementioned courses are taught by suitably qualified academic staff who have either obtained a doctoral degree in political science or who are professionals in the field. A broader

description of the competence of teaching staff is provided in section 3.4.1 and in CVs of teaching staff in Appendix 10.

**3.2.3. Assessment of the study programme including the study course/ module implementation methods by indicating what the methods are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. In the case of a joint study programme, or in case the study programme is implemented in a foreign language or in the form of distance learning, describe in detail the methods used to deliver such a study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.**

MSP Diplomacy is implemented in the form of full-time regular studies within 2 years or 4 semesters. The courses are offered sequentially, with students first learning the basic issues of international relations, foreign policy and diplomacy, and later consolidating and deepening their knowledge with the help of specialized courses in the B part of the programme. In the organization of the study process, particular consideration is directed at aligning the diverse previous study experiences of the students. MSP Diplomacy has attracted students with very diverse previous educations in, for example, political science, history, Asian studies, economics, as well as bachelor's programmes acquired in Latvia or abroad in other social, humanities or natural sciences. The level of preparedness of students at the start of the programme can be quite different. To ease the beginning of the study process for students whose previous education is not political science or international relations, students take the "Fundamental questions of political theory" course which introduces students to various subfields of political science and key theoretical approaches. This is an intensive course taking place during the first week of studies, with classes held daily and taught by several lecturers from different subfields of political science.

During the reporting period, there have been significant changes in the organization of the study process. When the MSP Diplomacy had its first intake of students in 2012, the study process was organized identically to the MSP "Political Science", that is, classes were held in the late afternoons and evenings of weekdays, and in some cases, classes were also scheduled on Saturdays. After evaluating the feedback given by the students about the study process and conducting a large-scale survey of the 2<sup>nd</sup>- and 3<sup>rd</sup>-year students of BSP "Political Science" about their preferred form of master's studies, it was found that students would prefer classes in the evenings of two working days and on Saturdays. These preferences were taken into account, and the transition to this form of study organization was introduced as of 2017.

The academic staff of MSP Diplomacy employ a number of different study methods in teaching their courses. These methods help to achieve the goals of the programme and to ensure that students acquire the planned knowledge, skills and competence in the course of their studies. First, each course consists of both lectures and seminars. The seminars mainly are conducted as student-led discussions and are based on the principles of the student-led learning process, with each level of study increasing the role of students and forms of involvement.

Second, the independent work of students is of great importance, preparing for seminar classes and composing the written assignments of the course. For each class, including lectures, a minimum of the literature to be mastered is prepared and assignments are offered, which, rather than simply providing information in lectures and seminars, encourage students to analyse and discuss the

topics viewed within the course.

Third, a theoretical approach is combined with its practical application, so students acquire not just knowledge, but also the skills and abilities to better prepare them for the labour market.

Representatives of the sector and employers also teach certain courses and perform guest lectures, for example, the course “Protocol and etiquette in the era of diplomatic transformation” is taught by a lecturer whose daily professional duties involve these subjects and the lecturer who teaches the course “Strategy and tactics of political negotiations” has a long-standing work experience in the format of tripartite cooperation of the Baltic states, and thus has practical experience in conducting international and political negotiations. Two courses – “Multilateral diplomacy and international organizations” and “Current issues of modern diplomacy” – are taught by a lecturer who has worked at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia.

Fourth, in most of the offered courses students also have to independently carry out small research assignments such as presentations, essays, and reports, which allow students to take the initiative in choosing the topics they want to study more thoroughly. In several courses, the students can choose the date on which they will prepare and present their research project, which allows for more even and balanced planning of the workload throughout the semester. In most courses, students present their research projects, receiving feedback from the lecturer and other students. The readiness to evaluate the work of other people and to listen to the evaluation and criticism of one's own work is one of the indicators to be achieved by studies.

The implementation of MSP Diplomacy is based on a student-centred approach, and the implementation of the programme is based on the following principles: lecturers take into account and respect students and their diverse approaches to the study process; lecturers, as far as possible, teach the courses using varied approaches and methods; lecturers use different pedagogical methods; they support students' independence in the study process, while providing support when needed; they treat students with respect; facilities and procedures are in place for students to lodge complaints.<sup>[1]</sup> It is essential for lecturers to be familiar with the basics of a student-centred approach and to be proficient in testing and examination methods, which may be slightly different in each higher education institution. Lecturers also ensure that the criteria for posting grades are discussed with students in advance and are publicly available in the e-learning environment (Moodle). Since the emphasis on a student-centred approach in higher education has gradually increased in Latvia since 2018, the implementation of this approach would not be possible without significant changes in the course descriptions, which have been modified and supplemented with the aim of more clearly defining the results of the study process and encouraging academic staff to focus on the achievement of these results, initially – for each course individually and also for the programme as a whole. The descriptions of both the revised and newly created courses fully include the principles of a student-centred approach.

All MSP Diplomacy courses are available on the Moodle platform, where information is provided on the course content, the learning outcomes of the course and their connection with the programme's learning outcomes, as well as requirements. The e-course provides a detailed content plan, links to external resources and course literature. On the course site in Moodle, the lecturers can post grades and provide comments, allowing students to track their progress throughout the course. The Moodle platform also enables the lecturers to send information to students about various issues related to the study process, without invariably involving study coordinators in communication with students. As to the use of the assessment part of the Moodle platform, the lecturers mainly employ this system to provide students with information about course planning and study materials, such as presentations used in classes.

The Moodle system is also used to communicate midterm results to students in a timely manner.

Although the Moodle system offers opportunities to provide comments on the works submitted by students, these functions are used only partially.

During the pandemic, the recording feature of remotely held classes enabled students to access class recordings at their convenience. The relatively well-developed e-study environment (Moodle) permitted a quite easy, prompt and efficient switch to remote studies during the Covid-19 pandemic and served as an opportunity to supplement the course resources with video lectures. Consultations with students have also become easier to organize and can be carried out remotely. .

By implementing the internal quality assurance policy, students are more actively involved in the improvement of the study process. UL has rules and procedures for submitting student proposals and resolving complaints, examining student appeals. In certain cases, students can also apply to the Academic Ethics Commission of UL, if students believe that lecturers, other students or representatives of the UL community have committed unethical actions, however, in recent years, the Academic Ethics Commission of UL has not had to consider complaints from lecturers, staff and students of UL FSS. The results of centralized student surveys are evaluated and taken into account in the improvement of the study process. MSP Diplomacy students can contact the programme director or study coordinator and obtain answers to the questions they are interested in, as well as solve problems and complications, if they arise during the study process. Students make suggestions for the improvement of study programmes and processes in discussions with lecturers and the programme director. At the end of each course, students complete a survey questionnaire about the particular course, which helps to find out students' opinions and to identify problems (if any) and solve them in a timely manner. Course evaluation questionnaires completed by students are a useful tool for regularly improving course content and identifying weak points. Information about how students evaluate each of the courses in MSP Diplomacy and their assessment of the study programme as a whole (the survey is filled out at the end of the fourth semester) is available to the study programme director and is discussed with the lecturers after the end of the course.

[1] Studentcentrētas izglītības pieeja Latvijas augstskolās (The approach of student-centered education in higher education institutions of Latvia). AIC, 2017 (available only in Latvian). [https://aic.lv/portal/content/files/Informativs\\_zinojums\\_SCL\\_istenosana\\_Latvija.pdf](https://aic.lv/portal/content/files/Informativs_zinojums_SCL_istenosana_Latvija.pdf)

**3.2.4. If the study programme envisages an internship, describe the internship opportunities offered to students, provision and work organization, including whether the higher education institution/ college helps students to find an internship place. If the study programme is implemented in a foreign language, provide information on how internship opportunities are provided in a foreign language, including for foreign students. To provide analysis and evaluation of the connection of the tasks set for students during the internship included in the study programme with the learning outcomes of the study programme (if applicable).**

**3.2.5. Evaluation and description of the promotion opportunities and the promotion process provided to the students of the doctoral study programme (if applicable).**



### **3.2.6. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the marks of the final theses.**

During the reporting period (2016–2021), the topics of master's theses of interest to MSP Diplomacy students have been very diverse, however, three main conclusions can be drawn about the topics of final theses and their selection. First, the students' choice of master's thesis topics largely corresponds to the general specialization of the programme – international relations, foreign policy and diplomacy. Thus, the students have mostly chosen to write master's theses on topics belonging to the subfield of international politics. From 2016 to 2021, 45 master's theses have been successfully defended, and none of the master's theses was focused on the analysis of domestic policy issues. Of course, the behaviour of countries in the international environment is largely influenced by domestic political factors, however, the influence of domestic political factors has always been examined in connection with the behaviour of countries in the international environment.

Second, the choice of topics for students' final theses was largely influenced by contemporary international politics. Students have researched EU political developments, e.g. issues related to EU enlargement, the use of economic instruments in the external relations of EU, threats caused by terrorism within the EU, the EU's response to the migration crisis in 2015–2016. Students have also studied the foreign policy of the great powers – USA, China, Russia – and its sources. A series of master's theses were written about Russia's foreign policy and its potential influence on the Baltic states. Master's theses have also been written on Russia-China and China-USA mutual relations. Students have also chosen topics dedicated to the security of the Baltic states and NATO's efforts to create the preconditions for a successful policy of deterrence in the Baltic region in relation to Russia. Students have also explored various aspects of diplomacy, e.g. digital diplomacy, sports diplomacy, forest diplomacy, economic/commercial diplomacy. Furthermore, master's theses are written about public diplomacy and the efforts of countries (e.g. Latvia) to actively shape their image in other countries. Students have also dedicated their master theses to developments in the Middle East, international terrorism, North Korea's foreign policy and the threat it poses to international security.

Third, students' interests have been closely related to academic discussions in Latvia, Europe and worldwide. Students have written theses on the phenomenon of hybrid warfare, economic sanctions, international migration, international terrorism, security dilemma, power diplomacy, the transformation of diplomacy today, digital diplomacy, deterrence, populism in relation to national foreign policy, nuclear threats to international security and international cooperation in this area, the role of individuals in foreign policy decision-making.

In the period from 2016 to 2021, 44 master's theses were defended within the framework of MSP Diplomacy. Grade 10 (with distinction) was received by 4 students, grade 9 (excellent) was received by 7 students, grade 8 (very good) was received by 9 students, grade 7 (good) was received by 9 students, grade 6 (almost good) was received by 9 students, grade 5 (satisfactory) was received by 6 students, and no student received a grade of 4 (almost satisfactory). Consequently, almost two-thirds of all grades have been 8 (very good), 7 (good) and 6 (almost good).

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

**3.3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples.**

MSP Diplomacy is implemented in the UL FSS premises and using the infrastructure and technical base of the faculty and the UL. The overall material and technical provision of the study field has already been described above, therefore the following paragraphs highlight the aspects of the material and technical provision that apply to students of MSP Diplomacy. The provision of students and lecturers with the literature necessary for studies and research, the provision of FSS with premises suitable for the study process and the overall provision of electronic resources (Moodle environment, remote teaching facilities on MS Teams platform) are particularly noteworthy.

In general, MSP Diplomacy has excellent resources that contribute to achieving the goals of the programme and implementing a high-quality study process. The UL FSS Library, where the collection of the social sciences branch is located, is open 60 hours a week (although during the Covid-19 pandemic, the working hours of the UL FSS library were reduced). An open access repository is available to users. The UL FSS Library is located across three large rooms, with a total area of 544 m<sup>2</sup>. 84 workplaces are available for library users, including 18 workplaces for working with a computer. The FSS Library provides the following services to students and lecturers:

Electronic ordering/reservation/renewal of information resources in the National Library Collections Catalogue (hereinafter – the Union Catalogue) and obtaining information resources for use on-site in the library's reading room or to take home. The service is available to users registered with the UL Library via the Union Catalogue from any mobile device and from any location with internet access.

Delivery of information resources. UL academic staff, researchers and doctoral students can order information resources through Union Catalogue from any library and specify the most convenient library branch to receive the reserved information resource .

Self-service. Self-service scanning is available to users.

Use of open access reading rooms, computers and the Internet. In the reading rooms, it is possible to use a collection of reference literature and periodicals, stationary and portable computers (both UL Libraries' and users' personal equipment), Internet connection, including WI-FI, which operates in all UL buildings.

Night subscription, booking of information resources. The night subscription service provides information resources outside the University of Latvia Library free of charge and outside opening hours. The information resource can be reserved in advance for certain hours.

Delivery of information resources in summer. Once a week, users can receive the information resources reserved in the Union Catalogue from the Repository in the branch library most convenient to them (Library on Raiņa bulvāris, Library of Natural Sciences, Library of House of Science).

Inquiries and consultations. Information service for users – consultation, provision of references, training and research support – is amongst the main areas of work of the UL Library. The consultant of the UL Library provides bibliographic, thematic, factual, address-related, clarifying and other references and consultations to students, academic, research and general staff. Students use consultations more actively during the development of independent written assignments and

master's thesis.

User training. Training is organized with the aim of developing users' skills to work independently, to find, evaluate and use information resources and e-environment tools. The library actively works with target audiences – students of all study levels, academic, scientific and general staff to promote not only information literacy, but also to provide in-depth knowledge and skills in working with electronic resources. In the first semester of studies, the library organizes and conducts presentations, classes in auditoriums and computer classrooms for students of the MSP Diplomacy programme, for the students at UL regional branches, these meetings are available remotely. The goal of the training is to enable the users to acquire the skills to work with open access stock, self-service equipment and office equipment – self-service scanners, copiers, thus improving the competence of independent learning. MSP Diplomacy students are provided with lectures by UL FSS library staff on library resources and the possibilities of their use. Every year at the beginning of September, first year students of MSP Diplomacy attend introductory lectures, which enable them to prepare for writing research papers and searching for academic sources, as well as using them.

*Table 3.3.1.1. Provision of the UL FSS library with printed information resources on diplomacy, foreign policy and international relations.*

<b>Printed information resources for MSP Diplomacy Overall at UL Library on 01.04.2022.</b>						
Printed resources (titles/copies)			Division of editions according to language (titles/copies)			
Books	Serials, periodicals	Other types of publications	Latvian	English	Russian	other
4775/9014	374/6349	177/280	847/4845	3173/8308	589/1019	717/1471
Total at UL Library: <b>5326</b> titles = <b>15 643</b> copies, of which:						
in the Library of the Faculty of Social Sciences: <b>1523</b> titles = <b>2689</b> copies						
1422/2149	86/514	15/26	226/528	1208/2054	68/83	21/24

*Table 3.3.1.2. Provision of the UL FSS library with printed information resources on diplomacy, foreign policy and international relations released within the last 5 years.*

<b>Printed information resources for MSP Diplomacy Overall at UL Library within the last 5 years (01.01.2017.-01.04.2022.)</b>						
Printed resources (titles/copies)			Division of editions according to language (titles/copies)			
Books	Serials, periodicals	Other types of publications	Latvian	English	Russian	other
356/589	23/507	9/23	107/298	264/791	8/15	9/15
Total at UL Library: <b>388</b> titles = <b>1119</b> copies, of which:						

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in the Library of the Faculty of Social Sciences: **109** titles = **414** copies

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103/158	4/250	2/6	29/58	79/355	1/1	-
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E-environment. Moodle is available to lecturers for the provision of studies. It is used to distribute study materials, as well as the submission, examination and analysis of study assignments. Moodle is an e-environmental tool in addition to the UL information system (LUIS) environment, in which assessment of studies is entered. Students register for courses electronically in the LUIS environment. Students have access to the support of a study coordinator if they have questions and need assistance with the study process in LUIS. Study coordinators also provide support to students in organizational issues of the study process, advising students on various issues related to the study process.

UL FSS provides facilities suitable for the study process. Most of the lecturers who are involved in the implementation of MSP Diplomacy hold elected positions in UL FSS or other structural units of UL, and these lecturers are provided with quality facilities and adequate support, while the visiting lecturers have access to offices provided by UL FSS, where lecturers can prepare for classes and advise students individually.

LU implements extensive infrastructure development projects, namely, in 2023, it is planned to complete the construction of the House of Letters, where MSP Diplomacy will be taught. The construction of the new building will bring together the humanities and social sciences under one roof, facilitating collaboration between the fields of social sciences and humanities. It can be predicted that this will strengthen the cooperation between academic staff, researchers and students of humanities and social sciences.

### **3.3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific base support, including the resources provided within the framework of cooperation with other science institutes and higher education institutions (applicable to doctoral study programmes) (if applicable).**

### **3.3.3. Indicate data on the available funding for the corresponding study programme, its funding sources and their use for the development of the study programme. Provide information on the costs per one student within this study programme, indicating the items included in the cost calculation and the percentage distribution of funding between the specified items. The minimum number of students in the study programme in order to ensure the profitability of the study programme (indicating separately the information on each language, type and form of the study programme implementation).**

The description of the study field's available resources described in section 2.3 also apply to MSP Diplomacy.

#### **Programme revenue**

MSP Diplomacy is financed by tuition fees (considering all the factors referred to in the Financial support section), which in the academic year 2021/2022 was 2060 EUR per year for full-time

regular studies.

Taking into account the above, the total budget of the study programme is expected to be 47 thousand EUR per year, the breakdown is shown in Table 8 below:

*Table 3.3.3.1. Estimated annual income of MSP Diplomacy (EUR).*

Type of studies	Number of students	Tuition fee/ state grant	Total income
FTR (fee)	20	2350	47 000
<b>Total</b>			<b>47 000</b>

### Programme costs

The financial requirements of study programmes at UL are calculated by a methodology described in Section 2.3.1. that utilizes data on the numbers of teaching staff, the planned number of students and so on.

### Full-time regular study programme costs

The calculations use student data from the 2021/2022 academic year. when 20 students were studying in the programme in its full-time regular form, as well as the study programme plan and the planned structure of the involved academic staff after accreditation. Based on this data, the total annual costs of the program are 46 564 EUR and their structure (percentage distribution) is shown in Table 3.3.3.2.

*Table 3.3.3.2. Percentage breakdown of costs in the study programme*

Expenditure item	% of total
Teaching staff costs	50 %
General staff	10 %
Other payments	1 %
Infrastructure expenditure	11 %
Property and services	2 %
Indirect costs	26 %
<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Figure 3.3.3.1. the cost of the study program (vertical axis) depending on the number of students (horizontal axis), the tuition fee (green line) and the state budget subsidy (blue line) are visually represented with a red line.

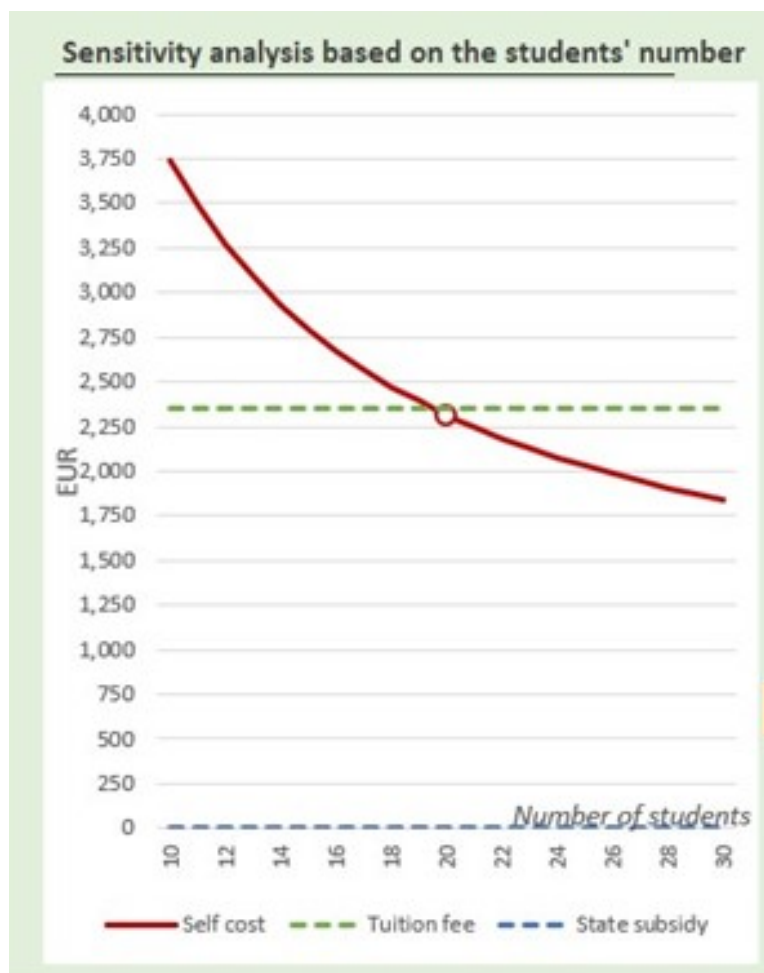


Figure 3.3.3.1. Cost of MSP Diplomacy depending on the number of students in full-time regular studies.

Based on the cost structure and the total number of students 20, the cost of the program per student (base cost) is 2314 EUR per year.

Based on the calculation, it can be seen that for the programme to be profitable and provide students with a quality study process, the number of self-funded students in the programme (all courses combined) must be at least 20 (intersection of red (cost) and green (tuition fee) lines projected on the x-axis).

### Summary of programme revenue and expenditure

Table 3.3.3.3. calculated programme revenues on the basis of the type of studies, the national subsidy and tuition fees, as well as programme costs given this number of students.

Table 3.3.3.3. Calculation of costs of MSP Diplomacy.

Type of studies	Number of students	Tuition fees/state grant	Total income	Total cost
FTR (fee)	20	2350	47 000	46 564
<b>Total</b>			<b>47 000</b>	<b>46 564</b>

The data presented in Table 3.3.3.3 clearly shows that UL has sufficient resources at its disposal to

implement the study programme and ensure its further development.

In addition, the development of the programme can be financed from the income received from funding attracted through the implementation of cooperation projects, as well as from the accumulated financial resources of the structural unit. Faculties also receive financial support for programme development from the UL Study Quality Improvement Fund.

MSP Diplomacy students can apply for the Diplomacy Scholarship established by American Latvians, Dagnija and Kaspars Krēsliņš, in 2019, which is open exclusively to the students of MSP Diplomacy. The scholarship was created with the aim of supporting the growth of Latvian diplomacy specialists. Each year, the scholarship is awarded to 1 or 2 students, and the total amount of support within the year is approximately 3,000 EUR.

### 3.4. Teaching Staff

**3.4.1. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members (academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.**

The qualifications of the academic staff involved in MSP Diplomacy fully correspond to the goals and tasks of the study programme. Courses are mostly taught by the elected academic staff of UL FSS, lecturers from other UL faculties, doctoral programme graduates of the Political Science Department of UL FSS as well as professionals of the sector. The selection of teaching staff involved in the programme is based on the lecturers' academic work experience, qualifications and research activities. The qualifications of academic staff fully meet the requirements of the master's study programme and ensure the necessary quality of the programme.

The composition of the MSP Diplomacy lecturing staff meets the requirements set out in the third paragraph of the first part of Section 55 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, namely, a minimum of 5 professors and associate professors participate in the implementation of the programme. Overall, the following academic staff representatives of FSS and other faculties participate in the implementation of the study programme: 3 professors, 2 associate professors, 1 lecturer and 15 adjunct lecturers. It is important to note that the 8 adjunct lecturers have a doctoral degree, thus ensuring the involvement of highly qualified teaching staff in the implementation of the programme. Doctoral students and professionals from state institutions are also involved in the implementation of the programme (see Table 3.4.1.1.).

*Table 3.4.1.1. Teaching staff involved in implementation of MSP Diplomacy*

Degree, position	With doctoral degree	With master's degree	Total
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Professors	3	0	3
Associate professors	2	0	2
Assistant professors	0	0	0
Lecturers	0	1	1
Contracted lecturers	8	7	15
Total	13	8	21

The composition of the teaching staff involved in the programme facilitates achievement of the study programme goal and the planned learning outcomes in full, ensuring the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and research skills in the subfield of international politics, which gives the graduates of the programme the opportunity to successfully engage in the labour market and address challenges in the sector.

#### **3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.**

Since the beginning of the master's study programme in 2012, there have been minimal changes in both the composition of the teaching staff and the course offering. Three professors have retired, while one professor no longer lives in Latvia. One professor, who was previously an associate professor, has been elected to the position of professor for the first time. Several new lecturers have been involved in the implementation of the MSP Diplomacy. Some of them are graduates of the doctoral programme of the Department of Political Science, and some doctoral students have also become involved in teaching. This shows a balanced, managed and gradual succession of generations, which ensures the high quality and sustainability of the programme. Compared to 2013, when the initial accreditation of MSP Diplomacy took place, the number of teaching staff involved in the programme has increased slightly from 19 in 2013 to 21 in 2022. The number of professors has fallen from 6 in 2013 to 3 in 2022, while the number of associate professors has increased from 1 in 2013 to 2 in 2022. The number of assistant professors involved in the implementation of the programme was 3 in 2013, while none of the teaching staff in 2022 were assistant professors. The number of teaching staff with PhDs was 14 in 2013, and 13 in 2022. The participation of doctoral candidates in the teaching process has increased since 2013 (from 5 in 2013 to 8 in 2022). Below is a more detailed description of the changes that occurred during the reporting period.

Generational renewal has brought some adjustments to the course offering. There are a number of courses that are no longer taught either because the lecturers who taught these courses have retired, no longer reside in Latvia or have chosen to discontinue their involvement in the programme. As far as possible, replacements have been sought for these lecturers. The course "Diplomacy development phases" has been taken over by another professor. Course "European



integration: Theory and practice” has been replaced by “Current topics in EU politics”. Several courses were taught only for a brief period after the launch of the programme, and in the following years, for various reasons, were no longer offered: “International law for diplomats”, “Global justice”, “International protection of human rights”, “Politics of contemporary Latvia”, “Diplomacy and media relations”. While preparing the accreditation report “Common European foreign and security policy” and “Energy policy and international relations” were also removed from the MSP Diplomacy programme. “Multilateral diplomacy and international organizations” was initially taught by lecturer, but in latter years was taken over by another lecturer. The course “Crises and their management in international politics” was initially taught by a professor, but was later taken over by new lecturer.

Over time, with the transformations of the international situation, new courses were created and included in MSP Diplomacy: “US foreign policy: Past, present, future”, “International relations and media”, “National security challenges and solutions”, “Political risk management”, “Digital political communication”. “Contemporary Latvian politics” has been replaced by the course “Politics of Contemporary Latvia”, and the course “Economic Diplomacy” has been replaced by the course “Politics of international economic relations”. It should be noted that the course “Policy of Russia in the CIS and Baltic states” has been extended from 2 to 4 CP.

In general, it can be concluded that within the MSP "Diplomacy" quite significant changes have taken place since 2012 in terms of the composition of lecturers and the courses offered, however, the offer of part A courses, which form the core of the program, have not undergone significant changes. Although two changes are worth noting. First, taking into account the challenges posed by Russia and China to international security and the growing rivalry between the great powers, the topic of international security in the programme has expanded – new courses are included in the offer, and the topics related to international security are incorporated in a number of existing courses. Second, international law courses have been replaced by courses focusing on US foreign policy, national security, the role of the media in international relations, political risk management and digital communication.

**3.4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members, involved in the implementation of doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals or peer-reviewed monographs may be additionally specified. Information on the teaching staff included in the database of experts of the Latvian Council of Science in the relevant field of science (total number, name of the lecturer, field of science in which the teaching staff has the status of an expert and expiration date of the Latvian Council of Science expert) (if applicable).**

**3.4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).**

**3.4.5. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study programme and study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).**

Close mutual cooperation among the teaching staff is a necessary prerequisite for achieving the expected learning outcomes of MSP Diplomacy. Since this programme is implemented mainly with the participation of lecturers of the Department of Political Science of UL FSS and graduates of the Political Science doctoral programme, the cooperation of the teaching staff takes place predominantly through meetings of the Department of Political Science, which include regular discussions about the study programme, inclusion of new courses in the programme, about the achievements and challenges of the academic work, approval of the academic calendar, approval of the topics of master's theses, analysis of the study process and study results, issues of academic staff renewal. The mutual complementarity of courses is also discussed at the meetings of the Department of Political Science in order to prevent duplication of course content. In preparation for the accreditation of the study field, Department of Political Science has structured discussions about the inclusion and exclusion of particular courses from the study programme.

Cooperation between teaching staff and students takes place in various forms and levels. Students are involved in the work and decision-making of the Faculty Council, and student representatives are also involved in the the "Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology" study field's Council. It is true, however, that the involvement of master's students in UL FSS student self-governance activities is minor, as most students work in parallel to their studies. Student surveys were conducted several times during the Covid-19 pandemic with the aim ascertaining students' point of view on the preferred form of studies (whether UL FSS should organize studies on site or remotely). Student opinions are usually taken into account, and during the Covid-19 pandemic, students of MSP Diplomacy appreciated the readiness of UL FSS to implement the study process remotely, even in cases where it was not a mandatory requirement from the government. Thus reducing the risks of student infection and further spread of Covid-19.

The key forms of contact with students are lectures, seminars, practical work, group work, individual consultations, individual assignments and supervision of master's theses. The number of students has averaged around 20 since 2016, consequently, joint classes for the first and second year students have been scheduled in some courses. Some courses are held together with MSP Political science students. There are several courses that are taught in English, thus, during their studies, MSP Diplomacy students have the opportunity to work together with exchange programme students. However, even in such cases when, for example, the audience consists of both the first and second year students, the total number of participants in the classes allows for an individual approach in working with students. By following and monitoring the progress of each student during the semester, by implementing interactive classes, and by giving a chance for each attendee to ask clarifying questions, as well as by organizing discussions about the topics explored in the course. Individual cooperation between lecturers and students takes place during supervision of the master's thesis, where a successful cooperation of the research supervisor of the thesis and the master's student is crucially important for researching and writing the master's thesis and

preparing for its defence. On average, one teaching staff member supervises 1-3 master's theses, which, taking into account the workload of the teaching staff in the implementation of other programmes and in the supervision of final theses, creates a reasonable workload and allows the work to be carried out qualitatively, with full involvement in the student's research.

In October 2021 MSP Diplomacy had approximately one student per one lecturer (a total of 20 students and 21 lecturers). However, it should be taken into account that lecturers have different workloads in the programme and several courses are taught within the framework of several study programmes, that is, some MSP Diplomacy courses are also taught to MSP Political Science students, thus reducing the programme implementation costs.

# Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	Diploma DIPL MSP.pdf	DIPL MSP diploma paraugs.pdf
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	Statistics DIPL MSP.pdf	DIPL MSP statistikas dati.pdf
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard	Education standard DIPL MSP.pdf	DIPL MSP izglitibas standarts.pdf
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	Mapping of the study courses DIPL MSP.xlsx	Kursu_kartejums-Diplomatija-11-2022.xlsx
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	Study plan DIPL MSP.pdf	DIPL MSP plāns.pdf
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	Study courses DIPL MSP.pdf	Kursu apraksti DIPL MSP.pdf
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)		
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
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 (if applicable)	Study field declaration DIPL MSP.pdf	DIPL MSP apliecinajums 55. pants.edoc

# Sociology (43314)

Study field	<i>Sociology, Political Science, and Anthropology</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Sociology</i>
Education classification code	<i>43314</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>Academic bachelor study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Aija</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Zobena</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>aija.zobena@lu.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Profesors</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>26552761</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>To prepare specialists who have acquired a comprehensive knowledge of sociology and its subfields and who have the necessary skills and competence to apply this knowledge in professional activities in governmental, non-governmental and private sectors. This corresponds to the knowledge, skills and competence of Level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<i>1) Learn about the basic concepts and most important theoretical aspects of sociology and its subsectors;</i> <i>2) Learn about quantitative and qualitative methods that can be used to process and analyse data;</i> <i>3) Nurture the individual work, communications, co-operation and teamwork skills among students;</i> <i>4) Learn skills related to analytical thinking, time planning, planning and pursuit of independent research projects, presentation of research results and academic writing;</i> <i>5) Develop the ability to use knowledge from the studies to identify, analyse and deal with practical social problems and to evaluate the influence of policies in this regard.</i>

Results of the study programme	<p><b>Knowledge:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand key theories and concepts of sociology and current trends in social development;</li> <li>2. Know sociology subfields, the historical development of sociological theories, their connection with the analysis of social trends in contemporary society;</li> <li>3. Know quantitative and qualitative research methods, basic principles of data processing and analysis, meaning and measurement of causal relationships, application of statistical methods;</li> <li>4. Know methods for preparing and assessing the effectiveness of social development planning, social policy, policies and administrative decisions at different levels and in different sectors.</li> </ol> <p><b>Skills:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Convert theoretical knowledge acquired in the course of studies for the analysis of social processes from a sociological perspective;</li> <li>6. Can collect, process and analyse social data;</li> <li>7. Can plan, organise and implement social research, analyse data, describe and draw conclusions, make recommendations to solve social problems.</li> </ol> <p><b>Competence:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Understand social processes relevant to Latvian society and their connection with global development trends;</li> <li>9. Use theoretical knowledge and skills acquired in the course of studies to apply quantitative and qualitative social data collection and analysis methods in conducting social research, identifying and solving social problems;</li> <li>10. Assess the societal impact of professional decisions and actions, evaluate social situations and make professional and ethical decisions</li> </ol>
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	<i>Bachelor thesis</i>

## Study programme forms

### Full time studies - 3 years - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	<i>3</i>
Duration in month	<i>0</i>
Language	<i>latvian</i>
Amount (CP)	<i>120</i>
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Secondary education</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Bachelor's degree of Social Sciences in Sociology and Cultural Studies</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	<i>-</i>

### Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
University of Latvia	RĪGA	RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050

### 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

**3.1.1. Description and analysis of changes in the parameters of the study programme made since the issuance of the previous accreditation form of the study field or issuance of the study programme license, if the study programme is not included on the accreditation form of the study field, including changes planned within the evaluation procedure of the study field evaluation procedure.**

Since the last accreditation of the study field in 2012, when BSP Sociology received high marks, there have been no changes in the parameters of the study programme.

The plan is to change to the code of the study programme from 43310 to 43314. This is so that the bachelor's degree study programme Sociology is in line with Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 322, "Regulations on Latvia's education classification," as adopted on June 13, 2017. This is part of a reassessment of the field of studies.

There are also plans during this reassessment period to change the name of the degree that is earned by students from "social science bachelor's degree in sociology" to "social science bachelor's degree in sociology and culture studies." This is so as to satisfy Article 12 of Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 240, "regulations on the state academic standard," as adopted on May 13, 2014, as well as Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 322, "Regulations on Latvia's education classification," as adopted on June 13, 2017.

**3.1.2. Analysis and assessment of the study programme compliance with the study field. Analysis of the interrelation between the code of the study programme, the degree, professional qualification/professional qualification requirements or the degree and professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements. Description of the duration and scope of the implementation of the study programme (including different options of the study programme implementation) and evaluation of its usefulness.**

The name of the study programme speaks directly to the degree that is to be earned from BSP Sociology – a social science degree in sociology and culture studies. This title is based on Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 240, "Regulations on the state academic education standard," as approved on May 13, 2014, and on thematic groups of education specified in Latvia's education classification. In accordance with accepted classification of sectors and subsectors of science in Latvia, sociology is part of the social science field *Sociology and Social Work*, while the name of the degree – social science bachelor's degree in sociology and culture studies – is in line with the Sociology, political science and anthropology study field. The first two digits of the study programme code (43) refer to the second classification level in academic education (bachelor's degree), as implemented after the completion of a general or professional secondary education, with full time studies for three or four years. The third, fourth and fifth number in the code (314) show that the study programme is in line with the 5<sup>th</sup> classification level of the educational theme "Social and human activity science," and the education programme group "Sociology and culture

studies.”

The goals, missions and learning results of the bachelor's degree programme are aimed at ensuring that students gain the knowledge, skills and competence that satisfy the 6<sup>th</sup> level of knowledge, skills and competence in sociology that is mentioned in Latvia's education classification. The aim of the programme is to train specialists with in-depth knowledge about sociology and its subsectors. They also have the skills and competence so that the knowledge can be put to use in professional work at the state, local government, non-governmental or private sector. The missions of the programme have been identified in accordance with this goal: 1) Learn about the basic concepts and most important theoretical aspects of sociology and its subsectors; 2) Learn about quantitative and qualitative methods that can be used to process and analyse data; 3) Nurture the individual work, communications, co-operation and teamwork skills among students; 4) Learn skills related to analytical thinking, time planning, planning and pursuit of independent research projects, presentation of research results and academic writing; 5) Develop the ability to use knowledge from the studies to identify, analyse and deal with practical social problems and to evaluate the influence of policies in this regard. The content of the bachelor's degree programme Sociology contains mandatory courses and limited electives which cover the basic positions, principles, structure and methodology of sociology and its subsectors, the history and timely problems of the development of sociology, as well as its characterisation and problems from the intersectoral perspective. This insures the implementation of these missions. In addition to courses focused on sociology and its subsectors, the bachelor's degree programme Sociology also includes courses that are mandated by the law on environmental protection and the law on civil defence.

The courses in BSP Sociology enable the planned learning outcomes – knowledge, skills and competence in the area of sociology. Graduates of the programme: 1) Understand key theories and concepts of sociology and current trends in social development; 2) Know sociology subfields, the historical development of sociological theories, their connection with the analysis of social trends in contemporary society; 3) Know quantitative and qualitative research methods, basic principles of data processing and analysis, meaning and measurement of causal relationships, application of statistical methods; 4) Know methods for preparing and assessing the effectiveness of social development planning, social policy, policies and administrative decisions at different levels and in different sectors; 5) Convert theoretical knowledge acquired in the course of studies for the analysis of social processes from a sociological perspective; (6) Can collect, process and analyse social data; 7) Can plan, organise and implement social research, analyse data, describe and draw conclusions, make recommendations to solve social problems; 8) Understand social processes relevant to Latvian society and their connection with global development trends; 9) Use theoretical knowledge and skills acquired in the course of studies to apply quantitative and qualitative social data collection and analysis methods in conducting social research, identifying and solving social problems; 10) Assess the societal impact of professional decisions and actions, evaluate social situations and make professional and ethical decisions.

Applicants for admission to the programme must have completed their secondary education if they are to achieve the planned learning outcomes successfully. Criteria for people with a secondary education that was earned since 2004 include a centralised exam (CE) in Latvia, one in English, French or German, and one in mathematics. People who completed their high school education prior to 2008 can replace their centralised maths examination with the grade that they received in the math class and that is stated on the secondary education document (or the average grade in algebra and geometry). Competition criteria for people who completed their secondary education prior to 2004 (not inclusive), those who completed their secondary education abroad, and those with special needs – the average annual grade in Latvian language and literature, the annual grade in English, French or German, and the average grade related to specific topics of study. Additional



points are awarded to winners of the top three prizes in the LU Young Sociologist School that was organised by the LU SZF last year. Additional benefits also accrue to students who have taken top honours in the scholarly research competition that has been organised by the SZF for the past two years. This must be original research that is done only for the purposes of this competition.

The courses in BSP Sociology lead to 120 CP (180 ECTS) over the course of three years (6 semesters). Only full-time studies exist. This conforms to Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 240, "Regulation on the state academic education standard," as adopted on May 13, 2014, while also ensuring full knowledge about the basic positions and theories of sociology and its subsectors, the history of their development, methods for the extraction and analysis of social information, the methods and methodology of organising sociological research, the ability to use the knowledge and competence in professional work in the area of sociology, as well as to gain the right to continue studies at a master's degree programme, a professional master's degree programme, or a second-level professional higher education programme if the necessary enrolment requirements have been fulfilled. These include appropriate pre-knowledge for the successful completion of such programmes.

### **3.1.3. Economic and/ or social substantiation of the study programme, analysis of graduates' employment.**

The goals of BSP Sociology are part of the field of study which relates to political science, sociology and anthropology. They also are in line with study field goals that are part of the LU's Strategic Plan for 2021-2027 and the developmental strategy of the Faculty of Social Sciences. Graduates of the bachelor's degree programme Sociology must be prepared to work for state and non-governmental organisations, various international institutions, as well as structures related to Europe and the European Union. Graduates must be equally qualified to engage in research work and to take part in social and political processes at the international, regional and local level in a manner that allows them to implement their professional and human potential and to be competitive in the labour market.

There is still a shortage of specialists in the public and non-governmental sector who can analytically evaluate social development trends and make proposals about what to do. This requires at least an all-encompassing analysis of sociological information. As the private sector develops, there is an increased demand for specialists who can correlate and analyse social information so that social, economic and political processes can be evaluated from a sociological perspective. Since Latvia joined the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), there has been an even greater demand for evidence-based activities in various areas of public life. The Institute for Social and Political Research of the University of Latvia's Faculty of Social Sciences (UL FFS ISPR) has researchers who have been involved in several major and international research programme such as the European Social Survey, the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competences, etc. These research programmes regularly commission voluminous and methodologically complex research, and the information that is extracted in these studies is a key condition for the preparation and implementation of evidence-based policies and the evaluation of how effective they are. In general terms, there is a rapid increase in demand in the economy and in the public at large for specialists of various levels in the area of sociology – professionals who are able to obtain valid and representative information about social processes at the micro, mezzo and macro level. Graduates of the bachelor's degree programme Sociology are in demand in the labour market and represent the majority of those who

go on to seek a master's degree. Most of those who have earned a master's degree in sociology have gone on to pursue doctoral studies.

BSP Sociology is unique in Latvia in that it is the only one at this level and with this content that is taught in Latvian. The courses provide knowledge, skills and competence in correlating and analysing social information so as to assess social processes from a sociological perspective. A partly comparable study programme is "Organisation and Public Administration Sociology," which is taught at the Latvian University of Agriculture, but its goals and courses are much different than the ones at the UL, because they only focus on one of the subsectors of sociology and social work – the sociology of organisations and administration. The courses in the bachelor's degree programme Sociology offer general knowledge, but also a look at areas of social development that are specific for Latvia. Such a programme is not available at universities in Lithuania and Estonia. The University of Tallinn in Estonia and the Vytautas Magnus University in Lithuania offer additional qualifications in just one sector – communications. In comparison to the programme at the University of Tallinn, the UL BSP Sociology offers broader and deeper knowledge in the field of sociology. The University of Tallinn allows students to specialise in sociology, but the UL study programme has a balance of theories, methods, practical skills and competences with regard to sociology and its subsectors.

The competitiveness of the UL FFS BSP Sociology is very high in Latvia, because it concentrates highly qualified academic personnel (professors, senior researchers and researchers with LZP export rights who have experience with national and international academic and applied research and have been involved in international research networks), has a purposeful material and technical foundation for studies (computer classrooms, licenced data analysis software, a purposefully assembled collection of literature in the field of sociology that is the best one in Latvia, as well as subscriptions to major databases in the area of the social sciences), and offers studies in sociology at all levels, which is a good foundation for the successive regeneration of academic personnel. The further development of sociology as a reflective and applied area of the social sciences requires analysis and an understanding of social processes in the specific society, social system and country so as to provide services in support of their further development. The UL FFS BSP has a good balance between theoretical and methodological courses, research internship courses, and an ability to spend time at companies so that students can, during their studies, gain the necessary knowledge, skills and competences in identifying and analysing social problems and preparing recommendations on how to solve them. Sociology specialists have had a key role in developing evidence based policies and in evaluating their implementation at the national level, at local governments, in the work of market agents, and in public development as a whole.

BSP Sociology is focused on training specialists for Latvia's economy and society. The Department of Sociology at FFS has a good partnership with leading research companies and institutes where graduates of the programme have found jobs (Kantar, SKDS, SIA "Latvijas fakti," state and local government institutions, etc.). Demand for graduates of the bachelor's degree programme Sociology remains high, and these graduates have very opportunity to find a good job. Those who choose to pursue an academic career can successfully continue their studies in master's degree programmes in Latvia or abroad.

From January 25 to February 16, 2022, a survey was conducted among employers who had hired graduates from the study programmes of the study field "Sociology, Political Studies and Anthropology," the purpose being to get a better idea of how well graduates of the bachelor's degree programme Sociology are prepared to join the labour market. 119 invitations were sent out to fill out an electronic questionnaire, and 55 of these were returned. This was 46%, which is a much higher response than has been the case with other Internet-based surveys in Latvia (15-25%). Although the 55 questionnaires were not enough for extensive statistic analysis, they

did make it possible to identify a few important trends. One question was this: “How would you characterise graduates of the LU who work at our company/institution and have completed their education in sociology, political studies or anthropology during the past six years?” Most respondents chose this answer: “They were well prepared in theoretical and practical terms and could immediately start to do their job independently” (23 responses), as well as “After a bit of training or introduction to the place of employment, they could do their work” (17 responses). 27 respondents rated the theoretical knowledge of graduates as good and very good (27 and 21 respectively), and the figures for practical skills were 25 and 17. Respondents particularly valued the ability of grads to learn new knowledge and skills – 12 gave a rating of good, while 39 said that the ability was very good. Asked about the ability to take and justify decisions, the response was 22 good and 22 very good, when it came to the ability to come up with new ideas and solutions, it was 20 and 27, and when it came to the ability to adapt to new circumstances in a shifting work environment, the response was 16 and 30. Employers particularly praised the Latvian language skills of graduates (41), their foreign language skills (35), and their computer skills (40). 35 respondents gave top marks to communications skills such as oral communications, business correspondence, preparation of reports, presentation of data, etc., as well as their ability to work in a team. 18 respondents said good and 36 said very good when it came to the level of responsibility which respondents showed at the job. The results do not allow for analysis of judgments about graduates of individual study programmes, but 16 employers who have employed grads of the sociology programme, and the survey does indicate a few common trends, because some faculty members whose courses involve knowledge, skills and competence that are essential for sociology actually work for several different programmes in the field of studies. This applies to the course Political analysis (4 CP), which is part of the sociology and the political science bachelor’s degree programme. Research method instructors also work for several programmes. One respondent in the survey summarised the situation very well: “It all depends on the specific individual. If the LU lays good theoretical foundations, then it depends entirely on the person himself as to how he will put this knowledge the use in practice, life and work.”

#### **3.1.4. Statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down into different study forms, types, and languages.**

The bachelor’s degree programme Sociology only offers full time studies that are taught in Latvian. The total number of students during the reporting period was not large, but it was quite stable. During a few of the more recent years, there has been a slight decline in student numbers, with more students dropping out. These negative trends are based on demographic processes (a lower birth rate, young people emigrating to pursue an education abroad), as well as insufficient financing for higher education, which includes insufficient social support for students. Another problem is that institutions of higher education do what they can to fill up slots where tuition is covered by the state, which means admitting poorly motivated or entirely unmotivated young people who know little about organising their studies in an independent way. Some of the dropout statistics involve students who never began their studies in the first place. Those who want to drop out are asked to fill out a survey to explain why they are doing so. Some are young people who did not think through what they wanted to study. Surveys of first-year students that are conducted once a year in the course in data sources for statistical and social research show that the availability of subsidised slots is quite often cited as a reason for choosing a specific study programme.

The main reasons why students drop out include the belief that the content of the programme is not in line with the student's hopes and ideas about sociology. There are also personal reasons, including an inability to merge full time studies with a full time job. Among applicants whose choice has not been sufficiently motivated, there are some who did not have study topics at high school which dealt with the issues of sociology and its subsectors. Since 2021, the UL FFS has organised a school for young sociologists, with academic personnel informing upper year high school students about sociology. Such students are required to write and defend a research paper, and that can provide them with additional enrolment points when signing up for the BSP Sociology. Advantages are also given to the winners of a scholarly research paper competition that the UL FFS has organised for the past two years.

There have been new and positive trends during the reporting period. Students who dropped out some time ago to find jobs abroad have expressed an interest in restarting their studies. Other applicants have sought enrolment after a couple of gap years after finishing high school. Two such students successfully completed their studies in 2019, and when they came back, they had a much more serious attitude and approach toward their studies. Several students who dropped out in the past demonstrated an interest in returning to their studies during the 2020/2021 academic year. Generally speaking, those who depart during their first semesters of studies are those who have not sufficiently seriously considered their choice, while those who drop out in the last year for personal reasons eventually return in many cases to complete their studies.

### **3.1.5. Substantiation of the development of the joint study programme and description and evaluation of the choice of partner universities, including information on the development and implementation of the joint study programme (if applicable).**

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

### **3.2.1. Analysis of the content of the study programme. Assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators with the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study courses/ modules and compliance with the needs of the relevant industry, labour market and with the trends in science on how and whether the content of the study courses/ modules is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science.**

The content and structure of BSP Sociology satisfy the requirements of Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 240, "Regulations on the state academic education standard," as adopted on May 13, 2014. They also take into account the study programme's goals and missions.

The structure of BSP Sociology is based on an integration of the interests and needs of various involved parties and on the use of various sources of information:

- Regularly tracking the experience of the world's leading universities when it comes to the development and implementation of bachelor's degree study programmes in sociology;
- Exchanges of experiences with foreign instructors as part of the ERASMUS programme, then working together in pursuit of international research projects and programmes;
- Studying materials in scholarly journals and the homepages of universities in the world to see how sociology studies are organised elsewhere at the bachelor's degree level;
- Learning about recommendations from experts and professionals in the sector that are presented at meetings of the Latvian Association of Sociologists, as well as in other formats where the views of people from the sector can be learned (e.g., focus groups or contacts with potential employers);
- Using recommendations from students that are obtained from regularly scheduled surveys at the completion of each semester and at the completion of the study programme, with the programme director regularly analysing the results of these studies together with student groups (usually at the beginning of each semester), and the results also being discussed at meetings of the Department of Sociology and the study field council;
- Recommendations from faculty members allow the Department of Sociology and the Sociology, political studies and anthropology study field to analyse links between bachelor's and master's degree study programmes on the one hand and research and synergy among various social science sector programmes on the other.

There are three components to the bachelor's degree programme Sociology:

Section A relates to mandatory courses and leads to 66 CP. This consists of general basic courses at the University of Latvia (10 CP), basic courses related to the sector (54 CP). The courses include introduction to studies and specialisation (6 CP), courses related to social theory (12 CP), sociological research methods (12 CP), courses related to the subsectors of sociology (12 CP), an independent research project (annual paper 2 CP and bachelor's thesis 10 CP), and courses related to the legally required courses related to environmental protection and civil defence (2 CP).

Section B consists of mandatory electives and leads to 52 CP. Students can choose Section B courses from a list. Most of these relate to subsectors of sociology. A course that leads to 2 CP relates to internships at companies.

Section C consists of free electives and leads to 2 CP. Students can choose courses from the LU offer or from courses offered by other study programmes in accordance with their own interests and their ability to register for such courses (provided that there is no requirement for pre-knowledge or any other limitation).

Courses in the bachelor's degree programme Sociology relate to important aspects of the sector, documents regulating higher education, and the recommendations and needs of employers. All of this tracks timely trends related to the development of the sociology sector not just in Latvia, but throughout the world. The study programme is organised so as to adapt flexibly to changes in the area of social research and the labour market. Important issues related to the development of the study programme and the organisation of the study process are discussed at meetings of the council of the study field Sociology, Political Studies and Anthropology, at meetings of the Department of Sociology and at consultations among faculty members.

The Department of Sociology also discusses changes in the bachelor's degree programme Sociology — preparation of new courses, involvement of doctoral students in the study programme, as well as successiveness among various bachelor's and master's degree programmes so as to ensure sociology. The bachelor's degree programme Sociology is implemented with a partnership among departments in the faculty. Faculty members from other departments of the Faculty of Social Sciences teach some Section A and Section B courses. Faculty members from the

Department of Sociology also teach courses at other SZF programmes. Some courses have been successfully taught to students from several SZF programmes, including Fundamentals of economic theory (4 CP), Introduction to Latvia's legal system (4 CP), and Introduction to communications science (2 CP). The study field Sociology, Political Studies and Anthropology regularly considers the needs for the development of academic personnel. The director of the study programme works with doctoral students who have expressed the desire to prepare and teach a course. This involves consultations on the content of the future course, as well as the preparation of the relevant course description.

Some courses are taught by guest instructors who work at companies and institutions related to the sector. The course Soci2046, Marketing research (Section A), is taught by a project director of SKDS, the course Soci2058, course Soci1082, Political process research (section B) is taught by the head of the SKDS Department of Social and Political Research, , etc.

Surveys among students show that a successful courses is one in which various forms of teaching and evaluation of knowledge are present – lectures, seminars, independent work, study of the literature, writing of essays, group work and discussions. It is preferable to have a mix of lectures and seminars. Students are not happy if instructors simply deliver lectures and do not involve sufficient interactive teaching methods. Several courses involve field trips to allow students to learn about companies which work in the sector.

BSP Sociology also includes courses to social theories, research methods and methodologies, as well as individual research work so that students can better gain independent research skills.

Students can regularly meet with faculty members at lectures, seminars and practical activities, and there can be individual consultations, as well. Each member of academic staff has regularly scheduled periods each week to set aside for consultations with students. A positive and constructive atmosphere of partnership is ensured when students communicate with faculty members during practical exercises, field trips and field trip internships.

ERASMUS exchange programme activities were cancelled during the 2020/2021 academic year because of the Covid-19 pandemic, which involved travel restrictions. The next year, however, the scope of student exchanges returned to its previous level. Mobility among students offers an excellent change to gain international experience in studies. BSP Sociology has agreements with many universities which offer a bachelor's degree education in sociology. Student mobility is usually planned during the spring semester of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year or the autumn semester of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Prior to mobility, there is an agreement on the study plan, as well as on the courses which are to be taken. Courses taken during this process are recognised in Section B or Section C of the programme. If, during the exchange semester, the BSP Sociology study plan involves Section A courses, the relevant student is allowed to extend semester so as to complete the coursework.

BSP Sociology courses are taught in Latvian, but several Section B courses are taught in English. These are usually taught during the autumn semester so as to increase the offer of courses for potentially incoming ERASMUS exchange students. English dominates in the international sociology sector, and that is the language of most of the literature, and that is why the study programme focuses on the ability to learn special terminology in English. Students during the first semester must take the course Terminology of the social sciences (taught in English) during their first semester of studies. This earns 2 CP and is part of Section A. Section B has several courses that are taught in English – Narcotics, crime and society (2 CP), Society and psychedelic substances (2 CP), Social and cultural planning (4 CP), and Introduction to evaluation research (2 CP). These courses are offered to incoming ERASMUS students, and that helps to enhance the establishment of an international study environment at the UL FFS. These courses focus on publicly important topics, because people are increasingly interested in these social problems, how they can be

resolved, and how they influence social and political processes not just in Latvia, but also at the international level.

**3.2.2. In the case of master's and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation. In the case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels (if applicable).**

**3.2.3. Assessment of the study programme including the study course/ module implementation methods by indicating what the methods are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. In the case of a joint study programme, or in case the study programme is implemented in a foreign language or in the form of distance learning, describe in detail the methods used to deliver such a study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.**

BSP Sociology involves oral, written and combined study and grading methods. The study process involves a diversity of ways in which the gain and strengthen knowledge, including introductory lectures, interactive lectures, summary lectures and problem-related lectures. Practitioners and professionals from various institutions are invited to teach certain courses so as to encourage unity between theory and practice. There is extensive use of practical assignments, seminars, individual, pair and group work, discussions and project preparation, as well as field trips to organisations in the sector. Employers are also involved in teaching and improving courses (they are asked to conduct certain seminars, classes are often organised as visits to places of employment so as to exchange experiences, etc.).

With an eye toward enhancing the research competence of students, students take successive courses which help them to analyse and research issues in the sector that are of interest to them, doing so in depth. Students in upper years of studies offer peer teaching and learning to students in lower years.

During seminars, students are encouraged to develop their performance, presentation and debate skills. The study process is dominated by methods in which the work of students themselves is important, this ensuring that students can achieve their learning outcomes in terms of learning and strengthening knowledge, skills and competence. These methods encourage students to be communicative when dealing with assignments, resolving actual problems in the sector, or modelling various situations.

The physical environment for the study process is also changing gradually. Auditoriums can be easily transformed for group or individual work, and students have access to digital technologies. Most instructors use methods which encourage students to take part actively so as to hone their critical thinking and reflections. The E-study environment is meant to facilitate the study process, as well as independent studies. Each course has an E-study (Moodle) environment in which

students have access to course materials, assignment descriptions, as well as materials related to the topics of the course. The environment also includes study assignments (tests, forums, seminars, conferences, etc.). All grades given to midterm and final tests are recorded along with commentary in the E-study environment, and they are available to students there, as well.

Since the last accreditation during the 2011/2012 academic year, when experts pointed to the need to expand the availability of study materials, much attention has been focused on ensuring that the bachelor's degree programme Sociology expands the availability of study materials in the E-study environment and that these materials are used to a greater extent. Since the previous accreditation, study materials have been prepared for Section A and Section B courses. Students submit most of their work in this system, where the work is evaluated, and students quickly receive evaluations from their instructors.

The emergency situation which was instituted in March 2020 led to fundamental changes in the study process. The distance study process was organised via the MS Teams platform and its digital technologies. Students and faculty members had to use these new technological opportunities in the study process, for exams and for the defence of bachelor's theses. These were forced and external circumstances, but the fact is that this expanded the technical ways in which there can be consultations with instructors via video calls, lectures can be recorded, the recordings can be used to review the study materials, and new opportunities are created to organise group work among students. There is no doubt that some elements from this virtual study process will be preserved in future, including a greater opportunity to invite guest lectors to take part in the process.

A student-centred approach is essential to ensure the success of the study process, but that is nothing innovative. The fundamentals of this process simply speak to a responsible approach toward the study process among instructors and students alike. During introductory activities, faculty members inform students about the desired learning outcomes, demands and grading system. Instructors try to create a supportive and inspirational environment for the studies, as well as an interactive study process. These elements had largely been involved in the process in the past, because it has always been essential to make sure that students are clearly aware of their responsibility and that of their instructors. The student-centred approach relates to the study programme and course descriptions. A particular focus is on ensuring a sensible formulation of learning outcomes so as to encourage further dialogue between instructors and students about the content of the studies and the relevant forms and methods of organising it. Properly formulated learning outcomes help students to understand and take co-responsibility for their learning, their self-evaluation and their understanding of the grades that they receive. Instructors use methods, examination forms and grading criteria which are in line with the goal of the studies and the planned learning outcomes. Examination forms are linked to specific learning outcomes in the course descriptions, and specific assignments are indicated if the student wishes to achieve said outcomes. Course descriptions explain the proportion of each type of examination in the final grade, placing ever more emphasis on regular activities during seminars. This helps students to take on more responsibility for the development of their knowledge, skills and competence, while instructors are encouraged to ensure a regular reciprocal link about each student's progress during the course of the semester. The E-studies system ensures that during the semester, students have access to planned grading of exams and the proportion of each type of exam in the final grade.

Students receive support and reciprocal links from their instructors. Grading criteria are published in advance. This allows students to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the expected learning outcomes.

Observing the principles of student-centred education facilitates the mobility of students (recognition of learning outcomes). Students are involved in research that is conducted by



academic personnel and take part in social activities. This provides them with important experience in terms of putting what they have learned to practice. Internal quality assurance policies mean that study programmes are implemented so that students are encouraged to be actively involved in improving the study process. There is a procedure whereby students can submit proposals, deal with complaints and review appeals. Improvement of the study process involves an evaluation of the results of student surveys. Students are happy to make recommendations as to how to improve the study programme and its processes during conversations with instructors and programme directors.

FFS has a system for regular collaboration with students when it comes to improving the study process. Students in various sectors and at various levels of the programme are represented on the council of the study field Sociology, Political Studies and Anthropology, as well as on the FFS Council, which is the highest decision-making institution at the faculty. All changes to the study programmes are reviewed by study departments, study field councils and, finally, the FFS Council, which has to approve them. This ensures that students have a chance to take part in the development of the study programmes.

Much attention in the BSP Sociology is focused on methods and methodologies related to extracting, analysing and using social information so as to develop knowledge, skills and competences. Throughout the study process, there is much attention toward learning research skills. During their first semester, students have several practical assignments which involve research skills. This continues with courses about sociological research methods during the second and third semester. It ends with writing and defending a bachelor's thesis.

During their third semester of studies, students are expected to write an annual paper, which is part of Section A of the BSP Sociology. The aim here is to develop the independent research skills of students so that they can learn in depth about an area or method of sociology and analyse a problem that exists in public life. While preparing these papers, students partner with their academic advisor to engage in in depth studies of literature in the selected area, to prepare a plan for the work and to correlate and systematise the results of their work. 80 hours of independent work are provided for this (2 CP). Students choose their topics themselves after consulting with instructors at the Department of Sociology. Students can also choose topics from lists which instructors prepare. Instructors help students to formulate their topic and to understand whether it does or does not correspond to the requirements of an annual paper. When choosing the academic advisors for annual papers, the scholarly interests of faculty members and doctoral students are taken into account. Doctoral students who are writing a dissertation related to the area of sociology also become academic advisors to students who are writing annual papers. During their individual work, students can be involved in broader research projects under the leadership of the relevant faculty member.

During the last accreditation of the study field in 2012, BSP Sociology was rated at a very higher level, but since then major improvements have been made so as to increase the ability of students to take part in scholarly research work. These improvements were based on recommendations from experts which were based on the stated desire among students to take part in research together with their instructors to a greater degree. Particularly in recent times, there have been increased opportunities to involve students, especially from upper years, in actual research projects. This is thanks to financing from the LU SZF Institute for Social and Political Research (LU SZF SPPI), the Latvian Science Council (LZP), the applied research projects (FLPP), and the national research programme (VPP). This experience encourages students to continue their studies at the master's degree level. In future, they may choose an academic career.

All students in the bachelor's degree programme Sociology are required to take part in actual

sociological research. Skills and competence related to applied sociological research relate to identifying and analysing social problems. Students learn about this in the Section A course Sociological research process (4 CP, 4<sup>th</sup> semester). Students who take the course are involved in actual research projects under the leadership of their instructors. During the past few years, academic staff have conducted studies for the Latvian Research Council along with students. The project was titled "Ready for change? The sustainable management of joint natural resources". The project led to publications that have been co-authored by instructors and students.

**3.2.4. If the study programme envisages an internship, describe the internship opportunities offered to students, provision and work organization, including whether the higher education institution/ college helps students to find an internship place. If the study programme is implemented in a foreign language, provide information on how internship opportunities are provided in a foreign language, including for foreign students. To provide analysis and evaluation of the connection of the tasks set for students during the internship included in the study programme with the learning outcomes of the study programme (if applicable).**

On the basis of a proposal from students, Section B of BSP Sociology includes the course SociR009, Internship in the use of sociological information in governance and organisations. Internships at companies are part of this course. The aim is to develop practical skill sin the use of sociological information in governance, organisations, public relations and marketing. The course is based on the BSP Sociology internships statutes, which set out the goals and missions of the internship, as well as the organisation, processes and evaluation of internships.

Internships are aimed at developing practical skills in the use of sociological information in governance, organisations, public relations and marketing. Internships earn 2 CP, which correspond to 72 work hours at the place of the internship. The course Practicum in the use of sociological information in governance and organisations is during the 5<sup>th</sup> semester of the full-time studies at the BSP Sociology. Students independently choose the place for their internship son the basis of their individual learning goals. The academic advisor for the internship at the FFS must approve the place of the internship. Students are expected to contact management at the place of internship to say that they want to have an internship there so that opportunities can be discussed. If the student and the management agree to this, then the student so informs the methodologist at the FFS so that an internship agreement can be drawn up. It is concluded between the institution at which the internship is to take place, the student and the FFS.

Internships involve various missions, including an analysis of the use of sociological information at governance, organisations, public relations and marketing at the place which the student has chosen – a private, non-governmental or local government institution or organisation. Diverse research methods such as statistical data analysis, interviews, focus groups and observation are put to use in analysing the work of the institution or organisation so as to determine the extent to which sociological information is used at the specific company, institution, governance agency or organisation, as well as in the fields of public relations and marketing at the institution where the student's internship is.

During their internship, students can improve their skills at working with social information and learn more about the work environment and organisation at specific enterprises. Students learn about the use of sociological information at governance, organisations, public relations and

marketing in accordance with the missions of the internship. During their research students, use materials offered by the institution, as well as related research, statistical data and theoretical materials as necessary. Students independently plan the organisation of work during the internship, agreeing on this with the manager of the institution. This develops teamwork and independent skills, the ability to improve communications skills and the ability to find a place in the environment of the company. It is a complex matter to evaluate the results of an internship and the growth which the relevant student has experienced, because that involves an evaluation from the academic advisor of the internship, as well as objective information about the internship, the self-evaluation of the student, the results of the evaluation of the student, as well as the reflection of the internship results in the report on the internship and the presentation at the concluding seminar of the internships.

During their internship, students gain practical skills at social development planning, social policies, policies at various levels and in various sectors, as well as methods used to evaluate the preparation and effectiveness of governance decisions at national governance institutions, non-governmental or private sector institutions or organisations (depending on where the specific internship is being conducted). Students gain an understanding about important social processes in Latvia and their links to global development trends. They learn how to identify social problems, how to put the theoretical knowledge that they have gained through the study process to practice, and how to use quantitative and qualitative social data extraction and analysis methods so as to prepare recommendations as to how such problems can be resolved.

### **3.2.5. Evaluation and description of the promotion opportunities and the promotion process provided to the students of the doctoral study programme (if applicable).**

### **3.2.6. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the marks of the final theses.**

An important component of BSP Sociology is writing and defending a bachelor's thesis at the conclusion of the programme. The aim is to confirm the ability of the student to engage in independent research work. Students must conduct theoretical analysis of the social issue that is at the centre of the thesis, demonstrating competence in selecting scholarly literature in that area. The student must prepare research methodology, justify the choice of data extraction and analysis methods that are used, obtain and analyse empirical data, and, finally, write academic text to describe the research that has been done, analyse the data that have been obtained, and engage in academic discussions about the topic that has been selected. During the sixth semester of studies, a Section A course, Academic research, writing and presentation, is taken by all students so that they are better prepared for writing the thesis and other academic papers such as lectures, presentations and course projects. The course focuses on preparing text and presenting research results. This also helps to prepare students for independent research at the master's degree level. Students gain basic knowledge about various academic genres in the study process, the importance of theories in academic work, fundamental elements of empirical research, and the public presentation and defence of their ideas.

Most students choose their topics themselves in accordance with their interests and current societal problems that meet the requirements of the labour market in the field of social research. Some students have jobs during the last year of their studies, and so they choose bachelor's thesis topics in accordance with the needs of their place of employment. Faculty members at the Department of Sociology who are also researchers at the FFS ASPRI and involve students in their research projects can propose topics of theses that are in line with the subjects of the project. This means that topics for bachelor's theses are timely in that students focus on the analysis of important social processes in a manner which conforms to labour market needs.

Bachelor's theses usually involve independent empirical research, and students work on this independently under the supervision of their academic advisor. Theses are written in Latvian. Many students have chosen to write about important problems in the education system. During the 2020/2021 academic year, for instance, the top grade of 10 ("outstanding") was received by the author of the thesis "The Experience of Students in on-site and Distanced Higher Education in Latvia." The student analysed the way in which the unexpected transfer to virtual lessons changed the educational experience of students in Latvia. The data that were analysed in the thesis were obtained via an online survey (n=408), which was aimed at finding out how the teaching and social and cognitive presence had changed. The methodology was based on the theoretical model of the Community of Inquiry, which operationalises the aforementioned presence. Another thesis which received top marks was written during the 2016/2017 academic year: "The Perspective of Teachers: Prevention Youth Suicide at Schools in Latvia." Other theses which received the grade of 10 were focused on migration processes. A student in 2018/2019 wrote a thesis titled "The Migration of Latvian Ethnic Returning: Motivations and Integration." The same was true of the thesis "The Remigration Experience of Remigrating Families with Foreign Spouses". Other students have focused their theses on the work of local governments: "Local Views about the Status of the Liepāja Karosta Beach" (2020/2021, a grade of 10). Another thesis was titled "The Importance of Community Funds in Strengthening Co-operation: A Study of the Fund in the Alūksne and Ape Administrative Districts" (2017/2018, a grade of 10). One that focused on the issue of the non-governmental sector was titled "The Corps of European Solidarity: Growth Opportunities for Young People in Latvia" (2017/2018, a grade of 10).

Defence of bachelor's theses is the last step in the study programme. This is an open discussion, and students from other semesters are welcome to take part. The reviewer of the thesis is chosen by the programme director and the director of the department. If a student has written a thesis independently and without an academic advisor, then two reviewers are chosen. At the beginning of the defence, the author or authors of the thesis present the goal of their work and the primary results (up to 10 minutes). Then those who are present pose questions which the author (authors) can answer immediately or answer in their final presentation (as they wish). During the process, the floor is given to the reviewer and the academic advisor (2-3 minutes for each). The author of the thesis has the final word in the process.

After all of the bachelor's theses have been defended, a closed meeting of the thesis commission is held. At it, voting rights on grading the thesis belong to the reviewers and academic advisors even if they are not members of the commission. The author (authors) may use pre-prepared PowerPoint or graph projection materials during their presentation.

Grades for bachelor's theses are seldom lower than 6 (almost good). During the reporting period, the lowest average grade for theses was 6.6. That was in 2017/2018, when 26 students defended their theses. In 2015/2016, 13 students defended their theses and received an average grade of 7.7. In 2016/2017 – 15 theses, an average grade of 8.3. 2018/2019 – 14 theses, 7.2. In 2019/2020 – 6 and 8.3. In 2020/2021 – 19 and 7.9.

### 3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

**3.3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples.**

BSP Sociology is located at the UL FFS and makes use of the material and technical foundations of the faculty and the LU. This has been described before, so at this point the focus will be on those aspects which apply to students in the BSP Sociology. Of particular importance is the provision of literature that is needed for studies and research by students and instructors. FFS has rooms which are appropriate for the study process, as well as electronic resources such as the Moodle environment and Ms Teams for distanced learning.

BSP Sociology is well-resourced and fully in line with the programme's goals and the quality of the study process. The library of UL FFS has the collection for social sciences, and it is open 60 hours a week for the convenience of students. Users have access to the collection, which is stored in three rooms with a total floor space of 544 m<sup>2</sup>. There are 84 workstations for students, 18 of them for work with computers. The FFS library offers the following services to students and faculty members:

Electronic ordering/reservation/usage deadline extension at the joint catalogue of libraries of national importance (hereafter – joint catalogue), as well as the receipt of information resources to use at the reading room of the library or at home. These services are available to registered users at the UL Library.

There is access to the delivery of information resources. Academic personnel, researchers and doctoral students can order information resources from the joint catalogue and from any library, indicating the sectoral library that would be the most convenient place to receive the reserved information resource.

Users have access to self-service scanning services.

There is access to informative literature and periodicals, desktop and laptop computers (both those of the library and those of users), as well as Internet connections, including Wi-Fi, which operates in all buildings of the UL.

The "Night Subscription" service is aimed at ensuring free access to certain information resources outside of the UL Library from the moment when it is closed until the moment when it is opened. Such resources can be reserved in advance, indicating the specific hours when the user wishes to access them.

Information resources can also be delivered during the summer. Users can receive information resources reserved in the joint catalogue once a week at their most convenient sectoral library (the one in Raiņa Boulevard, the Natural Sciences library, the House of Science library).

Users have access to informational services such as consultations, provision of reports, training and support in the field of research. These are among the fundamental duties of the UL Library. Consultants at the library can offer bibliographic, thematic, factographic, addressal, precising and

other types of information and consultations to UL students, as well as academic, scientific and general personnel. Students make more active use of such consultations when working on their independent projects, annual papers or bachelor's thesis.

User training is organised so as to help them to develop their skills of working independently and so that they can find, assess and use all information resources and E-environment tools. The library works actively with its target audiences – students at all levels, as well as academic, scientific and general personnel. This is aimed at information skills and offering in-depth knowledge and skills when it comes to working with electronic resources. During the first semester of studies, the library organises presentations for social work programme students, as well as activities in auditoriums and computer classrooms. Students from affiliates have access to such meetings in a distanced system. The aim of the training is to ensure that users have the skill to work with the freely available collection, self-service systems and office equipment such as self-service scanners and copiers. This helps to improve individual learning competence. BSP Sociology students also have access to lectures from UL FFS library personnel about the library's resources and how they can be used.

Faculty members use the electronic Moodle E-environment to distribute study materials and to receive, examine and analyse work that students have submitted. Moodle supplements the LU information system (LUIS), ensuring the entry of grades. Students use the LUIS to register for courses electronically. Support from a methodologist is available if there are questions or problems in this regard. The methodologist is also prepared to support students when it comes to organisational aspects of the study process, providing consultations on various related issues.

UL FFS has appropriate rooms for the study process. Most faculty members in the bachelor's degree programme Sociology have elected posts at the UL FFS, and they have high-quality offices and adequate support. Guest instructors have access to workspaces that are provided by the UL FFS. They can spend time there, prepare for their classes and offer individual consultations to students.

The study plan for each cohort of students is shaped in the long term when students begin their studies, which last for three years. Faculty members use the electronic Moodle E-environment to distribute study materials and to receive, examine and analyse work that students have submitted. Moodle supplements the UL information system (LUIS), ensuring the entry of grades. Students use the LUIS to register for courses electronically. Support from a methodologist is available if there are questions or problems in this regard. The methodologist is also prepared to support students when it comes to organisational aspects of the study process, providing consultations on various related issues.

UL is currently engaged in extensive infrastructure development projects. The building of the Writing House is to be completed in 2002, and the bachelor's degree programme Sociology will move there. This will bring all of the humanities and social sciences under one roof. The hope is that this will make relationships easier and strengthen the sector of anthropology, which merges the traditions of both areas. The UL Humanities Library has an extensive collection of anthropological literature, both via procurement of new books and via donations of collections. Students will have access to the library irrespective of the faculty in which they are studying. UL has workstations in computer classrooms and the reading room of the Social Sciences Library. Auditoriums have audio and video equipment, and in 2002 there will be state-of-the-art technologies and excellent aesthetics in the rooms. UL has highly developed opportunities for E-studies.

### **3.3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific base support, including the**

**resources provided within the framework of cooperation with other science institutes and higher education institutions (applicable to doctoral study programmes) (if applicable).**

**3.3.3. Indicate data on the available funding for the corresponding study programme, its funding sources and their use for the development of the study programme. Provide information on the costs per one student within this study programme, indicating the items included in the cost calculation and the percentage distribution of funding between the specified items. The minimum number of students in the study programme in order to ensure the profitability of the study programme (indicating separately the information on each language, type and form of the study programme implementation).**

The resources of the bachelor's study programme Political Science relate to all that is stated above about the informative, material and technical support of the study field (see 2.3.1.).

Programme revenues

BSP Sociology has the following financial resources:

- 1) A national subsidy from the Ministry of Education and Science, which in 2021/2022 was EUR 1,630 for full-time studies;
- 2) Tuition fees taking into account all of the factors stated above, which in 2021/2022 has been EUR 2,300 for full-time studies per year.

Given this, the total study programme budget is expected to be EUR 120,700, as decoded in Table 3.3.3.1.

*Table 3.3.3.1. Forecast programme revenues per year, EUR*

<b>Type of studies</b>	<b>Number of students</b>	<b>Tuition/subsidy</b>	<b>Total</b>
Full-time (subsidy)	76	1,630	123 880
Incl. students with LU scholarship	9		-14670
Full-time (tuition)	5	2,300	11,500
Total			120,710

#### **Programme costs**

UL has a methodology to calculate the basic cost of UL study programmes so as to evaluate the financing that is needed. This takes into account the costs that are needed to ensure the study process, as described in Section 2.3.1., and that applies to the study plan, faculty members, the planned number of students, etc. This ensures the believability of the forecasts.

Programme costs for **full time studies**

BSP Sociology uses data about students during the 2020/2021 academic year for these calculations. There were 81 full-time students, with the planned study programme plan and structure of involved academic personnel after accreditation. Based on this data, the total annual costs of the program are 132 738 EUR and their structure (percentage distribution) is shown in Table 3.3.3.2.

Table 3.3.3.2.

*Distribution of costs in the study programme*

Line item	%
Faculty members	53%
General personnel	11%
Other costs	0.2%
Infrastructure	10%
Property and services	1.8%
Indirect costs	24%
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 3.3.3.1. the cost of the study program (vertical axis) depending on the number of students (horizontal axis), the tuition fee (green line) and the state budget subsidy (blue line) are visually represented with a red line.

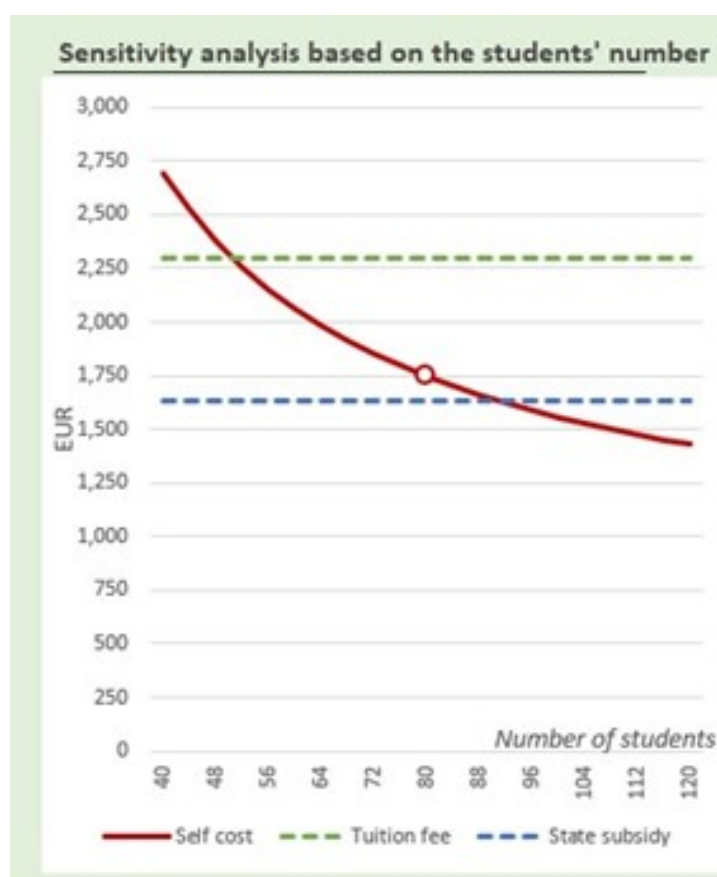


Figure 3.3.3.1. The base cost of BSP Sociology in the number of full time students



Based on the cost structure and the total number of students 81, the cost of the program per student (base cost) is 1734 EUR per year.

This calculation shows that if the programme is to be profitable and the study process is at a high level of quality for students, the number of tuition-paying students in the programme (all courses) should be at least 48 (the crossing of the red (base cost) and green (tuition fee) lines on Axis X). If all of the students in the programme had state subsidies, then there would have to be 96 of them.

### Summary of programme revenues and costs

Table 3.3.3.3. summarises the revenues of the cost, based on the type of studies, the national subsidy and the tuition fee, as well as the costs of the programme at this number of students.

Table 3.3.3.3.

### Results of the programme

Type of studies	Number of students	Tuition/subsidy	Total revenues	Total costs
Full-time (subsidy)	76	1,630	123 880	124 564
Incl. students with LU scholarship	9		-14670	
Full-time (tuition)	5	2,300	11,500	8195
<b>Total</b>			<b>120 710</b>	<b>132 759</b>

The data in the table make it clear that the UL has sufficient resources for the study programme and its ongoing development. Additional development can be financed with revenues from partnership projects, as well as the saved financial resources of the department. Financial support for programme development is also received by faculties from the UL Study Quality Improvement Fund.

At the same time, it is important to take steps toward attracting larger numbers of students. A challenge for the sector of sociology is that high school has no subjects which teach sociology as a social science. Children usually learn about social knowledge in elementary school, and student scholarly papers often use methods to obtain and analyse social information (surveys, interviews, etc). Still, students do not link this to sociology as a field of science. For several years now, the FFS has had a Young Sociologist School to facilitate a greater understanding among young people about sociology, to inform them about career opportunities in the field and thus to attract a greater number of students. Interest among high school students has increased year by year.

## 3.4. Teaching Staff

### 3.4.1. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members

**(academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.**

UL FFS is the basic employer of most of the most highly qualified academic personnel in the area of social sciences in Latvia. BSP Sociology has three professors (2 professors from the Sociology department and 1 professor from the Political science department), four associate professors and two docents. These faculty members are also senior researchers or researchers at the UL FFS ASPRI, take part in the national-level research programmes and various international organisations, write internationally recognised academic publications and serve as experts who analyse social processes at the national level. This enables the learning of theoretical ideas in close linkage with research, creates prerequisites for the organic involvement of students in research, and ensures the achievement of the planned learning outcomes in the programme. Some courses are taught by guest instructors from the sector's companies and institutions. All of the faculty members in the programme have at least a master's degree. Most courses in BSP Sociology are taught by academic personnel from the Department of Sociology, but faculty members from other departments of the Faculty of Social sciences teach courses at the Section A and Section B level. This provides deep and overall theoretical knowledge about the fundamental positions, principles, structure and methodology of sociology and its subsectors. It also focuses on the history of the development of sociology and its subsectors, its ongoing problems, as well as the skill of obtaining and analysing social information, planning and organising sociological research, identifying social problems, and understanding and analysing social processes in Latvia in the context of global occurrences.

#### **3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.**

In 2012/2013, the Department of Sociology had nine employees and one administrative employee. There were four professors, one associate professor, two docents and two lecturers. All faculty members are involved in the study programme. As student numbers have shrunk, the workload of academic personnel has also declined. All faculty members at the department for whom that is the basic job were employed part time and merged their work as instructors with research. Some of them were elected as senior researchers or researchers at the FFS ASPRI. This allowed the programme to preserve its academic human resources and to enhance the ability of attracting students to the research process.

In 2021/2022, the Department of Sociology has eight academic personnel and one administrative employee. The department has two professors, four associate professors and two docents. All of them are involved in the programme. Several instructors in the bachelor's degree programme Sociology are elected academic personnel from other departments of the FFS. There are also several hourly lecturers. As was the case when the previous accreditation report was prepared, most of the academic personnel in the department are elected as senior researchers and researchers at the FFS ASPRI. Doctoral students are also involved in teaching courses in the programme.

The composition of faculty members is stable, and a wide range of qualifications and ages is represented. All elected academic personnel in the Department of Sociology hold a doctorate in sociology and have experience with academic research. The Department of Sociology offers study programmes at all three levels – bachelor's, master's and doctoral. Doctoral students who are interested in pedagogic work can prepare and teach courses in the programme. During the 2021/2022 academic year, two applicants for doctoral degrees and three doctoral students did so. Two other courses were taught by people from the sector, and some lectures in other study courses were delivered by representatives of the sector who were invited to do so. Faculty members can improve their qualifications related to the Sociology, Political Studies and Anthropology study field via the SAM 8.2.2. project, which allows them to spend time at companies in the sector and to attend various courses that are on offer.

The Department of Sociology is targeting the regeneration of its academic personnel. Doctoral students are offered the chance of becoming involved in the study programme if they are interested in doing so. During their first year, doctoral students can review annual papers. During the second year they can be academic advisors for annual papers and reviewers of bachelor's theses, and during their third year of studies, doctoral students can be academic advisors or reviewers of bachelor's theses. With the approval of the programme director, doctoral students can also prepare and teach courses, which provides them with additional credits in the doctoral programme. The quality of this process is monitored by regularly analysed results of student surveys. When doctoral students are elected to their jobs, there are open lectures that are attended not just by experts chosen by the Department of Sociology, but also other faculty members from the department. The lectures are analysed at the department.

**3.4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members, involved in the implementation of doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals or peer-reviewed monographs may be additionally specified. Information on the teaching staff included in the database of experts of the Latvian Council of Science in the relevant field of science (total number, name of the lecturer, field of science in which the teaching staff has the status of an expert and expiration date of the Latvian Council of Science expert) (if applicable).**

**3.4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).**

**3.4.5. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying**

**the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study programme and study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).**

Close co-operation among faculty members is a prerequisite for achieving the planned learning outcomes of the bachelor's degree programme "Sociology." Most of the instructors who are involved in this study programme come from the LU SZF Department of Sociology, and most of them hold doctorate degrees. This means that their collaboration occurs at meetings of the Department of Sociological Studies, where there are regular discussions about various aspects of the study programme, including the preparation of new courses to include in the curriculum, achievements and problems in the process, the academic calendar, topics for annual papers and the bachelor's degree thesis, analysis of study processes and learning outcomes, and aspects of the regeneration of academic personnel. There are also discussions about how study courses are linked and about the successive nature of the sociological study programme – the bachelor's degree programme, the master's degree programme and the doctoral degree programme. This is important so as to avoid any overlap in course content and to ensure successiveness among study programmes in the field of sociology. In preparing for accreditation, the Department of Sociology discussed the exclusion of some courses from the curriculum, the inclusion of new courses, and ways of improving the overall structure of the study programme. Proposals on changes were prepared at department meetings and then submitted to the Study Field Council for its consideration.

Co-operation between faculty members and students occurs with various formats and at various levels. Students at the LU SZF are involved in the work of the faculty's council and its decisions, and they are also represented in the administration of the study field "Sociology, political science and anthropology." During the Covid-19 pandemic, there were several surveys of students to learn their views about the desirable form of studies – in presence or distanced. The views of students are usually taken into account.

Most of the courses in the bachelor's degree programme "Sociology" have fairly large numbers of students, which means that it is difficult to organise work in small groups and to have an individualised approach to the study process. Students can apply for consultations with their instructors during periods which faculty members have set aside for this purpose. Of course, there is a greater opportunity for an individualised approach in those courses which include seminars, though even in that case, it is not always possible to give the floor to each student during each seminar. The most important forms of partnership between students and faculty members are lectures, seminars, individual consultations, individual or group assignments, and the partnership between academic advisors and students when preparing annual papers and the bachelor's thesis. Students can choose their own advisor, but these choices are not always taken into account, because the Department of Sociology wants to divide up the workload of advising students as equally as possible among all faculty members so that the quality of the process is as good as possible.

At this writing, the proportion between students and faculty members in the bachelor's degree programme "Sociology" (as of October 2021) was 2.89 students per faculty member (81 students, 28 instructors). This is similar to the proportion which existed during the previous accreditation period. The workload of instructors in the programme can differ, and several courses are part of several different study programmes.



# Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	Diploma SOC BSP.pdf	SOC BSP diploma pielikums.pdf
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	Statistics SOC BSP.pdf	Statistikas dati SOC BSP.pdf
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard	Education standard SOC BSP.pdf	SOC BSP izglitības standarts.pdf
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	Mapping of the study courses SOC BSP.xlsx	Kursu_kartejums_SocBSP.xlsx
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	Study plan SOC BSP.pdf	SOC BSP plāns.pdf
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	Study courses SOC BSP.pdf	Kursu apraksti SOC BSP.pdf
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)	PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT SOC BSP.pdf	SOC BSP prakses nolikums.pdf
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
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 (if applicable)	Study field declaration SOC BSP.pdf	SOC BSP apliecinājums 55. pants.edoc

# Political Science (43312)

Study field	<i>Sociology, Political Science, and Anthropology</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Political Science</i>
Education classification code	<i>43312</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>Academic bachelor study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Toms</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Rostoks</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>toms.rostoks@lu.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Asociētais profesors</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>29557994</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>BSP Political Science prepares professionals with an in depth knowledge of political science and its sub-disciplines. It gives the necessary skills and competences to apply this knowledge to their professional activities in the national, municipal, non-governmental and private sectors.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<p><i>The academic BSP Political Science has the following missions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• Learning knowledge about the most important theories and latest trends in political science and its subsectors;</i></li> <li><i>• Learning knowledge about quantitative and qualitative methods and their practice usage;</i></li> <li><i>• Learning about the professional terminology of political science and its subsectors;</i></li> <li><i>• Developing individual work skills, as well as skills related to communications, co-operation and teamwork;</i></li> <li><i>• Learning how to make practice use of knowledge and skills that are developed during the study process to deal with practical aspect of politics and actions;</i></li> <li><i>• Learning about analytical thinking, time planning, and independent preparation of research projects and presentation of the results thereof;</i></li> <li><i>• Learning the skill of seeking out innovative approaches toward theoretical and practical problems.</i></li> </ul>

Results of the study programme	<p><b>Knowledge:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand major theories and concepts of political science, major issues addressed by political theory, and subfields of political science;</li> <li>2. Know the politics of Latvia, the European Union and other countries;</li> <li>3. Know various policy research approaches and methods.</li> </ol> <p><b>Skills:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Compare different opinions on theoretical and practical issues in political science, convert acquired knowledge to skills to implement theoretically and empirically oriented research, use quantitative and qualitative methods;</li> <li>5. Prepare policy planning documents using knowledge of public administration organisations' objectives, development plans, budgeting principles and domestic and international political contexts;</li> <li>6. Communicate research findings in writing and present them orally, respond to criticism and observe standards of academic ethics.</li> </ol> <p><b>Competence:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Assess and independently interpret recent developments in political science and understand the social impact of political decisions;</li> <li>8. Develop new ideas, are self-critical, adapt to new situations and understand the social impact of professional activities;</li> <li>9. Develop proposals for the improvement of policies, public participation, and the quality of the implementation of regulatory acts and policies at the governmental and municipal levels of public administration.</li> </ol>
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	Bachelor thesis

## Study programme forms

### Full time studies - 3 years - latvian

Study type and form	Full time studies
Duration in full years	3
Duration in month	0
Language	latvian
Amount (CP)	120
Admission requirements (in English)	Secondary education
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	Bachelor's degree of Social Sciences in Political Science
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	-

### Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
University of Latvia	RĪGA	RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050



### 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

**3.1.1.1. Description and analysis of changes in the parameters of the study programme made since the issuance of the previous accreditation form of the study field or issuance of the study programme license, if the study programme is not included on the accreditation form of the study field, including changes planned within the evaluation procedure of the study field evaluation procedure.**

There have been no major changes in the bachelor's study programme (BSP) Political Science primary parameters since the last accreditation of the programme. This applies to the degree that is to be earned, the field of studies, the code of the programme in accordance with Latvia's Education Classification, the duration of the programme, the language of instruction, and the enrolment requirements. During the reporting period, however, the goal, missions and learning outcomes of BSP Political Science have been made more precise (Table 1).

Table 3.1.1.1.

### Changes in the goals and missions of the study programme

The goal of the BSP Political Science accredited in 2013	The goal of the BSP Political Science up for accreditation at this time	Reason
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<p>The goal of the academic bachelor's degree study programme Political Science is to train academically educated and professionally qualified experts for Latvia's social, state, private sector, local government and international organisation needs – experts who can pursue their professional and human potential so as to be competitive in the labour market; train professionals with in-depth knowledge about political systems and national administration, as well as an understanding of international proceedings, the socioeconomic and political issues of the European Union, and Latvia's role therein. Graduates must be equally qualified to do research work and take part in social and political processes at the international, regional and local level. The trained experts must be able to strengthen the LU Department of Political Science and the most important institution in Latvia which offers a bachelor's degree in political science</p>	<p>The goal of the bachelor's degree study programme is to prepare experts with in-depth knowledge about political science and its subsectors, with the necessary skills and competence with respect to this knowledge so that it can be used for professional work in the public, non-governmental and private sector.</p>	<p>The goal of the programme was made more precise in 2021, transforming the learning outcomes thereof.</p>
<p><b>The mission of the accredited BSP Political Science</b></p>	<p><b>The improved missions of the study BSP Political Science</b></p>	<p><b>Reason</b></p>

The academic BSP Political Science has the following missions:

- Ensure scientifically justified and broad profile studies in political science in accordance with academic education standards;
- Ensure the introduction of the most important achievements in the field of political science;
- Ensure that students develop skills that they can use in the study process so as to identify, analyse and deal with practical aspects of politics;
- Ensure that students have all-encompassing knowledge about governance and politics in Latvia and Europe, as well as about Latvia's political placement and opportunities in the world;
- To shape scientific and humane understanding in students;
- To develop critical and independent thought abilities in students;
- To develop the skills of students in the use of present-day information technologies;
- To prepare and develop the knowledge and skills among students that will allow them to do high-quality work in their chosen area of specialisation after being graduated;
- To allow students to supplement their knowledge at partner universities abroad.

The academic BSP Political Science has the following missions:

- Learning knowledge about the most important theories and latest trends in political science and its subsectors;
- Learning knowledge about quantitative and qualitative methods and their practice usage;
- Learning about the professional terminology of political science and its subsectors;
- Developing individual work skills, as well as skills related to communications, co-operation and teamwork;
- Learning how to make practice use of knowledge and skills that are developed during the study process to deal with practical aspect of politics and actions;
- Learning about analytical thinking, time planning, and independent preparation of research projects and presentation of the results thereof;
- Learning the skill of seeking out innovative approaches toward theoretical and practical problems.

The missions of the programme were made more precise in 2021, improving the learning outcomes of the programme in line with the latest achievements in the field of political science while also implementing a shift toward student-centred education.

### 3.1.2. Analysis and assessment of the study programme compliance with the study field.

**Analysis of the interrelation between the code of the study programme, the degree, professional qualification/professional qualification requirements or the degree and professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements. Description of the duration and scope of the implementation of the study programme (including different options of the study programme implementation) and evaluation of its usefulness.**

Title of the study programme indicates the degree awarded after completion of the study programme "Political science", that is, social science bachelor degree in political science. Title of the study programme has been formulated according to the guidelines provided by the Cabinet of Ministers 13 May 2017 decree number 322 "Regulations on Latvia's education classification" and according to the thematic groups identified in the Latvian education classification. Political science is part of the wider group of social sciences, and the degree awarded after completion of studies corresponds to the study direction "Sociology, political science and anthropology". The first two digits of the code of the study programme 43312 indicate the level of the study programme – bachelor degree, while the remaining three digits indicate that the study programme is part of the thematic area "Social sciences, commercial sciences and law", more specifically the bachelor study programme "Political Science" is part of the study programme group "Social and human behaviour sciences".

Since 1992, the University of Latvia (UL) has had a bachelor's degree study programme in political science, i.e., academic BSP in Political science. BSP Political Science belongs to the field of study Sociology, political science and anthropology, and this is confirmed by five factors. First, political science and political science in Latvia are synonyms, and this is basically included in the name of the programme and the field of studies. The name of the programme is Political science, while the name of the field of study includes the concept political science. Secondly, BSP Political Science fully applies to this field of study because it includes all four of the most important subsectors in political science: political theory, comparative politics, international policy, and public politics and governance. The Latvian National Encyclopaedia defines political science as follows: "In formal terms, political science belongs to the social sciences while also preserving links to the humanities. The main subsectors of political science are political theory, comparative politics, public governance and international politics."<sup>[1]</sup>

Third, Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 246, "Regulations on the profession classification, professions in line with basic missions and fundamental qualification requirements," as adopted on May 23, 2017, has this to say about the qualification requirements in the separate profession group "2633 Philosophers, historians and political scientists";

"306. The professions and corresponding basic missions of the separate group "2633 Philosophers, historians and political scientists": To study and explain the main causes and resources of global and social activities, experiences and existence, as well as to explain and develop philosophical concepts and theories; to compare original evidence about the past to present-day records and similar fundamental sources, as well as secondary sources, archaeological, anthropological and other discoveries and to provide consultations on such matter; to obtain materials, inspect their authenticity, and study and describe the history of the relevant economic, social or political aspect in the country or one of its regions; to conduct studies of the previous and current theories and practices in the fields of political philosophy and political systems, institutions and activities; to study existing political institutes and to collect data from various sources, including discussions with official government and political party individuals; to submit discoveries and conclusions for

publication for use by associations, establishments, organisations, political parties and interested persons; to conduct dendrochronological dating of historical timber, including historical wooden structure and objects; to prepare the annual chronology of the age of trees; to obtain information from the rings which depict the age of trees that can be used for history (related to archaeology, ethnography, architecture and art), forestry, ecology, climatology, geology and other areas; and to prepare scholarly papers and reviews.”[2]

This is the most voluminous description in normative regulations about the qualifications of political sciences and political studies. Courses included in BSP “Social science” cover the entire aforementioned description of qualifications. The courses review political systems, political institutions, political parties, governments, and the history of political systems.

Fourth, the content of BSP Political Science includes many study courses with content that strictly applies to politics and political studies. The subsector of political science clearly includes the following courses: Introduction to political science, Introduction to public administration, Introduction to international politics, Introduction to political science studies, Latvian politics (political system), Research methods in political science; European Union I: Integration and institutions, European Union II: Politics and decision-making, Political analysis, Political theory, the history of political ideas, and Local governance (42 KP in all). BSP Political Science also includes courses which belong to other areas of social science and are interdisciplinary. Still, the dominant component in the study programme is political science.

Fifth, BSP Political Science offers knowledge, skills and competence that are focused on gaining in-depth knowledge about domestic politics and national governance, as well as about international politics. The programme teaches knowledge about important political science theories and concepts, as well as the most important issues that are considered by political theorists, the subsectors of political science, comparative politics, public governance, international politics, the political systems of Latvia and other countries and factors which influence them, timely political processes today the establishment, structure, functioning and policies of the European Union, the EU’s influence on Latvia’s politics and development, various political research approaches and methods, fundamental principles of data processing and analysis, the importance and measurement of causality, as well as quantitative and qualitative methods and their use. The gradual completion of study courses ensures the achievement of learning outcomes. These are interrelated, and students not only learn about the subsectors of political science, but also gain the necessary skills and competence that are expected of political science students.

BSP Political Science accepts applicants with at least a secondary education who have passed centralised exams in Latvian, English and mathematics. For people who completed their secondary education prior to 2008, the central examination in mathematics can be replaced with the grade that was received in mathematics (or the average grade in algebra and geometry). Criteria for people who completed their secondary education prior to 2004, people who completed their secondary education abroad, and people with special needs face the following criteria: the average grade in certain subject areas, including Latvian language and literature, English, French or German.

The full-time students take three years to complete BSP Political Science. Part-time and correspondence course studies are not offered. This duration of studies is optimal, allowing students to spend their first three semesters in taking fundamental courses related to political science. They spend the subsequent three semesters in their area of specialisation (including the practicum course). Some students take part in the Erasmus exchange programme. During the sixth semester, they earn 10 KP for writing their bachelor’s thesis.

The conclusion is that BSP Political Science corresponds to the study field Sociology, political

science and anthropology, and the courses that are offered as part of the programme ensure complete learning about all of the subsectors of political science.

[1] Ijabs. K. "Political Science in Latvia." In Latvian National Encyclopaedia (2021). See <https://enciklopedija.lv/skirklis/8486-politolo%C4%A3ija-Latvij%C4%81> (Available only in Latvian language)

[2] Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 264, "Regulations on the profession classification, professions in line with basic missions and fundamental qualification requirements," 23 May 2017. See <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291004-noteikumi-par-profesiju-klasifikatoru-profesijai-atbilstosiem-pamatuzdevumiem-un-kvalifikacijas-pamatprasibam> (Available only in Latvian language)

### **3.1.3. Economic and/ or social substantiation of the study programme, analysis of graduates' employment.**

Full-fledged political science studies in Latvia became possible only after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and that means that political science is a comparatively new area of social sciences in Latvia. At the same time, however, it is very important for full development of the country, because political science studies prepare graduates for work in the area of national governance. Latvia's National Development Plan for 2021-2027 formulates a strategic vision about the country's development and identifies the relevant goals. All of the essential goals that are found in this planning document speak to active state involvement in pursuit of goals and the facilitation of development, as well as the preparation of concrete action politics that will make it possible to achieve the stated goals.[1]

The views of students, graduates and employers are important in assessing the quality of the Political Science bachelor's degree study programme. Let us now turn to information about surveys of students, graduates and employers, identifying the importance of these surveys in ensuring the quality of the study process.

Student surveys are conducted during various periods of the study process. A separate study is conducted when students begin their studies, and then such studies are organised at the conclusion of each semester so that students can evaluate the course that they have just taken. A separate study is conducted after the first year of the studies, with students offering reciprocal links about their experience during the year. A survey at the conclusion of the study programme asks students to evaluate their overall three-year experience with the programme. Some students do not choose to go on to further studies, and they are asked to fill out a questionnaire to provide information about why that is the case. All survey results are available to the director of the study programme. Because of the limited scope of this section, the next paragraphs will focus mostly on analysing the results of the survey of graduates that was conducted in 2021. These results are surveyed in a general way, while the results of a survey of employers are reviewed on the basis of an analysis of the study field Sociology, political science and anthropology. Many employers have hired BSP Political Science graduates, as well as MSP Political Science and MSP "Diplomacy" grads, which means that the results of these surveys cannot be applied to a single study programme.

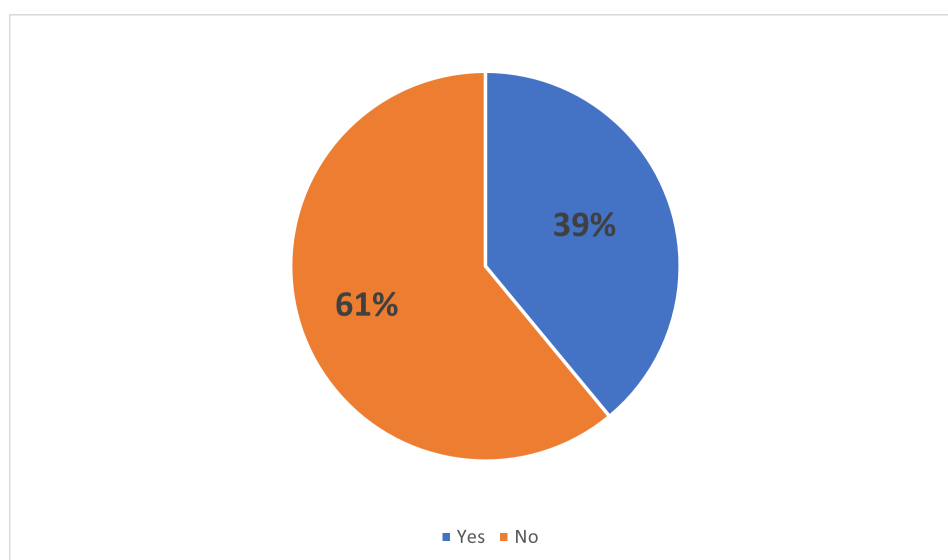
The results of student surveys during the past six years have pointed to three topics which students feel to be important. First of all, during the beginning of the reporting period, students reported that lots of instructors made incomplete use of the Moodle environment. These complications were resolved, particularly during the Covid-19 epidemic, when faculty members made much more use

of the virtual environment for studies. Students were quite critical about the offer of courses, arguing that the range should be expanded. This was taken into account, and the following new courses have been introduced: “Gender and politics,” “Local governance,” “International organisations,” “Populism and radically rightist populism in Europe,” “Social media and the digital age in the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” “Introduction to climate policy,” and “Management of international economic relations.” Third, students called for more practical knowledge in the courses. In this sense, theoretically focused study courses have been supplemented with several others that are aimed at introducing students with professionals in the sector, as well as ensuring their ability to have internships at national or local government institutions, or an academic or NGO institution. Students can also take several courses that are taught by guest instructors from the sector: “Contemporary issues in contemporary foreign policy” and “Latvia’s politics (political system).” Some students have been involved in organising the Rīga Conference, which is one of the leading discussion forums in Northern Europe about the issue of international security. In sum, the views of students about the programme are identified in various ways, and, where possible, they are taken into account with the aim of improving the study process.

A survey of graduates was conducted late in 2021 to learn their views about the study programme. 88 respondents completed the questionnaire, and 86% answered that they were satisfied with having chosen BSP Political Science for their higher education. 82% said that it helped them to gain new knowledge and skills, 60% argued that their competitiveness was higher than comparable graduates of other university programmes. 84% said that they had a good impression about the programme, 60% said that it prepared them well for the labour market, 87% said that the process facilitated the development of characteristics which served them well in the labour market, 67% believed that the education helped them to shape their career, and 65% said that they used what they learned during the programme at work. 61% of respondents have spent at least some time working in a sector that relates to the study programme (Figure 3.1.3.1).

Figure 3.1.3.1.

*Question: Have you ever had a salaried job, whether full-time or part-time for at least three months in a sector that is linked to the study programme? Please mark one answer.*

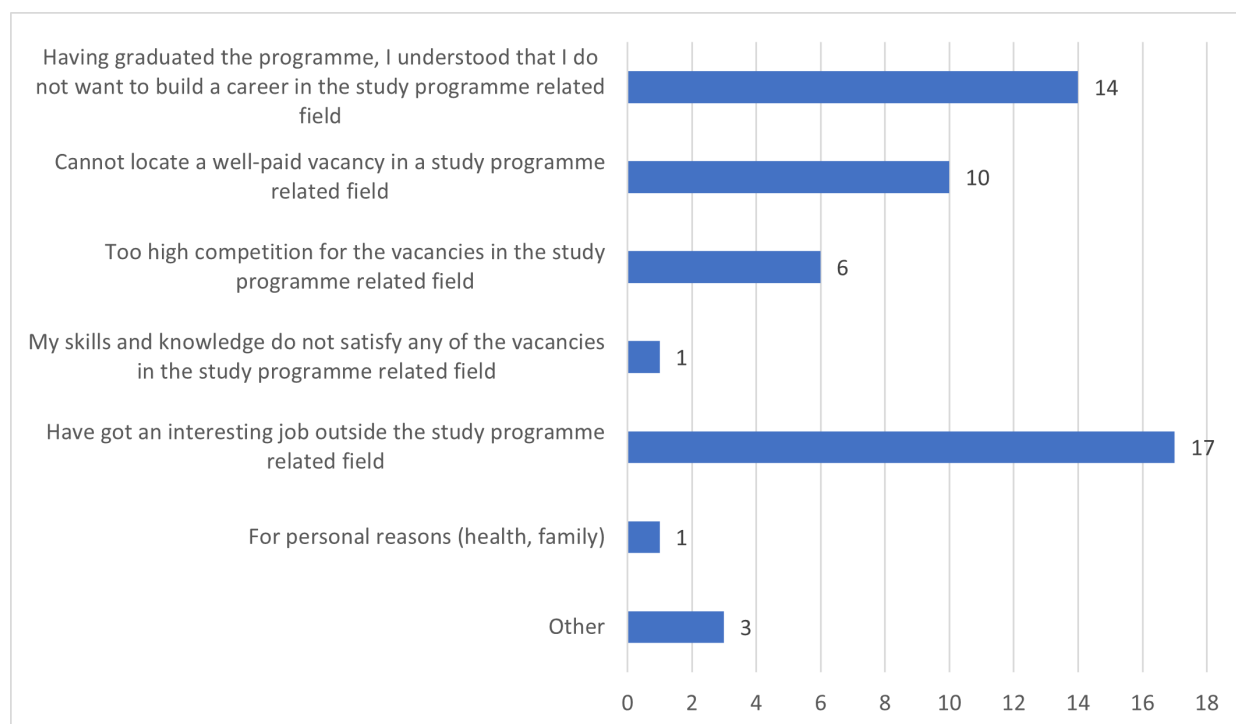


Many of those who have not worked in a sector that relates to the study programme reported that they found work in some other sector or understood after graduation that they did not want to work in the sector with respect to which they had finished their higher education. Only a few respondents said that there would be too much competition in the sectors which are linked to the programme and that that would cause problems in finding work. More detailed information about

why some respondents do not work in the sector after completing their education can be found in the graph below.

Figure 3.1.3.2.

Question: Why have you not worked at a paid job in a sector that is linked to the study programme? Please mark all applicable answers.



In general terms, it can be concluded that the economic and social justification for BSP Political Science is that the programme is necessary because the national governance system requires highly qualified employees. Many respondents do work in the sector which relates to their education. The survey of graduates also shows that they were quite satisfied with aspects of the study programme. They thought more highly of theoretical knowledge (90%) than practical skills (72)%, but the overall level of satisfaction with the studies was at a high level. It must be noted that a substantial percentage of the grads decided to continue their studies in MSP “Political science.”

[1] Latvian National Development Plan 2021-2027. Intersectoral Co-Ordination Centre (2020). See [https://www.pkc.gov.lv/sites/default/files/inline-files/NAP2027\\_\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.pkc.gov.lv/sites/default/files/inline-files/NAP2027__ENG.pdf)

### 3.1.4. Statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down into different study forms, types, and languages.

During the reporting period, BSP Political Science offered both full-time (PLK) and part-time (NLK) studies, but the programme gradually ended the NLK studies, which occurred on Saturdays. Right now only full-time studies are offered. The number of students in BSP Political Science has declined during the reporting period, but data show that after a decline in 2017 and 2018, the number of students has increased quite substantially and has had the trend of stabilisation. A positive factor



is that the state subsidises the education of the best BSP Political Science students. Sadly, the number of such slots has declined a bit during the reporting period, and that has reduced the opportunity for students to have their tuition covered by the state. It can be concluded that this is one of the main obstacles against increasing the number of students in the programme. This could improve over the next few years, because the LU SZF plans to move to new facilities in the Torņakalns neighbourhood of Riga in 2023, when the construction of the Writing Building will be completed. A more attractive study environment might attract a larger number of students who will be attracted not just by the quality of the study programme and its faculty members, but also by a more attractive environment for the process.

*Table 3.1.4.1. Full-time students in BSP Political Science – enrolled and studying students by year*

Reporting period (as of October 1)	Form and language of studies	Enrolled				Students					
		Total	Among enrolled students		Total	Year of studies			Among all students		Dropouts between August 30 of the previous year and Oct. 1
						1	2	3			
			Subsidy	Tuition fee					Subsidy	Tuition fee	
2021	PLK, Latvian	44	20	24	109	44	33	32	54	55	21
2020	PLK, Latvian	35	19	16	104	35	36	33	58	46	24
2019	PLK, Latvian	52	23	29	113	51	30	32	59	54	15
2018	PLK, Latvian	36	18	18	94	39	26	29	57	37	25
2017	PLK, Latvian	33	17	16	97	33	36	28	59	38	35
2016	PLK, Latvian	43	24	19	133	46	38	49	76	57	32
2015	PLK, Latvian	46	26	20	150	50	57	43	77	73	29

Much work has been done during the reporting period to attract young people to enrol in BSP Political Science. This has mostly involved Open Days events at LU SZF, as well as the efforts by the director of the study programme to answer questions submitted by potential students which are sent in by E-mail. The Open Days event was also organised during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, albeit virtually. This expanded opportunities for those potential students who live outside of Riga or, because of the pandemic, decided to stay home.

Thinking about the attraction of potential students, the LU bachelor's degree programme in political

science offered advantages to those students who, before finishing high school, demonstrated particular skills related to political science and the relevant knowledge. It was for this purpose that high school students were invited to attend scholarly conferences in political studies. The Faculty of Social Sciences organised a competition on scholarly research work, and the winners were the ones who were invited to do so. These students who took first place in these events won 100 additional points in the enrolment process, as well as advantages in the competition over subsidised study slots. Those in 2<sup>nd</sup> place received 75 bonus points, while those in 3<sup>rd</sup> place got 50. Over the course of time, however, it proved that this process was not effective, and so in 2021 a new format was organised – a school for young professionals that is organised in a centralised way at the LU SZF. All departments take part in the sub-programmes of this school. The Department of Political Science organises its own Young Politician School (JPS). It is a virtual process, and in the spring of 2022, a bit more than 100 upper-year high school students took part. At the conclusion, all participants took a test. The one with the best grade received a diploma, 100 additional points in the enrolment process, as well as advantages in the competition over subsidised study slots. Those in 2<sup>nd</sup> place received a diploma and 75 bonus points, while those in 3<sup>rd</sup> place got a diploma and 50 points. The commission determined the winners of the top three places by looking at the number of points from the examinations, as well as the activity which students demonstrated during the activities, plus their additional knowledge.

Table 3.1.4.2. includes information about students who have dropped out. The main reasons for this are known, because students who do so fill out a questionnaire that is attached to their application to drop out. Other discuss the reasons during consultations that occur. Some students who enrol in BSP Political Science do not really understand the direction and content of the process. They say so in the questionnaire. There are students who drop out during the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year of studies, mostly for personal reasons, including the inability to merge their studies with a full-time job. There are no precise data about how many students have jobs, but it is likely that some of them do, particularly in those cases in which they have to pay their own tuition. Others drop out because they are not satisfied with the programme and the studies. Overall indicators about satisfaction are at a high level, but a few students have rated the process poorly and said that they feel discomfort because of the workload and the requirements.

*Table 3.1.4.2. Full-time students in BSP Political Science – students earning a degree or qualifications by year*

Reporting period (as of October 1)	Form and language of studies	Earned degree or qualifications		
		Total	Among such students	
			Subsidy	Tuition
2021	PLK, Latvian	25	20	5
2020	PLK, Latvian	20	15	5

2019	PLK, Latvian	24	21	3
2018	PLK, Latvian	27	21	6
2017	PLK, Latvian	39	23	16
2016	PLK, Latvian	26	19	7
2015	PLK, Latvian	25	19	6

Students in BSP Political Science have made quite active use of offered ERASMS exchange opportunities. On average, two students do so during each academic year (Table 4). These opportunities enhance the overall attractiveness of the programme. Between the fall semester of 2015 and the spring semester of 2002, 43 students took part in the exchange programme. It must also be noted that there has been substantial incoming mobility. 450 students from abroad have attended at least one course that is part of BSP "Political science."

*Table 3.1.4.3. BSP Political Science students taking part in the ERASMUS programme, 2015-2022*

	<b>2015/ 2016</b>	<b>2016/ 2017</b>	<b>2017/ 2018</b>	<b>2018/ 2019</b>	<b>2019/ 2020</b>	<b>2020/ 2021</b>	<b>2021/ 2022</b>
<b>Austria</b>	2	2		1			
<b>Italy</b>	2	1			1		2
<b>France</b>	4	1		1	2	2	
<b>Germany</b>	4	1	1				1
<b>Greece</b>		2					
<b>Turkey</b>	3						
<b>Sweden</b>					1		
<b>Hungary</b>		2				1	2
<b>Norway</b>	1						
<b>Finland</b>	1		1				

Czech Republic							1
Switzerland			1				
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>

**3.1.5. Substantiation of the development of the joint study programme and description and evaluation of the choice of partner universities, including information on the development and implementation of the joint study programme (if applicable).**

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

**3.2.1. Analysis of the content of the study programme. Assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators with the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study courses/ modules and compliance with the needs of the relevant industry, labour market and with the trends in science on how and whether the content of the study courses/ modules is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science.**

In accordance with Article 10 of Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 240, "Regulations on the state academic education standard," the mandatory and limited elective parts of a bachelor's degree study programme must cover the basic positions, structure and methodology of the relevant sector or subsector of science (no fewer than 25 credits), the history and contemporary issues of the development of the sector or subsector (no fewer than 10 credits), and a description of the sector or subsector and a look at issues from an intersectoral perspective (no fewer than 15 credits).

30 KP in BSP Political Science are dedicated to the basic positions, principles, structure and methodology of the sector: Introduction to political science (4 cp), Introduction to public administration (4 cp), Introduction to international politics (4 cp), Introduction to political science studies (4 cp), Latvia's politics (political system) (4 cp), **Research Methods in Social Sciences** (6 cp) and Research methods in political studies (4 cp). The mandatory courses dealing with the history and issues of the sector lead to 24 KP: European Union I: Integration and Institutions (4 cp), European Union II: Policies and decision-making (4 cp), Political analysis (4 cp), Political theory (4 cp), History of political ideas (4 cp), and Local governance (2 cp). Limited electives related to the sector lead to 48 KP, while the mandatory (Section A) courses which relate to intersectoral issues lead to 12 KP: Fundamentals of economic theory (4 cp), Introduction to Latvia's legal system (4 cp), Introduction to sociology (2 cp), Civil protection (1 cp), and Environmental protection (1 cp). Limited (Section B) courses related to intersectoral issues lead to 18 credits: Civilisations in Europe (4 cp), Project administration (2 cp), Political ethics (2 cp), EU public communications: theory and practice

(4 cp), Social media and the digital era in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (2 cp), Introduction to climate policy (2 cp), and Management of international economic relations (2 cp).

There are three segments in the study programme – mandatory Section A courses (72 KP), including the bachelor's thesis (10 KP), limited Section B electives (46 KP), and free Section C electives (2 KP).

The content of study courses is regularly reviewed, and course descriptions are regularly updated. This happened in 2018 and in 2002. This happens according to need if there have been changes in the course content and learning outcomes or when a course is taken over by a different faculty member. The programme director has access to course evaluations from students at the conclusion of each semester, and that is a reciprocal link related to each course. After BSP Political Science is completed, students are asked to fill out a questionnaire which focuses on their level of satisfaction about the study programme as such. During the Covid-19 pandemic, there were several surveys to find out whether under complex circumstances, students prefer studies on site or virtually (the survey was conducted at a time when the level of sickness was quite high, but the government had not yet ordered that studies be distanced). The survey results showed that bachelor's degree students preferred studies on site, but this depended on the status of the pandemic in the country. The higher the level of sickness, the less students expressed a desire to study on site.

BSP Political Science involves courses which make an investment in achieving various learning outcomes, and that allows students to achieve results in terms of knowledge, skills and competence. Most study courses focus on specific aspects of political studies, but the courses also teach students how to use their knowledge for research and professional purposes. Students also gain substantial competence and an understanding of the professional work of political scientists and their responsibility in society. A summary of the mapping of learning outcomes can be found in Appendix 33. It shows that various types of knowledge, skills and competence are evened out during the study process.

BSP Political Science offers a wide range of courses. The content has two parts. Section A courses are taken by all students, and they are obligatory. Section B courses are limited electives, and students can choose between two areas of specialisation – “Public policy and governance” or “International politics.” This specialisation occurs during the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester of studies. The two areas of specialisation are not completely set apart. A series of Section A and Section B courses apply to both areas. Each area, however, has three unique courses. In both cases, there are courses about international politics and public governance and administration, which means that students learn about all subsectors of political science. Specialisation, in turn, means more in-depth sectoral courses. In addition to the three unique courses, specialisation is implemented through two other essential manners. The first is that students have *de facto* specialisation in terms of the topic that they choose for research work – international politics or public policy and administration. During their studies, students write two annual papers before the bachelor's thesis at the end of the process. It is also true that students specialise during the “Practicum in sectoral studies” course, which involves an internship at an organisation. Students who wish to specialise in international politics can do so at an organisation which deals with foreign policy, external security or international co-operation. Students who wish to specialise in public policy and administration can do so at organisations that are primarily focused on domestic politics and internal governance.

#### Specialisation 1: Public policy and administration

The purpose of this area of specialisation is to train educated, professionally qualified, competent and competitive experts for national governance and local government needs. They have knowledge about the structure public action policies and how they are established and

implemented. Students learn about the structure and functioning of public governance institutions, personnel, financial and project management at institutions, communications with the public and interest groups, the cycle of action policies, the management methods that are used in the public sector, and the influence of the EU on public administration (a list of courses can be found in the Study plan). Students also learn how to prepare action policy planning documents, internal normative acts related to personnel, project and finance management, prepare and lead projects, use management methods to improve the institutions operations, engage in strategic planning, and be able to represent the state’s interests when the EU is preparing action policies along with explaining the institution’s decisions to the public.

Specialisation 2: International politics

The aim of this field of studies is to train qualified experts with in-depth knowledge about international processes and Latvia’s role therein. They are equally qualified at conducting research work and taking part in political processes at the regional and global level. Knowledge gained during the studies include an understanding of the main concepts of international politics and other sectors of political science, as well as analysis of their use in political procedures in the world. Students are familiar with the most important schools of international political theory today – realism, liberalism, the English school, constructivism, the critical school, feminism, etc. They also learn about concepts such as security, foreign policy, international organisations, and manifestations of diplomacy in theory and practice (courses are listed in the Study plan). Students will be able to independently analyse international political processes, prepare and evaluate action policies, and understand factors which relate to the foreign policy of various countries.

Table 3.2.1.1.

Section B courses in both areas of specialisation

Specialisation 1: “Public policy and administration”	Specialisation 2: “International politics
<p>The structure and functioning of the public sector</p> <p>Project management</p> <p>Politics and gender</p> <p>Practicum in sectoral politics</p>	<p>The global agenda</p> <p>Management of international economic relations</p> <p>Foreign policy analysis</p> <p>Practicum in sectoral politics</p>

During the previous accreditation period, BSP Political Science offered five areas of specialisation, but as student numbers dropped, it was not possible to support more than two of them. Accordingly, the programme gradually got rid of the areas of specialisation that are European studies, European governance, and Politics and society. The current areas of specialisation correspond to the split that exists in political science between domestic politics and international politics.

**3.2.2. In the case of master’s and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation. In the case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels (if applicable).**

**3.2.3. Assessment of the study programme including the study course/ module implementation methods by indicating what the methods are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. In the case of a joint study programme, or in case the study programme is implemented in a foreign language or in the form of distance learning, describe in detail the methods used to deliver such a study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.**

BSP Political Science involves full-time studies which take three years or six semesters. The first two semesters are devoted to the fundamentals of political science, and during the next four semesters, students can deepen their knowledge about political studies. Courses are offered in succession, with students first learning about the fundamentals of political science and then strengthening and deepening their knowledge, not least in terms of writing and defending annual papers and their bachelor's theses. Specialised Section B courses help to ensure this.

Courses involve a diversity of study methods in support of the programme's goals, also ensuring that students gain the planned knowledge, skills and competences. Each course has lectures and seminars. Seminars are primarily focused on student-led discussions and are based on student-led learning processes. The role and involvement of students increases at each level of the study programme. Also of great importance is independent work which students do in preparing for seminars and writing the papers that are required in the courses. The minimum literature that is to be read is prepared for each class, including lectures. Assignments are given which allow students not to find information during lectures and seminars, but instead analyse it. Third, the theoretical approach is combined with practical applications, and that is one of the achievable learning outcomes in the programme. Representatives of the sector and of employers are brought into teach some courses or to deliver guest lectures. These can be offered to first-year students, but they are mostly focused on students in their 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year of studies, because they have already become familiar with the fundamentals of political science and the relevant terminology.

Fourth, in addition to course content, students in most courses must conduct minor individual research involving presentations, essays and lectures which allow students to choose the topics which they wish to research more thoroughly. This also encourages students to take the initiative. In most courses, students present research projects, receiving a response from faculty members and other students. The readiness to evaluate the work of others and to listen to evaluation and criticism of one's own work is one of the achievable learning outcomes in the programme.

BSP Political Science is based on a student-centred teaching approach, which includes things such as the fact that faculty members take into account and respect students and their diverse approach to the process; when possible, they teach courses in various ways; they use a diversity of pedagogical methods; they support the independence of students during the study process while also ensuring support when it is necessary; they respect their students; and they have offered opportunities and procedures whereby students can file complaints. It is essential for faculty members to be familiar with the foundations of the student-centred approach and with examination methods that may be slightly different at each institution of higher education. Faculty members also ensure that grading criteria are discussed in advance with students and are publicly available in the Moodle E-study environment. Given that the emphasis on a student-centred approach in higher education has gradually increased in Latvia since 2018, this approach would not be possible

without substantial changes to course descriptions. These have been restructured and supplemented so that they more clearly define the learning outcomes and encourage faculty members to focus on these outcomes in each course and in the programme as such. Updating of study courses also is based on principles of the student-centred approach.

All BSP Political Science courses are on the Moodle platform, with information about the course content, requirements for the final grade, the achievable learning outcomes, and their links to the planned learning outcomes of the programme. E-courses involve detailed content planning, as well as links to external resources and the literature of the course. Moodle allows faculty members to post grades together with comments, thus allowing students to track their progress during the entire process. Moodle also allows faculty members to send information to students about various issues, which means that study methodologists no longer have to be involved in communications with students. When it comes to the grading part of the Moodle platform, each grade is on a 10-point scale along with comments. If the form of an assignment permits this, the grade can be calculated with a rubric tool in accordance with the criteria for reaching each grade level. Criteria, for their part, are linked to the achievable learning outcomes of each course. In comments, faculty members explain their grade and point to the strengths and weaknesses of the assignment. In addition to these comments, students receive a description of their level in the rubric system (see thesis guidelines in Appendix 89 for a general example of grading guidelines for faculty members and students).

During the pandemic, virtual class sessions were recorded, which meant that students could access them at any time. The comparatively well-developed E-study Moodle environment quite easily and quickly made it possible to move toward distanced learning during the Covid-19 pandemic, also creating an opportunity to supplement course resources with video lectures. Consultations with students have also become easier to organise, because they, too, can be organised in a distanced way.

An internal quality assurance policy means that students are actively involved in improving the study process. The LU has procedures which allow students to submit recommendations, deal with complaints, and review student appeals. In some cases students can approach the LU Academic Ethics Commission if they believe that faculty members, students or others in the LU community have acted unethically. Improvements to the study process are partly based on the results of centralised student surveys. BSP Political Science students can contact the programme director or study methodologist if they have questions. They can also deal with problems and complications in the study process. Students are happy to make recommendations on how to improve the study programme and its process in conversations with faculty members and the programme director. Each course involves an evaluation of its content, and although it does not involve anonymity, it does serve as a good instrument for regularly improving the content of each course and revealing weaknesses therein. Information about how students rate each course in BSP Political Science is available to the programme director and is discussed with faculty members after the conclusion of each course.

**3.2.4. If the study programme envisages an internship, describe the internship opportunities offered to students, provision and work organization, including whether the higher education institution/ college helps students to find an internship place. If the study programme is implemented in a foreign language, provide information on how internship opportunities are provided in a foreign language, including for foreign students. To provide analysis and evaluation of the connection of the tasks set for students during the internship included in the study programme with the learning**



## **outcomes of the study programme (if applicable).**

BSP Political Science involves internships which involve a separate course that is part of the Section B (mandatory electives) section. Internships are advised by faculty members who teach the course “Practicum in sectoral policies,” and they oversee each student’s internship. The internship as such is managed by employees of institutions of national or local governments, capital enterprises or international or non-governmental organisations, and their job is to co-ordinate the student’s internship at the relevant institution. The course “Internship in sectoral policies” involves 160 academic hours or 4 KP. The inclusion of this course in the programme was because students want a greater integration of practical activities, knowledge and skills in the study process. Most students praise the theoretical knowledge that they gain in BSP Political science, but they also want a fundamental component of practical knowledge and skills. One way of ensuring this is to offer internship opportunities to the students. Regulations about this can be found in Appendix.

The purpose of internships is to do specific things that are in line with the goals of the practicum, doing so in an appropriate environment so as to integrate theoretical knowledge from the study process to practical work. Internship assignments include learning about the work of professionals and organisations who are involved in public administration and international processes, as well as to learn how to do specific things related to the necessary knowledge, skills and professional competence. Students can strengthen their theoretical knowledge, gain competence that is in line with the study programme, and gain practical skills that are necessary for experts in the relevant area. Students also can collect data and do research work that will be necessary for their studies or for their bachelor’s thesis.

There are several options for internships. They can occur at any national or local governance institution, capital enterprise or international or non-governmental organisation at which the internship tasks that are required by the bachelor’s degree programme in political science can be handled at a high level of quality.

Students can be involved in an internship that is based on partnership agreements which the Faculty of Social Sciences has concluded with various partner institutions. Students can also choose their own place for an internship, consulting with the relevant faculty member if necessary. Internships can also be compared if the study has a job relationship at a national or local governance institution, capital enterprise or international or non-governmental organisation at which the tasks which are national or local governance institution, capital enterprise or international or non-governmental organisation where the tasks that are required by the bachelor’s degree programme in political science can be handled at a high level of quality. The comparison of an internship requires an application from the student to compare the internship together with its report and the references from the internship leader at the relevant institution.

Upon the completion of an internship, the student submits a report, and the institution where the process took place submits a reference to the relevant faculty member. Students are required to prepare a presentation of what they did during their internship, and this is submitted to the relevant faculty members, who will grade it on a 10-point scale. The grade is based on the faculty member’s views about the report, as well as on the reference from the institution where the internship occurred.

The results of policy internship are closely related to and contribute to the learning outcomes of the bachelor study programme “Political science”. Internship offers provides students with an opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge, thus contribute in an important way to achieving

particular learning outcomes of the whole study programme, such as number 5 “prepare policy planning documents, using knowledge about goals, development plans, budgetary principles, and domestic and international context in which public administration organizations operate” and number 9 “develop suggestions on how to improve policies, facilitate democratic participation, improve the quality of legislative documents and policies at the level of municipalities and government institutions”. These (and other) aims of the bachelor study programme “Political science” are closely related to the learning outcomes of the study course “Policy internship”.

### **3.2.5. Evaluation and description of the promotion opportunities and the promotion process provided to the students of the doctoral study programme (if applicable).**

### **3.2.6. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the marks of the final theses.**

BSP Political Science students have had many different interests when it has come to bachelor's theses during the reporting period (2016-2021), though there are three central conclusions that can be made about the topics and their selection. First, most of the choices relate to one of the two areas of specialisation – “International politics” and “Public policy and administration.” Comparatively less interest has been demonstrated in topics related to the theoretical aspects of politics. Topics related to comparable politics largely relate to one or the other area of specialisation, depending on whether the focus of the thesis is on international or domestic issues.

It is also true that thesis topics have largely related to international and domestic political issues. Many have been written by the following topics, all of which have to do with domestic politics in Latvia and other countries: Elections, referendums, various action policies (energy, agriculture, sports, youth, family support, higher education, immigration, health care), reforms, governments and their stability, political culture and participation, political leadership, political communication, local governments, same-sex marriage, the power of courts, the way in which national administration institutions communicate with the public, as well as administrative and territorial reforms in Latvia. Many students have chosen to write their theses about aspects of international politics. Comparatively popular topics have included the way in which the EU takes decisions and about its overall policies, as well as the foreign policies of countries that are important to Latvia – the United States, Russia, China, Germany, France, Belarus, Lithuania and Estonia. As the security situation in Europe worsened after Russia's annexation of Crimea and the beginning of a military conflict in Eastern Ukraine, aspects of international, regional and national security came to the forefront, as did Latvia's membership in NATO and the efforts of the alliance to bolster the security of the Baltic States. Students have traditionally also been interested in mutual co-operation among the Baltic States, as well as their relationships with Nordic countries.

Third, the interests of students have largely and closely been linked to academic debates in Latvia, Europe and the world. Students have written theses about hybrid war and analysed various aspects of this phenomenon as a part of transformation of war in the present-day world. There has also been lots of interest in the appearance of populism in Latvia, Europe and the world, the social

media and the digital aspects of politics. Students have analysed the trend of decline in democracy in the world, as well as the efforts among democratic countries to stop these processes. A series of theses have focused on cyber security, and there has been a gradually increasing interest in gender aspects of politics, as well as the way in which disinformation influences politics. This indicates that during their studies, BSP Political Science students have focused on topics that are important not just in Latvia's academic environment, but also of interest to researchers elsewhere in the world.

177 bachelor's theses were defended in BSP Political Science between 2016 and 2021. A grade of 10 (outstanding) was received by 11 students, 9 (excellent) was received by 25, 8 (very good) was received by 48, 7 (good) was received by 46 students, 6 (nearly good) was received by 23, 5 (average) was received by 14 students, and 4 (nearly average) was received by 10 students. Slightly more than one-half of all grades were 8 (very good) and 7 (good), while the grades between 9 (excellent) and 6 (nearly good) represented approximately 80% of all of the grades.

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

#### **3.3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples.**

BSP Political Science is located at the LU SZF and makes use of the material and technical foundations of the faculty and the university. Material and technical aspects of the study field have been described above, and so the following paragraphs will emphasise material and technical support for BSP Political Science students. Of particular interest is the fact that students and faculty members have the literature that is necessary for studies and research. The SZF has appropriate lecture rooms and electronic resources for the study process (the Moodle environment, as well as distanced learning opportunities via the MS Teams platform).

Generally speaking, the resources of BSP Political Science are adequate and fully in line with the goals of the study programme and the quality of the study process. The LU SZF library holds a collection of literature related to the social sciences, and it is open 60 hours per week to serve the needs of students (true, with limitations during the Covid-19 pandemic). Users have free access to the collection, and the LU SZF library is in three rooms with a total of 544 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space. There are 84 workstations at the library, 18 of them with a computer. Students and faculty members have access to the following services from the SZF library:

Electronic ordering/reservation/usage deadline extension at the joint catalogue of libraries of national importance (hereafter – joint catalogue), as well as the receipt of information resources to use at the reading room of the library or at home. These services are available to registered users at the LU Library.

There is access to the delivery of information resources. Academic personnel, researchers and doctoral students can order information resources from the joint catalogue and from any library, indicating the sectoral library that would be the most convenient place to receive the reserved information resource.

Users have access to self-service scanning services.

There is access to informative literature and periodicals, desktop and laptop computers (both those of the library and those of users), as well as Internet connections, including Wi-Fi, which operates in all buildings of the LU.

The “Night Subscription” service is aimed at ensuring free access to certain information resources outside of the LU Library from the moment when it is closed until the moment when it is opened. Such resources can be reserved in advance, indicating the specific hours when the user wishes to access them.

Information resources can also be delivered during the summer. Users can receive information resources reserved in the joint catalogue once a week at their most convenient sectoral library (the one in Raiņa Boulevard, the Natural Sciences library, the House of Science library).

Users have access to informational services such as consultations, provision of reports, training and support in the field of research. These are among the fundamental duties of the LU Library.

Consultants at the library can offer bibliographic, thematic, factographic, addressal, precising and other types of information and consultations to LU students, as well as academic, scientific and general personnel. Students make more active use of such consultations when working on their independent projects, annual papers or bachelor’s thesis.

User training is organised so as to help them to develop their skills of working independently and so that they can find, assess and use all information resources and E-environment tools. The library works actively with its target audiences – students at all levels, as well as academic, scientific and general personnel. This is aimed at information skills and offering in-depth knowledge and skills when it comes to working with electronic resources. During the first semester of studies, the library organises presentations for social work programme students, as well as activities in auditoriums and computer classrooms. Students from affiliates have access to such meetings in a distanced system. The aim of the training is to ensure that users have the skill to work with the freely available collection, self-service systems and office equipment such as self-service scanners and copiers. This helps to improve individual learning competence. BSP Political Science students also have access to lectures from LU SZF library personnel about the library’s resources and how they can be used.

Table 3.3.1.1.

*Print information resources at the LU SZF library related to political science*

<b>Print information resources for BSP Political science at the LU library as of April 1, 2022</b>						
Print publications (number, copies)			By language (number, copies)			
Books	Periodical	Other	Latvian	English	Russian	Other
12,617/25,191	666/7,516	416/779	2,402/12,573	7,747/14,795	1,699/2,863	1,851/3,255
Total at LU Library: <b>13,699</b> titles, <b>33,486</b> copies, among them:						
The library of the Faculty of Social Sciences: <b>3,992</b> titles = <b>6,032</b> copies						
3,827/5,678	121/277	44/77	654/1,399	3,081/4,341	198/229	59/63

Table 3.3.1.2.

*Print information resources at the library of the LU SZF about political science that have been published during the past five years*

<b>Print information resources for BSP Political science at the LU library, as published during the past five years (01.01.2017.-01.04.2022.)</b>						
Print publications (number, copies)			By language (number, copies)			
Books	Periodicals	Other	Latvian	English	Russian	Other
440/685	29/173	25/43	190/390	271/459	16/23	17/29
Total at LU library: <b>494</b> titles = <b>901</b> copies, among them:						
The library of the Faculty of Social Sciences: <b>253</b> titles = <b>366</b> copies						
231/296	15/58	7/12	67/99	182/263	2/2	2/2

Faculty members have the Moodle E-environment in the study process. It is used to disseminate study materials and to submit, test and analyse assignments. Moodle is an E-environment tool that supplements the environment of the LU Information System (LUIS) into which grades are posted. Students use the LUIS to register for courses electronically. They have support from a methodologist if they have questions or need help with the LUIS and its processes. Methodologists are also ready to provide support when it comes to how the study process is organised. They offer consultations to students about various aspects of the process.

The LU SZF has appropriate venues for the study process. Most BSP Political Science faculty members hold elected positions at the LU SZF, and they have high-quality rooms and adequate support. Some faculty members work for the Faculty of Humanities (HZF). Guest instructors have access to workspaces at the LU SZF where they can prepare for their classes and offer individual consultations to students.

The LU is currently involved in extensive infrastructural development projects. The plan is to complete work on the building of the Writing Building in 2024, and that is where BSP Political Science will be organised in future. The new building will put the humanities and the social sciences under one roof, which hopefully will make it easier to collaborate with others.

### **3.3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific base support, including the resources provided within the framework of cooperation with other science institutes and higher education institutions (applicable to doctoral study programmes) (if applicable).**

### **3.3.3. Indicate data on the available funding for the corresponding study programme, its funding sources and their use for the development of the study programme. Provide information on the costs per one student within this study programme, indicating the items included in the cost calculation and the percentage distribution of funding between the specified items. The minimum number of students in the study programme in order to ensure the profitability of the study programme (indicating separately the information on**

**each language, type and form of the study programme implementation).**

The resources of the bachelor's study programme Political Science relate to all that is stated above about the informative, material and technical support of the study field (see 2.3.1.).

**Programme revenues**

BSP Political Science receives the following resources:

- 1) A national subsidy from the Ministry of Education and Science, which in 2021/2022 was EUR 1,630 for full-time studies;
- 2) Tuition fees taking into account all of the factors stated above, which in 2021/2022 has been EUR 2,300 for full-time studies per year.

Given this, the total study programme budget is expected to be EUR 221,000, as decoded in table below:

*Table 3.3.3.1.*

*Forecast programme revenues per year, EUR*

Type of studies	Number of students	Tuition/subsidy	Total
Full-time (budget-financed)	58	1,630	94,546
Full-time (tuition)	55	2,300	126,500
Total	113		221,046

**Programme costs**

The LU has a methodology to calculate the basic cost of LU study programmes so as to evaluate the financing that is needed. This takes into account the costs that are needed to ensure the study process, as described in Section 2.3.1., and that applies to the study plan, faculty members, the planned number of students, etc. This ensures the believability of the forecasts.

**Programme costs for full-time studies**

BSP Political Science uses data about students during the 2020/2021 academic year for these calculations. There were 113 full-time students, with the planned study programme plan and

structure of involved academic personnel after accreditation. Based on this data, the total annual costs of the program are 194'951 EUR and their structure (percentage distribution) is shown in Table 3.3.3.2.

Table 3.3.3.2. Distribution of costs in the study programme

Line item	%
Faculty members	46%
General personnel	10%
Other costs	1%
Infrastructure	12%
Property and services	2%
Indirect costs	29%
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 3.3.3.1. the cost of the study program (vertical axis) depending on the number of students (horizontal axis), the tuition fee (green line) and the state budget subsidy (blue line) are visually represented with a red line.

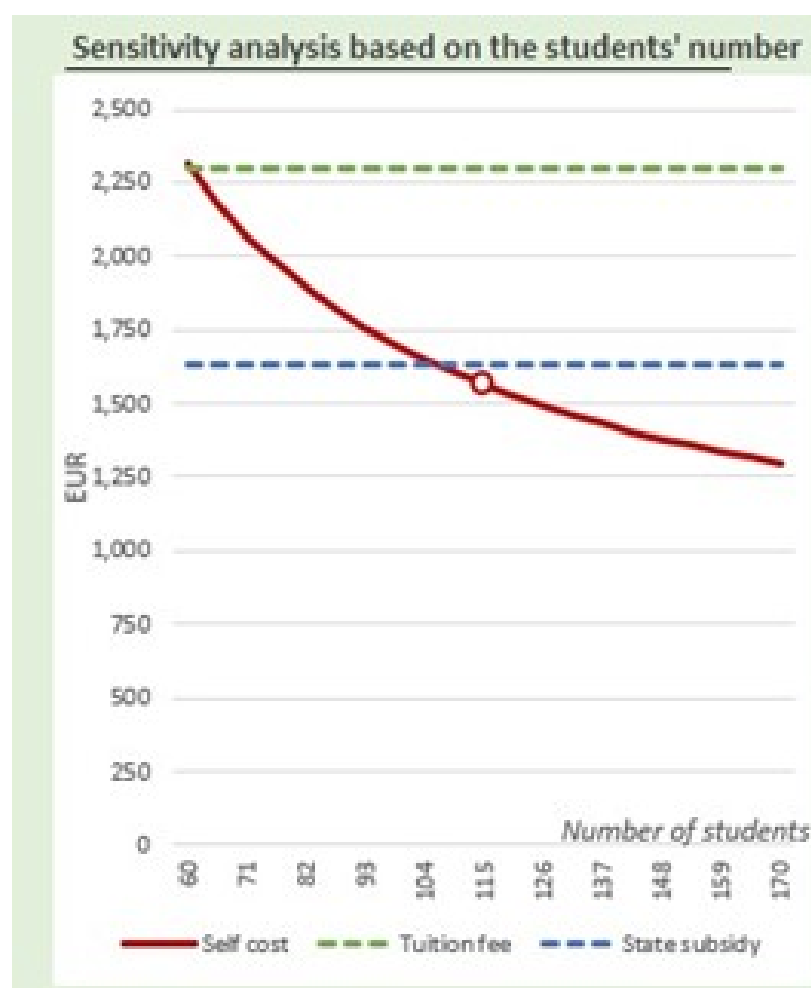


Figure 3.3.3.1. shows the cost of the study programme on the basis of the number of students, comparing it to the proposed tuition fee and national budget subsidy.

Based on the cost structure and the total number of students 113, the cost of the program per student (base cost) is 1577 EUR per year.

This calculation shows that if the programme is to be profitable and the study process is at a high level of quality for students, the number of tuition-paying students in the programme (all courses) should be at least 60 (the crossing of the red (base cost) and green (tuition fee) lines on Axis X). If all of the students in the programme had state subsidies, then there would have to be 104 of them.

### Summary of programme revenues and costs

Table 3.3.3.3. calculated programme revenues on the basis of the type of studies, the national subsidy and tuition fees, as well as programme costs given this number of students.

Table 3.3.3.3. A summary of the costs of BSP Political Science

Type of studies	Number of students	Tuition/subsidy	Total revenues	Total costs
PLK (subsidy)	58	1,630	94,546	100,063
PLK (tuition)	55	2,300	126,500	94,888
<b>Total</b>	<b>113</b>		<b>221,046</b>	<b>194,951</b>

The data in the table make it clear that the LU has sufficient resources for the study programme and its ongoing development. Additional development can be financed with revenues from partnership projects, as well as the saved financial resources of the department. Financial support for programme development is also received by faculties from the LU Study Quality Improvement Fund.

## 3.4. Teaching Staff

**3.4.1. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members (academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.**

The qualifications of faculty members in BSP Political Science are completely in line with the ability to achieve the programme's goals and missions. Most courses are taught by elected LU SZF faculty members and doctoral students from the Department of Political Science who thus can strengthen their pedagogical skills. Among the total number of instructors in the programme, six are doctoral students at the Department of Political Science who are at various stages in terms of writing their



dissertation. There is also one doctoral student from the University of Tartu. The selection of faculty members is based on their academic experience, qualifications and scholarly research work. These qualifications fully confirm to the requirements of the bachelor's degree study programme and also ensure the necessary level of quality in the programme.

The composition of BSP Political Science faculty members satisfies the requirements of Article 55.1.3 of the law on universities. The programme has seven professors and associate professors (the minimum is five of them). The study programme also has academic personnel from the SZF and other faculties – 4 professors, 3 associate professors, one docent, two lectors and 14 hourly lecturers who are doctoral students and experts from government institutions.

*Table 3.4.1.1.*

*Faculty members in BSP Political Science*

<b>Degree, job</b>	<b>With Ph.D.</b>	<b>With MA</b>	<b>Total</b>
Professors	4		4
Associate prof.	3		3
Docents	1		1
Lectors	1	1	2
Hourly lecturers	1	13	14
Total	10	14	24

This makes it clear that the composition of faculty members in the programme makes it fully possible to achieve the programme's goal and planned learning outcomes, ensuring quality in the learning of theoretical knowledge and research skills in the field of political science, thus allowing graduates to successfully find jobs in the labour market so that they can help to resolve problems in the relevant sector.

### **3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.**

There have been fundamental changes in the composition of faculty members during the reporting period. Two professors have retired. Two new professors have been promoted to replace them. They were previously elected associate professors. One docent became an associate professor during the reporting period. Several young instructors, most of them doctoral students from the Department of Political Science, have become involved in the programme. This speaks to a balanced, successful and gradual replacement of generations, thus allowing the programme to

ensure a high level of quality and programme sustainability. Overall, the number of professors and associate professors (4 professors in 2012 and 2022; 3 associate professors in 2012 and 2022) has not changed, but the number of dots has decreased (7 dots in 2012 and 1 in 2022). The overall number of lecturers in the political science programme has increased, with 17 lecturers in 2012 and 24 in 2022. The following paragraphs give a more detailed description of the changes that occurred during the reporting period.

The replacement of generations has also adjusted the content of studies. During the next accreditation period, there will no longer be the course "Public appearances," which was taught by a professor who has now retired. Other courses that she used to teach have been successfully taken over by others. One young lecturer now teaches the courses "Regional security policy," "Contemporary and timely foreign policy problems," and "Introduction to international politics."

Of special note is the involvement of doctoral students from the LU SZF Department of Political Science in the teaching of classes. One PhD student teaches the course "Research methods in political studies," another teaches the new course "Local governance," two co-teach a course on "Contemporary issues in foreign policy" another teaches a course on international organisations, and yet another has prepared a new study course, "Gender and politics."

One graduate of the master's degree programme in Political science has joined the PhD programme and will teach study course "Introduction to climate policy." Apart from that she has been a director of the Department of Climate Change and Adaptation Policies at the Ministry for Environmental Protection and Regional Development. Other young faculty members who have received their education abroad have also joined the staff at BSP Political Science. A doctoral student at the University of Tartu teaches the courses "Populism and radically rightist populism in Europe," as well as the interdisciplinary course "The social media and the digital era of the 21<sup>st</sup> century." Another course is taught by a master's degree graduate from the University of Aalborg - he teaches the course "Management of international economic relations." The experience of these young people in terms of studying abroad helps to internationalise the study process in that courses will in future be taught both in Latvian and in English. This will also bring experience from foreign universities in terms of teaching courses and organising the study process at the LU SZF.

**3.4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members, involved in the implementation of doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals or peer-reviewed monographs may be additionally specified. Information on the teaching staff included in the database of experts of the Latvian Council of Science in the relevant field of science (total number, name of the lecturer, field of science in which the teaching staff has the status of an expert and expiration date of the Latvian Council of Science expert) (if applicable).**

**3.4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying**

**the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).**

**3.4.5. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study programme and study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).**

Faculty members work closely together, and that is an absolute prerequisite for achieving the learning outcomes of BSP Political Science. Most of the courses are taught by faculty members and doctoral students from the Department of Political Science at the LU SZF, and so the partnership is basically ensured by department meetings where there are regular discussions about aspects of the study programme, the inclusion of new courses into the curriculum, learning achievements and problems, affirmation of the academic career, affirmation of topics for annual papers and bachelor's theses, analysing the study process and its learning outcomes, as well as discussing regeneration of academic personnel. Links among study courses are also discussed at department meetings so as to avoid any duplication of content. In preparing for the accreditation of the field of study, the Department of Political Science has discussed the exclusion of some courses from the study programme so as to include new ones therein. As a result of these discussions, the study programme has been updated with the following study courses: Research Methods in the Social Sciences; Local Governance; International Organisations, Politics and Gender, Introduction to Climate Policy, Governance of International Economic Relations.

Partnerships between faculty members and students occur at various levels and with various formats. LU SZF students are involved in the work of the faculty's council, and some are involved in the management of the study field Sociology, political science and anthropology. During the Covid-19 pandemic, several surveys were conducted among students to learn their views about the desirable form of instruction in terms of classes on site or virtually. The views of students are usually taken into account.

Most courses at BSP Political Science have quite a few students, so it is problematic to organise work in small groups or with an individualised approach. Still, students can seek individual consultations from faculty members during specified office hours. Larger opportunities for an individualised approach relate to those courses in which there are seminars with students divided up into groups of 15 to 20 people. In such cases, too, it is hard to ensure that every student will have an opportunity to speak up during one of the sessions. The most important forms of partnership between students and faculty members are lectures, seminars, individual consultations, individual or group assignments, and serving as faculty advisers for annual papers and bachelor's theses. In this latter case, the job of advising the authors is divided up as evenly as possible among faculty members at the Department of Political Science so that all of them can gain the relevant experience.

At the writing of this report, the proportion between students and faculty members at BSP Political Science (as of October 2021) was 4.74 students per faculty member (109 students and 23 faculty members). This is comparable to the situation that existed during the previous accreditation. The

workload of faculty members in the programme varies, and several courses are offered as part of several different study programmes.

# Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	Diploma POL BSP.pdf	POL BSP diploma paraugs.pdf
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	Statistics POL BSP.pdf	Statistikas dati POL BSP.pdf
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard	Education standard POL BSP.pdf	POL BSP izglitības standarts.pdf
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	Mapping of the study courses POL BSP.xlsx	Kursu_kartejums-Politikas-zinatne-11-2022.xlsx
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	Plan of the bachelor study programme Political science.pdf	POL BSP plāns.pdf
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	Study courses POL BSP.pdf	Kursu apraksti POL BSP.pdf
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)	PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT POL BSP.pdf	POL BSP prakses nolikums.pdf
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
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 (if applicable)	Study field declaration POI BSP.pdf	POL BSP apliecinājums 55. pants.edoc

# Political Science (45312)

Study field	<i>Sociology, Political Science, and Anthropology</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Political Science</i>
Education classification code	<i>45312</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>Academic master study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Jānis</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Ikstens</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>janis.ikstens@lu.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Profesors</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>27331144</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>BSP Political Science prepares professionals with an in-depth knowledge of political science and its sub-disciplines. It gives the necessary skills and competences to apply this knowledge to their professional activities in the national, municipal, non-governmental and private sectors.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<i>1. To promote in-depth acquisition of modern theories and methodologies of political science.</i> <i>2. To promote the acquisition of specialized in-depth knowledge in the chosen subfield of political science, the cultivation of analytical and research skills therein.</i> <i>3. To improve the skills of scientific research and analytical work.</i> <i>4. To promote the application of acquired knowledge and skills in solving practical problems.</i> <i>5. To cultivate creative and critical thinking, analysis, argumentation and public speaking skills.</i>

Results of the study programme	<p><i>Knowledge:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of the major theoretical sources and recent academic trends in one or more subfields of political science;</li> <li>2. Demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of qualitative and quantitative research methods and the advantages and disadvantages of their application in research in political science;</li> <li>3. Thoroughly understand key issues in Latvia's multi-level political process.</li> </ol> <p><i>Skills:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Can analyse academic texts in political science and critically evaluate them, identifying their strengths and weaknesses;</li> <li>5. Conduct evidence-based empirical political analysis in broader social, political and institutional contexts according to their specialisation;</li> <li>6. Can develop an appropriate research design and use appropriate research methods to address different political science issues;</li> <li>7. Demonstrate excellent written and oral communication skills in Latvian and English in order to confidently communicate the results of their research, with optimum use of ICT.</li> </ol> <p><i>Competence:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Can provide a professional and competent appraisal of the work done by others, as well as respond effectively to criticism of own performance;</li> <li>9. Can cooperate with others in solving professional tasks;</li> <li>10. Can engage in practical problem-solving and political decision-making.</li> </ol>
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	<i>Master's Thesis</i>

## Study programme forms

### Full time studies - 2 years - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	<i>2</i>
Duration in month	<i>0</i>
Language	<i>latvian</i>
Amount (CP)	<i>80</i>
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>A bachelor's degree or a second-level vocational higher education (or equivalent) in political science A bachelor's or master's degree or a second-level vocational higher education (or equivalent) to higher education in the social sciences or humanities, and an entrance examination. A bachelor's or master's degree or a second-level vocational higher education, or equivalent to higher education in other academic fields, relevant work experience in the public sector and an entrance examination.</i>

Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Master's degree of Social Sciences in Political Science</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	-

#### **Places of implementation**

<b>Place name</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Address</b>
University of Latvia	RĪGA	RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050



### 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

**3.1.1. Description and analysis of changes in the parameters of the study programme made since the issuance of the previous accreditation form of the study field or issuance of the study programme license, if the study programme is not included on the accreditation form of the study field, including changes planned within the evaluation procedure of the study field evaluation procedure.**

Most of the parameters of the master's study programme (MSP) Political Science have remained unchanged. However, the programme code has been adjusted. In accordance with the changes in the Latvian education classification pursuant to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 322 of 13.06.2017 "Regulations on the Classification of Latvian Education", the code of this programme hereinafter is 45312. The admission requirements have also been specified.

*Table 3.1.1.1.*

*Changes in the study programme's parameters*

<b>Programme parameters</b>	<b>MSP Political Science accredited in 2013</b>	<b>MSP Political Science proposed for accreditation"</b>	<b>Validation</b>
Study programme code according to classification of Latvian education	45310	45312	With changes

Admission requirements	<p>Previous education: bachelor's degree or second-level professional higher education, or equivalent higher education.</p> <p>1) Entrance examination – interview of applicants</p> <p>2) Additional condition: Curriculum vitae (CV)</p>	<p>Previous education: bachelor's degree or second-level professional higher education in social sciences and humanities with a right to study for master's degree.</p> <p>Admission requirements:</p> <p>1) Entrance examination – interview of applicants</p> <p>2) Additional condition: Curriculum vitae (CV)</p>	<p>The changes were introduced in order to homogenize the professional competence of the students.</p>
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Minor editorial changes have taken place in the description of goal, tasks and learning outcomes of MSP Political Science.

Table 3.1.1.2.

*Changes in programme goal and tasks*

<b>Goal of MSP Political Science accredited in 2013</b>	<b>Goal of MSP Political Science proposed for accreditation</b>	<b>Validation</b>
<p>The goal of the master's study programme Political Science is to prepare academically educated and professionally qualified political scientists for the needs of Latvian society, state and local governments, who would be able to realize their professional potential and be competitive in the labour market, as well as to affirm the UL Department of Political Science as the leading institution in the preparation of political science masters in Latvia.</p>	<p>The goal of the master's study programme Political Science is to prepare academically educated and professionally qualified political scientists for the needs of Latvian society, state and local governments, who would be able to realize their professional and human potential and be competitive in the labour market.</p>	<p>The goal of the programme has been adjusted to changes in the academic environment. This development has not significantly altered the goal of the programme.</p>
<b>Tasks of the accredited MSP Political Science</b>	<b>Tasks of the revised MSP Political Science</b>	<b>Validation</b>

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To ensure the introduction of the most significant achievements of political science in the study process.</li> <li>2. To provide opportunities for cultivating the students' ability to apply the knowledge acquired during the study process in identifying, analysing and solving practical political problems.</li> <li>3. To develop in students the skills of scientific research and analytical work, to prepare them for independent scientific and research work in political science, to integrate studies with research, involving students in research projects of the department.</li> <li>4. To create a scientific and humane understanding of society in students.</li> <li>5. To develop students' skills in the use of modern information technologies.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To promote in-depth acquisition of modern theories and methodologies of political science.</li> <li>2. To promote the acquisition of specialized in-depth knowledge in the chosen subfield of political science, the cultivation of analytical and research skills therein.</li> <li>3. To improve the skills of scientific research and analytical work.</li> <li>4. To promote the application of acquired knowledge and skills in solving practical problems.</li> <li>5. To cultivate creative and critical thinking, analysis, argumentation and public speaking skills.</li> </ol>	<p>The tasks emphasize the communication of research results, as well as the application of knowledge and skills in solving practical problems.</p>
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**3.1.2. Analysis and assessment of the study programme compliance with the study field. Analysis of the interrelation between the code of the study programme, the degree, professional qualification/professional qualification requirements or the degree and professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements. Description of the duration and scope of the implementation of the study programme (including different options of the study programme implementation) and evaluation of its usefulness.**

The affiliation of MSP Political Science to the Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology study field is validated by several contentions. First of all, the name of the programme includes political science. Secondly, the goal, tasks and learning outcomes of the programme are clearly focused on the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competence specific to political science studies. Thirdly, the basis of the programme is made up of many study courses that relate to at least one of the subfields of political science – political theory, comparative politics, international politics and public administration. For example, courses such as USA and Europe: Comparative Politics, Institutions and Society, Parliamentarism, Presidentialism and the Challenges of Modern Democracy, Political Process in Latvia, etc. relate to comparative politics. Courses such as Theories of International Politics, Current Issues of International Relations, Latvia in Politics of the World, etc. Relate to international politics. On the other hand, public administration is represented by such courses as Current Problems of Public Administration, Development Planning, Project Management in Politics, etc. The courses Political Philosophy, Contemporary Social Theories and others pertain to political theory. Fourthly, these courses are taught by teaching staff whose scientific activity is closely

related to the issues discussed in the courses. The admission rules have also been specified, limiting the admission to those who have enjoyed 2<sup>nd</sup> level higher education, and done so in social sciences and humanities. In order to confirm the suitability of applicants for studies at the MSP Political Science, an entrance examination is held, whereby the members of the commission evaluate the knowledge of the applicants in political science.

The duration of the MSP Political Science is 2 years of full-time studies. This duration of studies is optimal, corresponds to the laws and regulations in force in Latvia and enables the students during their studies to consider various theoretical and empirical aspects of political science. Therefore, it can be concluded that MSP Political Science corresponds to the study field "Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology".

The title of the master's degree programme "Political Science" confirms to the programme's content and its leading parameters – the code, the degree that is to be obtained, the goals and the missions, the learning outcomes and the enrolment requirements, all of which are organically linked and mutually integrated. The code of the study programme is based on Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 322, "Regulations on Latvia's education classification," as adopted in Rīga on 13 June 2017 (Protocol No 3 18. §). In accordance with the regulation, the first digits of the code, 45, refer to the academic level of the master's degree, which is to be pursued upon the completion of a bachelor's or professional bachelor's degree programme. The duration of full-time studies is two years, which means that the total duration of the study process is at least five years (provided that it takes three years to earn a bachelor's degree in political science). The last three digits of the code, 314, refer to the thematic group "Social sciences, commercial sciences and the law," the education thematic sector "Social and human behaviour sciences," and the education programme group "Political science." In accordance with all of this, the degree that is to be earned is a master's degree in political science. This level of the education programme is in line with EKI level 7 and LKI level 7, in accordance with the descriptors of this level of qualification and with political science being a specific area of science in which there are formulated programme goals, missions, learning outcomes and study content.

### **3.1.3. Economic and/ or social substantiation of the study programme, analysis of graduates' employment.**

The demand for employees by the state and local government institutions has increased. Between 2010 and 2019, the number of employees in the general government sector in Latvia has increased by approximately 3 percent: from 220 803 employees in 2010 to 227 624 employees in 2019. Considering this trend, the learning outcomes of MSP Political Science are primarily adapted to the needs of administrative institutions in order to prepare academically educated and professionally qualified political scientists for the needs of Latvian society, the state and local governments, in accordance with the goal of MSP.

Data from the graduate register show that there is a high demand for MSP Political Science graduates in the labor market. This is facilitated by their understanding of the functioning of the administrative system in a democratic regime, their ability to perform analytical work and convincingly communicate its results in different languages. Graduates of the program work both in the public sector, as well as in the private and the non-governmental sector. They operate both in national-level institutions (ministries, agencies, media, non-governmental organizations), and in regional and local institutions (municipalities, their structural units and organizations). Graduates of

the program often sign employment contracts with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, as well as with the State Chancellery and Riga City Council structures. A number of graduates also work in the media - Latvijas Radio, TVNET group, etc. In addition, several graduates of the program have been elected as members of municipal councils.

At the end of 2021, a survey of MSP Political Science graduates was conducted, involving 40 respondents who had graduated from the programme since 2016.

The overall satisfaction with this programme is very high – 50% rather agreed, and 45% fully agreed with the statement that they were satisfied with the fact that they chose to acquire MSP Political Science. The general impression of the programme is also good – 47.5% of the respondents fully agreed with this statement, while another 45% rather agreed.

The impact of the programme on the professional and personal growth of graduates is also noticeable. More than 57% of respondents indicated that the study process had a significant impact on their personality (sense of responsibility, time management, beliefs), promoting the development of those qualities that were later useful when entering the labour market. Almost half (47.5%) of the respondents fully agreed with the statement that the acquired education contributed to their employment. In addition, 85% of the respondents fully or rather agreed with the statement that they used the knowledge and skills they had acquired in their studies in their work.

The respondents characterized the theoretical knowledge acquired within the programme with an average rating of 4.35 out of 5, using a scale from 1 “very poor” to 5 “very good”. The role of the programme in the ability to acquire new knowledge and skills received just as high assessment (average of 4.38), as well as in the ability to identify and solve problems (4.33), whereas the programme's contribution to the ability to find and process information was rated higher (4.65). Other gains in the study process were rated slightly lower: practical skills were rated with an average grade of 3.55 using the same scale, while the ability to work with numbers and mathematical operations received an average rating of 3.18, which is the lowest among all evaluated aspects. The programme has made a significant contribution to the advancement of Latvian language skills (4.80), as well as those of foreign languages (4.43), and the development of communication skills (4.40). The programme received high assessment for developing the ability to work independently, determining work methods and execution time (4.55).

In their recommendations for the improvement of MSP Political Science, the respondents suggest such measures as expanding the range of elective courses, even wider use of guest lectures, and discussing European Union development issues more extensively.

#### **3.1.4. Statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down into different study forms, types, and languages.**

The number of students in the programme has been quite constant in the last five years, fluctuating slightly above 40 students. However, it should be noted that this is a decrease compared to 2015–2016, when the number of students was around 50. The decrease is apparently explained by the fall in the number of study places financed from the state budget. At the same time, it should be taken into account that the number of students has not dropped during the Covid-19 pandemic. The attraction of students to the MSP Political Science could improve in the next few years, after UL

FSS relocates to new premises in Torņakalna in 2023, when the construction of the House of Letters will be completed. A more attractive study environment could attract a larger number of students, who, in addition to the quality of the study programme and lecturers, also attach importance to a more attractive study environment.

UL FSS invests great efforts in attracting students to the study programmes implemented within the faculty, and MSP Political Science also benefits from these measures. In the past, these efforts were mostly focused on the organization of the Open Days of UL FSS, and the efforts of the study programme director to promptly provide answers to interested parties' questions about the programme, which are sent via e-mail. The Open Door Day of UL FSS has also been organized, even during the Covid-19 pandemic, when in 2020 and 2021 it was organized remotely, thus providing greater participation opportunities for those interested who live outside Riga or chose to remain at home due to the pandemic. In recent years, publicity measures in social networks and in the urban environment have been intensified.

The data provide information about student dropouts during studies (see Appendix Statistics POL MSP). The main reasons for dropping out are known and they are ascertained when students complete a special form intended for this purpose, which is attached to the application for exmatriculation, or by discussing the reasons for exmatriculation in person as part of a counselling. In the autumn semester, those who have been exmatriculated have frequently indicated that, upon entering MSP Political Science, they had an incomplete idea of the programme content, the organization of the study process, and the requirements. Another important reason for exmatriculation is personal considerations or the inability to combine studies with paid work. According to the observations of the programme director, most students work, hence, combining studies with work is a great challenge. Although graduate surveys indicate that satisfaction with the quality of the study programme is high, the elevated standards and heavy study load may prove to be an insurmountable obstacle for some students.

Within the reporting period, the students of MSP Political Science have used the offered Erasmus exchange opportunities, with an average of 2-3 students going on exchange every academic year. Exchange study opportunities are one of the factors that increase the attractiveness of this MSP in the eyes of prospective students. In total, 22 students have used Erasmus exchange opportunities in the period from the autumn semester of 2013 to the spring semester of 2022. The seemingly modest result is largely influenced by the fact that a large number of students work and are reluctant to leave their jobs to go on exchange for one semester.

### **3.1.5. Substantiation of the development of the joint study programme and description and evaluation of the choice of partner universities, including information on the development and implementation of the joint study programme (if applicable).**

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

### **3.2.1. Analysis of the content of the study programme. Assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning**

**outcomes, the set aims and other indicators with the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study courses/ modules and compliance with the needs of the relevant industry, labour market and with the trends in science on how and whether the content of the study courses/ modules is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science.**

Pursuant to Art. 20 of CM Regulation No. 240 of 13.05.2014 Regulations on the state standard of the academic education, the mandatory part of the master's study programme, except for the development of the master's thesis, includes the study of the theoretical knowledge in the selected sphere of the field of science or its subfield, and the approbation of theoretical knowledge in the aspect of the current problems of the chosen field of science or its subfield in the amount of no less than 12 CP, if the volume of the master's study programme is 40 CP, and no less than 24 CP, if the volume of the master's study programme is 80 CP.

For the guidelines, principles, structure and methodology of the field of MSP Political Science, the mandatory part of the programme provides for 36 credit points, within which the following courses are taught: Structure and Conducting of Research, Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods; Theories of International Politics; Actual Topics in EU Politics; USA and Europe: Comparative Politics, Institutions and Society; Latvia in International Politics; Political Philosophy; Political Process in Latvia; Current Problems of Public Administration.

For courses in the restricted elective part of the programme, students must earn 22 CP. The courses of this part are designed to create an opportunity for students to choose a specialization in one of three directions: Comparative Politics and Political Theory; Public Administration; International Politics. The choice must be made from the following offer in the amount of 58 CP: Current Issues of International Relations; Anti-Corruption Policy and Ethics in the Public Sector; Parliamentarism, Presidentialism and the Challenges of Modern Democracy; Contemporary Social Theories; Policy of Russia in the CIS and Baltic States; Decision-Making in Foreign Policy; Municipal Governments in Latvia and Europe; Crises and Their Management in International Politics; Basic Questions of Political Theory; Project Management in Politics; Strategy and Tactics of Political Negotiations; Digital Political Communication; Quality Management Systems; Political Risk Management; Team Building and Development; Personnel Management; Lobbying Practices and Regulation in Europe and North America; Global Justice; Development Planning; Data Society Management.

In terms of structure, the study program consists of three parts: mandatory part A in the amount of 56 CP, including the master's thesis in the amount of 20 credit points, restricted elective part B courses in the amount of 22 CP and free elective part C courses in the amount of 2 CP.

The programme director has access to the evaluations of the study courses provided by the students at the end of each semester, thus obtaining the feedback from the students about each study course. After graduating from MSP Political Science, students fill out a questionnaire with questions about satisfaction with the study programme as a whole. This information helps to regularly update the content of study courses and revise course descriptions, taking into account the learning outcomes to be achieved.

Each study course included in the programme contributes to the achievement of several learning outcomes. For example, the courses of the mandatory part make a significant contribution to deepening the understanding of theoretical knowledge and methodological issues. Writing and

presenting papers in various courses improves analysis and communication skills. Practical assignments and final examinations in individual courses increase competence in solving practical problems. This in greater detail and particulars is reflected in the summary of mapping study results (see Appendix Mapping of the study courses).

It is important to note that the content of MSP Political Science has undergone changes that reflect the requirements of the labour market. In response to employers' comments, the aspect of solving practical problems has been enhanced, including introduction of the courses Development Planning and Political Risk Management. Taking into account the rapid digitization of various areas of life, an offer has been created for the analysis of the impact of information and communication technologies on politics, providing the courses Data Society Management and Digital Political Communication.

Taking into account these facts, it can be concluded that the content of MSP Political Science complies with the laws and regulations in force in Latvia, and, furthermore, is updated according to the requirements of the labour market.

**3.2.2. In the case of master's and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation. In the case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels (if applicable).**

In accordance with Art. 20 of CM Regulation No. 240 of 13.05.2014 Regulations on the state standard of the academic education, the mandatory part of the master's study programme, except for the elaboration of the master's thesis, includes the research of theoretical knowledge of the selected sphere of the respective field of science or its subfield, and approbation of this theoretical knowledge in the aspect of the current problems of the selected field of science or its subfield in the amount no less than 12 credit points, if the volume of the master's study programme is 40 credit points, and in amount no less than 24 credit points, if the volume of the master's study programme is 80 credit points.

For the guidelines, principles, structure and methodology of the field represented by MSP Political Science, the mandatory part A of the programme is assigned 36 CP, which consist of the following courses: Structure and Conducting of Research; Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods; Theories of International Politics; USA and Europe: Comparative Politics, Institutions and Society; Current Topics in EU Politics; Latvia in Politics of the World; Political Philosophy; Political Process in Latvia; Current Problems of Public Administration.

Regarding the courses specific to the field, in the restricted elective part B of the programme the students must obtain 22 CP. The courses of this part are designed to create an opportunity for students to choose a specialization in one of three directions: Comparative Politics and Political Theory; Public Administration; International Politics. The choice must be made from the following offer in the amount of 54 CP: Current Issues of International Relations; Anti-Corruption Policy and Ethics in the Public Sector; Parliamentarism, Presidentialism and the Challenges of Modern Democracy; Contemporary Social Theories; Policy of Russia in the CIS and Baltic States; Decision-Making in Foreign Policy; Municipal Governments in Latvia and Europe; Crises and Their Management in International Politics; Basic Questions of Political Theory; Project Management in Politics; Strategy and Tactics of Political Negotiations; Digital Political Communication; Quality



Management Systems; Political Risk Management; Team Building and Development; Personnel Management; Lobbying Practices and Regulation in Europe and North America; Global Justice; Development Planning; Data Society Management.

The aforementioned courses are taught by teaching staff whose academic and professional background is suitable for performing such functions. A broader description of their competence is provided in Section 3.4.1 and in *Curricula Vitae*.

**3.2.3. Assessment of the study programme including the study course/ module implementation methods by indicating what the methods are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. In the case of a joint study programme, or in case the study programme is implemented in a foreign language or in the form of distance learning, describe in detail the methods used to deliver such a study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.**

Oral, written and combined study and evaluation methods are used during mastering of the study courses and in examinations.

Various methods of acquiring and consolidating knowledge are used in the studies, such as introductory lectures, summary lectures, problem-oriented lectures. In order to promote the unity of theory and practice, practitioners, professionals from various institutions are invited to teach individual lectures or entire study courses. Practical assignments, seminars, individual, pair and group assignments, discussions and project development, study tours to the organizations of the sector are widely used in order to promote the achievement of the learning outcomes of the master's study programme Political Science – acquiring the competence to engage in solving practical issues and making political decisions. Employers are involved in the implementation and development of study courses (they are invited to conduct particular seminars, sometimes the classes are organized as experience exchange visits to workplaces, etc.).

In order to promote the development of students' research competence, students in subsequent courses have the opportunity to analyse and explore in depth the issues in the sector that interest them.

In the seminars of study courses, students' performance, presentation and discussion skills are cultivated, thus ensuring a significant contribution to the achievement of the current study programme learning outcomes, such as communication skills and the competence to give a professional and competent assessment of the work done by others, as well as to absorb the assessment of one's own performance.

In order for students to achieve their learning outcomes – acquire and strengthen knowledge, skills and develop competence – the study process is dominated by methods assigning great importance to student activity. In the study process, methods are used that promote student communication in performing study tasks, solving real political problems, modelling alternative solutions to these problems.

Likewise, the physical environment of the studies is gradually changing: the auditoriums can be easily transformed for group work, individual assignments, students can use digital technologies. Teaching staff members predominantly use methods that encourage active participation of

students, critical thinking and reflection. The e-study environment will be used in the study process and to promote independent studies. An e-study environment (Moodle) has been created for each study course, where students have access to lesson materials, descriptions of assignments, in addition to study materials related to course topics, as well as study assignments to be completed (tests, forums, seminars, etc.). All study course midterm and final examination evaluations are recorded and available to students in the e-study environment.

In updating the study programmes and the study courses thereof, the student-centred approach is implemented, paying special attention to the meaningful formulation of learning outcomes, thus promoting the dialogue between lecturers and students about the study content, organizational forms and methods. On the other hand, correctly formulated study results promote comprehension and co-responsibility on behalf of the students for their learning, self-evaluation and understanding of the received assessment. During the study process, the lecturers use methods, test forms and assessment criteria appropriate to the study goal and the planned learning outcomes.

During the study process, students receive support and feedback from lecturers. The evaluation criteria for assigning grades are made public at the start of the study course. The cumulative approach is used in the assessment of student achievements, the final assessment is formed from the performance of several study assignments. Assessment gives students the opportunity to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the expected learning outcomes.

In line with the study principles of student-centred education, student mobility is promoted (recognition of study results), students are involved in research initiated by academic staff as far as possible, thus gaining significant experience in applying the knowledge acquired during their studies in practice. By implementing the internal quality assurance policy, the study programme is implemented in such a way that students are encouraged to actively participate in the improvement of the study process. The results of student surveys are evaluated and taken into account in the improvement of the study process. Students readily contribute their suggestions for the improvement of study programmes and the process in discussions with lecturers and the programme director.

**3.2.4. If the study programme envisages an internship, describe the internship opportunities offered to students, provision and work organization, including whether the higher education institution/ college helps students to find an internship place. If the study programme is implemented in a foreign language, provide information on how internship opportunities are provided in a foreign language, including for foreign students. To provide analysis and evaluation of the connection of the tasks set for students during the internship included in the study programme with the learning outcomes of the study programme (if applicable).**

**3.2.5. Evaluation and description of the promotion opportunities and the promotion process provided to the students of the doctoral study programme (if applicable).**

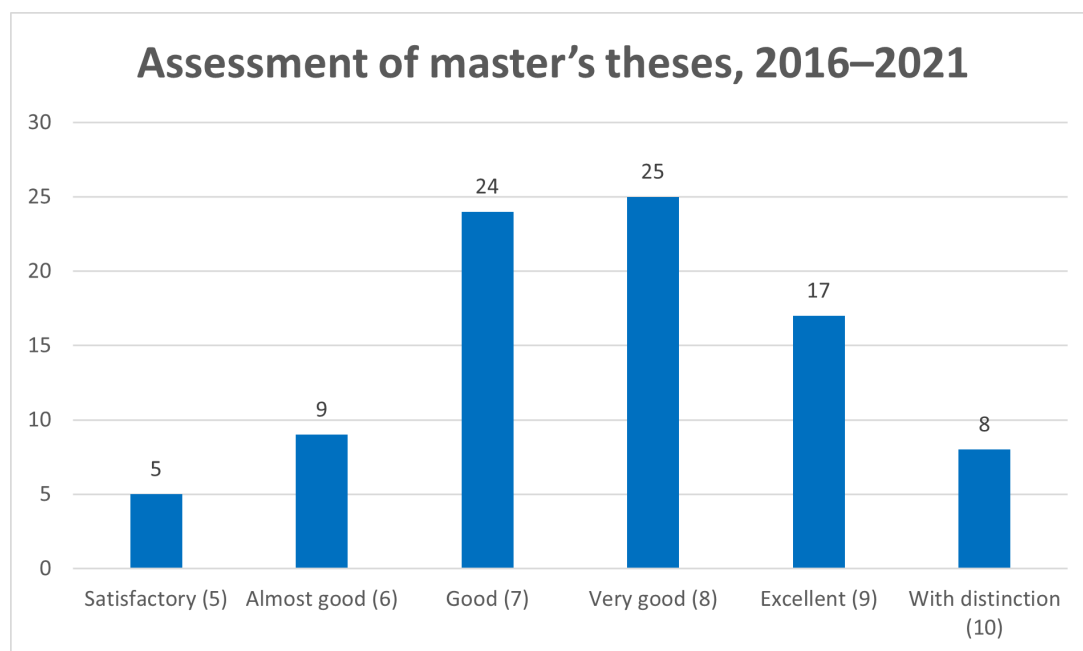
### 3.2.6. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the marks of the final theses.

The students of MSP Political Science since 2016 have defended 88 master's theses. They have been dedicated to a wide range of topics. Most frequently, master's theses have corresponded to the subfield of comparative politics (38 master's theses), slightly less interest was occasioned by international politics (30 master's theses), 18 master's theses were defended on the topics pertaining to public administration, whereas in case of two master's theses it is difficult to assign them to a single specific subfield.

Although socio-political current events in Latvia and the world to a certain extent influence the choice of topics for master's theses, it is not the only consideration. For example, the international context obviously contributed to the defence of theses in 2016-2017 that analysed Islamophobia in Latvia, the impact of the flow of asylum seekers on the decisions taken by the European Union, the attitude of Latvian society and political parties towards the reception of refugees and asylum seekers in Latvia. Russia's aggression in Ukraine in 2014 apparently prompted elaboration of master's theses dedicated to hybrid threats to the Baltic states, the impact of the Ukrainian conflict on the relations of Russia and the European Union, as well as to the policy of Russian compatriots in Latvia. At the same time, theses that are not directly related to socio-political activities have been defended and received a high assessment – for example, on the influence of the public initiative portal *manabalss.lv* on the legislative process in Latvia, on budgeting in Latvian municipalities, on the role of the Latvian president as a public intellectual, on China's influence on the South American security complex and other topics.

Just like the topics, the evaluations of master's theses also cover quite a wide spectrum:

Figure 3.2.6.1.



The distribution of marks is approaching a normal distribution and the mode in this cluster is the rating “very good”.

### 3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

**3.3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples.**

All the informational and material technical provision of the study field described above applies to the provision of the master's study programme Political Science (see 2.3.1–2.3.3).

**3.3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific base support, including the resources provided within the framework of cooperation with other science institutes and higher education institutions (applicable to doctoral study programmes) (if applicable).**

**3.3.3. Indicate data on the available funding for the corresponding study programme, its funding sources and their use for the development of the study programme. Provide information on the costs per one student within this study programme, indicating the items included in the cost calculation and the percentage distribution of funding between the specified items. The minimum number of students in the study programme in order to ensure the profitability of the study programme (indicating separately the information on each language, type and form of the study programme implementation).**

The description of the study field's available resources described in section 2.3 also apply to MSP Political science.

#### **Programme revenue**

In order to provide the funds necessary for the implementation of the master's study programme Political Science, UL uses the following sources:

1. state budget grant from the Ministry of Education and Science, which in the academic year 2021/2022 has been set at 2445 EUR for full time regular studies;
2. tuition fees, taking into account all the factors indicated in the section Financial provision system, which in for the academic year 2021/2022 comprises 2350 EUR per year for full time regular studies.

Taking into account the above, the total budget of the study programme is expected to comprise 87.4 thousand EUR per year, the breakdown is provided in Table 3.3.3.1. below.

*Table 3.3.3.1.*

*Estimated annual income of programme, EUR*

Type of studies	Number of students	Tuition fees/state grant	<b>Total income</b>
Full time regular (state funded)	32	2445	78 240
Students with UL grant			-4890
Full time regular (fee-paying)	6	2350	14 100
<b>Total</b>			<b>87 450</b>

### Programme costs

In order to estimate the amount of funds required for financial provision, the cost of UL study programmes is calculated according to the methodology developed by UL, which takes into account the costs of ensuring the study process described in section 2.3.1 Financial provision system, and information about the study programme plan, the involved teaching staff, the planned number of students and other aspects, thus ensuring the reliability of forecasts.

### Full-time regular study programme costs

The implementers of master's study programme Political Science use the student data from the academic year 2021/2022 for the calculations – 38 students study in the programme in its full-time regular form, and the calculations also involve the study programme plan after accreditation and the planned structure of the involved academic staff. Based on this data, the total annual costs of the program are 87 992 EUR and their structure (percentage distribution) is shown in Table 3.3.3.2.

Table 3.3.3.2.

*Percentage breakdown of costs in the study programme*

<b>Expenditure item</b>	<b>% of total</b>
Teaching staff	51 %
General staff	10 %
Other costs	0.2 %
Infrastructure expenditure	11 %
Property and services	1.8 %
Indirect costs	26 %
<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Figure 3.3.3.1. the cost of the study program (vertical axis) depending on the number of students (horizontal axis), the tuition fee (green line) and the state budget subsidy (blue line) are visually represented with a red line.

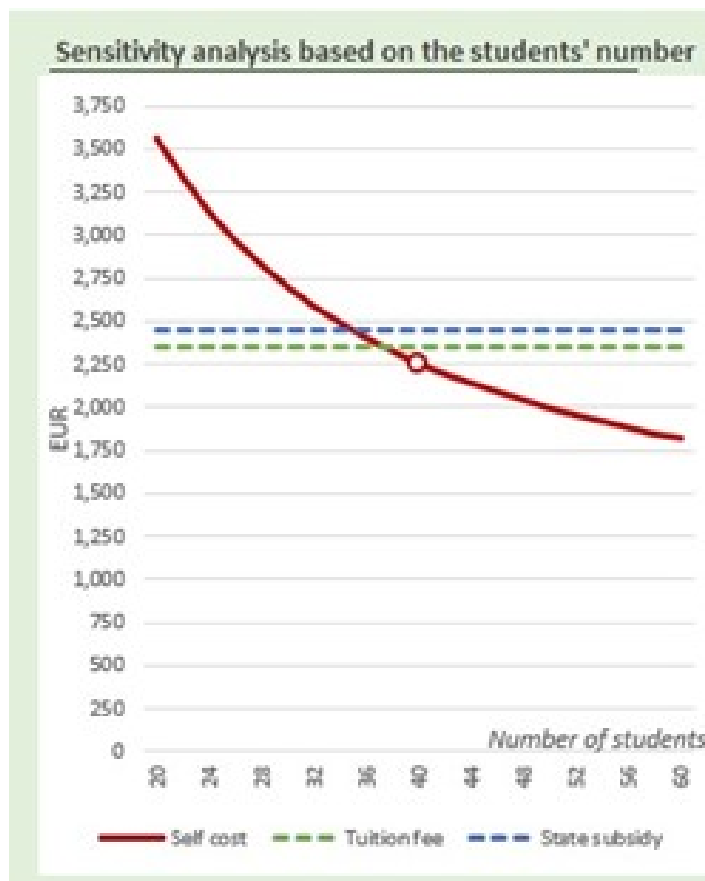


Figure 3.3.3.1.

*Cost of MSP Political science depending on the number of students in full-time regular studies.*

Based on the cost structure and the total number of students 38, the cost of the program per student (base cost) is 2325 EUR per year.

Based on the calculation, it can be seen that for the programme to be profitable and provide students with a quality study process, at the current amount of state budget grant and the established tuition fee, the number of fee-paying students in the programme (all courses combined) must be at least 38 (intersection of red (cost) and green (tuition fee) lines projected on the x-axis), whereas, if the programme were to be acquired only by state budget-funded students, their number should reach 36.

### Summary of programme revenue and expenditure

Table 3.3.3.3. below summarizes the programme revenue based on the type of studies, state grant and tuition fee, and the programme costs at the current number of students.

Table 3.3.3.3.

*Programme results*

Type of studies	Number of students	Tuition fees/state grant	Total income	Total cost
Full time regular (state funded)	30	2445	78 240	74112

Students with UL grant	2		-4890	
Full time regular (fee-paying)	6	2350	14 100	13 896
<b>Total</b>			<b>87 450</b>	<b>88 008</b>

The data presented in Table 3.3.3.3. clearly indicate that in order to ensure the cost efficiency of the study programme, it is necessary to increase the number of fee-paying students and reduce the number of the students funded by UL. In order to increase the number of fee-paying students, more active efforts are planned in motivating the bachelor's students to continue their studies at the master's level, as well as the marketing activities to attract applicants.

Until the time when a positive result is achieved, the programme is additionally financed from the income generated by full-time regular bachelor's study programme Political Science, which forms the surplus balance of financial resources within the study field. The faculty can also receive financial support for the development of the programme from the UL Study Quality Improvement Fund.

## 3.4. Teaching Staff

**3.4.1. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members (academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.**

The implementation of the master's study programme Political Science involves highly qualified staff, which consists of UL academic staff and professionals working in various sectors. Among them are 3 professors, as well as one leading researcher. Four associate professors, as well as one Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences Associate Professor participate in the implementation of the programme. Two assistant professors also participate in the implementation of the programme. All of them are well-known and highly valued specialists in their fields in Latvia. They carry out research, the results of which are integrated into the study process. For example, 2 associate Professors have been analysing the interaction of information and communication technologies with politics over a long time. One assistant professor is an internationally recognized expert in the field of anti-corruption. One associate professor has prepared numerous publications on the foreign policy of Latvia, and one professor- on the politics of the Baltic states. More information about the academic, scientific and professional activity of teaching staff members is provided in their *Curricula Vitae*, enclosed in Appendix CV.

Likewise, a number of experienced industry professionals contribute to programme implementation: Deputy Director General at State Environmental Service Latvia (teaches the course Development

Planning), Head of the Administration of the Constitutional Court (teaches the course Strategy and Tactics of Political Negotiations), the associate of the Centre for East European Policy Studies (teaches the course Policy of Russia in the CIS and Baltic States), chairperson of the board of Latvian Association of Personnel Management (teaches the course Personnel Management), former member of the *Saeima* and parliamentary secretary at the Ministry of Defence (teaches the course Latvia in International Politics). All the professionals of sector have at least a master's degree and at least 10 years of work experience.

Table 3.4.1.1.

*Teaching staff involved in implementation of MSP Political Science*

<b>Degree, position</b>	<b>With doctoral degree</b>	<b>With master's degree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Professors	3	0	3
Associate professors	5	0	5
Leading researchers	1	0	1
Assistant professors	2	0	2
Lecturers	0	0	0
Adjunct lecturers	1	4	5
Total	12	4	16

Consequently, it can be concluded that the diverse composition of teaching staff involved in the implementation of the programme allows to fully achieve the goal of the study programme and the planned learning outcomes, ensuring the acquisition of excellent theoretical knowledge and research skills, which gives the graduates of the programme the opportunity to successfully enter the labour market.

### **3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.**

Since the previous accreditation, there have been several changes in the composition of the teaching staff. Three professors have retired, two have focused on other professional challenges, while four continue their professional activities outside of Latvia. However, several new teaching staff members have been recruited for the implementation of the programme, enabling improvement of the existing courses, and, furthermore, introducing the changes in the offer of courses according to transformations in society and the labour market.

Experienced professionals have been involved in teaching several study courses. The course



Personnel Management is taught by the chairperson of the board of Latvian Association of Personnel Management with extensive experience, and the course Latvia in Politics of the World is taught by the former parliamentary secretary of the Ministry of Defence. The associate of the Centre for East European Policy Studies and UL doctoral programme student, teaches the course Policy of Russia in the CIS and Baltic States.

Several new courses have been developed with the contribution from researchers elected to academic positions. Associate Professor of UL heads the course Data Society Management, while Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences Associate Professor teaches the course Digital Political Communication.

Several other new courses were created thanks to the involvement of professionals in the field. Deputy Director General at State Environmental Service Latvia, teaches the course Development Planning, while the board member at CPM Consulting International, together with Professor of UL have created the course Current Topics in European Union Politics.

Compared to the previous evaluation period, the number of teaching staff involved in the implementation of the program has increased (from 14 to 16). The number of participating professors (from 4 to 3) and the number of participating assistant professors (from 4 to 2) have slightly decreased, but the number of associate professors (from 2 to 4) and the number of industry professionals (from 2 to 5) have significantly increased.

In addition to indicating a balanced process of academic staff renewal, these changes also attest to the increasing attraction of professional competence from outside UL for the improvement of the study process, taking into account changes in the labour market and the socio-political context.

**3.4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members, involved in the implementation of doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals or peer-reviewed monographs may be additionally specified. Information on the teaching staff included in the database of experts of the Latvian Council of Science in the relevant field of science (total number, name of the lecturer, field of science in which the teaching staff has the status of an expert and expiration date of the Latvian Council of Science expert) (if applicable).**

**3.4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).**

**3.4.5. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study programme and study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).**

Close mutual cooperation among the teaching staff members is a necessary prerequisite for achieving the expected learning outcomes of MSP Political Science. Since this programme is implemented mainly with the participation of lecturers of the Department of Political Science of UL FSS, the cooperation of the teaching staff takes place predominantly through meetings of the Department of Political Science, which include regular discussions about the current issues of the study programme, inclusion of new courses in the programme, about the achievements and challenges of the academic work, approval of the academic calendar, approval of the topics of master's theses, analysis of the study process and learning outcomes, issues of academic staff renewal. The mutual complementarity of courses is also discussed at the meetings of the Department of Political Science in order to prevent duplication of course content. Cooperation of teaching staff and discussions on course content and programme development also take place within the meetings of study field "Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology" council.

Cooperation between teaching staff and students takes place in various forms and levels. Within UL FSS, the students are involved in the work and decision-making of the faculty council, and student representatives are also involved in the study field "Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology" council. Admittedly, the involvement of master's students in UL FSS student self-governance activities fluctuates, as most students work in parallel to their studies. Student surveys were conducted several times during the Covid-19 pandemic with the aim ascertaining students' perspective on the preferred form of studies, i.e., whether UL FSS should organize studies on site or remotely.

Classes are held in various formats within the courses, however, the key forms of cooperation with students are lectures, seminars, practical assignments, group work, individual consultations, individual assignments and supervision of master's theses. In recent years, the number of students registered for one study course usually does not exceed 30. This contributes to the transparency of student performance and promotes individualized cooperation between teaching staff and students. This is especially pronounced in the process of developing a master's thesis. As a rule, the number of supervised master's theses does not exceed 3 for a member of a teaching staff, and this contributes to a greater immersion into the research project implemented by the student.

At the time of the submission of the report, student-faculty member ratio in MSP Political Science (data as of October 2021) is approximately 3 students to 1 lecturer. However, it should be taken into account that lecturers have different workloads in the programme and several study courses are taught within the framework of several study programmes, that is, a series of MSP Political Science study courses are also taught to the students of MSP Diplomacy, which allows to reduce the costs of the programmes.

# Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	Diploma POL MSP.pdf	POL MSP diploma pielikums.pdf
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	Statistics POL MSP.pdf	POL MSP statistikas dati.pdf
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard	Education standard POL MSP.pdf	POL MSP izglitibas standarts.pdf
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	Mapping of the study courses POI MSP.xlsx	POL MA Kursu_ pilnais kartejums.xlsx
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	Study plan POL MSP.pdf	POL MSP plāns.pdf
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	Study courses POL MSP.pdf	Kursu apraksti POL MSP.pdf
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)		
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
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 (if applicable)	Study field declaration POL MSP.pdf	POL MSP apliecinajums 55. pants.edoc

# Social Sciences (51312)

Study field	<i>Sociology, Political Science, and Anthropology</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Social Sciences</i>
Education classification code	<i>51312</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>Doctoral study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Daunis</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Auers</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>daunis.auers@lu.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Profesors</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>28308953</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>To educate and train highly qualified professionals in the social sciences for employment in higher education, research as well as the public and private sectors. To consolidate existing DSP's in Communication Science, Political Science and Sociology into a unified, interdisciplinary approach to training young professionals, passing on general skills, promoting cooperation between different fields of research and using available resources more effectively.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. To study the theories and methods of the social science fields represented in the program, focusing on in-depth studies of the media and communication sciences, political science, sociology and social work in order to build theoretical and empirical understanding of the development of socio-political, communication and information processes.</i></li> <li><i>2. To acquire the latest theoretical approaches and methods of communication science, political science, sociology and social work and the empirical application.</i></li> <li><i>3. To acquire pedagogical theories and practices in higher education (acquiring the knowledge, skills and competences of a lecturer and a workshop manager, a student advisor and a research projectmanager).</i></li> <li><i>4. To publish the results of the research in international and locally refereed and indexed scholarly journals.</i></li> <li><i>5. To acquire presentation skills in presenting research results at international and local conferences, and seminars.</i></li> <li><i>6. To acquire and develop creative and critical thinking, analytical and reasoning skills and competences.</i></li> <li><i>7. To prepare the PhD dissertation independently and defend it at the Doctoral Study Council, thereby demonstrating a high level of knowledge, skills and competence in communication science, political science and/or and sociology and social work.</i></li> </ol>

Results of the study programme	<p><i>Knowledge</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand and analyse well-established and recent scientific theories and findings in the chosen field and sub-field of science;</li> <li>2. Understand and apply research methodology and modern research methods in the chosen field and sub-field of science;</li> <li>3. Know and understand the relationship of the chosen field and sub-field of science to other fields of science and professional activities.</li> </ol> <p><i>Skills</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Independently assess and develop appropriate and qualitative methodologies for research in the chosen field and sub-field of science;</li> <li>5. Independently contribute to the extension of the frontiers of knowledge in the chosen field and sub-field of science or to a new understanding of existing knowledge and its applications in practice by carrying out original research of significant scope, at least part of which is at the level of internationally peer-reviewed publications;</li> <li>6. Can communicate both orally and in writing with academics and the general public on general issues in the social science and its sub-fields;</li> </ol> <p><i>Competence</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Demonstrate knowledge and comprehension of research methodology and modern research methods;</li> <li>8. Independently perform critical analysis, synthesis and evaluation, and solve significant research, pedagogical or innovation tasks in the chosen field and sub-field of science;</li> <li>9. Independently proposes an original research idea, plans, structures and manages scientific projects, including international projects in a chosen field and sub-field of science;</li> <li>10. Independently plan, organise, conduct and supervise research at the interface with other social sciences.</li> </ol>
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	Graduation exams, dissertation

## Study programme forms

### Full time studies - 3 years - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	3
Duration in month	0
Language	latvian
Amount (CP)	144
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Master's degree (or equivalent) in the social sciences or humanities, and an entrance examination. A master's degree (or equivalent) in other academic fields, relevant work experience in the field and an entrance examination.</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Doctoral Degree of Science Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Social Sciences</i>

Qualification to be obtained (in english)	-
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### Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
University of Latvia	RĪGA	RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050

### Full time studies - 3 years - english

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	3
Duration in month	0
Language	<i>english</i>
Amount (CP)	144
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Master's degree (or equivalent) in the social sciences or humanities, and an entrance examination. A master's degree (or equivalent) in other academic fields, relevant work experience in the field and an entrance examination. Studies in English require English language knowledge (at least B2 level)</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Doctoral Degree of Science Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Social Sciences</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	-

### Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
University of Latvia	RĪGA	RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050

## 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

**3.1.1. Description and analysis of changes in the parameters of the study programme made since the issuance of the previous accreditation form of the study field or issuance of the study programme license, if the study programme is not included on the accreditation form of the study field, including changes planned within the evaluation procedure of the study field evaluation procedure.**

The doctoral study programme (DSP) in Social Sciences was drafted in 2020/2021 and licensed in 2021. It replaced the existing DSPs in Sociology and Political Science, as well as the Communications Science doctoral programme that was part of the Information and Communications Studies study field. The Social Sciences DSP was established to consolidate the existing doctoral programmes at the University of Latvia's (UL) Faculty of Social Sciences (FSS) (mentioned above) and to ensure a unified and interdisciplinary approach in the training of young scholars, research and academic skills, facilitating collaboration among various areas of social science, and ensuring the effective use FSS resources. The objective of the DSP in Social Sciences is to prepare highly qualified experts for the research, higher education and private sectors. The title of the degree to be awarded has been changed to Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in social sciences (replacing Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Sociology and Social Work, Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Political Science and 'Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Media and Communication sciences. The change of degree has taken place in accordance with amendments to the Law on Scientific Activities, which entered into force on 29.07.2022., and grants a science doctorate in doctors (Ph.D.) social sciences, in conformity with Regulation No 595 of the Cabinet of Ministers of 27.09.2022, Regulations Regarding Industrial Groups of Science, Scientific Sectors and Subsectors of Latvia. This degree is granted for defending a doctoral dissertation in the "Mass media and communication", "Political science" and "Sociology and social work" science branches.

The tasks of the DSP in Social Sciences:

1. To study the theories and methods of the social science fields represented in the program, focusing on in-depth studies of the media and communication sciences, political science, sociology and social work in order to build theoretical and empirical understanding of the development of socio-political, communication and information processes.
2. To acquire the latest theoretical approaches and methods of communication science, political science, sociology and social work and the empirical application.
3. To acquire pedagogical theories and practices in higher education (acquiring the knowledge, skills and competences of a lecturer and a workshop manager, a student advisor and a research projectmanager).
4. To publish the results of the research in international and locally refereed and indexed scholarly journals.
5. To acquire presentation skills in presenting research results at international and local conferences, and seminars.
6. To acquire and develop creative and critical thinking, analytical and reasoning skills and competences.
7. To prepare the PhD dissertation independently and defend it at the Doctoral Study Council, thereby demonstrating a high level of knowledge, skills and competence in communication science, political science and/or and sociology and social work.

The Social Sciences DSP ensures that the FSS will continue to ensure all three cycles (bachelor's – master's – doctoral) of the higher education degree system in the field of social sciences. This corresponds to the requirements of the Bologna Declaration. No changes have been planned during the evaluation of the study field. Eight students enrolled in the Social Sciences DSP during the 2021/2022 academic year.

**3.1.2. Analysis and assessment of the study programme compliance with the study field. Analysis of the interrelation between the code of the study programme, the degree, professional qualification/professional qualification requirements or the degree and professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements. Description of the duration and scope of the implementation of the study programme (including different options of the study programme implementation) and evaluation of its usefulness.**

DSP Social Sciences is a study area in the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study programme. It is based on the experience of European Union member states in implementing social science studies. This is a priority for Latvia's areas of science and the academic education traditions of UL.

The programme content is in line with the title of the DSP programme in Social Sciences. Its code, the degree that can be earned, the goals and tasks, the learning outcomes and the enrolment requirements are mutually linked and integrated. DSP Social Sciences covers three areas that are cited in the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 49 (2018), "Regulations on Latvia's Science Sectors and Subsectors": 5.4. Sociology and social work, 5.6. Political science, and 5.8. Mass Media and Communications. The DSP Social Sciences codes are 51312 (Political science), 51314 (Sociology and social work), and 51321 (Mass Media and Communications." These are all in line with Latvia's education classification.<sup>[1]</sup> The code of the study programme is determined by Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 322, "Regulations on Latvia's Education Classification," as published in Rīga on June 13, 2017 (Protocol 30 18. §). In accordance with these regulations, the first two digits, 51, refer to doctoral studies and a doctoral degree. Students can enrol in this programme after completing their master's degree or professional master's degree, or continuing their previous educational programme with the code 49. Full-time studies require three to four years. According to the regulations, the last three digits are 312 (political science), 314 (Sociology and cultural studies), 321 (Journalism and communications), 322 (Library, information and archive studies), which are all part of the thematic group "Social sciences, commercial studies and the law," which, in turn, is part of the educational thematic area "Social and human behaviour sciences". The awarded degree is a Doctoral Degree of Science Doctor of Science (Ph.D.) in Social Sciences. DSP Social Sciences satisfies the 8<sup>th</sup> ISCED and EKI/LKI education level, as well as the 1<sup>st</sup> subgroup of the Republic of Latvia's classification of professions.

**The political science subprogramme** (in accordance with the dissertation that is to be written) offers in-depth knowledge about the most important theories and timely issues of political sciences. Students prepare for and take examinations in political science, their chosen area of specialisation and their chosen foreign language. They also confirm their abilities in the area of political science by teaching classes at the bachelor's degree level and, if they wish, by entering professions related to political science.

**The Sociology / Social Work subprogramme** (in accordance with the dissertation that is to be



written) offers in-depth knowledge about the most important theories and contemporary issues in sociology / social work. Students prepare for and take examinations in sociology and social work, their chosen area of specialisation and their chosen foreign language. They also confirm their abilities in the areas of sociology / social work by teaching classes at the bachelor's degree level and, if they wish, by entering areas of professions which relate to sociology / social work.

**The mass media and communications subprogramme** (in accordance with the dissertation that is to be written) offers in-depth knowledge about the most important theories and timely issues of communications science and library science. Students prepare for and take examinations in communications science and library area, their chosen area of specialisation and their chosen foreign language. They also confirm their abilities in the area of communications science and library science by teaching classes at the bachelor's level and, if they wish, by entering areas of professions which relate to communications.

In accordance with the UL's rules on study programmes and ongoing education programmes, the scope of DSP Social Sciences is 144 credits (CP) or 48 CP per year for full-time students. This scope of the programme has been calculated on the basis of the assumption that 1 CP corresponds to one workweek (40 work hours for the student). The academic year has 52 weeks, of which four are holidays. Accordingly, full-time students earn around 24 CP during each of their six semesters. The rules say that the mandatory share of the doctoral study programme involves preparations for the dissertation (analysis of the literature, research, conferences, writing of papers), a module of general skills, promotion exams, as well as participation in the UL's doctoral schools and foreign universities which offer comparable experience. The scope of the mandatory part of DSP Social Science is 122 CP.

Enrolment requirements allow the programme to recruit students who will be able to learn the content of the programme successfully and achieve the planned learning outcomes. Students with a master's degree in communications science, library science, political science, sociology or social work are admitted to the programme, as are those who have a master's degree in other social sciences and humanities, as well as natural sciences, or a comparable higher education diploma. Matriculation occurs after the student has presented the topic of his or her dissertation to the doctoral programme council, which assesses the applicant's level of knowledge in the relevant area of the social sciences, the applicant's foreign language skills, as well as the equality of the planned scholarly research and its correspondence to the priority research areas of the UL and science in Latvia. After entrance interviews, applicants are ranked on the basis of the sum of points that they have received. Overall enrolment criteria for UL doctoral programmes are listed on the UL homepage.<sup>[2]</sup> The entrance interviews are conducted in Latvian or English, after which classes are taught in Latvian or English.

The DSP in Social Sciences is taught in Latvian and English. Establishing new English language programs in English is the strategic objective of both UL and FSS. Objective 2 of the Education Development Guidelines 2021-2027 state that modern, high-quality and highly skilled development-oriented education programs strengthen international cooperation and the internationalization of higher education. The policy document stresses that "it is essential to improve the quality of Latvia's internationalization of higher education by providing both modern and high-quality study programmes and study environments and highly qualified academic staff and by attracting motivated students". DSP Social Sciences addresses these challenges by teaching the program in both Latvian and English. There are relatively few foreign students in Latvia at the DSP level. However, the DSP in Social Sciences has the potential to attract foreign students. The program's lecturing staff are bilingual in Latvian and English and have obtained education in both Latvian and international universities, where the teaching language has been English. In addition, international guest lecturers are involved in the teaching of study courses. As a result, the DSP in Social Sciences

can offer quality doctoral level studies in English.

[1] See <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitibas-klasifikaciju>. (Available only in Latvian)

[2] See <https://www.lu.lv/en/admission/study-programmes/doctoral-study-programmes/>

### **3.1.3. Economic and/ or social substantiation of the study programme, analysis of graduates' employment.**

DSP Social Science uses interdisciplinary foundations to ensure the preparation of highly qualified experts who can work in areas such as science, higher education and various areas of the social sciences in the national economy (sociology, social work, political science, the mass media and communications). This goal is in line with the Ministry of Education and Science (IZM) project "Fundamental positions on education and development of skills, 2021-2027." The project is focused on growth related to valuable disciplines and the values of an interdisciplinary approach.

[1] The programme also ensures a substantial investment related to Latvia's sustainable development strategy until the year 2030. The strategic principles that are included in this strategy include creativity, tolerance, co-operation and participation, and these cannot be pursued without the training of top-level experts in the area of the social sciences.[1] The study programme can also make an investment in the "Europe 2020" European growth strategy, particularly in terms of an including growth priority, as well as the goal of overcoming social exclusion.[2] The licensed study programme is part of one of the smart areas of specialisation, as defined in Latvia - "Information and communications technologies." [3] It is important to note here that studies and research in the area of the social sciences are among the priorities in the development of science in Latvia (Cabinet of Ministers Instruction 746, Protocol No 61 §17, 13 December 2017, "On priorities in the field of science, 2018-2021). This particularly applies to the 5<sup>th</sup> element in this programme, "Latvia's statehood, language and values, culture and art," the 6<sup>th</sup> one - "Public health," the 7<sup>th</sup> one - "A knowledge culture and innovations for economic sustainability," the 8<sup>th</sup> one - "Demographics, sports, an open and inclusive society, welfare and social security," as well as the 9<sup>th</sup> one - "The safety and defence of the state and society." [4]

DSP Social Science was established in accordance with the UL's development strategy for 2016-2020, which, in accordance with letter 4-10e/21/99 from the IZM, was extended to December 31, 2022. It also relates to the new UL development strategy for 2021-2027.[5] DSP Social Science, therefore, will provide a substantial investment toward achieving the goals that are listed in the UL development strategy:

1) Training human resources to satisfy labour market requirements in Latvia and the EU:

a) DSP Social Science will develop and improve the current FSS doctoral study programme at a new interdisciplinary level, introducing study types that are focused on analysing the fundamental issues and needs of society, and facilitate the learning of skills that are needed to prepare innovative social products - identifying the needs of various social groups, managing processes, and proposing situations to state and local government institutions, as well as non-governmental organisations;

b) The study offer will be diversified in that DSP Social Science conforms to labour market requirements and is a new and internationally competitive study programme;

c) The knowledge base and innovation resources will be expanded in that DSP Social Science will involve employers and partners from professional organisations in the process;

2) Internationalisation of education:

a) Establishing and improving international study programmes, including those that are taught in the official languages of the EU; DSP Social Science ensures that doctoral students learn and do research work in Latvian and English;

b) Research and conclusions about the development of higher education in Europe and the world, as well as the introduction of best practices in the UL. DSP Social Science is based on the trend which characterises the world's leading universities – ensuring that during the doctoral studies, students gain a wide range of knowledge, skills and competence so as to guarantee work after they complete their studies and so that they can become involved in research in the rapidly changing labour market of public governance because of its diversification;

c) Support for the mobility of students and academic personnel so that they can take part in internships abroad so as to enhance their careers.

3) Enhancing the effectiveness of the study process:

a) Concentrating human resources will ensure a critical mass for effective study and research processes. The DSP in Social Sciences concentrates the resources of the previous FFS doctoral study programmes so as to achieve a more qualitative training of highly qualified researchers and instructors in sociology, social work, political science and communications science, seeking to ensure closer co-operation and synergy among these disciplines.

4) Regeneration of academic personnel and increased capacity: Academic personnel and students in the programme will ensure a key investment in several priority research directions at the UL, including Topic 1, "Innovative information technologies," Topic 9, "Public health, quality of life and national sustainability," Topic 10, "Critical thinking, innovation, competitiveness and globalisation," Topic 11, "Letonica, the diaspora and intercultural communications," and Topic 12, "People and technologies and the quality of education."

The DSP in Social Sciences enrolled its first students in the autumn of 2021 thus there is currently no available data on graduate employment.

[1] [https://www.rtu.lv/writable/public\\_files/RTU\\_gunta\\_araja.pdf](https://www.rtu.lv/writable/public_files/RTU_gunta_araja.pdf) (Available only in Latvian language)

[2] See [https://www.pkc.gov.lv/sites/default/files/inline-files/LIAS\\_2030\\_en\\_1.pdf](https://www.pkc.gov.lv/sites/default/files/inline-files/LIAS_2030_en_1.pdf)

[3] See [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/policy/what/glossary/e/europe-2020-strategy](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/what/glossary/e/europe-2020-strategy)

[4] See <https://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/informacijas-un-komunikacijas-tehnologijas> (Available only in Latvian language)

[5] See <http://likumi.lv/ta/id/295821-par-prioritarajiem-virzieniem-zinatne-2018-2021-gada> (Available only in Latvian language)

[6] For the strategy from 2016 to 2020, see [https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user\\_upload/lu\\_portal/eng/library/Summary\\_UL\\_strategy\\_EN\\_250517.pdf](https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/lu_portal/eng/library/Summary_UL_strategy_EN_250517.pdf)  
For the strategy from 2021 to 2027, see [https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user\\_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti\\_LV/1.\\_VISPAREJIE\\_DOKUMENTI/LU\\_strategija\\_buklets\\_2021.pdf](https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_LV/1._VISPAREJIE_DOKUMENTI/LU_strategija_buklets_2021.pdf)

**3.1.4. Statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down into different study forms, types, and languages.**

Nine students enrolled in the DSP in Social Sciences in the 2021/2022 academic year. The programme can be taught in Latvian or English. However, in the 2021/2022 academic year the DSP in Social Sciences was taught in Latvian.

**3.1.5. Substantiation of the development of the joint study programme and description and evaluation of the choice of partner universities, including information on the development and implementation of the joint study programme (if applicable).**

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

**3.2.1. Analysis of the content of the study programme. Assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators with the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study courses/ modules and compliance with the needs of the relevant industry, labour market and with the trends in science on how and whether the content of the study courses/ modules is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science.**

The content of DSP Social Science is based on goals that have been defined in the work programme "Growth and Employment" and its specific support project, "Establishing study programmes at the University of Latvia which facilitate international competitiveness and economic development in Latvia." The programme is also based on these internal and external normative acts:

- 1) The law on universities in the Republic of Latvia;[\[1\]](#)
- 2) The law on scientific work in the Republic of Latvia;[\[2\]](#)
- 3) Cabinet of Ministers regulations on delegating the right to grant a doctoral degree to universities;[\[3\]](#)
- 4) Cabinet of Ministers regulations on the procedure and criteria for awarding doctoral degrees[\[4\]](#)
- 5) Cabinet of Ministers regulations on sectors and subsectors of science in Latvia;[\[5\]](#)
- 6) UL regulations on study programmes and ongoing education programmes (Senate decision 102,

24 April 2017);[6]

7) Regulations on promotion councils and promotion at the University of Latvia (Instruction 1/95, 12 April 2006).[7]

DSP Social Science covers three sectors that are mentioned in Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 322, Protocol No 30 18.§, “Regulations on scientific sectors and subsectors in Latvia”: 5.4. Sociology and social work, 5.6. Political science, and 5.8. Mass media and communications. The codes of DSP Social Science in accordance with Latvia’s education classification are 51312 (Political science), 51314 (Sociology and social work), and 51321 (Mass media and communications).[8] There are **three sub-programmes** in DSP Social Science in accordance with the sector and subsector classification and the doctoral degree that is to be earned, as well as to make use of methodologies and theoretical ideas from related subsectors (see Section 3.1.2):

- The sub-programme Political Science;
- The sub-programme Sociology and Social Work
- The sub-programme “Mass Media and Communications.

In line with the *UL regulations on study programmes and ongoing education programmes*, the scope of DSP Social Science is 144 CP or 48 CP per year for full-time students. The regulations state that doctoral study programmes include a mandatory component that relates to the student’s dissertation (analysis of the literature, research, conferences and preparing publications). There is a general skills module along with promotion exams, as well as participation in the UL’s doctoral schools and comparable experience at foreign universities. The mandatory segment of DSP Social Science amounts to 122 CP:

- 1) Preparation of the dissertation (60 CP), presentation of research results at conferences (6 CP) and writing of scholarly papers (14 CP) – a total of 80 CP.
- 2) A course on research design and ethics (4 CP), a course on research methods (6 CP), a theoretical course in the relevant area of science (4 CP), as well as promotion exams about the area of science (4 CP), area of specialisation (4 CP) and a foreign language (2 CP) – a total of 24 CP;
- 3) The general skills module – a course on university didactics (4 CP), a course on academic English language (4 CP), and a course on pedagogical and professional work in the area of social sciences (4 CP) – a total of 12 CP.
- 4) Participation in the UL’s doctoral schools (6 CP).

Limited electives amount to 22 CP:

- 1) Theoretical courses (8 CP);
- 2) A combined course on universally applicable skills (2 CP);
- 3) Individual research – presentation of research results at conferences (4 CP), participation in doctoral study courses at foreign universities (4 CP), participation in doctoral student and young scientist summer schools (4 CP) and time spent at foreign universities (4 CP) – a total of 12 CP.

Study courses which doctoral students have taken or passed at other universities can be included if the courses and the related certificates or documents have been accepted by the doctoral studies council of the relevant sector.

DSP Social Science has a combined set of courses which all students take together, as well as three sub-programmes that are in line with the areas of science that are covered in the programme. The combined section involves these courses:

- Dissertation I-VI (60 CP);
- Research design and ethics (4 CP);
- Research methods in the social sciences (6 CP)
- A report at an international scholarly conference I (3 CP);
- Publication of a scholarly paper in a local peer-reviewed scholarly journal or compendium or publication of a chapter in a local peer-reviewed collective monograph (3 CP);
- Publication of a scholarly paper in an international peer-reviewed journal I and II (14 CP);
- Doctoral school courses (6 CP);
- The latest trends in social theory (4 CP);
- Introduction to the work of instructors (4 CP);
- English language for social science research (4 CP);
- The mathematical, logical and methodological foundations of the social sciences (4 CP);
- A combined course on general skills (2 CP);
- Individual studies and research in section “B” (12 CP).

### **The scope of the combined section of the programme is 126 CP**

In sub-programmes of the study programme, students engage in study and research work that are part of the programme, doing so in line with the specifics of the relevant area of science, working together with other students, faculty members and researchers from the relevant area.

#### **The sub-programme “Political science:**

- The theoretical elective Timely aspects of political science (4 CP);
- The course Pedagogical and professional work in the social sciences (4 CP);
- Promotion exams in political science, area of specialisation and foreign language (10 CP).

#### **The sub-programme Sociology and social work:**

- The theoretical elective Timely aspects of sociology and social work (4 CP);
- The course Pedagogical and professional work in the social sciences (4 CP);
- Promotion exams in political science, area of specialisation and foreign language (10 CP).

#### **The sub-programme “Mass media and communication”:**

- The theoretical elective Communications theory: Development and contemporary approaches, or the theoretical elective Theories of library science and information science;
- The course Pedagogical and professional work in the social sciences (4 CP);
- Promotion exams in political science, area of specialisation and foreign language (10 CP).

### **The scope of each sub-programme is 18 CP.**

Mapping of the courses that are included in the programme (in Appendix) has shown that the courses ensure the achievement of the study programme’s learning outcomes. The courses are organised so that there is no duplication of content and so that they are offered in succession. The mapping of learning outcomes shows that the study courses of DSP Social Science achieve all of the programme’s results.

The following learning outcomes are most often planned to achieve in terms of the knowledge of students:

- 1) Understand and analyse classical and contemporary theories in communications science, political science, sociology and social work;
- 2) Understand and use research methodologies and modern research methods in communications science, political science, sociology and social work;

3) Understand and be familiar with links between communications science, political science, sociology and social work and other areas of science and professional sectors.

The following learning outcomes are most often planned to achieve in terms of the skills of students:

4) Independently evaluate and know how to prepare qualitative methodology that is in line with research in communications science, political science, sociology and social work;

5) Independently contribute to the extending knowledge in the selected research field and sub-field, or give a new understanding of existing knowledge and its empirical use by carrying out a significant original study, of which at least part is at the level of internationally refereed and cited publication;

6) Is able to communicate, both orally and in writing, on general issues of social science and the scientific scope of the selected science field and sub-field with both academia and the general public

The following learning outcomes are most often planned to achieve in terms of the competence of students:

7) Understand and manage research methodology and modern research methods;

8) Independently perform critical analysis, synthesis and evaluation, address significant research, pedagogical or innovation tasks in the field and sub-field of science

9) Independently develop an original research idea, plan, structure and manage research projects, including international projects in the relevant field and sub-field of science;

10) Independently plan, organise, conduct and lead research in contacts with other social sciences

The following learning outcomes are most often planned to achieve in terms of the knowledge of students:

1) Understand and analyse the classical and latest scientific theories in communications science, political science, sociology and social work;

2) Understand and analyse the classical and latest research conclusions in communications science, political science, sociology and social work;

3) Understand and use research methodologies and modern research methods in communications science, political science, sociology and social work;

4) Understand and be familiar with links between communications science, political science, sociology and social work and other areas of science and professional sectors.

The following learning outcomes are most often planned to achieve in terms of the skills of students:

1) Independently evaluate and know how to prepare qualitative methodology that is in line with research in communications science, political science, sociology and social work;

2) Independently enhance scholarly qualifications by engaging in scientific projects and learning how to orally and in writing communicate about achievements in communications science, political science and sociology that are in line with international criteria, or by engaging in research or development projects at companies and organisations which require high-level knowledge and skills;

The following learning outcomes are most often planned to achieve in terms of the competence of

students:

- 1) Understand and manage research methodology and modern research methods;
- 2) Independently plan, organise, conduct and lead research in contacts with other social sciences;
- 3) Invest in the expansion of knowledge boundaries or shape new understanding about existing knowledge and its application in practice by conducting a major and original research project, part of which is at the level of internationally peer-reviewed publications;
- 4) Invest in the development of the area of science and integrate into the global research environment of scientists.

Mapping results (Appendix 82) show that the planned outcomes of the study programme's courses are in line with the results that are to be achieved in the study programme. Accordingly, it can be concluded that graduates of the doctoral programme will have achieved all of the learning outcomes that are planned in the programme.

As the study programme was planned, there were consultations and support was received for the development and necessity of the programme from students in the current FFS doctoral study programme, as well as from potential employers and their organisations – the SKDS research centre, the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Latvia's Foreign Ministry, the State Probation Service, etc. In addition to this, employers have been involved in preparing courses for the programme. In future, too, there will be such consultations. The involvement of employers in the further improvement of the programme will be ensured in that they will be involved in the Study Area Council, which will review issues about fundamental changes in study programmes while also reviewing and approving reports and new study courses. There will be surveys of employers about the study programme and the knowledge of graduates and their preparedness for the labour market. Employers will also be involved in the programme on an everyday basis, because the Faculty of Social Sciences has stable links with graduates of the current FFS programme who work for the institutions that may potentially have jobs for new graduates. There will be regularly scheduled surveys of students and graduates about courses and the programme as such. This will be based on UL Instruction 334 (22 August 2016), "The procedure for organising regularly scheduled surveys to evaluate the study process at the University of Latvia." The results of these surveys will be available for the Academic Department, the director of the study programme and the dean of the faculty. If the results point to problems in specific courses, then this will first be discussed with the relevant faculty member and the heads of the relevant departments. If necessary, the issue will also be reviewed by the Study Area Council, which may decide to replace the faculty member. The council will also review the results of the study programme's surveys to think about possible changes in the programme, its content and its teaching methods, all of this aimed at addressing problems which students have indicated. The results of the survey each year are discussed with representatives of the student self-governance organisation, and this is a detailed review of problems in specific courses, with decision taken on possible ways of addressing them.

[1] <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/37967>

[2] <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/107337>

[3]

<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/124786-noteikumi-par-doktora-zinatniska-grada-pieskirsanas-promocijas-tiesibu-delegesanu-augstskolam> (This document has not been officially translated by the [State Language Centre](#).)

[4]



<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/124787-doktora-zinatniska-grada-pieskirsanas-promocijas-kartiba-un-kriteriji>  
(This document has not been officially translated by the [State Language Centre](#).)

[5] <https://www.vestnesis.lv/op/2022/189.3> (Available only in Latvian language)

[6] [https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user\\_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti\\_EN/3/Study\\_and\\_continuing\\_education\\_programmes.pdf](https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Dokumenti/Dokumenti_EN/3/Study_and_continuing_education_programmes.pdf)

[7]

[https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user\\_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Studijas/Studiju\\_organizacija/3\\_NOTEIKUMI-PAR-PROMOCIJU-ENG.pdf](https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Studijas/Studiju_organizacija/3_NOTEIKUMI-PAR-PROMOCIJU-ENG.pdf)

[8] <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/291524-noteikumi-par-latvijas-izglitibas-klasifikaciju>. (This document has not been officially translated by the [State Language Centre](#).)

**3.2.2. In the case of master's and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation. In the case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels (if applicable).**

DSP Social Science study courses are based on the latest trends in social science research methods and empirical research results, as well as in three sub-programmes which deal with theoretical ideas. The independent work that students must do, as well as examinations and particularly the dissertation are all meant to demonstrate the study's ability to use research methods and theories that they have learned so as to independently deal with serious research problems in the sector. The latest trends in social science methods are discussed in the courses "Communications theory: Development and modern approaches," "Theories in library science and information science," "Timely issues in political science" and "Timely issues in sociology and social work."

The main research areas of DSP Social Science are closely linked to the strategies of the UL and FFS (2021-2027), as well as the priorities of the UL FFS Institute for Social and Political Research:

- Latvia in international relations and security
- Innovative and inclusive governance
- The functioning and transformation of governance
- Social inequality and an inclusive society
- Interaction between individuals and technologies;
- Nature and society: Public benefits, ecological crisis, management of common resources
- Diaspora, migration and integration
- The media ecosystem
- Media, information, digital and data skills

**3.2.3. Assessment of the study programme including the study course/ module implementation methods by indicating what the methods are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. In the case of a joint study programme, or in case the study programme is implemented in a foreign language or in the form of distance learning, describe in detail**

**the methods used to deliver such a study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.**

The University of Latvia has internal norms that are in line with the Republic of Latvia's law on universities, "The procedure for preparing and actualising study courses at the University of Latvia." These state that information about rules on taking any study course, goals, missions, requirements for earning credits, the content of study courses, the organisation of the study processes for contact lessons, the organisation and missions of independent student work, the planned learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, competence) and the examination methods and grading criteria are to be included in all study course descriptions that are available to students on the UL Information System (ULIS) and the university's E-study environment.

At the beginning of each course, the instructor must inform students about how it is organised, its content, requirements, planned learning outcomes, examinations and grading criteria, also explaining the essence of the study course as part of achieving the overall learning outcomes of the programme.

DSP Social Science, its study courses and its learning outcomes (expressed as knowledge, skills and competence) were organised so that they supplement one another and are aimed at facilitating the understanding of students, as well as to encourage student initiative and responsibility for the results of the study process. A student-centred approach was taken into account when preparing the study programme and its courses, particularly focusing on a sensible formulation of learning outcomes while encouraging dialogue between instructors and students about the content, organisational forms and methods of the study process. Properly formulated learning outcomes help students to understand and take responsibility for their learning self-evaluation and understanding of the grades that they receive.

Students receive support and a reciprocal link with their instructors during the study process. Grading criteria are made known in advance. Grading helps students to show the extent to which they have learned what is necessary. The E-study Moodle environment is used in the study process so as to encourage independent studies. The study process takes into account the diversity of learning needs that exists among students, choosing appropriate pedagogical methods and encouraging motivation, self-reflection and participating in the study process among the students.

Employers will be brought in to teach and improve courses. This will involve separate lectures and seminars. At the Doctoral school, for instance, that relates to courses such as "Publication of research results I" and "Publication of research results II." Employers will also be involved in improving the academic and professional skills of students in the course "Academic and professional internship," as well as via exchange trips during the Doctoral school course "Scientific communication."

Students in successive courses have a chance to analyse and research in depth aspects of the sector that are of interest to them so as to help them to develop their research competence. During the first semester of the "Social Science" study programme, for instance, students take the courses "Research design and ethics (4 CP) and "Innovations in social science research methods" (6 CP). During the second semester, students can choose the Section B course "Foundations of mathematically-logical methodologies in social sciences" (4 CP), as well as other Section B courses which relate to theoretical aspects of social science sectors. The methodological and theoretical preparedness which students gain during their first three semesters of studies will help to prepare

international papers during the second year at the Doctoral school courses “Publication of research results I” and “Publication of research results II” (2 CP taken together).

Taken into account in the study process are the existing knowledge and experience of students, as well as the diverse learning styles among students. This means that the study programme will be flexible, and that will be facilitated by changes in the physical environments of the processes. Auditoriums can easily be adjusted for group work, and doctoral students, as needed, can use rooms at the FFS building that are specifically meant for their individual work. Students will also have access to digital technologies.

Student mobility will be facilitated by recognising study results. Students will be involved in research initiated by academic personnel and in social activities in society, thus gaining important experience in how to put their learning to practice. At the Faculty of Social Sciences, there is notable experience in this regard, but it also must be noted that improved support for doctoral students in the area of social sciences at the UL would also facilitate the form of mobility which relates to participation in foreign university doctoral student and young scientist summer schools.

Each study programme and each course at the UL has formulated learning results as a set of knowledge, skills and competence. Courses in the study programme are based on the principle of gradualness and succession. This is ensuring by the mapping of planned learning outcomes at the level of the study programme and the study courses (see Appendix DSP Social Science course mapping).

The primary study methods in DSP Social Science are:

- 1) Lectures: A systematic discussion about basic course issues. At the doctoral level, this is used to offer fundamental introductory information, requirements related to the earning of credits, and discussions about important innovations in the relevant area of science. The largest proportion of lectures relates to theoretical courses;
- 2) Seminars: An in-depth evaluation of theoretical and empirical issues that relate to the dissertations of students, as well as of drafts of their dissertations so as to discuss debatable positions therein. Doctoral students prepare for seminars independently, making use of the literature that is available at libraries and databases so as to explain and defend their views during seminar activities;
- 3) Independent studies of key literature: This is particularly crucial during the various phases of preparing the dissertation, as well as in preparing scholarly publications;
- 4) Independent research: Doctoral students are involved in research projects or do individual research so as to establish theoretical models, collect empirical data, organise surveys, conduct statistical processing and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data that have been obtained, and interpret the results. This work must be done on the basis of the previously drafted strategy and methodology for the dissertation, and the work must be done precisely and at a high level of quality, because that is the foundation for conclusions in the dissertation. Of importance in this is the use of results to prepare scholarly publications and conference reports, as well as to include them in the dissertation as such.
- 5) The dissertation: Original research by doctoral students in their chosen subsector or direction of science, with the results laid out in accordance with requirements about scientific objectivity, argumentation and ethics in good literary language. Writing the dissertation and submitting it to the doctoral council – these are the most important learning outcomes for doctoral students.

Study course exams are organised and the achievements of students are evaluated in line with the law on universities and a document related to the Constitution of the UL, “The procedure for

organising study course examinations at the University of Latvia,” as taken by the Senate of the UL on 29 June 2015, Decision No 211. This applies to the evaluation of the learning outcomes of all full and part-time students at all levels of UL study programmes. Each course has two types of examinations – midterm exams which represent no less than 50% of the total grade, as well as a final, which represents no less than 10% of the final grade. Examinations can be written, oral, or mixed. Grading involves an examination form and methods that confirm to the teaching methods that were used during contact lessons in the study process and in the organisation of the student’s individual work. Passing a final is mandatory to earn credits from the relevant course. Grading and criteria for midterm exams are determined by the relevant structure in line with the specifics of each study course. The study course grade is calculated in the centralised UL achievement registration system on the basis of the algorithm that has been cited in the course description. This takes into account midterm and final grades which are registered in the examination protocol.

Midterm exams can include tests, independent work, practical work, reports, papers and other types of work in line with the specifics of the study course. The number and type of midterm tests is defined in each course’s course description. Students must earn a passing grade each time to pass the course as such. Coursework can also be judged as successful if a student fails an exam, but that possibility is specified in the course description. Depending on the specifics of each course, there can also be requirements related to attendance.

The evaluation of learning outcomes occurs on fundamental principles that are defined in Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 240, 13 May 2014, “Regulations on the state academic education standard”:

- **Transparency** in the study programme’s goals and missions, as well as the study course goals and missions, with the university setting a set of demands for the evaluation of learning results;
- **An opportunity to review grades**, with a specific procedure for this at the university;
- **The mandatory nature of grades** in that students must pass all courses in the study programme;
- **Varying types of examinations** in the study programme;
- **Appropriateness of the grade** in that students are given a chance in examinations to confirm their knowledge, skills and competence related to assignments and situations. The content and scope of examinations is in line with the content that is specific in course programmes.

Learning outcomes are judged on a 10-point scale, though with the permission of the UL prorector, there can also be Pass/Fail courses. A course is seen as passed if the student receives a grade of no less than 4 on the 10-point scale (nearly average) or a passing grade. This is where the student receives credits for completing the relevant course.

The evaluation of students’ knowledge, skills and competence in each course is based on pre-described learning outcome criteria. These criteria are based on the learning outcomes that are planned for each study course, and the explanation of grading that is found in the “University of Latvia procedure for preparing and actualising study courses.”

The extent to which grading methods and procedures correspond to the achievement of study programme goals and to the satisfaction of student needs is analysed and improved on the basis of the experience of instructors after they analyse the learning outcomes of the students, as well as a comparative look at survey results over the course of several academic years. Students have said in surveys that of great importance are clearly formulated planned learning outcomes and clearly defined grading criteria, along with regular reciprocal links between students and faculty members during the study process. Instructors are required to systematically analyse their own experience, work with colleagues, analyse the achievements of students and improve course descriptions and

the E-study environment by drafting appropriate criteria for the planned learning outcomes and thus ensuring that the grading will be justified.

The COVID-19 pandemic adjusted the process, which was organised online with the use of the MS-Teams platform. A positive factor in this was that being online made it easier to involve foreign guest lectures in the study process.

DSP Social Science studies are based on a student-centred approach that was put in place when the programme was established. The study programme and its courses were updated, particularly focusing on a conceptual formulation of learning outcomes, facilitating collaboration between faculty members and students about the content of the studies, and the relevant organisational forms and methods. This has encouraged the understanding of students that they are co-responsible for their learning, their self-evaluation and their understanding of the grades that are received. Each course has lectures and seminars which are based on student-led discussion and mutual reviews of the work that has been done. Grading criteria are published in advance, and students have support and reciprocal links with their professors. An internal quality policy encourages students to be actively involved in looking for ways of improving the study process further. There are procedures for students to submit proposals, to deal with complaints, and to review student appeals. The student-centred approach is strengthened even further by regularly scheduled dialogue among the programme director, instructors and students about the content of studies and their organisational forms and methods.

The DSP in Social Sciences is taught in both Latvian and in English. The Moodle (*E-Studijas*) platform is also bilingual. Literature, where possible, is available in both languages, though DSP level literature is mostly in English. All assignments are in Latvian and English, ensuring identical course content and comparative grading. All UL DSP teaching staff are fluent in both Latvian and English.

**3.2.4. If the study programme envisages an internship, describe the internship opportunities offered to students, provision and work organization, including whether the higher education institution/ college helps students to find an internship place. If the study programme is implemented in a foreign language, provide information on how internship opportunities are provided in a foreign language, including for foreign students. To provide analysis and evaluation of the connection of the tasks set for students during the internship included in the study programme with the learning outcomes of the study programme (if applicable).**

**3.2.5. Evaluation and description of the promotion opportunities and the promotion process provided to the students of the doctoral study programme (if applicable).**

The promotion process of DSP Social Science is set out in the UL FFS Methodological instructions on preparing a dissertation in the Social Sciences (2022) document, as well as in a set of rules on the preparation and design of UL dissertation summaries.

The content and scope of the final examination for doctoral students are determined by the doctoral council of the relevant area of science. The exam in a foreign language develops the skill

of speaking the language, offering arguments in it, and making use of the relevant scholarly terminology in English. Doctoral students can take this exam together with the one which focuses on their area of specialisation, presenting their report and engaging in discussions in the foreign language. In that case, the exam commission includes language experts, and the linguistic skills of the student are given a separate grade. This exam can also be taken by satisfying the UL's centralised foreign language exam requirements. If a student so desires, the doctoral council of the sector can agree that all of the final examinations will be conducted in the foreign language.

The doctoral degree (Ph.D.) in Social Science is granted for defending a doctoral dissertation in the "Mass media and communication", "Political science" and "Sociology and social work" science branches. Dissertations must be original, students must undertake independent scholarly research, and the text must make a fundamental investment in the further development of the relevant area of social science. The promotion work can be a dissertation, a monograph or a compendium of scholarly papers.

**The promotion work - dissertation** involves important scientific research that is conducted at a high academic level, demonstrates that the scientific and professional qualifications of the student are at the doctoral level, and can be viewed as a major investment in the development of the sector of the mass media and communication. Dissertations require a detailed review of previous research in the relevant area. They must describe the theories and methods that are used in the work, ensure all-encompassing analysis and interpretation of the extracted results, justify conclusions, and prove that the conclusions and the work as such are important as a contribution toward the development of the Social Science sector. The basic text of a dissertation must be between 120 and 200 pages long (12-point font, line spacing 1.5, 240,000-400,000 characters, not counting appendices).

**The promotion work - monograph** involves important scientific research that is conducted at a high academic level, demonstrates that the scientific and professional qualifications of the student are at the doctoral level, can be viewed as a major investment in the development of the sector of the mass media and communication, and has been published as a book. Monographs require a detailed review of previous research in the relevant area. They must describe the theories and methods that are used in the work, ensure all-encompassing analysis and interpretation of the extracted results, justify conclusions, and prove that the conclusions and the work as such are important as a contribution toward the development of the Social Sciences. The text should be between 240,000 and 400,000 characters in length.

**Promotion work - compendium of scholarly publications** involves publications which reflect important and thematically unified scholarly research (or several thematically unified research projects), as conducted at a high academic level, as testifying to scientific and professional qualifications that are in line with the doctoral level and can be seen as a major investment in the development of the mass media and communication sector and the scientific area as such. Such compendia must include at least five thematically unified papers that have been published as separate scholarly papers or have been published in recognised and peer-reviewed scholarly journals. A summary of the papers is also required. The total length of the scholarly papers must be at least 200,000 characters. At least 50% of the content must involve the independent work of the author without any co-authors. The summary must be at least 30 pages long (12-point font, line spacing 1.5, around 60,000 characters). The summary is a concentrated review of previous research in the relevant subject area, a description of the theories and methods that have been used in the research, a reflection of the primary results and conclusions, and proof that the conclusions and the research as such will make a significant contribution toward the development of the "Social Science" sector.

Dissertations are submitted to and defended before the UL Social Science promotion council, doing so in accordance with Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 1001, “The procedure and criteria for awarding a scientific doctoral degree,” as adopted on 27 December 2005 and amended on 14 August 2018. Ph.D. degrees are available to successful graduates of the DSP Social Science programme. It is awarded for important and independently conducted scientific research that is a major investment in the relevant area of science, and speaks to the scientific and professional qualifications of the author, which are at the doctoral level. It is recommended that the results of a dissertation be published or be accepted for publication in recognised and peer reviewed scholarly journals.

More information about the defence and grading of dissertations can be found in Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 1001, “The procedure and criteria for awarding a scientific doctoral degree,” as adopted on 27 December 2005 and amended on 14 August 2018.<sup>[1]</sup>

[1] <https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=124787> (This document has not been officially translated by the State Language Centre.)

### 3.2.6. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the marks of the final theses.

The new DSP Social Science was conceived in 2020/2021 and licensed in 2021, replacing the previous DSPs in Sociology, Political Science, and the Communications Science doctoral programme in the study area Information and communication science. 48 dissertations were defended in these previous DSP’s between 2012 and 2022. The titles of the promotion work can be found in the table below.

Table 3.2.6.1.

Title	Year
Social representation of the Soviet era in post-Soviet biographic discourse in Latvia	2012
Western political consultation techniques and post-Soviet political technology political campaigns in Latvia	2012
Representation of interests before the Court of the European Union: Analysis of an energy policy case	2012
Relations between science and society in Latvia: Communicative practices and discourses	2012
Co-operation among local governments in Latvia	2012
Interpretation of the quality of education agents	2012
Harmonising work and family at private sector organisations	2012
Interaction of social construction of ethnic and national identity: An examination of Latvia’s case	2012

Transformation of the public sphere in Latvia: Internet framework	2013
Individual relationships on online social networks	2013
Interaction in innovation among small and medium companies in Latvia's forestry sector	2013
InCULding poorly educated young people into Latvia's labour market	2013
The establishment of professional ethos for government officials in Latvia, Denmark and Sweden	2013
Use of the social media in corporate communications in Latvia (2009-2011)	2014
Rural discourse in the Latvian language press in Latvia (1989-2012)	2014
Public intellectuals in Latvia during the period of perestroika and the renaissance: Construction of identities and public discourses (1986-1992)	2014
National identity and integration policy in Latvia	2014
Amateur art in Latvia: Development of the community and cultural policies	2014
Transfer of university knowledge in Latvia	2014
Innovations at the university: Aspects of power and legitimacy	2014
Risk evaULATION as a predictor of repeated criminal offences	2014
Discourse about the social memories and commemoration of Latvia's Third Renaissance in the media (1988-2014)	2015
Public media and the public benefit: Analysis of Latvia's experience	2015
The communications and ethics of social memory: Discourses about the Holocaust in Latvia (1945-2014)	2015
Library 2.0 and the Google generation: Opportunities for interaction among actors in the present day	2015
The regional press in Latgale in the cultural and social arena	2015
Populism in the discourse of Latvia's political parties between 1993 and 2011	2015
Transformation of foreign ministries in the Baltic and Scandinavian countries, 2004-2012	2015
EU foreign policy and promotion of national interests: Examination of Latvia's case	2015
Political will to strengthen human security in foreign policy: Examination of Latvia's case	2015
Signs of combining innovative action policies at a multi-level governance system: The case of countries in the Baltic Sea region	2015
The digital portrait as a construct of the self of young people in Latvia (18-25) on the social media	2016



(Re)presentation of consumers in Latvian magazine ads during the period of perestroika and the post-Soviet period: Gender identity discourse (1985-2004)	2016
Involvement of uninvolved intellectuals in national governance: Rainis and Vaclav Havel	2016
Inequality in health conditions in Latvia	2016
Political participation in Europe: Comparative analysis	2016
Capacities of communities in rural development in Latvia	2016
Suspensive veto practices in governance in Latvia (1993-2018)	2019
Human security as a national interest in foreign policy: Case analysis of Japan, Canada and Norway	2019
Joint management of private forest properties	2019
Attraction to place and lifestyle diversity in Latvia's countryside	2019
Stroke survivors and the stroke-related knowledge of their relatives	2019
How joining the European Union infULenced the development of transport policies in the Republic of Latvia	2020
The all-encompassing strategies of the United States against Russia, 2001-2017	2021
Europeanisation of executive branch co-ordination mechanisms: The experience of Estonia, Latvia and Slovenia	2021
Trans-frontier co-operation in border zones	2021
Forecasting of user experiences: The information architecture of the University of Latvia's website	2022
Learning about and changing action policies in the wake of extraordinary situations in Latvia	2022

The dissertations cover a broad range of topics, including national governance (The establishment of professional ethos for government officials in Latvia, Denmark and Sweden; Suspensive veto practices in governance in Latvia (1993-2018); Europeanisation of executive branch co-ordination mechanisms: The experience of Estonia, Latvia and Slovenia; Learning about and changing action policies in the wake of extraordinary situations in Latvia); foreign affairs and diplomacy (Transformation of foreign ministries in the Baltic and Scandinavian countries, 2004-2012; EU foreign policy and promotion of national interests: Examination of Latvia's case; The all-encompassing strategies of the United States against Russia, 2001-2017); Human security as a national interest in foreign policy: Case analysis of Japan, Canada and Norway; as well as various social problems (Including poorly educated young people into Latvia's labour market; Risk evaluation as a predictor of repeated criminal offences; Inequality in health conditions in Latvia; Political participation in Europe: Comparative analysis; Capacities of communities in rural development in Latvia).

### 3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

**3.3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples.**

DSP Social Science resources include all of the informative, material and technical resources that are discussed above (see 2.3.1.). DSP Social Sciences is implemented at the FFS. Rooms and technical support involve technologies and software that are needed in the study process. The FFS library offers several important services free of charge:

- Ordering, reserving and extending terms for electronic information resources from the Common Catalogue of libraries of national importance;
- Delivery of information resources to UL academic personnel, researchers and doctoral students who order information resources from the Common Catalogue and indicate the best place to receive the information resource – a sectoral library;
- Freely accessed reading rooms, computers and the Internet. Reading rooms have informative literature and collections of periodicals, as well as desktop and laptop computers (those of the UL library and those owned by users). There is a WI-FI system which operates in all UL buildings;
- According to data as of January 1, 2022, the collection of the UL Library (ULB) has **26,426** titles related to the information field “Political science, sociology and anthropology,” as well as **60,485** copies of printed information, mostly in English, Latvian, Russian and other languages.

The ULB also offers access to electronic resources, including the UL E-resource repository, the databases of journal publishers and others, as well as E-book platforms. In 2022, the UL has access to 42 E-resource platforms, and E-book ones include VLeBooks, ProQuest and Ebook Central, all of which are convenient for distance studies. There is also a wide array of E-journal databases, and the ones that are used the most in the area of sociology are Cambridge Journals Online, EBSCO, JSTOR, Oxford Journals Online, Sage Journals, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink Contemporary Journals, and the Taylor & Francis Social Science & Humanities Library. Subscribed electronic resources, including databases and E-book platforms can be used in the UL network and outside of it, linking to the system with a ULIS user name and password.

The ULB has implemented a state-of-the-art Internet service, Primo Discovery and SFX, to ensure more convenient access to electronic resources. One link can access search results from all of the databases which the ULB has. The collection at the library, in general terms, satisfies the needs of DSP Social Science and of scholarly research. It is supplemented each year with the most important information resources, doing so on the basis of the needs of academic personnel and students.

**3.3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific base support, including the resources provided within the framework of cooperation with other science institutes and higher education institutions (applicable to doctoral study programmes) (if applicable).**

DSP Social Science has all of the aforementioned elements of the informative, material and technical support in the field of studies.

**3.3.3. Indicate data on the available funding for the corresponding study programme, its funding sources and their use for the development of the study programme. Provide information on the costs per one student within this study programme, indicating the items included in the cost calculation and the percentage distribution of funding between the specified items. The minimum number of students in the study programme in order to ensure the profitability of the study programme (indicating separately the information on each language, type and form of the study programme implementation).**

### Revenues

DSP Social Science has the following UL resources:

- 1) A subsidy from the Ministry of Education and Science which, during the 2021/2022 academic year comes to EUR 4,890 per full-time student;
- 2) Tuition fees, taking into account all of the actors in the “Provision of Finances” section, with the fees amounting during the 2021/2022 academic year to EUR 2,350 per full-time student.

Given this, the total budget for the study programme is expected to be EUR 129,300 per year, as seen in *Table 3.3.3.1*.

*Table 3.3.3.1.*

*Forecast programme revenues per year, EUR*

Study type	Number of students	Tuition/subsidy	Total
Full-time (budget-financed)	25*	4,890	122,250
Full-time (tuition)	3	2,350	7,050
<b>Total</b>			<b>129,300</b>

\* The planned number of students whose tuition is paid by the state after the closure of DSP “Sociology,” DSP Communications Science,” and DSP Political science

### Programme costs for full-time studies in Latvian and English

Costs at DSP Social Science are based on data about students who were enrolled in the doctoral programme at the UL FFS during the 2021/2022 academic year. There were 28 full-time students, and that satisfied the planned study programme plan and the planned involvement of academic personnel after accreditation. Based on this data, the total annual costs of the program are 128 798 EUR and their structure (percentage distribution) is shown in Table 3.3.3.2.

*Table 3.3.3.2. Distribution of costs in the study programme*

Line item	% of total
Faculty costs	39%
General personnel	8%
Other costs	14%
Infrastructure	11%
Property and services	2%
Indirect costs	26%
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 3.3.3.1. the cost of the study program (vertical axis) depending on the number of students (horizontal axis), the tuition fee (green line) and the state budget subsidy (blue line) are visually represented with a red line.

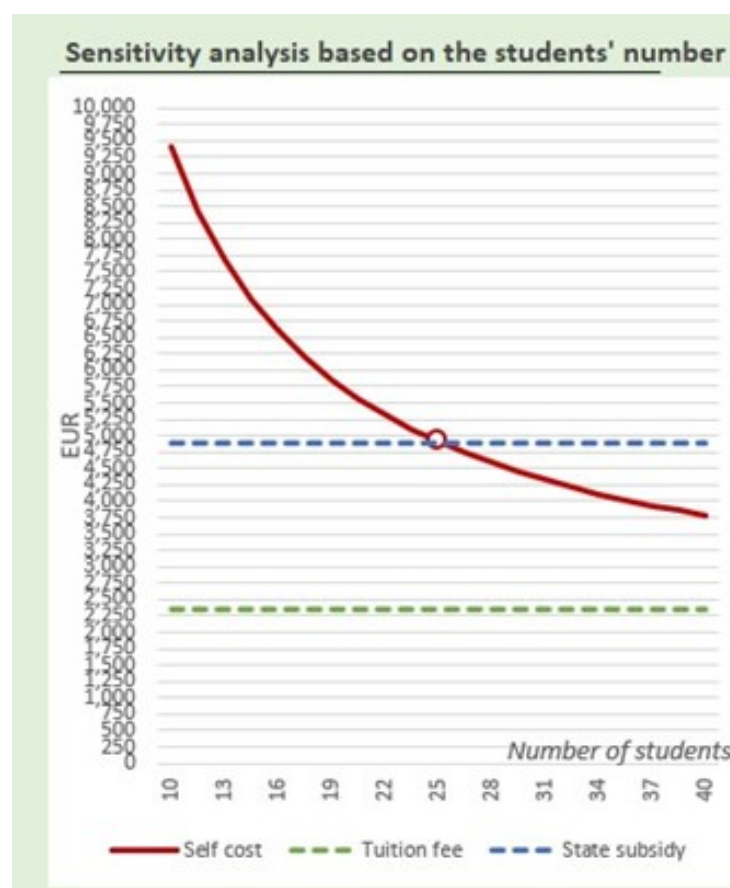


Figure 3.3.3.1. Base cost of the doctoral study programme Social Science per full-time student

Based on the cost structure and the total number of students - 28, the cost of the program per student (base cost) is 4588 EUR per year.

This calculation shows that if the programme is to be profitable and the process of studies were to be at a high level of quality, the existing national subsidy and the tuition fee means that the number of tuition-paying students in the programme (all courses) should be at least 55 (the crossing of the red (base cost) and green (tuition fee) lines on Axis X). If the student only had

tuition-paying students, then there would have to be at least 25 of them.

Programme costs for **full-time studies in English**

The developers of the program plan that at least 28 students will study in the English group of the program. Based on this data, the total annual costs of the program are 128 798 EUR and their structure (percentage distribution) is shown in Table 3.3.3.2.

Table 3.3.3.3. Distribution of costs in the study programme

Line item	% of total
Faculty costs	39%
General personnel	8%
Other costs	14%
Infrastructure	11%
Property and services	2%
Indirect costs	26%
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 3.3.3.1. the cost of the study program (vertical axis) depending on the number of students (horizontal axis), the tuition fee (green line) and the state budget subsidy (blue line) are visually represented with a red line.

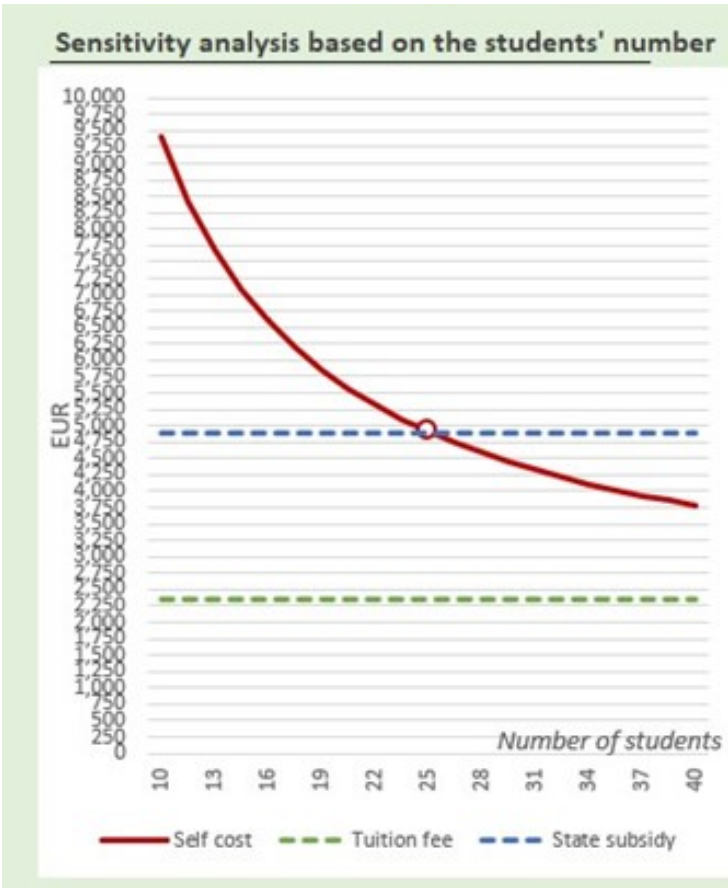


Figure 3.3.3.1. Base cost of the doctoral study programme Social Science per full-time student

Based on the cost structure and the total number of students - 28, the cost of the program per student (base cost) is 4588 EUR per year.

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### Summary of programme revenues and costs

Table 3.3.3.4. sums up the programmes revenues on the basis of the type of studies, the national subsidy, the tuition fee and the programme costs given this number of students.

Table 3.3.3.4.

Type	No of students	Tuition/subsidy	Total revenues	Total costs
Full-time (subsidy)	25*	4,890	122,250	115 000
Full-time (tuition)	3	2,350	7,050	13 800
<b>Total</b>			<b>129 300</b>	<b>128 800</b>

\* The planned number of students whose tuition is paid by the state after the closure of DSP Sociology, DSP Communications Science, and DSP Political science

These data clearly show that the UL has sufficient resources to implement the study programme and to ensure its ongoing development. Additional development can be financed from revenues from partnership projects, as well as from the finances which units in the system have saved up. Faculties also receive financial support for the development of support programmes from the UL Study Quality Improvement Fund.

## 3.4. Teaching Staff

**3.4.1. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members (academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.**

Selection and hiring of elected academic posts is based on regulations on academic and administrative jobs at the University of Latvia, as adopted by the Senate of the UL on 31 October 2011 with Decision No 153. The rules state that all applicants for academic jobs must satisfy a minimum set of requirements, including state language knowledge in accordance with normative

requirements, foreign language skills to the extent that is necessary to handle the duties of an economic job, as well as uninterrupted improvement of the candidate's academic and scientific qualifications. DSP Social Science selects faculty members with an eye toward ensuring that these are experienced instructors and active researchers. These are the mandatory requirements for faculty members: 1) Their qualifications satisfy normative requirements; 2) Their area of scholarly research work is in line with the content of the study programme and/or the courses that they teach; 3) They have sufficient English language skills; and 4) They have published papers in international peer-reviewed journals during the previous six years.

The qualifications of academic personnel in DSP Social Science satisfy the need to achieve the study programme's goals and missions. The law on universities, which was adopted by Parliament on 2 November 1995, states that academic doctoral study programmes must have at least five holders of doctoral degrees, with at least three of them are experts affirmed by the Latvian Science Council in the relevant sector. Only holders of doctoral degrees will be chosen as docents and faculty advisers for dissertations in DSP Social Science. Most courses in the programme are taught by elected faculty members from the UL FFS, while others are taught by elected faculty members from other faculties. All docents in the programme have a doctorate which fully satisfies the requirements of the doctoral study programme and ensures the necessary level of quality in the programme.

DSP Social Science has nine professors, eight associate professors, three docents and one senior researchers, which satisfies the requirement for at least five professors. Regeneration, training and development of academic personnel occur in accordance with individual plans that are approved when the rector of the UL and the dean of the FFS conclude job agreements with the relevant faculty members. In 2022, 12 faculty members were LZP experts (see Appendix 85 for a list of holders of doctorates who are part of DSP Social Science and who approved by the Latvian Science Council). Intersectoral co-operation is facilitated by involving docents and instructors from other faculties in the FFS, including a professor from the UL Faculty of Computer Science, and a professor from the UL Faculty of the Humanities. Instructors from various departments also work together in certain study courses. The course "Latest trends in social science research methods," for instance, involves guest faculty members from abroad. Faculty members in the programme also take part in international projects, as well as those that are organised by the Latvian Science Council and other institutions. Academic personnel in the programme are recognised scientists in Latvia and abroad, as is proven by the papers which they have published. Instructors regularly take part in international conferences and publish papers in recognised journals, including those that are indexed in the Scopus and Web of Science databases. This supports improvements to the content of study courses in accordance with relevant trends in the sector.

Faculty members who are involved in DSP Social Science can fully achieve the study programme's goals and planned learning outcomes, ensuring the learning of high-quality theoretical knowledge and research skills in the social science sector.

#### **3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.**

The DSP in Social Science was created in 2021 and there were no changes in academic staff during the first year of operation.

**3.4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members, involved in the implementation of doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals or peer-reviewed monographs may be additionally specified. Information on the teaching staff included in the database of experts of the Latvian Council of Science in the relevant field of science (total number, name of the lecturer, field of science in which the teaching staff has the status of an expert and expiration date of the Latvian Council of Science expert) (if applicable).**

Between 2015 and 2021, academic personnel at DSP Social Science published 104 papers that are indexed in the Scopus database. This demonstrates the internationality and expansion of publication by these people.

12 faculty members at DSP Social Science are experts at the Latvian Science Council, and nine of them are experts in their relevant fields. Three professors in the political science subprogramme, Two professors and three associate professors in the sociology / social work subprogramme, 1 professor in the mass media and communication subprogramme (for more information see list of DSP experts in the appendix, section Other attachments).

**3.4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).**

During recent years, academic personnel from DSP Social Science have taken part in several national and international projects, including "Horizon2020" and "EU-FP7" initiatives, State research programme (VPP) projects, and LZP fundamental and applies research projects (Table 4).

*Table 3.4.4.1.*

*Scientific projects implemented by academic personnel from DSP "Social science"*

Project	Type of project	Time	Participants	Source of funding	Amount of funding (EUR)
"Risks to Democracy Caused by Disinformation and Conspiracy Theories: A Review of Latvia's Experience"	LZP FLPP	2020-2022	2 professors, 1 associate professor	Latvian Council of Science	300 000



"Life with COVID 19: A Review of Overcoming the Crisis Caused by the Coronavirus in Latvia and Proposals on Public Durability in Future"	VPP	2020	1 associate professor	State Research Programme	497 580
European Researchers Night in Latvia 2018-2019 (NIGHTLV)	Horizon 2020	2020	1 professor, 1 assistant professor	Horizon 2020 Framework Programme	30 825
European Social Survey (ESS)		9 <sup>th</sup> round 2018-20, 10 <sup>th</sup> 2021-22	2 assistant professors	SEDA (State Education Agency)	198 248 181 258
"The Economy of Symbolic Exchange: Gift-Giving as a Social, Cultural and Political Practice in Late Medieval Livonia"	Estonian Science Council, project MOBJD231	2018-2020	1 senior researchers	Estonian Council of Science	66 424
European Values Study		2017-2021	1 associate professor	Cross Sectoral Coordination Centre	63 508
"From Past to Present: Migration and Integration in Life Stories in the Partnership Network"	NORDPULS	2018-2020	1 associate professor	SEDA (State Education Agency)	
The second research cycle of a study on international and increasing competence evaluation programme related to adults	OECK PIAAC	2018-2024	2 professors, 2 associate professors, 1 assistant professor	Latvian Ministry of Education and Science	2 107 164,90
"COMPACT": From Research to Policy Through Raising Awareness of the State of the Art on Social Media and Convergence	"Horizon2020-ICT-2016-2017 ( <i>Information and Communications Technologies Call</i> )"	2017-2010	1 professor	INDUSTRIAL LEADERSHIP - Leadership in enabling and industrial technologies - Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)	21 875
SUSTINNO	VPP		4 professors, 5 associate professors, 1 assistant professor	State Research Programme	900 000

“Development of a Sustainable and Consolidated Society in Latvia”: Solutions to Demographic and Migration Challenges”	VPP			Latvian Ministry of Education and Science	495 800
“Latvia: Report on Human Development, 2019/2020”	UL FFS SPPI	2019-2020	1 professor, 1 associate professor	University of Latvia	20275,18
“Media Ecology in Latvia: Analysis of Changes Caused by Fourth Industrial Revolution”	LZSP FLPP	2018-2020	1 professor, 1 associate professor	Latvian Council of Science	199 848
Diaspora of Latvian Scientists: Partnership Networks and Opportunities	Commissioned by IZM	2019	2 associate professors	Latvian Ministry of Education and Science	20 000
“Latvia: Report on Human Development, 2017/2018”	UL FFS SPPI	2017-2019	2 associate professors	University of Latvia	9967,69
Attracting Diaspora Sciences and Facilitating Co-operation	Commissioned by IZM	2017	1 associate professor	Latvian Ministry of Education and Science	19988,82
“Diversity in Latvia’s Media Environment”	UL, Ministry of Culture ESP	2017	1 professor, 1 associate professor	Ministry of Culture	40 000
“A Study of the Media Skills of Children and Teenagers aged 9-16 in Latvia, with Recommendations for further Steps to be Taken in Facilitating the Media Skills of Children and Teenagers”	Ministry of Culture	2017	1 associate professor	Ministry of Culture	4247,1
SUSPLACE – Sustainable Place Shaping: Inclusive, Resilient & Connected Places, Greening Economies and Pathways to Sustainability	H2020 Marie Curie Innovative Training Networks, grant 674962	2015-2019	1 professor	Horizon 2020 Framework Programme	476 712,72
“Living Together with Difficult Memories and Diverse Identities”	ERA.NET RUS PULs-S&T, EU-FP7 initiatives project	2016-2017	2 professors	Horizon 2020 Framework Programme	81 368

"A Study of the Economic Involvement of the Diaspora and Opportunities to Use the Potential of Knowledge"	Commissioned by LIAA	2016-2017	1 associate professor	Investment and Development Agency of Latvia	11327,6
"Latvia: Report on Human Development, 2015/2016"	UL FFS SPPI	2016	1 professor, 3 associate professors	University of Latvia	9967,69
"Preparation of Innovative Regional Development Diagnostic Instruments"	ESF	2015	1 associate professor	European Social fund	473 335
"Children Born of War: Past, Present, Future	Marie Curie Innovative Training Networks (Horizon-2020, H2020-MSCA-ITN-2014)	2015-2019	1 professor	Horizon 2020 Framework Programme	223 577
"Social Dimension and Social Innovation of Sustainability"	VPP "Innovation and Sustainable Development: Post-Crisis Processes in Latvia in the Global Context (SUSTINNO)"	2014-2018	3 professors, 3 associate professors, 1 assistant professor	State Research Programme	107 994
"Value Orientations in Society and Restoration of Society"	VPP "Innovation and Sustainable Development: Post-Crisis Processes in Latvia in the Global Context (SUSTINNO)"	2014-2018	3 professors, 1 associate professor	State Research Programme	110 460

**3.4.5. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study programme and study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).**

Lecturing staff in the DSP Social Science are based in the three relevant UL FFS departments – political science, sociology and information & communication – and work in tandem with academic

staff from other related faculties. This partnership and support culture is underpinned by the DSP Social Science Study Council, which reviews issues related to the DSP and its work (achievements by doctoral students, analysis of the study process and learning outcomes, etc.). All departments and most of the teaching staff in the programme are represented on the Council. A number of courses are taught by at least two instructors (Research design and ethics, Latest trends in social science research methods, Socio-political problems in the Baltic States and Post-Soviet arena, Latest trends in social theory, Communications theory: Development and Contemporary Approaches, Theories of Library Science and Information Science, Research result publication I and II). All DSP courses take place in a seminar room with workplaces arranged in a circle so as to facilitate collaboration and discourse with and between doctoral students. The Council of the Sociology, Political Science and Anthropology study field offers a platform for broader strategic discussions about how to develop teaching content and how to improve the study programme. Scientific partnerships relate to the projects and conferences of the UL FFS Institute for Social and Political Research, where doctoral students are involved in research projects as well as organise and participate in conferences. During the 2023/2024 academic year, the study programme will move to a modern, new building at the new UL campus at Torņkalns. This will help to enhance new forms of co-operation with instructors and research institutes at other faculties.

At the time of writing this report, the proportion between students and faculty members was 0.43 students per instructor, but it must be kept into account that this only applies to the first course of DSP Social Science (nine students).

# Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	Diploma SOC DSP.pdf	diploma_paraugs_DR_latviski.pdf
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	Statistics SOC DSP.pdf	DSP statistikas dati.pdf
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard		
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	Mapping of the study courses SOC DSP.xlsx	Kursu_kartejums_DSP.xlsx
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	Study plan SOC DSP.pdf	DSP plāns.pdf
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	Study courses SOC DSP.pdf	SOC DSP kursu apraksti.pdf
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)		
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)	Study field declaration experts.pdf	SOC DSP ekspertu apliecinajums.edoc
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 (if applicable)	Study field declaration SOC DSP.pdf	DSP apliecinajums 55. pants.edoc

# Cultural and Social Anthropology (45314)

Study field	<i>Sociology, Political Science, and Anthropology</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Cultural and Social Anthropology</i>
Education classification code	<i>45314</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>Academic master study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Aivita</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Putniņa</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>aivita.putnina@lu.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Asociētais profesors</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>67034922</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>To prepare anthropology specialists at a higher level, characterized by the ability to orientate in the history and modern approaches of anthropology, independently plan and conduct practical anthropological research, critically and systematically analyze social and cultural processes.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<p><i>Supporting students so as to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. Strengthen academic thinking and writing skills, as well as those that relate to the communication of academic knowledge in the broader society;</i></li> <li><i>2. Gain top-level academic knowledge about cultural and social anthropology, providing students with systematic knowledge about theory, use of concepts, research methods and techniques, and research ethics;</i></li> <li><i>3. Use the theoretical knowledge, methods and ethnographic examples to analyse various social and cultural issues;</i></li> <li><i>4. Have and strengthen the skills, knowledge and competence to plan, manage and pursue research processes so as to describe, evaluate and analyse research problems, prepare research applications, select appropriate research methods, and then extract, process, analyse and interpret the relevant data;</i></li> <li><i>5. Do independent scholarly and search work so as to strengthen practical experience in managing individual and group research, engaging in critical analysis of research responsibility, and ensuring an ethical approach toward research participants and colleagues;</i></li> <li><i>6. Develop the skills that are necessary for further professional and personal growth by supporting ambition and responsibility and by laying foundations for professional co-operation and improvement opportunities in anthropology and other fields of endeavour.</i></li> </ol>

Results of the study programme	<p><i>Knowledge:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. To recognize and understand large-scale anthropological approaches, theories and concepts according to the curriculum of the program, to know and understand the nature of knowledge and its interrelationship.</i></li> <li><i>2. Recognize and understand different methods and approaches of anthropological research and understand the social and scientific significance of research.</i></li> </ol> <p><i>Skills:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>3. Apply theories of anthropology and provide contextual comparison in known and new situations, understand moderately complex and complex theoretical concepts.</i></li> <li><i>4. To use appropriate anthropological methods in the context of fieldwork research, to establish good relations with research participants. identify an appropriate ethnographic context for comparison.</i></li> <li><i>5. To communicate in writing and orally in both academic and public environment, to review and evaluate one's and other colleagues' work at a high level.</i></li> <li><i>6. Create and implement an appropriate research plan based on fieldwork research and share responsibilities for group work and effective teamwork.</i></li> <li><i>7. Know and use appropriate electronic and other tools (software and hardware), effectively plan time and workload, use information resources responsibly and efficiently.</i></li> </ol> <p><i>Competences:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>8. To apply anthropological theories at a high level and to provide contextual comparison in known and new situations, using appropriate theoretical concepts and ethnographic contexts at a high level, as well as to understand, process and interpret articles, presentations and discussions related to the field of anthropology.</i></li> <li><i>9. Understand the meaning and limitations of data and their interpretation, identify and encode data items, creating logical links between data items at a high level in a theoretical and comparative context.</i></li> <li><i>10. Understand and demonstrate an ethical approach and professionalism in field work and conduct research in an ethically responsible manner, assessing ethical challenges and finding appropriate solutions and choosing appropriate methods and approaches to anthropological research.</i></li> </ol>
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	<i>Masters' Thesis</i>

## Study programme forms

### Full time studies - 2 years - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	<i>2</i>
Duration in month	<i>0</i>

Language	<i>latvian</i>
Amount (CP)	<i>80</i>
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>A bachelor's degree or a second-level vocational higher education (or equivalent) and entrance examination. English language skills at least B2 level</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Master of Social Sciences in Sociology and Cultural Studies</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	-

#### **Places of implementation**

<b>Place name</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Address</b>
University of Latvia	RĪGA	RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050

#### **Full time studies - 2 years - english**

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	<i>2</i>
Duration in month	<i>0</i>
Language	<i>english</i>
Amount (CP)	<i>80</i>
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>A bachelor's degree or a second-level vocational higher education (or equivalent) and entrance examination. Studies in English require English language knowledge (at least B2 level)</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Master of Social Sciences in Sociology and Cultural Studies</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	-

#### **Places of implementation**

<b>Place name</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Address</b>
University of Latvia	RĪGA	RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050



### 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

**3.1.1. Description and analysis of changes in the parameters of the study programme made since the issuance of the previous accreditation form of the study field or issuance of the study programme license, if the study programme is not included on the accreditation form of the study field, including changes planned within the evaluation procedure of the study field evaluation procedure.**

Since 2009, the University of Latvia (LU) has offered a master's degree programme in anthropology, "Cultural and Social Anthropology" (CSA MSP).

The main change related to CSA MSP is that the degree was changed from a humanities master's degree in anthropology to a social science master's degree in anthropology, this being done in accordance with programme groups that are defined in Cabinet of Ministers (MK) Regulation No 322, "Regulations on Latvia's education classification," as adopted on 13 June 2017. The result was a change in the direction of the programme, as well as the nomenclature and code of the programme. This shift was approved at a meeting of the Study Quality Commission of the Higher Education Quality Agency on 9 March 2022. Prior to this, external experts analysed the shift in accordance with MK Regulation No 793, as adopted on 11 December 2018.

These changes are reflected in greater detail in Table 3.1.1.1.

*Table 3.1.1.1. Changes in the study programme*

Parameters	Programme accredited in 2013	Improved programme	Reason
Degree	Humanities master's degree in anthropology	Social science master's degree in anthropology	Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 322, "Regulations on Latvia's education classification," as adopted on 13 June 2017, as well as Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 240, "Regulations on the state academic education standard," as adopted on 13 May 2014

Field	Language and cultural studies, native language studies, linguistic programmes	Sociology, political science and anthropology	Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 795, "Regulations on launching and accrediting fields of study," as adopted on 11 December 2018
Code	45227	45314	Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 322, "Regulations on Latvia's education classification," as adopted on 11 December 2018

Changes have also been made to the goals and missions of CSA MSP (Table 2), as well as learning outcomes that have been made more precise in accordance with recommendations from the previous accreditation commission, as well as the latest methodological ideas.

*Table 3.1.1.2. Changes to the goals and missions of CSA MSP*

Goals of the programme accredited in 2013	Goals of the improved programme	Reason
The primary goal of the cultural and social anthropology MSP is to train anthropologists for Latvia's economy who hold a cultural and social anthropology master's academic degree, providing them with knowledge and research skills and abilities for further academic work or a professional career in business, national governance, international institutions or the NGO sector.	The goal of the cultural and social anthropology master's degree programme is to train top-level social anthropology specialists who can focus on historical and modern approaches toward anthropology, conduct independent and practical anthropological research, and critically and systematically analyse social and cultural processes.	The goal of the programme was updated in 2018 by transforming the programme's learning outcomes. The Study Quality Commission of the Higher Education Quality Agency praised this change on 9 March 2022.
Missions of the programme accredited in 2013	Missions of the improved programme	Reason

<p>Supporting students so as to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide academic knowledge about cultural and social anthropology at the level of a master's degree qualification, ensuring knowledge about theories, developmental trends, applicable concepts, as well as fundamental and specialised research work emphasising the Baltic region with the relevant research methods, fieldwork and research ethics;</li> <li>2. Train cultural and social anthropology specialists who can independently make use of theories, methods and problem solving knowledge, skills and abilities for further studies, academic work, or practical research and professional work in the Baltic region;</li> <li>3. Develop and improve skills related to the identification, analysis, interpretation and handling of scientific, professional and social problems at the state and non-governmental sector, as well as in business, making use of anthropological perspectives and methods, using analytical and critical thinking skills, and being able to take part in interdisciplinary teamwork;</li> <li>4. Develop skills in conducting independent anthropological research, evaluating research appropriateness and ensuring an ethical approach toward sources of information and colleagues while also developing innovative ideas on the basis of specialised scholarly literature;</li> <li>5. Develop the skill to write scholarly and popular papers, presentations or applications for papers, being able to present the work in an academically and socially understandable way, as well as to analyse and review the results of other research projects;</li> <li>6. Develop the skills, ambition and responsibility that are related to the ongoing improvement of education by updating knowledge with the help of ongoing and lifelong education, as well as undergoing professional development.</li> </ol>	<p>Supporting students so as to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strengthen academic thinking and writing skills, as well as those that relate to the communication of academic knowledge in the broader society;</li> <li>2. Gain top-level academic knowledge about cultural and social anthropology, providing students with systematic knowledge about theory, use of concepts, research methods and techniques, and research ethics;</li> <li>3. Use the theoretical knowledge, methods and ethnographic examples to analyse various social and cultural issues;</li> <li>4. Have and strengthen the skills, knowledge and competence to plan, manage and pursue research processes so as to describe, evaluate and analyse research problems, prepare research applications, select appropriate research methods, and then extract, process, analyse and interpret the relevant data;</li> <li>5. Do independent scholarly and search work so as to strengthen practical experience in managing individual and group research, engaging in critical analysis of research responsibility, and ensuring an ethical approach toward research participants and colleagues;</li> <li>6. Develop the skills that are necessary for further professional and personal growth by supporting ambition and responsibility and by laying foundations for professional co-operation and improvement opportunities in anthropology and other fields of endeavour.</li> </ol>	<p>The missions of the programme were updated in 2018 by transforming the achievable learning outcomes and ensuring that the missions are student-focused.</p>
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**3.1.2. Analysis and assessment of the study programme compliance with the study field. Analysis of the interrelation between the code of the study programme, the degree, professional qualification/professional qualification requirements or the degree and professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements. Description of the duration and scope of the implementation of the study programme (including different options of the study programme implementation) and evaluation of its usefulness.**

On March 9, 2022, the AIC Study Quality Commission took decision 2022/-4-I after reviewing requests No 1-13/693 and 1-13/-694 from the University of Latvia (LU), as submitted on November 5, 2021. On the basis of this, as well as on the basis of conclusions from external experts, the commission decided to approve a change in the study field to "Sociology, Political Studies and Anthropology," and to change the code in the Latvian education classification, "because the content of the study programmes are in line with the 'Sociology and cultural studies' programme group into which anthropology belongs" (p 3). This decision confirms thorough expert analysis to make sure that KSA MSP is in line with the aforementioned field of studies. The experts also concluded that the content of the study programme is in line with the sector of anthropology.

The Study Quality Commission also evaluated other parameters of the programme, including enrolment requirements and the duration of the studies. KSA MSP is offered Full-time, and the studies take two years (four semesters). Students earn 80 credits (KP) during this period. The duration of the programme is based on Bologna process recommendations, and in terms of content, it is linked to the three-year bachelor's degree programme in the field.

KSA MSP fully satisfies state education standards in accordance with Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 240, "Regulations on the state academic education standard," as adopted on 13 May 2014. A more detailed discussion of this can be found in the appendix which speaks to how the programme satisfies the standard.

Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 264, "Regulations on the profession classification, professions in line with basic missions and fundamental qualification requirements," as adopted on 23 May 2017, shows that the qualification requirements for specialists in the fields of anthropology and sociology are defined as follows:

"304. The separate group '2632 Sociologists, anthropologists, and senior specialists from related professions' have the following basic missions: Ensure the rise of human society by conducting research concerning structures, social norms, organisations and mutual relations; prepare scholarly papers and reviews in the fields of sociology, anthropology and related areas; explain the origins and evolution of humankind by researching shifting problems and phenomena of a cultural and social nature; explain the development of humankind by studying the remnants of material culture from the past – residences, temples, instruments, coins, weapons and sculptures; study the physical and climatic conditions of zones and regions, adapting economic, social and cultural activities to them; provide consultations on the practical use of such research to shape economic and social policies; research and analyse the behaviour, attitudes and interactions among social groups and social institutions; analyse social processes and problems; organise and manage social research; ensure information and knowledge so that managers or governance systems can take decisions or use them for academic purposes."

This is the most voluminous regulatory description of the content of anthropology and sociology.

KSA MSP courses partly cover all of this content, offering more in-depth specialisation in the area of culture and society. The description is fully covered by KSA BSP.

There are no other binding norms in Latvia to define the content of the sector of anthropology. To evaluate the appropriateness, a comparison has been made among various anthropology MSPs. When it comes to the programmes, there are no major differences in terms of content. The focus at the University of Helsinki is on social changes, migration and inequality that are reviewed from the social and the cultural perspective. The names of courses overlap between the University of Tallinn and the RSU KSA MSP, but Tallinn specialises in audiovisual anthropology and places a greater emphasis on content which is created by students during research seminars. RSU offers an introductory programme in anthropology, and its structure and names of courses are similar to the KSA bachelor's degree programme. Anthropology is seen as a field of the humanities in Estonia, while in Finland and Latvia it is seen as part of the social sciences. In comparison to other universities, the University of Tallinn offers a master's degree of arts in humanities, the University of Latvia and the RSU award master's degrees in the social sciences, and the degree given by the University of Helsinki does not indicate an areas of specialisation or the name of the relevant field of studies (master's degree).

The list of KSA MSP courses shows that the mandatory (Section A) courses represent 100% of 50 credits. The limited elective (Section B) courses also offer a total of 50 KP. Of these, 56% are related to anthropology, while 28% relate to other areas of the social sciences. 16% relate to the humanities, but those are regional and ethnology courses which are classified in Latvia as being part of the field of social sciences.

In seeking out a niche in the region, LU KSA MSP will continue to preserve links to humanities programmes, as is dictated by the history of anthropology in Latvia. The programme will also, however, take advantage of the opportunity to create new areas of specialisation for students that relate to political science and sociology. These will be included in the free electives section of the programme. This section also includes several related courses from the social sciences (Russia's policies in the CIS and Baltic States, Discourse analysis, Migration and integration, Biographic methods in the humanities and social sciences, Developmental planning), while also preserving the contrasting components of other anthropology programmes (Popular culture in Japan, Buddhism), as well as ethnographic courses from the Baltic region so as to ensure knowledge about the comparative method that is characteristic of anthropology.

There are no planned changes for enrolment requirements. Applicants for KSA MSP must have at least an average level of English language skills, and that has to do with the fact that most of the literature in the sector is in English. This also is the case for applicants who study the program in Latvian because the literature intended for studying the courses is available mainly in English. Enrolment requirements do not limit the sectoral belonging of previously obtained education. Entrance exams are meant to make sure that students will be able to study successfully and complete the programme. The exams consist of a well-argued essay about the applicant's motivations in applying to the programme, followed by conversations in which the skills and readiness of applicants can be evaluated. New students are offered an introductory course in anthropology that is worth 4 KP (Cultural and social anthropology and methods). This course is mandatory for all students who have no pre-knowledge about anthropology.

The study program is implemented in Latvian and English. KSA MSP is the continuation of the 3-year KSA BSP, which is also offered in Latvian and English. Latvian National Education Development Guidelines 2021-2027 as an overarching goal for 2018 strives to provide quality education opportunities to all Latvian residents in order to promote the development and realization of their potential throughout their lives and to build their ability to change and responsibly manage the

constant changes in society and the national economy. A modern, high-quality educational offer oriented to the development of skills highly valued in the labor market is offered as part of the program, transferring the latest approaches and knowledge in research through foreign-educated lecturers, as well as high quality standards on a national and international scale is offered in the Latvian language. In response to the Education Development Guidelines 2021-2027. 2nd goal: "Modern, high-quality educational offer oriented to the development of skills highly valued in the labor market", the implementation of the KSA MSP program in Latvian and English languages strengthens the international cooperation and internationalization of higher education. The national policy document emphasizes that "it is essential to improve the quality of the internationalization of Latvian higher education, ensuring both modern and high-quality study programs and study environment, as well as highly qualified academic staff, and attracting motivated students" for the purposeful creation of HI export. In Latvia, there are relatively few foreign students directly in the profile of social sciences and humanities, and anthropology programs have a high potential to respond to the challenges of globalization and promote interdisciplinarity, which has been characteristic of the sector since its beginnings, including interdisciplinarity with STEM sectors. By conducting research and communicating with similar program implementers in Europe and the USA, opportunities have been discovered that make the program attractive to foreigners. First, it is a practical and student-centered approach. Secondly, it is relatively easy for foreign students to gain research experience due to Latvia's diverse linguistic environment. Since the instructors of the program are bilingual in Latvian and English and mostly received their education in foreign universities where the language of instruction was English, KSA MSP has a high potential of teaching staff to offer studies in English. The UL has an attractive study environment and opportunities for foreign students. In Latvia, anthropology is a relatively new branch of science, and KSA MSP is the only program of this level in Latvia, helping to create terminology and new approaches to the study of human relations in the Latvian language. This program is unique with the opportunity to learn anthropology in depth, which until now is the only anthropology programme available in Latvian at the bachelor's level in the world. Since anthropology has a distinctly cross-cultural approach, foreign and Latvian student groups, using a student-centered approach, allow internationalization to be implemented also at the level of student communication in the bilingual study e-environment and between student streams. Creating programs in English is a strategic goal of LU and SZF. In addition, English stream students increase the number of students in the program, bring in tuition fees allowing to ensure the sustainability of the program, which is an essential aspect of the survival of KSA MSP, due to comparatively low state funding compared to other similar programs. The flow of the English language also allows attracting foreign students with Latvian state scholarships.

### **3.1.3. Economic and/ or social substantiation of the study programme, analysis of graduates' employment.**

Anthropology is a new field of science in Latvia, but it has been well known for a long time elsewhere in the world. Anthropologists study the phenomenon of human beings in a global context, also looking at how people put together relationships and their social life. Unlike other areas of social science in Latvia, KSA MSP offers instruments which make it possible to study the diversity of humanity, as well as to gain critical knowledge about the society in which one lives.

KSA MSP trains specialists with knowledge about a diverse area of human activities, social, economic, political, relationship, religious and other area functions, as well as the diversity of

society and management thereof. The popularity of the field of anthropology has grown together with processes of globalisation and shrinking distances. Graduates of KSA MSP, accordingly, have found work in Latvia and abroad in various areas, because their education goes beyond the Latvian context.

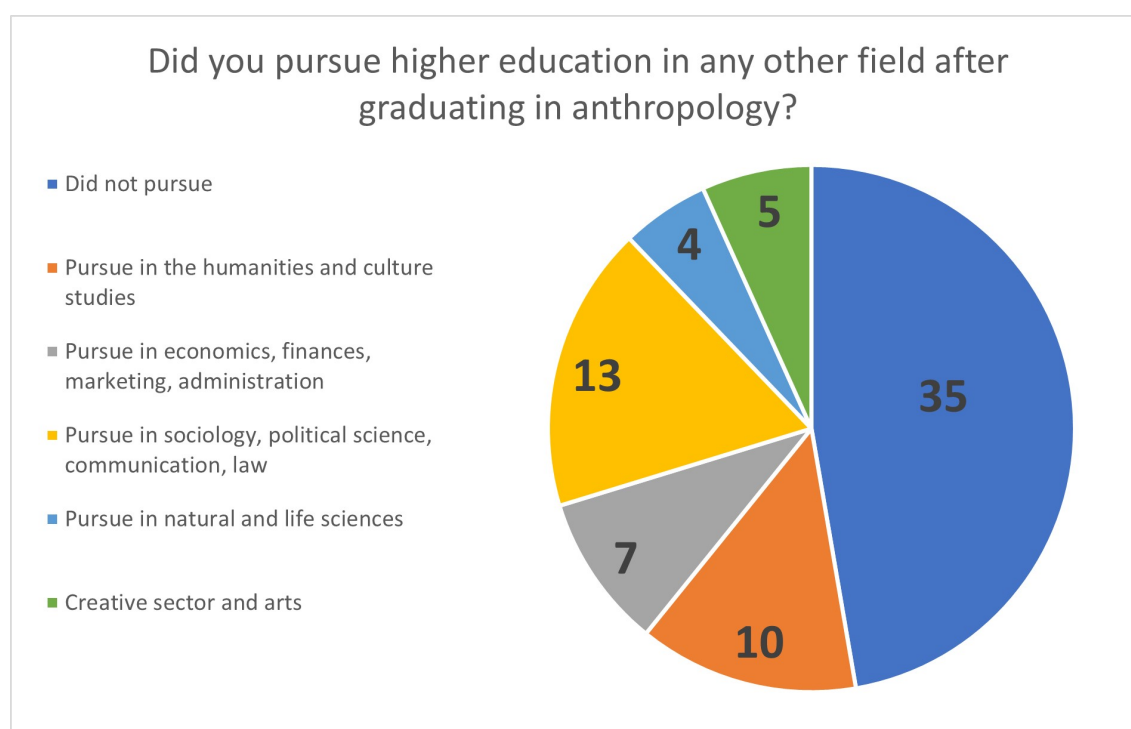
Graduates can use the knowledge that they have gained to work in academic research, as well as at various state and NGO structures and businesses, because they are familiar with intercultural communications skills and have a holistic view about the diversity of society.

The programme has a comparatively small number of slots for students whose tuition is paid by the state, but it has nevertheless been able to attract students and prove that the demand for anthropology in Latvia and the world is still at a high level.

74 anthropology graduates were surveyed in August and September 2020 via a questionnaire on the Visidati.lv portal. Among master's degree graduates, 31 (62%) of them participated in the survey. Seven respondents had completely both programmes. The survey was taken by 10 men and 64 women with an average age of 30.2 years.

Most of the graduates went on to continue their education, and their careers demonstrate a broad spectrum of ongoing education (Figure 3.1.3.1.).

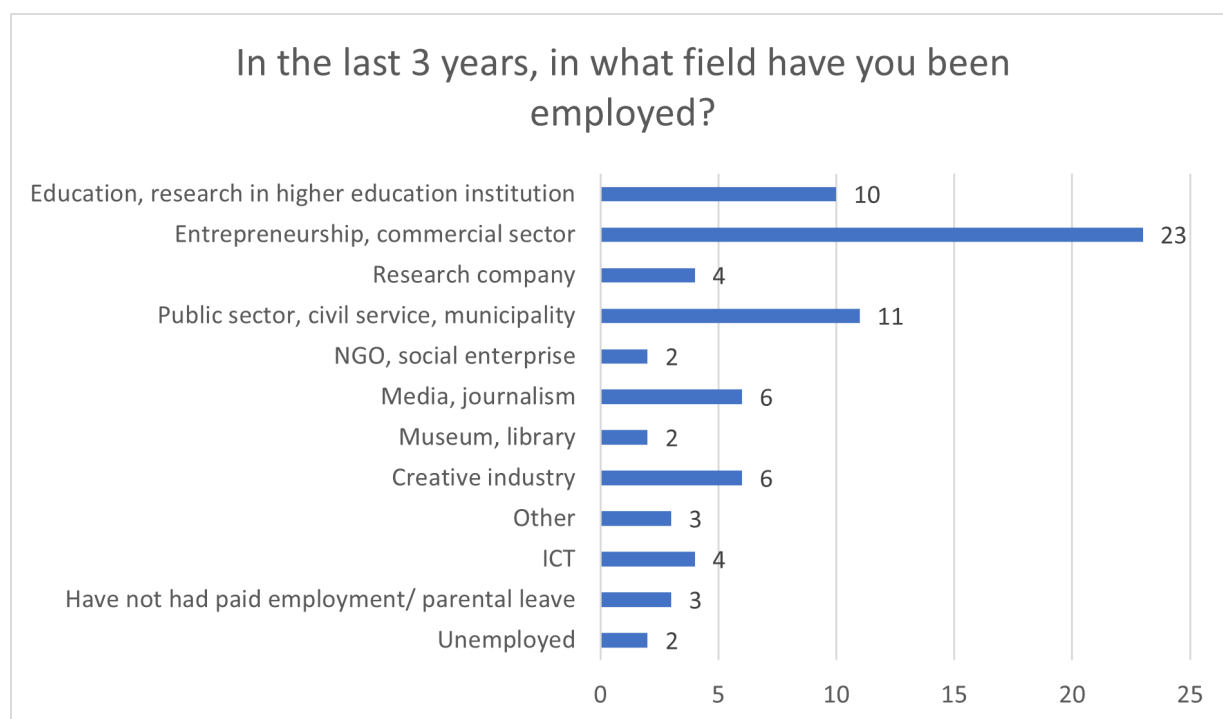
*Figure 3.1.3.1. The ongoing education of programme graduates*



We see in Figure 3.1.3.1 that 79% of respondents stopped their education after completing the master's degree programme. These data confirm that the programme is most often used as an element which supplements education for people who are already on their career trajectory. Most applicants who begin their studies have already had a master's degree, while two had a doctoral degree. Of the seven respondents who completed both programmes, four did not continue their education. The survey suggests that these respondents are mostly employed in the area of anthropology as professionals, but they do not continue their academic career. That probably is down to the fact that there is no further education level in anthropology in Latvia.

The places where graduates work are also very diverse (Figure 2). Most of them work for private companies, while a few are employed in research, most often at universities or research institutes.

Figure 3.1.3.2. Employers of anthropology graduates in absolute numbers



If we look at how much money graduates are earning, then we find that graduates of the master's degree programme earn between EUR 1,222 and EUR 1,540 on average, while those who have completed both bachelor's and master's degrees earn between EUR 1,219 and EUR 1,519 (though such graduates usually remain in academia and/or continue their studies, thus earning less than those who work elsewhere, including in the private research sector). The average wage was calculated on the basis of the boundaries of salaries in responses to the questionnaire, then dividing it up in relation to the number of respondents in each category. Average salaries for respondents involved in research are a bit higher than average. Most of those in the higher range of wages are master's degree graduates, which suggests that the tendency of the programme to study anthropology just to gain additional knowledge so as to work in a sector other than anthropology.

Given these broad career choices, it is essential to understand the kind of knowledge and skills that the programme can provide. Graduates of both programmes are the most satisfied ones, and that probably has to do with the fact that most of these people work in the sector. 81% of master's degree programme graduates link their knowledge to their career (as opposed to 60% of bachelor's degree graduates who agree). This suggests that there are different target groups for the two programmes.

Asked about types of knowledge and skills, respondents are more positive than when they think about how the programme has influenced their overall career. Respondents most often use analytical and critical thinking skills, as well as skills related to preparing texts and to English language abilities. Less often used are specifically anthropological knowledge and skills. Generally speaking, the programme offers a good portfolio of knowledge and skills that is in demand in the labour market – critical thinking, a systematic and all-encompassing view of the social world, analytical skills, the ability to work with texts, the transfer of inclusive values, as well as communications skills.

KSA MSP graduates have career trajectories which suggest that the further positioning of the programme in the sector of anthropology would be useful, focusing on anthropology as another step in the career of students, allowing students to combine interaction between their education



and their career, offering clearly formulated knowledge and skills, integrating these into the content of the programme and the grading criteria, and using the universal and interdisciplinary content of anthropology as a unique niche of education.

**3.1.4. Statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down into different study forms, types, and languages.**

The number of students in the programme has gradually decreased since the year when it was established (Table 3.1.4.1.). There are several reasons for this.

*Table 3.1.4.1. Student numbers at KSA MSP*

Year (as of 10/1)	Form and language	Matriculants			Students						Recipients of degree, qualifications		
		Total	Of all matriculants		Total	Year		Of total number of students		Dropouts from August 30 of the previous year to October 1 of the reporting year	Total	Of all recipients	
			Subs.	Tuition		1	2	Subsidy	Tuition			Subsidy	Tuition
2021	Full-time	8	5	3	28	11	17	13	15	3	7	6	1
	Latvian	5	5		13	6	7	13		2	6		
	English	3		3	15	5	10		15	1	1		1
2020	Full-time	19	9	10	31	20	11	19	12	7	4	3	1
	Latvian	9	9		19	10	9	19		3	3	3	
	English	10		10	12	10	2		12	4	1		1
2019	Full-time	12	10	2	23	12	11	19	4	2	3	3	0
	Latvian,	10	10		19	10	9	19			3	3	
	English	2		2	4	2	2		4	2	0		0
2018	Full-time	10	5	5	16	10	6	12	4	4	6	4	2
	Latvian	5	5		12	8	4	12		2	4	4	
	English	5		5	4	2	2		4	2	2		2
2017	Full-time	7	5	2	17	10	7	12	5	7	6	5	1
	Latvian		5		12	7	5	12		5	5	5	
	English			2	5	3	2		5	2	1		1

2016	Full-time	13	7	6	23	15	8	16	7	4	5	5	0
	Latvian,	7	7		16	9	7	16		2	5	5	
	English	6		6	7	6	1		7	2	0		0
2015	Full-time	12	7	5	19	13	6	14	5	4	11	5	6
	Latvian	7	7		14	8	6	14		4		5	6
	English	5		5	5	5	0		5				
2014	Full-time, Latvian, English	9	5	4	22	9	13	13	9		11		
2013	Full-time, Latvian,	12	5	7	19	12	7	10	9		6		

First of all, it is an objective fact that student numbers have been declining throughout the country. There is no central application process for master's degree programmes, so there are no data that would make it possible to compare the number of applications at KSA MSP to those at other universities. The number of applications per one slot with a government subsidy to cover tuition has ranged from 1.9 to 3, depending on the number of such slots that are available.

There were seven subsidised study slots in 2019, and seven students were chosen from among 13 applicants. This demonstrated that the tuition fee and the number of subsidised slots are essential for ensuring that applicants even think about enrolling in the programme. There were 10 subsidised slots in 2020, and 23 people (including one from a different EU member state) applied. 13 students began the programme, and three paid their own tuition. There were five subsidised slots in 2021, and six students were admitted to the programme. Most applicants have already had a master's degree, while two students during the reporting period held a doctorate. These people choose their studies in a very purposeful way in that they want to learn about anthropology. The degree itself is less important as an element in encouraging people to enter the programme.

Another way of attracting more students who pay their own tuition is to attract foreign students. At the beginning of this reporting period, the study programme prepared to teach classes in both Latvia and in English, adapting course materials in the E-environment and in presentations. Initially the number of foreign students was small (Table 3.1.4.2.), and some host countries said that the strategy for attracting students was insufficiently focused (Table 3.1.4.3.), but the numbers have gradually crept upward. The programme has a homepage in English to support potential and existing students, and there are regular requests for the LU to improve the quality of communications with potential students from abroad. An effective element in this is a centralised system of information about study opportunities in Latvia that has been prepared by the Ministry for Education and Science. It includes information about the programme.

*Table 3.1.4.2. Foreign students in the programme*

45222 MSP Cultural and Social anthropology	<b>2015/2016</b>	<b>2016/2017</b>	<b>2017/2018</b>	<b>2018/2019</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>

Earning degree, qualification	2	2	2	1	3	7	6
Exchange programme	1	8	4	15	8	2	7

Table 3.1.4.3. Country of origin of foreign students

	KSA MSP
<b>2013</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2014</b>	0
<b>2015</b>	1-United States
<b>2016</b>	1-Germany
<b>2017</b>	1-Lithuania, 1-Pakistan
<b>2018</b>	1-Iran
<b>2019</b>	1-Cameroon, 1-Greece
<b>2020</b>	1-Russia, 1-Germany, 1-Ukraine, 1-Morocco, 1-Cameroon
<b>2021</b>	1-Indonesia, 1-Japan

There are obstacles against attracting foreign students. Many applicants drop out during the process, which involves a comparison with the diploma from a previous education, the conclusion of a study agreement, and the need to receive a residency permit in Latvia. This can seldom be achieved more quickly than in six months, so the application process for the 2022/2023 academic year began earlier and in the fall so that applicants can deal with these various procedures in a timely way. Between 2019 and 2021, a big problem was the pandemic. Latvia does not have embassies in all foreign countries, and there were various restrictions on travel and work. Foreign students at KSA MSP take entrance examinations, submit letters of motivation and take part in conversations with representatives of the entrance exam commission so as to make sure that all applicants are appropriate for the programme. At the same time, however, a small part of the applicants who sign up take the tests, and even fewer actually enrol in the programme. During the past two years, the programme has offered various kinds of support, including distanced studies, while students deal with arrival formalities. Information about the study environment and an invitation to report on problems has allowed slightly more applicants to enrol in the programme. In 2021, opportunities to study abroad were hindered by vaccine regulations and the comparatively complicated process of proving the fact of vaccination even if the vaccine was one that was registered in the EU.

A comparatively large number of dropouts is another problem which has an effect on student numbers. One of the most frequently cited reasons for dropping out is an excessive workload and an ability to do it while the student has a full-time job. Nearly all KSA MSP students have such jobs. Dropping out was also seen when the number of study slots with national budget subsidies declined. In 2020, there were 10 such slots, but when this group began its second year of studies,

the number was halved, and that led to a higher number of students to drop out. Some students who are granted admission to a slot with the budget subsidy don't even start their studies. They don't come to any classes and avoid communications with LU staff. Perhaps this is based on a desire to receive the relief that is available to full-time students. This is been seen more frequently in the master's degree programme, where students are expelled after the first semester because they simply have not done the required work.

The number of students who drop out is also affected by satisfaction about the study process and the programme. Student surveys show that intensive full-time studies while the student has a full-time job and a family are the biggest problem for master's degree students, and that is the most frequent reason for quitting the process. Burnout as a problem has lacked support at universities in Latvia, and that is seen in a research project which students conducted during the reporting period.[1] We have looked for a solution to this problem by focusing on the "slow study" process that has been developed abroad. Students use individual plans, allowing each of them to study at his or her own pace. This encourages students to remain in the programme, and that creates comparatively high statistics about student numbers. "Slow study" is not provided for in Latvian law, which means that this solution usually requires additional investments in planning, implementation, adaptation of tuition fees, etc. Foreign experience shows that the structure of programs is increasingly subordinated to student needs. Those who study more slowly should not have to overpay for their studies, nor should they submit requests for an extension in their academic "debts." KSA MSP has experience to show that slower studies under the framework of full time studies are much in demand, but for the time being, there is not sufficient supply.

The position of a student curator has been introduced during the reporting period, allowing each student to see help and discuss problems in a neutral environment once per semester. Fundamental problems that have been addressed by the curator include inclusive activities for students with special needs. Particular problems are experienced by students with mental health issues. Along with family and work conditions, these are among the most frequently cited reasons for dropping out of the programme.

Another major problem for master's degree students was created by the Covid pandemic, because it kept them from writing their master's theses in a timely manner. Bachelor's degree students adapted to the new procedures fairly easily, but master's degree students found it more difficult because their jobs also became virtual, and that meant that they had to stay at home and adapt their family life to their needs. In 2021, three of the students who were in their last semester of the master's degree programme were schoolteachers who asked for a delay in submitting their master's thesis or went on an academic sabbatical.

KSA MSP students traditionally have not chosen to take part in exchange trips abroad (over the course of 10 years of the programme, only four have done so). That is because of full time jobs and family life.

*Table 3.1.4.4. Programme students who study abroad under exchange programme auspices*

MSP Cultural and Social Anthropology	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Erasmus+ studies</i>	1	0	1	0	0	1	1

<i>Erasmus+ internships</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Other mobility programmes</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

[1] See ‘Responsibility, Well-being and Study Relationships in Higher Education” (2021).  
[https://www.antropologija.lu.lv/fileadmin/user\\_upload/\\_lu\\_portal/projekti/anthropologija/HigherEd-21\\_Noformets.pdf](https://www.antropologija.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/_lu_portal/projekti/anthropologija/HigherEd-21_Noformets.pdf)

### **3.1.5. Substantiation of the development of the joint study programme and description and evaluation of the choice of partner universities, including information on the development and implementation of the joint study programme (if applicable).**

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

### **3.2.1. Analysis of the content of the study programme. Assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators with the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study courses/ modules and compliance with the needs of the relevant industry, labour market and with the trends in science on how and whether the content of the study courses/ modules is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science.**

In accordance with Article 10 of Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 240, “Regulations on the state academic education standard,” as adopted on 13 May 2014, the mandatory section of a master’s degree programme must, apart from the writing of the masters thesis, cover the relevant sectors or subsectors of the study field, including an examination of theoretical ideas in the field and a testing of theories in areas chosen in relation to the sectors or subsectors of the field. This leads to no fewer than 20 credits (KP) if the master’s degree programme has a total of 80 of them.

The mandatory part of KSA MSP has 30 credits which apply to anthropology courses which cover research concerning theoretical ideas and testing them from the perspective of important problems (Social and cultural theories; Post-modernism and anthropology; Anthropology methods and ethics; Transformation of boundaries; Anthropology of consumption; Experience, oneself and ability to act; Post-Socialist anthropology; Anthropology fieldwork II). These credits do not include the master’s thesis.

There are three parts to the study programme – mandatory (Section A) courses leading to 50 credits (including the master’s thesis, which earns 20 KP), limited elective (Section B) courses worth 28 KP, free elective (Section C) courses worth 2 KP, as well as additional courses in civil defence

and environmental protection. The structure of this content involves three types of courses: (1) Sequential theoretical courses leading to 12 KP and allowing students to track the development of the most important concepts, approaches and themes, also linking these to the theoretical ideas of social and cultural theories, as well as philosophy; (2) Specific courses leading to 6 KP which focus on specific aspects of methods and practical research, part of which relates to thematic courses and the master's thesis, which leads to 20 KP; (3) Thematic courses among which mandatory ones include Post-Socialist anthropology and Transformation of boundaries, both of which relate to regional issues. There are also several specialised courses such as the anthropology of medicine, theories of anthropology, science and technology, gender studies and anthropology of music, all leading to 4-6 credits. These are taken together with other courses in the programme, doing so in accordance with each student's research interests. An ethnographic component that is characteristic of the field of anthropology is offered in the elective courses Buddhism and Popular Japanese culture.

The content of courses is regularly reviewed on the basis of student evaluations and the methodological seminars of the Department of Anthropology. Because the programme very much emphasises young instructors, many of the courses are taught together with experienced colleagues. This has proven to be an effective way in terms of changing the content of courses and having a new view of said content. Most master's degree students are employed and on a stable career track, and so the programme focuses on this group during the enrolment process, looking to see what kind of potential each student has when it comes to research projects. These projects and the field of research are the foundation for the study process, allowing students to apply theoretical approaches and methods to their project, which is crowned with a successfully defended master's thesis. Similarly, smaller projects are included in thematic courses. Experience shows that most students are interested in in-depth ethnographic research methods and the anthropological approach to same. These two tracks are the spine of the programme's content.

There are no major differences in terms of the content of KSA MSP, as compared to other programmes in the region – the University of Tallinn, the University of Helsinki and the Rīga Stradiņš University (RSA). The University of Helsinki focuses on social change, migration and inequality, as viewed from the social and the cultural perspective. Some of the names of courses overlap with the University of Tallinn and the RSU, but the University of Tallin specialises in audiovisual anthropology and focuses more on student-created content in courses and in research seminars. The RSU offers an introductory programme in anthropology which is, in terms of structure and course titles, similar to the KSA bachelor's degree programme.

The content of KSA MSP courses is regularly reviewed on the basis of student evaluations and the methodological seminars of the Department of Anthropology. Because the programme very much emphasises young instructors, many of courses are taught together with experienced colleagues. This has proven to be an effective way in terms of changing the content of courses and having a new view about said content.

Internal quality policies ensure that students are actively involved in improving the study process. The LU has processes and procedures whereby students can submit recommendations, resolve complaints and review their appeals. The process of improving the study process involves an evaluation of centralised student surveys. These are conducted once a semester, and the results are analysed and individually discussed with faculty members and students. KSA MSP also uses the focus group method with students so that they can practice their research methods and receive anonymous data about programme evaluations.

The information included in courses is supplemented with course descriptions (see attachment) and in improving the content of courses in the E-environment. Each course has an E-platform in which

in addition to the course description, there is a whole segment devoted to the achievable learning outcomes, and their links to the programme's learning outcomes. There is also information about grading criteria for courses. At the beginning and end of each course, the goals of the course and the achievable learning outcomes are explained to students and devaluated orally. As noted in Section 3.1., the goals and missions of the programme have been revised since the previous accreditation. Expert recommendations have helped to review the goals and missions of individual courses. The mapping of courses so as to achieve the programme's learning outcomes is depicted visually in the mapping appendix.

Employers are involved in improving the programme in two ways. They are surveyed to gain a panoramic view of the preparedness and skills of programme graduates. Second, representatives of employers are involved in the study field council, where they can provide recommendations and ensure reciprocal links with the programme.

**3.2.2. In the case of master's and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation. In the case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels (if applicable).**

Article 20 of Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 240, "Regulations on the state academic education standard," as adopted on 13 May 2014, states that "the mandatory portion of a master's degree programme, save for the composition of the master's thesis, shall cover the examination of theoretical ideas from the relevant sector or subsector of science, as well as testing of such theories I the science sectors and subsectors from the perspective of timely issues (..) earning no fewer than 24 credits if the scope of the master's degree programme is 80 credits." The mandatory portion of KSA MSP, not counting the thesis, offers 30 KP for anthropology courses which cover the examination and testing of theories from the perspective of public issues (Social and cultural theories; Post-modernism and anthropology; Anthropology methods and research ethics; Transformation of boundaries; Anthropology of consumption; Experience, oneself and action; Anthropology of Post-Socialism; Anthropology fieldwork II). In addition to these individual courses, the grading of master's theses also includes criteria related to the innovation of the thesis and the use of anthropological knowledge in new contexts (see the methodological regulations for theses). This ensures a link between the awarded degree and the achievements and ideas of the sector of anthropology.

The nucleus of the faculty members at KSA MSP is made up of scholars with a doctorate in anthropology. Associated professor earned her doctorate at Cambridge in the UK. Her research interests focus on medical anthropology (the courses Sickness and health in anthropology; Biotechnologies and society), gender anthropology (Men and women in society), as well as theoretical anthropology (Social and cultural theories; Post-modernism and anthropology; Bourdieu practice and agency theory). Assistant professor earned his doctorate at the University of Durham in the UK. He specialises in the anthropology of economies and consumption (Anthropology of consumption; Experience, oneself and action; Anthropology of international business), as well as of Europe and post-Socialist countries (European ethnography; Anthropology of Post-Socialism). Other assistant professor earned her doctoral degree in anthropology and public health from the University of Leeds in the UK. She specialises in the anthropology of medicine, science and technologies (Transformation of boundaries; Introduction to science and technology studies).

Professor earned his doctorate at the Jāzeps Vītols Academy of Music in Latvia. His focus is on ethno-musicology, teaching the courses Sound environment and society; and Music, power and religion. Border sciences are represented in the list of faculty members by professor (demographics), lecturer (History) and two professors (sociolinguistics), among others.

**3.2.3. Assessment of the study programme including the study course/ module implementation methods by indicating what the methods are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. In the case of a joint study programme, or in case the study programme is implemented in a foreign language or in the form of distance learning, describe in detail the methods used to deliver such a study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.**

Studies are based on a student-centred approach. Each course has both lectures and seminars. Seminars are based on student-led discussions and student-led learning processes. The role of students increases semester by semester. Independent work is of great importance as well. Each class session, including lectures, involves a minimum of literature that must be studied, as well as assignments. Lectures and seminars are meant to analyse information, not just present it. These theoretical approaches are combined with practical use in that the development of an applicable approach is one of the achievable learning outcomes in the programme. In addition to course content, students in each course have an option of conducting mini-research on their own and in relation to the topic of the course. Students are also supported in researching new and individual topics in Fieldwork course I (2 KP), Anthropology methods and ethics (2 KP), and in the master's thesis (20 KP). Courses also involve student self-evaluation tools such as a self-reflection essay about work in a group along with the knowledge, skills and competences which this has ensured. The involvement of students in the process also involves reviewing each other's work. Important research competence is part of the achievable learning outcomes of the programme.

The learning outcomes were completely reworked after the faculty received an academic development project grant from the LU in 2018. This enabled an examination of best practices at other universities, and the aim was to introduce a set of courses and grading systems that would be transparent, unified and comprehensible to students. The expected achievements of students at the BSP and MSP level would be defined with precision. The grading system was fully integrated into the Moodle E-course platform. Learning outcomes of the programme are reflected in the achievable learning outcomes of each course, thus allowing students to understand the role of each course and each assignment in ensuring the student's level of achievement in pursuit of the overall learning outcomes of the programme. In order to make sure that students and faculty members can more easily track the development of achievements in the specific group of results, the results are grouped together and numbered (references can be found in the description of learning outcomes for each E-course in the Moodle system). The emphasis is on allowing each student to improve his or her results, and the learning outcomes have been formulated with the phrase *"Upon being graduated from the programme, students will be better at..."*. This emphasises the different capabilities of each student while also emphasising the dynamism and complexity of the learning process so as to ensure that students are actively involved in pursuit of their goals.

The grades given to individual tests is based on a grid-type grading if that is possible in the Moodle environment. The grade is based on criteria which relate to the achievable learning outcomes of



the course and the extent to which each student has achieved them. Guidelines for the final exams were fully revised during the accreditation period, with sections meant for students and for faculty members in terms of planning work and organising principles for grading. The instructions also include a sample of the grid-based grading system. Methodological instructions are appended.

As is the case with the unified approach toward instructions related to final exams, there are also guidelines about the selection of didactic methods for courses and about judging the successes of students. All courses can be found on the Moodle platform, which has information about the content of the course, the achievable learning outcomes of the course, their link to the learning outcomes of the programme, as well as other requirements. E-courses offer detailed content planning with links to external resources, lists of literature that is to be studied and assignments that are to be completed. This allows students to receive regular reciprocal links while developing their knowledge, competence and skills during the course. The grade given to each assignment is based on a 10-point scale, with faculty members adding comments as to why the particular grade was given. If the assignment makes it possible, then a grid-tool formula is used for the grading in accordance with the extent to which each criterion related to the assignment was achieved. The criteria, in turn, are linked to the achievable learning outcomes of the course. The comment section explains the grade and the strengths and weaknesses of how the assignment was done. Students also receive a relevant description of their level in the grid system.

Because the study programme is implemented in Latvian and in English, the E-course platform is also bilingual. Literature, where possible, is offered in both languages, though the literature that is needed for master's theses is mostly in English. All assignments are in Latvian and English, which allows students in both groups to have the identical course content and the identical judgments. The student forum tool is also bilingual, allowing students to share their papers and assignments and to engage in group work. All faculty members in anthropology speak both Latvian and English.

The development of the E-environment for the programme made it easy to transfer to distance learning during the pandemic, also serving as an opportunity to supplement course resources with video lectures and other interactive materials. There are no plans to continue to develop distance learning in this regard, however, because of the specific nature of anthropological studies.

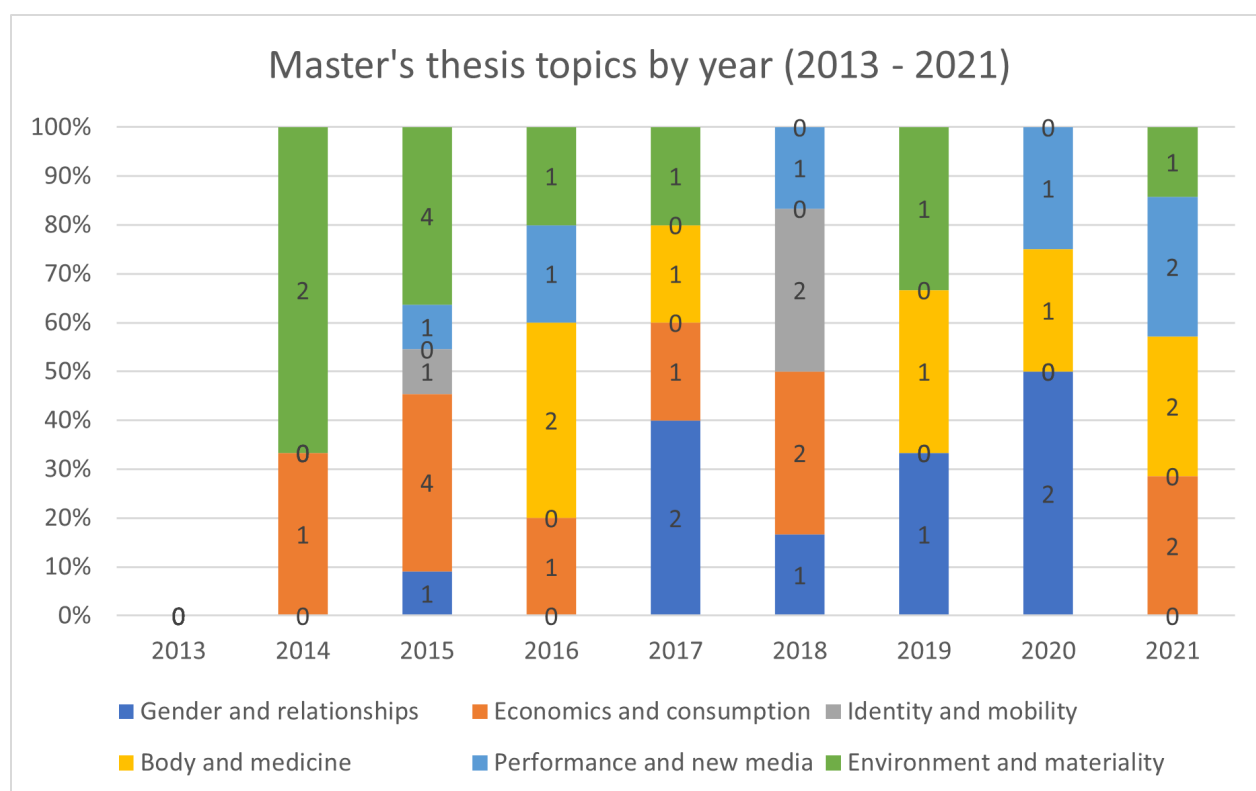
**3.2.4. If the study programme envisages an internship, describe the internship opportunities offered to students, provision and work organization, including whether the higher education institution/ college helps students to find an internship place. If the study programme is implemented in a foreign language, provide information on how internship opportunities are provided in a foreign language, including for foreign students. To provide analysis and evaluation of the connection of the tasks set for students during the internship included in the study programme with the learning outcomes of the study programme (if applicable).**

**3.2.5. Evaluation and description of the promotion opportunities and the promotion process provided to the students of the doctoral study programme (if applicable).**

### 3.2.6. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the marks of the final theses.

Most of the master's degree theses have been written in the area of economics and consumption (11). Most of these focus on salaried jobs. Two theses were about craftsmen and wine producers, four were about employees in various sectors, including sharing of professional knowledge, the emotional and physical feelings of department store employees, or career growth. Still others have focused on the economic aspects of life, including quick loans and the planning of household expenditures.

Figure 3.2.6.1. Topics for master's theses



The second most popular theme is the anthropology of the environment and materialism (10). Five theses focused on life in an urban environment, two were about consumption habits in households, with a focus on saving resources, and another two had to do with forestry.

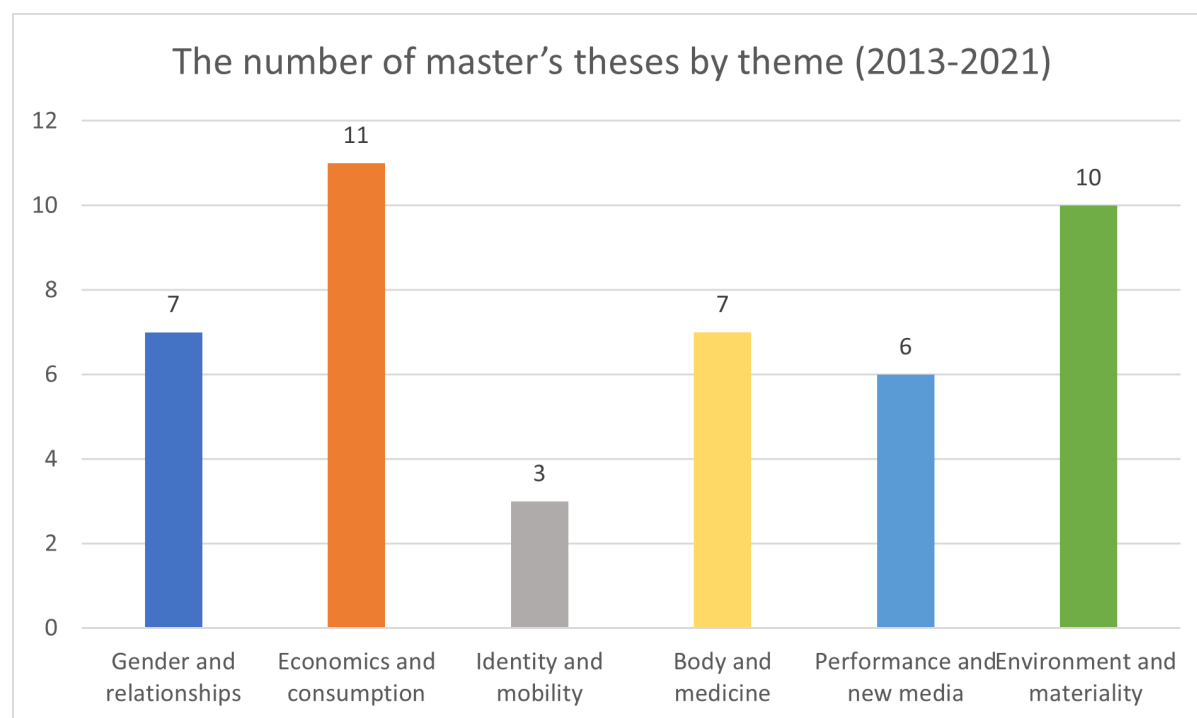
Seven these were written about the anthropology of gender and relationships and another seven were about the anthropology of the body and medicine. Those focusing on gender and relationships centred on manifestations of gender at companies and cultural centres, courses preparing couples for marriage, childbirth, self-help courses, fashion, as well as work with rapists. The anthropology of the body and medicine has focused on relations between medical personnel and patients, rehabilitation of addictions, aging and experiences with diseases.

Six theses were devoted to the anthropology of performances and the new media. Four focused on the use of technologies in various contexts, including purposeful dreaming courses, the playing of mobile games, and everyday communications.

Three theses were written about identity and mobility. One focused on the organisation of life in a family in Kyrgyzstan, one was about cultural exchanges between two cities in the former East

Germany and West Germany, and one centred on the shaping of social memories in history lessons.

Figure 3.2.6.2. Number of master's degree theses by theme (2013-2021)



The distribution of grades given to master's theses does not point to any specific trends. Since 2015, there has been pre-defence of theses, which allows students to receive a reciprocal link sooner so that they can improve the overall results. A unified grading system was tested in 2017 and completed in 2018. There are also guidelines for students and faculty members. This has slightly reduced the number of students whose grade has been lower than 7 (Table 7). It has to be added that KSA MSP students were affected by the pandemic more than BSP students were. Some students were in a big hurry to complete their studies, while others postponed the writing of their master's thesis for work or family reasons, wishing to write a high-quality thesis.

Table 3.2.6.1. Distribution of grades given to master's degree theses

Cultural and social anthropology MSP	Grades given to master's theses						
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Spring 2013	1		2		1	1	2
Spring 2014		1			1	1	1
Fall 2014	1		1				
Spring 2015	1	1	1		2	2	2
Spring 2016					3	1	1
Spring 2017	1	1	1		2		1
Spring 2018		2		2	1		1

Spring 2019				1	1		1
Spring 2020	1			1		1	1
Spring 2021		1	1		1	2	2

### 3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

#### 3.3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples.

KSA MSP is organised at the facilities of the LU SZF, making use of the material and technical foundations of the faculty and the LU. Overall material and technical support for the field of studies has been discussed previously, so the next paragraphs will emphasise those aspects of this which apply to KSA MSP students. Particularly important is the fact that students and faculty members have access to the literature that is needed for studies and research. The SZF has rooms that are appropriate for the studies, as well as electronic resources (the Moodle environment, distanced teaching opportunities on the MS Teams platform).

Generally speaking, the resources of KSA MSP are at an excellent level and fully appropriate to achieve the goals of the study programme and to ensure high-quality study processes. Literature for KSA MSP is available mainly in English; it is intended for use by students of the English and Latvian language streams. A relatively small number of sources have been translated and created in Latvian, and equivalents of these sources are available in English

The LU SZF library contains the collection of social science literature. It is open 60 hours a week for the convenience, who also have access to free-access collections. The LU SZF library has three rooms with total floor space of 544 m<sup>2</sup>. Users have access to 84 workstations, including 18 with a computer. The SZF library ensures the following services for students and faculty members:

Electronic ordering/reservation/usage deadline extension at the joint catalogue of libraries of national importance (hereafter – joint catalogue), as well as the receipt of information resources to use at the reading room of the library or at home. These services are available to registered users at the LU Library.

There is access to the delivery of information resources. Academic personnel, researchers and doctoral students can order information resources from the joint catalogue and from any library, indicating the sectoral library that would be the most convenient place to receive the reserved information resource.

Users have access to self-service scanning services.

There is access to informative literature and periodicals, desktop and laptop computers (both those of the library and those of users), as well as Internet connections, including Wi-Fi, which operates in

all buildings of the LU.

The “Night Subscription” service is aimed at ensuring free access to certain information resources outside of the LU Library from the moment when it is closed until the moment when it is opened. Such resources can be reserved in advance, indicating the specific hours when the user wishes to access them.

Information resources can also be delivered during the summer. Users can receive information resources reserved in the joint catalogue once a week at their most convenient sectoral library (the one in Raiņa Boulevard, the Natural Sciences library, the House of Science library).

Users have access to informational services such as consultations, provision of reports, training and support in the field of research. These are among the fundamental duties of the LU Library. Consultants at the library can offer bibliographic, thematic, factographic, addressal, precising and other types of information and consultations to LU students, as well as academic, scientific and general personnel. Students make more active use of such consultations when working on their independent projects, annual papers or bachelor's thesis.

User training is organised so as to help them to develop their skills of working independently and so that they can find, assess and use all information resources and E-environment tools. The library works actively with its target audiences – students at all levels, as well as academic, scientific and general personnel. This is aimed at information skills and offering in-depth knowledge and skills when it comes to working with electronic resources. During the first semester of studies, the library organises presentations for social work programme students, as well as activities in auditoriums and computer classrooms. Students from affiliates have access to such meetings in a distanced system. The aim of the training is to ensure that users have the skill to work with the freely available collection, self-service systems and office equipment such as self-service scanners and copiers. This helps to improve individual learning competence. KSA MSP students also have access to lectures from LU SZF library personnel about the library's resources and how they can be used.

Faculty members use the electronic Moodle E-environment to distribute study materials and to receive, examine and analyse work that students have submitted. Moodle supplements the LU information system (LUIS), ensuring the entry of grades. Students use the LUIS to register for courses electronically. Support from a methodologist is available if there are questions or problems in this regard. The methodologist is also prepared to support students when it comes to organisational aspects of the study process, providing consultations on various related issues.

The LU SZF has appropriate rooms for the study process. Most faculty members in KSA MSP have elected posts at the LU SZF, and they have high-quality offices and adequate support. Guest instructors have access to workspaces that are provided by the LU SZF. They can spend time there, prepare for their classes and offer individual consultations to students.

The study plan for each cohort of students is shaped in the long term when students begin their studies, which last for three years. Faculty members use the electronic Moodle E-environment to distribute study materials and to receive, examine and analyse work that students have submitted. Moodle supplements the LU information system (LUIS), ensuring the entry of grades. Students use the LUIS to register for courses electronically. Support from a methodologist is available if there are questions or problems in this regard. The methodologist is also prepared to support students when it comes to organisational aspects of the study process, providing consultations on various related issues.

The LU is currently engaged in extensive infrastructure development projects. The building of the Writing House is to be completed in 2002, and KSA MSP will move there. This will bring all of the humanities and social sciences under one roof. The hope is that this will make relationships easier

and strengthen the sector of anthropology, which merges the traditions of both areas. The LU Humanities Library has an extensive collection of anthropological literature, both via procurement of new books and via donations of collections. Students will have access to the library irrespective of the faculty in which they are studying. The LU has workstations in computer classrooms and the reading room of the Social Sciences Library. Auditoriums have audio and video equipment, and in 2022 there will be state-of-the-art technologies and excellent aesthetics in the rooms. The LU has highly developed opportunities for E-studies.

**3.3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific base support, including the resources provided within the framework of cooperation with other science institutes and higher education institutions (applicable to doctoral study programmes) (if applicable).**

**3.3.3. Indicate data on the available funding for the corresponding study programme, its funding sources and their use for the development of the study programme. Provide information on the costs per one student within this study programme, indicating the items included in the cost calculation and the percentage distribution of funding between the specified items. The minimum number of students in the study programme in order to ensure the profitability of the study programme (indicating separately the information on each language, type and form of the study programme implementation).**

**Revenues**

MSP “Culture and Social Anthropology” has the following resources:

- 1) A national budget subsidy from the Ministry of Education and Science which amounts to EUR 2,445 for full-time studies during the 2021/2022 academic year;
- 2) Tuition that is based on all of the factors that are mentioned in the section on finances. For full-time students during the 2021/2022 academic year, the tuition is as follows:
  - EUR 2,200 per year for citizens and residents of the EU, EEZ and Switzerland;
  - EUR 2,600 for citizens of other countries.

Given this, the total budget of the study programme in accordance with data about the 2021/22 academic year is expected to be EUR 59,852 per year (Table 3.3.3.1.).

Type of studies	Number of students	Tuition/subsidy	Total revenues
Full time (subsidy)	13	2,445	31 785
Incl. students with LU scholarship			-7,335

Full time (tuition, EU students)	9	2,200	19,800
Full time (tuition, citizens of other countries)	6	2,600	15,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>		<b>59,850</b>

#### Programme costs for full-time studies in Latvian

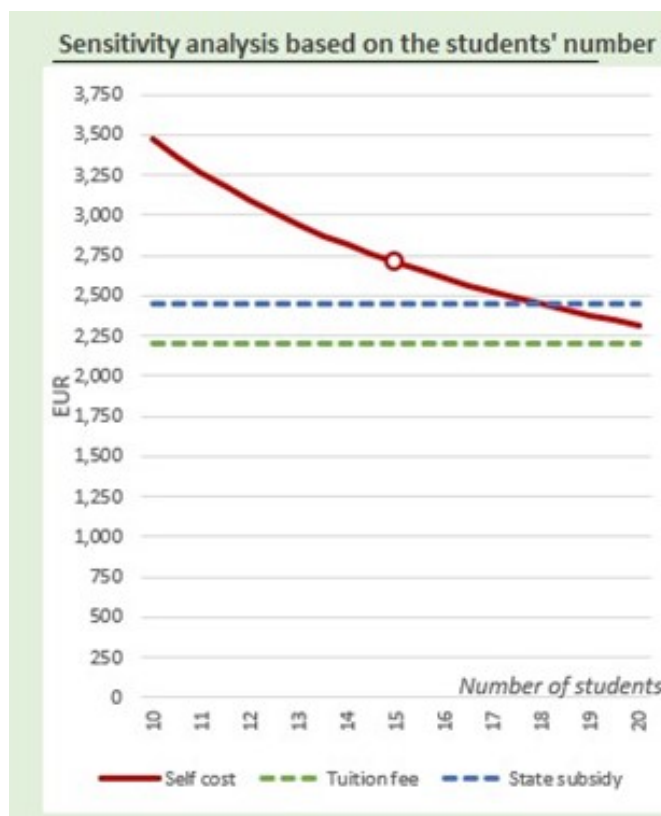
In order to assess the amount of funds required for financial support, the cost of study programmes of the UL is calculated according to the methodology developed by the UL, which takes into account the costs of providing the study process described in the section "Financial support of the SD" and information about the plan of the study programme, the participating teaching staff, the planned number of students, etc. aspects, thus ensuring the reliability of forecasts.

MSP CSA implementers use 2021/2022 for calculations. student data of the academic year - 13 students study in the full-time programme, the existing study programme plan and the existing structure of the academic staff involved. Based on this data, the total annual costs of the program are 32 844 EUR and their structure (percentage distribution) is shown in Table 3.3.3.2.

*Table 3.3.3.2. Distribution of costs in the study programme*

<b>Line item</b>	<b>% of total</b>
Faculty members	59 %
General personnel	12 %
Other costs	0.2 %
Infrastructure	8 %
Property and services	1.5%
Indirect costs	19.3 %
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Figure 3.3.3.1. the cost of the study program (vertical axis) depending on the number of students (horizontal axis), the tuition fee (green line) and the state budget subsidy (blue line) are visually represented with a red line.



#### Attēls 3.3.3.1.

*The cost of MSP Cultural and Social Anthropology on the basis of the number of students who are studying in Latvian.*

Based on the cost structure and the total number of students - 13, the cost of the program per student (base cost) is 2940 EUR per year.

Based on the calculation, it can be seen that in order for the programme to be profitable and for students to be provided with a high-quality study process, the number of fee-paying students in the Latvian language programme (in all courses together) should be at least 17 (the intersection of the red (own costs) and green (tuition fees) lines is projected on the x axis). On the other hand, if the programme included only budget students studying in Latvian, then their number should reach 20 students.

#### Programme costs for full-time studies in English

MSP CSA implementers use 2021/2022 for calculations. student data of the academic year - 15 students study in the full-time programme, the existing study programme plan and the existing structure of the academic staff involved. Based on this data, the total annual costs of the program are 36 436 EUR and their structure (percentage distribution) is shown in Table 3.3.3.3.

*Table 3.3.3.3. Distribution of costs in the study programme*

Line item	%
Faculty members	51.8 %
General personnel	10 %
Other costs	0.2%



Infrastructure	11 %
Property and services	2%
Indirect costs	25 %
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>100</b>

Figure 3.3.3.2. the cost of the study program (vertical axis) depending on the number of students (horizontal axis), the tuition fee (green line) and the state budget subsidy (blue line) are visually represented with a red line.

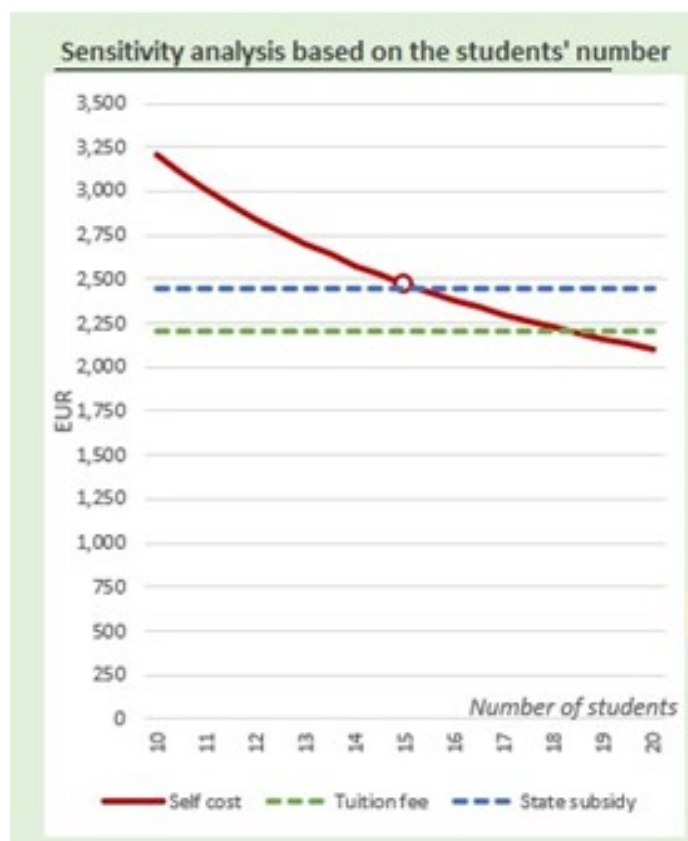


Figure 3.3.3.2. The cost of MSP Cultural and Social Anthropology on the basis of the number of students who are studying in English.

Based on the cost structure and the total number of students - 15, the cost of the program per student (base cost) is 2473 EUR per year.

These calculations show that if the programme is to be sustainable and the study process were to be at a high quality, the number of tuition-paying students in the English track (all courses) must be at least 19 students from EU and EEZ member states or 14 foreign students (the crossing of the red (base cost) and green (tuition fee) lines on Axis X).

Table 3.3.3.4. summarises the programme's revenues on the basis of the type of studies, the national subsidy and the tuition fee, and the programme costs at this number of students.

Table 3.3.3.4. Results of the programme

Type of studies	Number of students	Tuition/subsidy	Revenues	Costs
Full time (subsidy)	13	2,445	31 785	32 838
Incl. students with LU scholarship			-7335	
Full time (tuition - EU/EEZ students)	9	2,200	19,800	21 861
Full time (tuition, citizens of other countries)	6	2,600	15,600	14 574
<b>Total</b>			<b>59,940</b>	<b>69 273</b>

These data show that the LU does not have sufficient financial resources to provide for the study programme, and that means that additional steps must be taken to ensure an increase in the number of tuition-paying students specifically in the Latvian track. There will be more active work aimed at attracting bachelor's degree students to the continuation of their studies at the master's degree level. There will also be marketing activities aimed at attracting applicants.

### 3.4. Teaching Staff

**3.4.1. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members (academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.**

The qualifications of faculty members involved in the programme satisfy the achievement of the goals and missions of KSA MSP. Courses are taught by elected LU SZF faculty members, as well as elected faculty members from other faculties. The choice of instructors in the programme is based on their experience with academic work, their qualifications and their scholarly research work. 90% of the instructors in the programme have a doctorate, which shows that the qualifications of academic personnel are fully in line with the requirements of the master's degree programme and ensure the necessary level of quality in the programme.

KSA MSP has academic personnel from the SZF and other faculties – seven professors, five associate professors, five docents, four lecturers and three hourly instructors who are researchers and specialists from state and private organisations. Most of those who are involved in the programme are SZF faculty members who have been elected for six years in accordance with normative requirements. The number of professors and associate professors satisfies the requirements of Article 55.2 of the Law on universities (at least five). The policy of regenerating, training and developing academic personnel is based on individual plans that are approved when the rector of the LU and the dean of the ZSF sign a job contract with the relevant faculty members.

*Table 3.4.1.1. Faculty members in KSA MSP*

<b>Degree, post</b>	<b>With doctorate</b>	<b>With master's degree</b>	<b>Total</b>
Professors	7		7
Associate professors	5		5
Docents	5		5
Lecturers	1	3	4
Hourly instructors	1	2	3
Total	19	5	24

Faculty members are involved in international projects, as well as projects organised by the Latvian Science Council and other institutions. Between 2015 and 2018, a partnership with anthropologists from Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, the UK and Denmark implemented an anthropology development project in the Baltic States which was financed by the Wenner Gren Foundation. The focus was on teaching of anthropology in the Baltic region. This also helped to improve the capacity of instructors at the Department of Anthropology Studies.

KSA MSP faculty members are recognised in Latvia and abroad, as is proven by their publications. They regularly take part in international conferences and publish papers in peer-reviewed journals that are indexed in the Scopus and Web of Science databases. This helps to ensure improvement to the content of study courses in accordance with trends in the sector (a full list of such publications is appended).

All of this means that the composition of KSA MSP faculty members fully makes it possible to achieve the goals of the study programme and the planned learning outcomes, ensuring the learning of high-quality theoretical knowledge and research skills in the sector, as well as practical preparedness which will allow graduates to be successful in dealing with problems in the sector.

### **3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.**

The number of instructors since the 2012/2013 academic year has declined by 15% or so (four instructors). This has to do with a drop in student numbers during the period, the strengthening of the nucleus of elected faculty members, as well as consolidation of the content of the programme. The qualitative composition of faculty members has not changed to any significant degree during the reporting period.

When it comes to changes in the posts of faculty members, the proportion of professors and associate professors has increased during the reporting period (one person in absolute numbers). This has mostly been at the expense of hourly lecturers, whose proportion has shrunk. These are positive qualitative changes in that they improve the quality of studies in the programme.

The programme was established in 2009. Since 2012, some of the nucleus instructors of the programme who have doctoral degrees from foreign universities have left their jobs at the LU, and that has to do with wages and a lack of adequate financing for science up until 2018 (3 persons). Some found better-paid jobs in Latvia or abroad (one is an elected associate professor at Oxford, another is a professor at the University of Central Europe). To keep faculty members and to develop the programme between 2013 and 2017, the University of Latvia Foundation attracted funds to develop anthropology. Money was received from partners such as the SEB Bank and the Latvian Association of Commercial Banks. There were also private donations so that stipends could be paid to foreign instructors. Latvia's universities at the time had no schemes to attract instructors. Wages did not cover travel and accommodation costs, and that meant that it was all but impossible to attract foreigners. The foundation resources allowed the programme to attract staff from high-ranking Universities (e.g. University of Oxford) to teach a few courses. Younger scholars were also brought in. One of them remains in Latvia, has been elected to the post of docent, and has taken part actively in the department's research work and the teaching of classes.

A replacement of generations among faculty members has made it possible to ensure that the most talented graduates of the programme can find jobs at their alma mater. One of them earned her doctorate in 2018 after writing an intersectoral dissertation related to anthropology and folklore. Another earned her doctorate in 2020 at the University of Leeds in the UK and was elected as a docent. (In total 2 young scientists have joined the programme since 2018). The Public Anthropology Centre of the Department of Anthropology has fundraised during the reporting period so as to achieve a goal that was defined in the 2013 accreditation report – to strike a balance of 50:50 between the research and academic work of instructors. These proportions shift, and faculty members share the job of teaching courses, thus allowing younger instructors to be successful in their doctoral studies or to take part in larger research projects. Along with a national competition on scholarly projects in 2018, instructors from the Department of Anthropology have taken part as a group of researchers in various applied research projects commissioned by the Latvian Ministry of Welfare and Ministry of Health. This improved research capacity and the ability to take part in other projects, but it has not been sufficient to ensure publications from faculty members. The availability of fundamental and applied programmes in Latvia mean that the number of papers published by faculty members in peer-reviewed journals has increased rapidly (with 13 papers submitted and/or published over the past three years). Students are also involved in the research projects.

The composition of KSA MSP faculty members and changes therein have been positive, thus ensuring a high level of quality in the programme and being in line with the overall learning outcomes of the study courses and the programme.

#### **3.4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff**

members, involved in the implementation of doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals or peer-reviewed monographs may be additionally specified. Information on the teaching staff included in the database of experts of the Latvian Council of Science in the relevant field of science (total number, name of the lecturer, field of science in which the teaching staff has the status of an expert and expiration date of the Latvian Council of Science expert) (if applicable).

**3.4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).**

**3.4.5. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study programme and study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).**

The nucleus of the faculty members is made up of instructors from the Department of Anthropology in partnership with instructors from related fields of science at the SZF and HZH. Much attention has been devoted to collaboration among faculty members and the introduction of a mutual support culture. There are several mechanisms in support of this. Department meetings offer a chance to review issues that have to do with the work of the department, as well as with contact issues. For instance, there have been discussions about the ethical policies related to contacts between personnel and students (etiquette on social networks, identifying boundaries, preserving open and friendly relations with students, etc.). Department meeting are also used to deal with methodological issues and to exchange knowledge and skills. When the pandemic began, distance learning resources were prepared so as to teach anthropology and to train one another. Knowledge from ongoing education courses are multiplied at the department as instructors share it. There is also participation in department projects which allows faculty members to meet regularly and, in addition to aspects of the project at hand, to discuss the study process under an informal atmosphere. During one of the latest fundamental and applied research projects during the past three years, there were 49 meetings at which participants could strengthen their interrelationship, make plans and transfer research ideas to the content and process of teaching. Faculty members who are involved in projects take part in academic reading and writing seminars (5 and 45 during the last three years). This provides support to younger colleagues in terms of their skills. There is also mentoring of younger colleagues, a course being taught by a young and an experienced

instructor working together. Mentoring is also important in terms of encouraging younger professionals and in supporting them in writing publications.

In 2018, work began on a unified grading system so as to promote links among the various study courses. This made it possible to consolidate the programme so that all of the learning outcomes would relate to a unified goal. There was also a chance to discuss the content of courses and links among them. Before this project, students sometimes complained about an overlap of information in the various courses, but since 2018, links among courses have been rated positively. Changes in courses are discussed, and instructors work together to ensure succession among courses, delivering lectures together and providing consultations to one another about the content of each course.

At the writing of this report, there were 0.97 students per faculty member (this proportion based primarily on electives). The proportion was higher during the previous accreditation period, but it has to be noted that the proportion is based on electives which allow students to specialise in areas of interest to them. They use the resources of the LU for this purpose.

# Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	Diploma CSA MSP.pdf	KSA MSP diploma pielikums.pdf
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	Statistics CSA MSP.pdf	KSA MSP statistikas dati.pdf
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard	Education standard CSA MSP.pdf	KSA MSP izglitības standarts.pdf
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	Mapping of the study courses CSA MSP.xlsx	Kursu_kartejums KSA MSP.xlsx
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	Study plan CSA MSP.pdf	KSA MSP plāns.pdf
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	Study courses CSA MSP.pdf	Maģistra studiju programmas Kultūras un sociālā antropoloģija kursu apraksti.pdf
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)		
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
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 (if applicable)	Study field declaration CSA MSP.pdf	KSA MSP apliecinājums 55. pants.edoc

# Cultural and Social Anthropology (43314)

Study field	<i>Sociology, Political Science, and Anthropology</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Cultural and Social Anthropology</i>
Education classification code	<i>43314</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>Academic bachelor study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Aivita</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Putniņa</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>aivita.putnina@lu.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Asociētais profesors</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>67034922</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>To prepare specialists in cultural and social anthropology at an intermediate level, which is characterized by the ability to orientate in the basic principles of the anthropological field, to independently and in a group conduct practical anthropological research, to critically and systematically analyze social and cultural processes.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. in acquiring and strengthening academic thinking and writing skills, as well as in communicating academic knowledge in the wider society;</i></li> <li><i>2. acquiring academic knowledge in cultural and social anthropology at a basic level, providing systematic knowledge in theories, concepts, research methods and techniques, research ethics;</i></li> <li><i>3. in the use of acquired theoretical knowledge, methods and ethnographic examples in the analysis of various social and cultural issues;</i></li> <li><i>4. acquisition and strengthening of skills, knowledge and competences in the implementation of the research process - description, assessment and analysis of social and cultural processes, research problems, preparation of the research application, implementation of appropriate research methods, data collection, processing, analysis and interpretation;</i></li> <li><i>5. in carrying out scientific and research work, developing practical experience in conducting individual and group research, creating arguments, critically evaluating research responsibility, implementing an ethical attitude towards research participants and colleagues;</i></li> <li><i>6. in building the necessary skills for further professional and personal growth, supporting entrepreneurship, responsibility, laying the foundations for professional cooperation and development opportunities both in anthropology and in other fields.</i></li> </ol>



Results of the study programme	<p><i>Knowledge</i></p> <p>1. To recognize and understand the most important anthropological approaches, theories and concepts according to the curriculum of the program, to recognize and understand ethnographic examples, to understand the basic level, as well as moderately complex theoretical concepts.</p> <p>2. Recognize and understand different methods and approaches of anthropological research.</p> <p><i>Skills</i></p> <p>3. Apply theories of anthropology and provide contextual comparison in known and new situations and identify the appropriate ethnographic context for comparison.</p> <p>4. To use appropriate anthropological methods in the context of fieldwork research, to establish good relations with research participants.</p> <p>5. To communicate in writing and orally in both academic and public environment, to review and evaluate the work of oneself and other colleagues.</p> <p>6. Share responsibility for group work and work effectively in a team.</p> <p>7. Know and use appropriate electronic and other tools (software and hardware), effectively plan time and workload, use information resources responsibly and efficiently.</p> <p><i>Competences</i></p> <p>8. To use appropriate theoretical concepts in argumentation, creating it, to apply appropriate ethnographic contexts, to understand, process and interpret articles, presentations and discussions related to the field of anthropology.</p> <p>9. Understand the meaning and limitations of data and their interpretation, identify and encode data items, create logical links between data items, in a theoretical and comparative context.</p> <p>10. To conduct research in an ethically responsible manner, to evaluate ethical challenges and to find appropriate solutions and to choose appropriate methods and approaches for the study of anthropology.</p>
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	<i>Bachelor thesis</i>

## Study programme forms

### Full time studies - 3 years - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	<i>3</i>
Duration in month	<i>0</i>
Language	<i>latvian</i>
Amount (CP)	<i>120</i>
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Secondary education</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Bachelor of Social Sciences in Sociology and Cultural studies</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	<i>-</i>

**Places of implementation**

Place name	City	Address
University of Latvia	RĪGA	RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050

**Full time studies - 3 years - english**

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	3
Duration in month	0
Language	<i>english</i>
Amount (CP)	120
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Secondary education. English language skills at least B2 level</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	<i>Bachelor of Social Sciences in Sociology and Cultural Studies</i>
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	-

**Places of implementation**

Place name	City	Address
University of Latvia	RĪGA	RAIŅA BULVĀRIS 19, CENTRA RAJONS, RĪGA, LV-1050

## 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

**3.1.1. Description and analysis of changes in the parameters of the study programme made since the issuance of the previous accreditation form of the study field or issuance of the study programme license, if the study programme is not included on the accreditation form of the study field, including changes planned within the evaluation procedure of the study field evaluation procedure.**

The University of Latvia (UL) has offered a bachelor's degree study programme in anthropology since 2009 – the academic bachelor's degree study programme in Cultural and Social Anthropology (BSP CSA).

The main changes in the BSP CSA are related to the change of the degree from a humanities bachelor's degree in anthropology to a social science bachelor's degree in sociology and cultural studies. This satisfies Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 322 of 13 June 2017, "Regulations on Latvia's Education Classification," and it has led to changes in the classification of the study direction, as well as the degree and code number. The change was approved by the Study Quality Commission of the Higher Education Quality Agency on 9 March 2022. Prior to that, external experts conducted an evaluation in accordance with Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 793, 11 December 2018.

These changes are presented in greater detail in Table 3.1.1.1.

### 3.1.1.1. Changes in the study programme

Parameters	Cultural and Social Anthropology study programme, accredited in 2013	Improved Cultural and Social Anthropology study programme	Reason for change
Degree to be awarded	Humanities BA in anthropology	Social sciences BA in sociology and cultural studies	In line with Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 322, "Regulations on Latvia's Education Classification," 13 June 2017, as well as Regulation No 240, "Regulations on the State Academic Education Standard," 13 May 2014.

Study direction	Language and culture studies, native language studies and language programmes	Sociology, political science, anthropology	In line with Regulation No 793, "Regulations on Launching and Accrediting Study Directions," 11 December 2018
Code	43227	43314	In accordance with Cabinet Regulation No 332, "Regulations on Latvia's Education Classification," 13 June 2017

Changes have also been made in the study programme's goals and missions (Table 2), as well as learning outcomes. These have been made more precise in accordance with recommendations from the previous accreditation commission, as well as the latest methodological considerations.

**Table 3.1.1.2. Changes in the study programme's goals and missions**

The aim of the study programme "Culture and social anthropology" in 2013	The aim of the improved study programme "Culture and social anthropology"	Justification
The aim is to provide the opportunity to obtain a bachelor's degree in humanities in anthropology with a specialization in the Baltic region, as well as prepare competitive cultural and social anthropology specialists, who would be able to orient themselves in the field of anthropology, would be able to do an independent practical study of a social and cultural problem and assist in research.	The aim is to prepare specialists in cultural and social anthropology at an intermediate level, which is characterized by the ability to orientate in the basic principles of the anthropological field, to independently and in a group conduct practical anthropological research, to critically and systematically analyze social and cultural processes.	The goal of the programme was adjusted in 2018, when the learning outcomes of the programme were changed. This was praised by the Study Quality Commission of the Higher Education Quality Agency on March 9, 2022.
Tasks of the accredited study programme Cultural and Social Anthropology	Tasks of the improved study programme Cultural and Social Anthropology	Justification

<p>1. To provide academic writing and electronic communication skills.</p> <p>2. To provide academic knowledge in cultural and social anthropology for a bachelor's degree at a level corresponding to the qualification, providing knowledge of anthropology in theories, basic and specialized research directions with an emphasis on</p> <p>of the Baltic region, as well as in research methods, fieldwork and research ethics.</p> <p>3. To prepare cultural and social anthropology specialists who can use the acquired theoretical, methodological and factual knowledge, skills and abilities for professional and research activities of the state, in the non-governmental sector and entrepreneurship in the Baltic region.</p> <p>4. To develop and improve the skills, knowledge and competences of the public and in describing, evaluating cultural processes, research problems and analysis, applying appropriate research methods, data collection, processing, analysis and interpretation and being able to present research in an academically comprehensible manner application, obtained research results and conclusions.</p> <p>5. To develop practical experience in conducting scientific and research work individually and collectively, developing the ability to form conclusions and formulate the reasoning used, critically evaluating the research responsibility, implementing ethical attitude towards informants and colleagues, as well as using critical and analytical thinking.</p> <p>6. Develop the skills necessary for independent improvement of education, entrepreneurship and responsibility, renewing knowledge with further education and lifelong learning assistance, as well as professional development.</p>	<p>To support students</p> <p>1. in acquiring and strengthening academic thinking and writing skills, as well as in communicating academic knowledge in the wider society;</p> <p>2. acquiring academic knowledge in cultural and social anthropology at a basic level, providing systematic knowledge in theories, concepts, research methods and techniques, research ethics;</p> <p>3. in the use of acquired theoretical knowledge, methods and ethnographic examples in the analysis of various social and cultural issues;</p> <p>4. acquisition and strengthening of skills, knowledge and competences in the implementation of the research process - description, assessment and analysis of social and cultural processes, research problems, preparation of the research application, implementation of appropriate research methods, data collection, processing, analysis and interpretation;</p> <p>5. in carrying out scientific and research work, developing practical experience in conducting individual and group research, creating arguments, critically evaluating research responsibility, implementing an ethical attitude towards research participants and colleagues;</p> <p>6. in building the necessary skills for further professional and personal growth, supporting entrepreneurship, responsibility, laying the foundations for professional cooperation and development opportunities both in anthropology and in other fields.</p>	<p>The tasks of the programme were updated in 2018 with reformulation of the learning outcomes and implementing student-centred approach.</p>
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**3.1.2. Analysis and assessment of the study programme compliance with the study field. Analysis of the interrelation between the code of the study programme, the degree, professional qualification/professional qualification requirements or the degree and professional qualification to be acquired, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and the admission requirements. Description of the duration and scope of the implementation of the study programme (including different options of the study programme implementation) and evaluation of its usefulness.**

AIC Study Quality Commission in its decision of March 9, 2022 no. 2022/-4-I, considering the application of LU of November 5, 2021 no. 1-13/693 and No, 1-13/694, as well as the opinion of external experts, supported the change of study direction to "Sociology, politics and anthropology" and recognized the code change in the Latvian education classification, "because the content of the study programmes corresponds for the programme group "Sociology and cultural studies", which also includes anthropology" (page 3). The said decision confirms that a full expertise was carried out for the compliance of BSP CSA for the mentioned field of study. The expertise also evaluated and recognized that the content of the study programme corresponds to the field of anthropology.

The Study Quality Commission also evaluated other parameters of the programme, including admission requirements and the duration of studies. BSP CSA is offered full-time on-site for the duration of 3 years (6 semesters) of study. During this time, students study the programme in the amount of 120 credits. The duration of the programme is based on the recommendations of the Bologna process, and the next stage of study can be continued in the two-year master's programme.

The study program is implemented in Latvian and English. KSA BSP is continued by the 2-year KSA MSP, which is also offered in Latvian and English. Latvian National Education Development Guidelines 2021-2027 as an overarching goal for 2018 strives to provide quality education opportunities to all Latvian residents in order to promote the development and realization of their potential throughout their lives and to build their ability to change and responsibly manage the constant changes in society and the national economy. A modern, high-quality educational offer oriented to the development of skills highly valued in the labor market is offered as part of the program, transferring the latest approaches and knowledge in research through foreign-educated lecturers, as well as high quality standards on a national and international scale is offered in the Latvian language. In response to the Education Development Guidelines 2021-2027. 2nd goal: "Modern, high-quality educational offer oriented to the development of skills highly valued in the labor market", the implementation of the KSA BSP program in Latvian and English languages strengthens the international cooperation and internationalization of higher education. The national policy document emphasizes that "it is essential to improve the quality of the internationalization of Latvian higher education, ensuring both modern and high-quality study programs and study environment, as well as highly qualified academic staff, and attracting motivated students" for the purposeful creation of HI export. In Latvia, there are relatively few foreign students directly in the profile of social sciences and humanities, and anthropology programs have a high potential to respond to the challenges of globalization and promote interdisciplinarity, which has been characteristic of the sector since its beginnings, including interdisciplinarity with STEM sectors. By conducting research and communicating with similar program implementers in Europe and the USA, opportunities have been discovered that make the program attractive to foreigners. First, it is a practical and student-centered approach. Secondly, it is relatively easy for foreign students to gain research experience due to Latvia's diverse linguistic environment. Since the instructors of the

program are bilingual in Latvian and English and mostly received their education in foreign universities where the language of instruction was English, KSA BSP has a high potential of teaching staff to offer studies in English. The UL has an attractive study environment and opportunities for foreign students. In Latvia, anthropology is a relatively new branch of science, and KSA BSP is the only program of this level in Latvia, helping to create terminology and new approaches to the study of human relations in the Latvian language. This program is unique with the opportunity to learn anthropology in depth, which until now is the only anthropology programme available in Latvian at the bachelor's level in the world. Since anthropology has a distinctly cross-cultural approach, foreign and Latvian student groups, using a student-centered approach, allow internationalization to be implemented also at the level of student communication in the bilingual study e-environment and between student streams. Creating programs in English is a strategic goal of LU and SZF. In addition, English stream students increase the number of students in the program, bring in tuition fees allowing to ensure the sustainability of the program, which is an essential aspect of the survival of KSA BSP, due to comparatively low state funding compared to other similar programs. The flow of the English language also allows attracting foreign students with Latvian state scholarships.

BSP CSA fully complies with the national education standard, in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers' regulations of May 13, 2014 No. 240 "Regulations on the State Academic Education Standard", a more detailed assessment can be found in the appendix on the compliance of the programme with the standard.

BSP CSA fully complies with the national education standard, in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers' regulations of May 13, 2014 No. 240 "Regulations on the State Academic Education Standard", a more detailed assessment can be found in the appendix on the compliance of the programme with the standard.

Analysing the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of May 23, 2017 no. 264 "Regulations on the Classification of Professions, Basic Tasks Corresponding to the Profession and Basic Qualification Requirements", it can be established that the qualification requirements for specialists in anthropology and sociology are defined as follows:"

"304. Professions and corresponding basic tasks of the separate group 2632 Senior specialists of sociologists, anthropologists and related professions": conduct research on the origin, structure, social norms, organization and mutual relations of human society; prepare scientific articles and reviews in sociology, anthropology and related fields; explain the origin and evolution of mankind by studying changing cultural and social problems and phenomena; explain the development of mankind by studying the remains of past material culture, living spaces, temples, tools, coins, weapons, sculptures; study the physical and climatic conditions of zones and areas and adjust economic, social and cultural activities to them; advise on the practical use of these studies in creating economic and social policies; conduct research and analysis of behavior, attitudes and mutual interaction of social groups and social institutions; analyze social processes and problems; organize and conduct social research; to provide information and knowledge for management and administrative decision-making or for academic purposes."

There is no other binding regulatory framework in Latvia, apart from the classification of professions, which would determine the content of the field of anthropology. In order to evaluate the relevance, a comparison was made between different BSPs in anthropology (LU BSP is the only one in Latvia): LU, Cambridge, Helsinki and Tallinn University). It can be noted that (a) the subject matter and content of the courses are similar in all universities; (b) despite the similar content, graduates of the programme in Estonia are awarded a Humanities degree, in the UK a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree, and in Finland a Candidate's degree. Analysing the anthropology study

programmes, it can be seen that all foreign universities offer a specialization in the first year in a direction that is different for each university - in political sciences, sociology, also archaeology and psychology (Cambridge), global history, world literature, critical thinking, problem solving, worldviews and religions), teamwork skills and interdisciplinary problem solving (Tallinn), economics and social and political history (Helsinki), later allowing specialization in anthropology. Comparing the content of the programmes, it can be seen that the names of the courses (subjects covered) are similar in all of them, but the greatest correspondence in the content of BSP CSA can be found with the content of the Cambridge University programme. Although in Great Britain, study programmes and degrees are not classified by fields of study or branches of science, anthropology is traditionally considered a social science, therefore we can assume that the programme could also be considered as belonging to the social sciences. At the University of Helsinki, the programme focuses on social change and offers courses in related social sciences and humanities, while at the University of Tallinn, the emphasis in the titles is on cultural anthropology, although the course content is similar to courses offered by other universities. In Estonia, anthropology is classified as a humanitarian science, and in Finland and Great Britain as a social science.

Analysing the content of BSP CSA courses in percentage, it can be found that 90% or 65 out of 72 of the credit points (cp) are dedicated to the field of anthropology in the compulsory part (A) of the programme. In the optional part (B), which is offered with a total volume of 84 cp, courses in the field of anthropology make up 56%, 17% of is devoted to border sciences, which belong to the direction of social sciences, and 15% to the humanitarian direction, but here it should be taken into account that these 12 cps or 15% are contrasting regional ethnographic courses and ethnology, which according to the current regulation are considered to belong to the group of social sciences.

### **3.1.3. Economic and/ or social substantiation of the study programme, analysis of graduates' employment.**

Anthropology is a new branch of science in Latvia, but well-known in the world, which studies the human phenomenon in a global context and the various ways in which people form relationships and social life. Unlike other social sciences existing in Latvia, BSP CSA focuses on the study of the diversity of humanity and through it also on the critical exploration of its society.

BSP CSA prepares specialists with knowledge in diverse areas of human activity, as well as in economic, political, kinship, religious and other functions of society, diversity of society and its management. The popularity of the field of anthropology has increased with the process of globalization, increasing population migration and shrinking distances. Consequently, the graduates of BSP CSA were able to find work both in Latvia in various fields and abroad, because education is not only related to the context of Latvian or Western societies.

The acquired knowledge allows graduates of the programme to work not only in academic research, but in various governmental and non-governmental structures and business, using the acquired intercultural communication skills and a holistic view of the diversity of society, cultural diversity and pluralism.

Despite the relatively small number of allocated budget places (24), the programme is able to attract students, showing that the level of demand for anthropology in Latvia and abroad remains high.

In August-September 2020, a survey of anthropology programme graduates was conducted at the

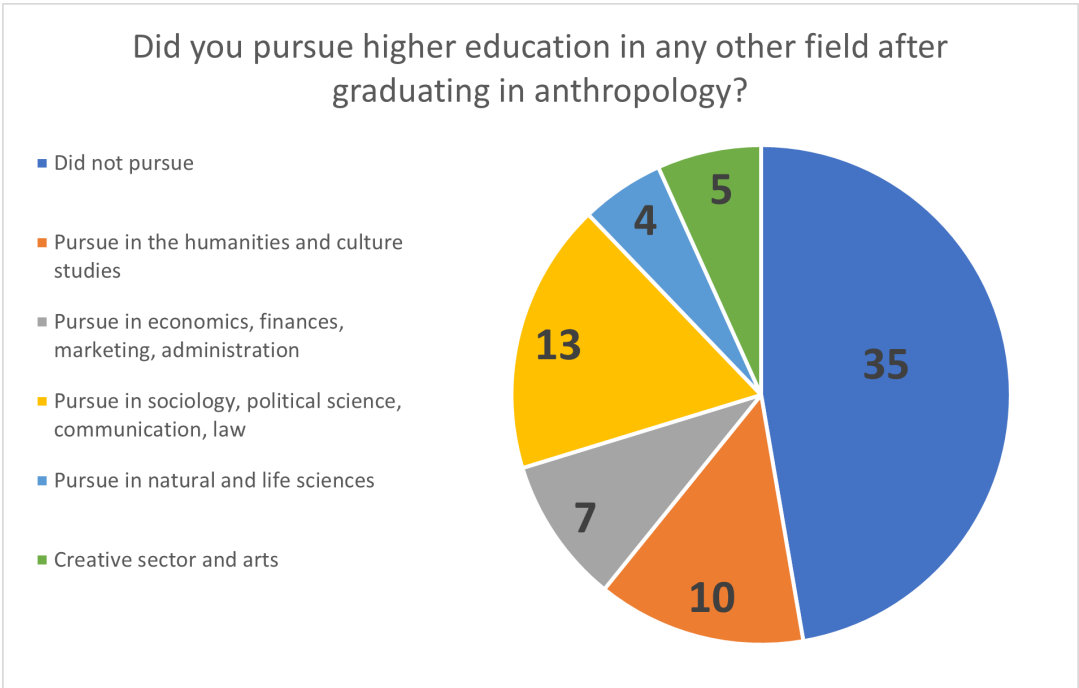


visidati.lv portal. Out of 115 graduates of the bachelor's programme, 62 or 54% filled out the questionnaire. 7 respondents had finished both programmes. The questionnaires were filled out by 10 men and 64 women and the average age of the respondents is 30.2 years.

Most graduates have continued their education and careers show a wide range of distance education (Figure 1)

Figure 3.1.3.1.

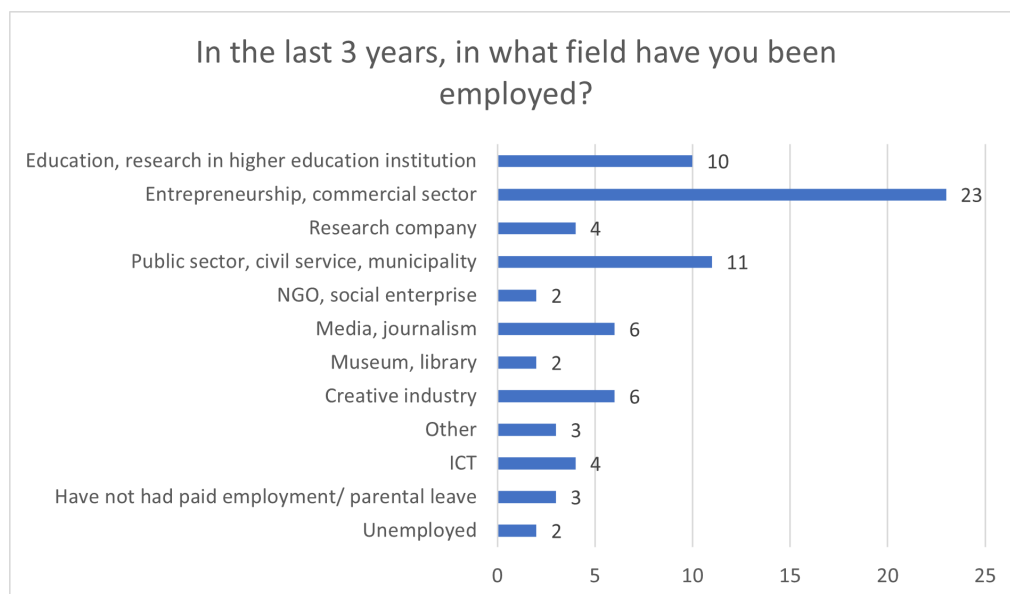
The further education of graduates of anthropology programmes



Analysing the responses by programme type, it can be seen that only 28% of graduates of the bachelor's programme did not go on to higher education. Out of 7 graduates of both programmes, 4 did not continue their education, although the survey shows that these respondents most often continue to work professionally in the field of anthropology. This is likely to be explained by the lack of access to further education in Latvia.

The fields of employment of graduates also show great diversity (see Figure 2). Most graduates work in private companies. A small proportion is employed in the field of research, more often in a university or a research institute.

Figure 3.1.3.2. Employment of anthropology graduates in absolute numbers



### **The average gross salary for programme graduates was 1070-1368 euros in 2021.**

Calculating the average salary of employed graduates, the salary of graduates of the bachelor's programme varies between 945-1231 euros, and the salary of graduates of both programmes - between 1219-1519 euros. The average salary was calculated by summing up the frequency of the salary limits indicated in the answers and dividing it by the number of respondents in the relevant category. It can be seen that the area of employment, not a degree, has a significant impact on the level of remuneration. The average salary of research-related respondents is slightly higher than the average.

Given the wide selection of career, it is important to understand what knowledge and skills the programme can provide. In general, graduates who graduated from both programmes are the most satisfied, and this is most likely related to the activity of the majority of this group in the research industry. Only 60% of the graduates of the bachelor's programme believe that the knowledge gained has been useful in their careers. These data are also consistent with a mini-research conducted at the end of 2020 among BSP 1st-year students - students do not have a career plan when they start their bachelor's studies, and studies allow to extend the decision-making period. Anthropology studies are attractive to undecided students in this sense, as they offer a relatively broad education in the social and humanitarian fields.

When asked about the types of knowledge and skills, respondents are more positive than thinking about the impact of the programme on their careers as a whole. Analytical and critical thinking skills are most often used (82% of graduates use them to a great extent, 11% - sometimes), as well as knowledge of text and English language. Less significance is paid to specific skills and knowledge related to the use of specific anthropology. The survey data show that, in general, the programme offers a good portfolio of knowledge and skills that are in demand on the labor market - critical thinking, a systematic and comprehensive view of the social world, analytical skills, the ability to work with texts, the transfer of inclusive values, communication skills, but a bachelor's degree students do not associate them with their careers in the anthropology field.

Graduates' career trajectories show the usefulness of further positioning of the programme in the field of anthropology, focusing on anthropology as a starting step in students' careers, allowing students to combine educational and career interactions themselves, offering clearly formulated knowledge and skills, integrating them into the programme content and evaluation criteria, as also using the universal and interdisciplinary content of anthropology as a unique educational niche.

**3.1.4. Statistical data on the students of the respective study programme, the dynamics of the number of the students, and the factors affecting the changes to the number of the students. The analysis shall be broken down into different study forms, types, and languages.**

The number of students in the programme has gradually decreased since the first years of its creation. There are several reasons for this.

*Table 3.1.4.1. The number of students in BSP CSA*

Report period as of October 1	Study form and language	Matriculated			Students							Have obtained a degree or qualification		
		Total	From the total number of matriculated		Total	Study year			From the total number of students		Exmatriculated (total from 30 August of the previous year to 1 October of the reporting year)	Total	Out of the total number of degree or qualification holders	
			Subsidy	Tuition		1	2	3	Subsidy	Tuition			Subsidy	Tuition
2021	FT	21	8	13	55	23	15	17	27	28	13	8	7	1
	Latvian	8	8		27	8	9	10	27		5	7	7	
	English	13		13	28	15	6	7		28	8	1		1
2020	FT	27	17	10	55	27	16	12	35	20	14	4	3	1
	Latvian	17	17		35	17	11	7	35		5	3	3	
	English	10		10	20	10	7	1		20	9	1		1
2019	FT	24	16	8	46	24	12	10	31	15	10	6	5	1
	Latvian	16	16		31	24	12	10	31		5	5	5	
	English	8		8	15	7	7	1		15	5	1		1
2018	FT	14	7	7	37	14	9	14	22	15	14	7	3	4
	Latvian	7	7		37	8	5	10	22		4	3	3	
	English	7		7		6	4	4		15	10	4		4
2017	FT	11	7	4	41	12	18	11	25	16	9	17	12	5
	Latvian,	7	7		25	8	11	11	25		4	12	12	
	English	4		4	16	4	7	5		16	5	5		5
2016	FT	25	19	6	55	22	7	26	41	14	13	11	7	4
	Latvian	19	19		41	19	3	22	41		5	7	7	
	English	6		6	14	6	4	4		14	8	4		4
2015	FT	12	10	2	46	12	15	19	35	11	14	18	10	8
	Latvian,	10	10					11	35		4	10	10	
	English	2		2	11	2	0	8		11	10	8		8
2014	FT, Latvian, English	20			63				24			18		

2013	FT, Latvian, English	34	85	24	17
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First of all, it is objectively affected by the decrease in the number of students in the country.

1.32-2.1% of all university applicants of the given year apply for anthropology studies. Analysing information about Latvian applicants, it can be seen that a higher number of applications, as well as a higher proportion of applications in universities and faculties, is observed in years when a higher number of budget places is offered (see Table 3.1.4.2.). It is significant that a higher number of budget places also attracts a higher number of students who study with personal funds.

The number of students who choose BSP CSA as the 1st priority for their studies remains quite stable and the statistics of matriculated students indicate that some of them refuse to study in the priority area because they did not receive a budget place. Applicants rarely choose studies using personal funds as their first priority.

Competition for 1 CSA budget place varies from 8.68, when the historically highest number of budget places was offered, to 21.25 per budget place - in the 2021/22 academic year, when a sharp drop in budget places was experienced. The competition in the priority group of the programme in these years was 1.84 and 3.75 per place, respectively.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the low number of places allocated by the state is one of the significant obstacles to increasing the number of students in the programme. On the other hand, attracting local students who are ready to invest personal funds in their studies is a complex challenge that cannot be solved only by changing the content of the programme or better promoting it.

*Table 3.1.4.2. Applications at BSP CSA*

	CSA subsidised study places	Applications for subsidised places		Applications for tuition-paid places		Competition		% of faculty applications	
		Total	1 <sup>st</sup> priority	Total	1 <sup>st</sup> priority	Per subsidised place in 1 <sup>st</sup> priority	Per subsidised place, total	Priority	Total
2021/22	8	170	30	65	1	3.75	21.25	6.48	8.15
2020/21	16	159	33	47	0	2.06	9.94	7.59	7.40
2019/20	16	154	35	52	0	2.19	9.63	8.18	7.59
2018/19	7	117	23	31	0	3.29	16.71	6.20	6.87
2017/18	7	109	20	41	1	2.86	15.57	4.94	5.55
2016/17	19	165	35	47	1	1.84	8.68	8.62	8.00
2015/16	10	141	25	42	2	2.50	14.10	6.00	6.55
2014/15	10	170	33	71	0	3.30	17.00	6.07	6.01
2013/14	10	193	29	79	3	2.90	19.30	5.10	6.30

The option to ensure a larger number of students for studies with private funds is the attraction of

foreign students. At the beginning of the reporting period, the study programme was prepared for teaching in Latvian and English, bilingually adapting course materials in the e-environment and lecture presentations. The number of foreign students is initially small (see table 6) and the various host countries indicate an unfocused strategy for attracting students (see table 5). As part of the programme, an English version of the website was created for the support of interested parties and students, within the framework of UL, regular requests were made to improve the quality of communication with foreign applicants. The centrally located information about study opportunities in Latvia by the Ministry of Education and Science, where information about the programme is provided, is effective.

*Table 3.1.4.2. Country of origin of international students*

<b>International students at BSP CSA by year of matriculation</b>	
<b>2014</b>	One from Canada, one from Brazil
<b>2015</b>	One from Canada, one from Vietnam
<b>2016</b>	One from Germany
<b>2017</b>	One from Germany
<b>2018</b>	One from Kazakhstan, one from Great Britain
<b>2019</b>	-
<b>2020</b>	One from Estonia, one from South Korea, one from the United States, one from Russia
<b>2021</b>	One from Lebanon, one from Ireland, one from India

There are also obstacles to attracting foreign students - a significant majority of applicants fail the application process, in which they have to obtain a diploma of previous education, sign a contract and obtain a residence permit. It has rarely been possible to do this within half a year, therefore, in the 2022/23 academic year, application for studies has been started earlier - already in autumn, so that applicants have time to complete the procedures. In the last years this process was particularly complicated by the pandemic - Latvian embassies were not located in all countries and there were travel and activity restrictions.

The second problem with BSP foreign applicants is the lack of centralized verification mechanisms for checking applicants' intentions. Currently, the only criterion is the results of previous studies, and more than half of the applications are rejected precisely because of this criterion. At the same time, only a small part of the applicants who pass the selection are matriculated. Within the framework of the programme, various types of support have been provided in the last two years - remote studies while the student completes the arrival formalities, information about the study environment and an invitation to report problems, etc., which has allowed a slightly higher number of applicants to matriculate. In 2021, opportunities for foreign studies are also limited by the regulation of vaccination and the relatively complicated process to recognize the fact of vaccination even with an EU-registered vaccine.

*Table 3.1.4.3. International students in the programme*

BSP CSA	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/21	2021/22
Total	6	9	11	22	18	11	24
Degree students	3	2	3	4	3	5	6
Exchange students	3	7	8	18	15	6	19

Another problem affecting the number of students is the relatively high dropout rate. One of the most frequent reasons given by students who have stopped their studies is the amount of the study load and the inability to balance it with work. Students with full-time employment are also more likely to develop student debt. For example, in the 2019/20 study year, 16 budget study places were offered for matriculation at BSP. A total of 154 applications were received, 35 of them with first priority, showing an increase since the previous year. In general, applications with the first priority made up 0.41% of all university applications, while in the previous academic year - 0.28%. Competition for one budget place in BSP CSA is 2.19 in the priority group and 9.63 in general. 24 students started their studies, but in the second year of study, their number has already dropped to 15, some of the students being exmatriculated because the number of budget places for the group was reduced to 10.

A relatively small number of local students are exmatriculated, admitting that they made a mistake in choosing their studies, this proportion is higher among foreign students. There is also a tendency for students who have won a budget place not to start their studies at all, not coming to a single class and avoiding communication with UL staff. Perhaps the motivation for doing so is the desire to possibly receive full-time student benefits. This phenomenon occurs more often at the level of master's studies, but almost every year at BSP there are one or more such students who are exmatriculated after the first semester without fulfilling their obligations.

Drop-out rate is influenced by satisfaction with studies and the programme. Although the overall satisfaction scores are moderately high, a small proportion of students give a very low rating here and admit to feeling discomfort due to the workload and demands of their studies.

The position of curator has been introduced to support students, allowing each student to talk about problems and ask for help once in three semesters in a neutral environment. The most important problems are the provision of inclusive education for students with special needs. Special difficulties are experienced by students with mental health problems - this is also the most frequent reason, along with family and work conditions, why studies are temporarily interrupted. The competition for budget places also creates tension in the student group, thus making the work of self-directed groups difficult. Also, the need has been recognized and the first attempts have been made to strengthen teamwork skills, which are significantly lower for the younger student cohorts compared to the period 10 years ago. The director of the programme regularly discusses with the lecturers of the programme the assessment given by the students about the courses and the programme.

BSP CSA students actively use the offered Erasmus+ exchange opportunities, on average 2 students go on exchange every study year (see table 7). Exchange study opportunities are relevant for both local and foreign students and improve the attractiveness of the programme.

*Table 3.1.4.4. The number of students in the programme who take part in exchange programmes abroad*

<i>BSP CSA</i>	<i>2015/2016</i>	<i>2016/2017</i>	<i>2017/2018</i>	<i>2018/2019</i>	<i>2019/20</i>	<i>2020/21</i>	<i>2021/22</i>
<i>Total</i>	3	1	3	1	2	2	2
<i>Erasmus + studies</i>	3	1	3	1	2	2	2
<i>Erasmus + internship</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Other mobility programmes</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**3.1.5. Substantiation of the development of the joint study programme and description and evaluation of the choice of partner universities, including information on the development and implementation of the joint study programme (if applicable).**

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

**3.2.1. Analysis of the content of the study programme. Assessment of the interrelation between the information included in the study courses/ modules, the intended learning outcomes, the set aims and other indicators with the aims of the study course/ module and the aims and intended outcomes of the study programme. Assessment of the relevance of the content of the study courses/ modules and compliance with the needs of the relevant industry, labour market and with the trends in science on how and whether the content of the study courses/ modules is updated in line with the development trends of the relevant industry, labour market, and science.**

In accordance with Article 10 of the Cabinet of Ministers' Regulations No. 240 "Regulations on State Academic Education Standards" of May 13, 2014, the mandatory part and the limited elective part of the bachelor's study programme include the guidelines, principles, structure and methodology of the relevant science branch or sub-branch (no less as 25 credit points), the history and current problems of the development of the science branch or sub-sector (not less than 10 credit points), as well as the characteristics and problems of the science branch or sub-sector in the inter-sectoral aspect (not less than 15 credit points).

25 credits in the BSP CSA in the mandatory part of the programme address the guidelines, principles, structure and methodology in anthropology (Introduction to studies and university resources, Introduction to cultural and social anthropology, Introduction to anthropological methods, Research ethics, Anthropology fieldwork I, Quantitative research methods in anthropology, Bachelor thesis seminar), 30 credits in the mandatory section are provided for the history of the development of the anthropology and current problems (Classical anthropological theories, Modern anthropological theories, Political anthropology, Kinship anthropology, Economic anthropology, Anthropology of religion and ritual, Environmental anthropology, Introduction in

biological anthropology). 54 credits in the limited elective part of the programme are provided for anthropology courses. On the other hand, for ensuring interdisciplinary 7 credits are provided in the mandatory (A) part of the programme (Philosophy, Internet, network etiquette and legal regulation, basics of the Latvian scientific language and terminology) and 32 credits in the limited elective (B) part (Traditional music I and II, Populism and radical right-wing populism in Europe, Political analysis, Social research: design, practical implementation and use, Biographical approach in social sciences, Social innovation and social economy, Social and cultural planning, Practical Latvian language for foreign students). In accordance with the conditions mentioned in clause 10 of this regulation, the bachelor's study programme also includes the content requirements of the study courses specified in the Law on Environmental Protection and the Law on Civil Defence (Environmental Anthropology, Civil Defence).

The study programme is structured into three parts: The obligatory A part has 72 credit points, including 10 CP for the bachelor thesis. B part limited elective courses in the amount of 44 credits, C for free elective courses in the amount of 4 credits. The programme consists of the following mandatory courses: (1) LU general courses in the amount of 10 credits, providing an insight into the organization of studies, academic language and academic thinking; theory courses (Classical theories of anthropology, Modern theories of anthropology) make up 6 credits; as well as the theory is already included in an integrated form in part of the compulsory courses in the fields of anthropology (Economic Anthropology, Anthropology of Kinship, Anthropology of Religion and Ritual, Political Anthropology, Environmental Anthropology, Introduction to Biological Anthropology); methods courses (Introduction to anthropological methods, Field work I, Quantitative research methods in anthropology, 14 credits). In elective courses, students supplement their knowledge in fields of their own choosing, for example, Practical Research, in which during the course students are involved in conducting some socially significant research. The practical component is also included in the study courses as a mini-research task, creating the student's research "portfolio". In-depth specialization courses of the department are offered in the optional part, which allows you to follow up to the application of theory and methods in analysis, for example, Anthropology of Sexuality and Gender, Introduction to the anthropology of performance, Animals in Anthropology, Anthropology of Art, Anthropology of Things, Introduction to Urban Anthropology, Ethnic Communities, etc.). The ability to combine theoretical and methodological knowledge, apply fieldwork skills and analyse data according to industry trends is confirmed by the final thesis. In anthropology studies, it is essential to take a contrasting course in the culture (ethnology) of the region, where the resources of the UL teaching staff are used to provide it, thereby expanding the choice of students. In the free choice part, students use 4 credit hours to study courses outside the programme structure, language learning is especially encouraged for the work of an anthropologist.

Compared to other study programmes in the region and Europe, UL BSP CSA offers a larger number of contact hours. The University of Cambridge, a leader in the teaching of anthropology, is based on individualized teaching. In general, all universities selected for comparison (Universities of Helsinki, Tallinn and Cambridge) have a smaller number of students and an individualized approach, but a low proportion of elective courses. At Tallinn University, it is possible to study in the minor/major system, which allows you to study anthropology also with a partial specialization. At UL CSR BSP, great emphasis is placed on developing research skills, which is not provided for in Tallinn and Cambridge Universities. The study content is basically similar, but the University of Tallinn offers an additional specialization in visual anthropology, while the University of Helsinki already focuses on social change.

The content of the study courses is regularly reviewed, guided by student evaluations and methodological seminars of the Department of Anthropology. Since the programme has a large proportion of young lecturers, a large part of the new lecturers' courses are shared with



experienced lecturers, which has also proven to be an effective tool for changing the course content and giving a new perspective on the course content. Connection with the labour market is provided by two 4-credit optional courses Practical research and Practical research I (total 8 credits), which are created either together with an employer partner (SEB bank, Latvian Commercial Banks Association, Latvian Saeima) or for current research projects of the department, which allows students to go through the full research cycle, starting from consultations with the client, research design, execution and presentation of results to both the partner and the media. Similar small projects are also included in the thematic courses. Connection with the labour market is also recommended in the selection of topics for the final theses. Experience shows that some students find work in the institutions that are studied during their studies. In addition, some courses are taught by graduates of the programme who have found their place in the labour market and are able to connect the topic of their specialization with the requirements of the labour market.

In addition, in 2020, Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC) conducted an analysis of the content and structure of the study programmes and a study of the industry's human resources development needs and necessary skills for the improvement of the content of the study programmes, recommending strengthening the 6 level skills of the Latvian Qualification Framework (LKI) by offering (1) development of management skills course; (2) to strengthen consulting skills on the practical use of research results. As a result of these recommendations, in the autumn semester of 2021, a new course "Anthropology and career" has been introduced into the programme in the amount of 4 credits, as well as the component of applied anthropology has been strengthened in other courses. These changes introduce students to the field of social studies as a further career.

In general, during the accreditation period, the programme has moved towards integrating more practical skills that can be used in the labour market into the content of the programme, which also meets the needs of students.

The information included in the study courses has been supplemented both by improving the course descriptions (see course descriptions in the appendix) and by improving the content of the courses in the e-environment. Each course has its own e-platform, where, in addition to the course description, a whole section is devoted to the achievable indicators of each course and their connection with the achievable indicators of the programme, as well as these indicators are included in the evaluation criteria of the e-course tasks. At the beginning and at the end of the course, the course goals and achievable indicators are explained and evaluated orally to the students. As mentioned in 3.1. section, the goals and tasks of the programme have been reworked since the previous accreditation, following the recommendations of experts, and the goals and tasks of the individual courses have also been modified accordingly. The map of the study course for achieving the study results of the study programme is visually represented in the appendix Mapping of the study courses CSA BSP.

**3.2.2. In the case of master's and doctoral study programmes, specify and provide the justification as to whether the degrees are awarded in view of the developments and findings in the field of science or artistic creation. In the case of a doctoral study programme, provide a description of the main research roadmaps and the impact of the study programme on research and other education levels (if applicable).**

**3.2.3. Assessment of the study programme including the study course/ module implementation methods by indicating what the methods are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study programme. In the case of a joint study programme, or in case the study programme is implemented in a foreign language or in the form of distance learning, describe in detail the methods used to deliver such a study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.**

Studies in BSP CSA are based in student-centred teaching and learning principles. First of all, each course has a part of lectures and seminars. The seminars mainly use student-led discussions and are based on the principles of the student-led learning process, with each level of study, increasing the role of students and forms of involvement. Different forms are used for students' work in person, not only discussions, but also role-playing games, go-alongs, or cognitive walks in the urban environment, and the use of visual materials. Secondly, the independent work of students plays a big role. For each lesson, including lectures, a minimum of literature to be learned is prepared and tasks are offered, which allow not to provide information, but to analyse it in lectures and seminars. Thirdly, the theoretical approach is combined with its practical application – the development of the applicable approach is one of the achievable indicators of the programme. Representatives of the industry and employers are invited to teach individual courses in the study courses (for example, Anthropology and career, Economic anthropology is organized in this way), study tours are organized to industry organizations (Introduction to biological anthropology includes an excursion to the Latvian Human Genome Project, Latvian History museum archive; in economic anthropology - to the Bank of Latvia, in body and medical anthropology - to the RSU Anatomy Museum) or direct cooperation with partners (for example, in the Introduction to Art Anthropology course - cooperation is with Survival KIT, in the Practical Research course - with the Association of Latvian Commercial Banks). Students are regularly informed about the work of the Latvian Society of Anthropologists and its student section and regularly organized lectures, which complement the study content with the latest in the industry. Fourth, in most courses, in addition to the course content, students are offered to conduct an independent mini-research on the course topic, but allowing the student to find the focus himself. Fifth, students are supported in the research of new individual topics in the Fieldwork Course (6kp) and in the bachelor's Work Seminar (2kp) in the final thesis (10kp). It is encouraged to link these research topics with students' further career opportunities. Some students implement this opportunity, for example, the topic of the final thesis on social entrepreneurship has opened the way for a BSP graduate to the position of director in the Latvian Association of Social Entrepreneurship. The Anthropology and Career course is used to promote these cases. Sixth, the courses use both student self-assessment tools (for example, a self-reflection essay on work in a group project and the knowledge, skills, competences gained in this process) and peer review as a part of the learning process. The ability to evaluate one's own and colleagues' work is also included in the programme's achievable indicators.

The study results were completely reworked by studying good practice in other universities and receiving a grant from the Academic Development Grant in 2018. We carried out the project in order to introduce a transparent, unified and student-understandable structure of assessment and learning outcomes in all programme courses and to precisely define the expected performance of students at the BSP and MSP levels. The evaluation system is fully integrated into the tools of the Moodle e-course platform. The study results of the programme are reflected in the learning outcomes of each course, allowing students to see the role of each course and each task in the

course in relation to overall programme results and evaluation of their performance level. So that students and teachers can more easily follow the development of each performance in the specific group of results, the results are grouped and numbered (references to these numbers can be found in the description of the achievable results of the e-course description in Moodle and in the Final theses guidelines). The official version of the programme and mapping table contains a reduced list of the same learning outcomes according to the University and national guidelines. Based on foreign experience and emphasizing the development aspect of each student, the results are formulated with the opening phrase "After learning the programme, students are better able to ...", to emphasize the different abilities of each student and allow to emphasize the dynamism and complexity of the learning process and actively involve students in achieving their goals.

For the evaluation of the individual tests of each course, if the selected form of assignment in the Moodle environment allows it, a rubric-type evaluation is used, where the evaluation of each task is made up of criteria resulting from the course's learning outcomes and the degree of their achievement. During the accreditation period, the guidelines for final assignments were completely reworked, which includes sections for students and teachers explaining the principles of work planning and evaluation. A sample rubric grading system is also attached to the instructions. Methodological instructions can be found in the appendixes.

Similar to the instructions for the final thesis, a uniform approach and guidelines for the selection of course didactics and the evaluation of student performance have been created. All courses can be found on the Moodle platform, where information is provided on course content, course deliverables and their relationship to programme deliverables, as well as requirements. The e-course provides detailed content planning, links to external resources, course literature and weekly study tasks, which allow students to receive timely feedback and develop their knowledge, competences and skills during the course. The evaluation of each task thus consists of an evaluation in a 10-point system and a comment part. If the form of the task allows it, the formula of the rubric tool is used to calculate the grade, according to the degree of achievement of each rating criterion. The criteria, in turn, are related to the achievable indicators of the course. The comment section explains the assessment, indicates the strengths and weaknesses of the task performance. In addition to comments, the student receives the relevant description of his/her level in the rubric system (for an example of general evaluation guidelines for lecturers and students, see the Final Thesis guidelines in the appendix).

Since the language of the study programme is Latvian and English, the e-course platform is created bilingually. If possible, study literature is offered in Latvian and English. A former lecturer of the programme translated the basic textbook into Latvian, but most course literature is in English. All tasks are written in Latvian and English, allowing students of both languages to receive not only identical course content, but also an assessment. The student forums tool is also bilingual, where students can share their writings and assignments and do group work. All anthropology lecturers are bilingual speakers of Latvian and English.

By implementing the internal quality assurance policy, students are ensured active involvement in the improvement of the study process. The UL has rules and procedures for submitting student proposals and resolving complaints, examining student appeals. The results of centralized student surveys are evaluated and taken into account in the improvement of the study process. Student surveys are conducted once a semester. The results are analysed and individually discussed with lecturers and students.

BSP CSA additionally uses the method of focus group discussions with students, which simultaneously allows students to practice research methods and obtain anonymized data on programme evaluation.

Employers are involved in the development of programme content in three ways. First of all, employer surveys are conducted, but they mainly offer a panoramic view of the preparedness and required skills of programme graduates. Secondly, representatives of employers are also involved in the study direction council, allowing not only to receive recommendations, but also to maintain feedback. Thirdly, graduates of the programme are employed in the teaching of individual courses, thus ensuring the connection of the programme with the labour market situation. A special course, Anthropology and career, was introduced in 2021, allowing students to familiarize themselves not only with career opportunities, but also with graduate experiences.

During the last 4 years of the review period, the institution of a curator has been operating - the curator conducts individual interviews with all first-semester students to help them adapt to the study environment and the rest of the students, providing feedback to the programme director. Evaluation of the content of individual courses is a part of every course, which, although it does not ensure anonymity, serves as a good tool for regular improvement of the course content and detection of weak points. Students are happy to express their suggestions for improvement of study programmes and processes in discussions with lecturers and programme directors.

A developed e-environment allowed the programme to easily switch to remote training during the pandemic and served as an opportunity to supplement course resources with video lectures and other interactive materials. At the same time, taking into account the specifics of anthropology studies, there are no plans to develop programmes in the form of distance learning.

**3.2.4. If the study programme envisages an internship, describe the internship opportunities offered to students, provision and work organization, including whether the higher education institution/ college helps students to find an internship place. If the study programme is implemented in a foreign language, provide information on how internship opportunities are provided in a foreign language, including for foreign students. To provide analysis and evaluation of the connection of the tasks set for students during the internship included in the study programme with the learning outcomes of the study programme (if applicable).**

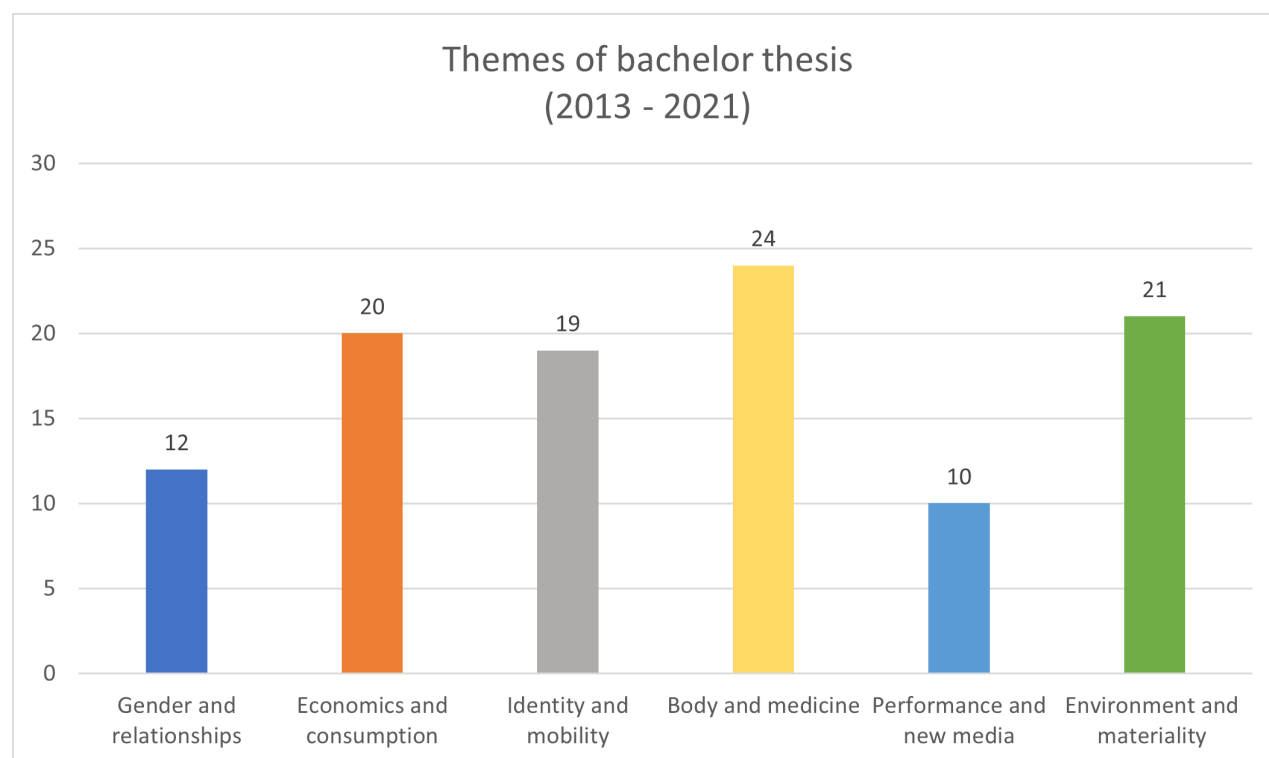
**3.2.5. Evaluation and description of the promotion opportunities and the promotion process provided to the students of the doctoral study programme (if applicable).**

**3.2.6. Analysis and assessment of the topics of the final theses of the students, their relevance in the respective field, including the labour market, and the marks of the final theses.**

BSP students have a number of different research interests, however, most works are written in the anthropology of the body and medicine, which is the priority direction of the department's scientific research (25 in total). Students focus on experiences of various illnesses (eg depression,

type I diabetes) (see Figures 3.2.6.1. and 3.2.6.2.).

Figure 3.2.6.1. The number of BSP CSA bachelor's theses per topic during the reporting period



The second most popular topic is related to the anthropology of environment and materiality, which includes 22 undergraduate theses. 6 works are written about people's experiences in the urban environment, for example, bicycle infrastructure, creative quarters, walking with a dog. 5 is about the relationship between humans and animals. Several works have also been written about various associations, communities and activism in the fields of environmental cleaning and sustainable and ethical consumption (for example, about vegan lifestyle, waste management). This topic is related to the long-term interests of the department's lecturers in urban planning issues and is one of the department's current research directions.

20 bachelor theses were written in the anthropology of economy and consumption. The most works were written in 2013 (9), while in 2019-2021. no one has been written in the year. Students wrote about homemakers, traders, homeless people, working students, management practices of large organizations. This is also the area of competence of the department and mainly applied research and organized cooperation are carried out here, promoting students' interest in the study of the national economy.

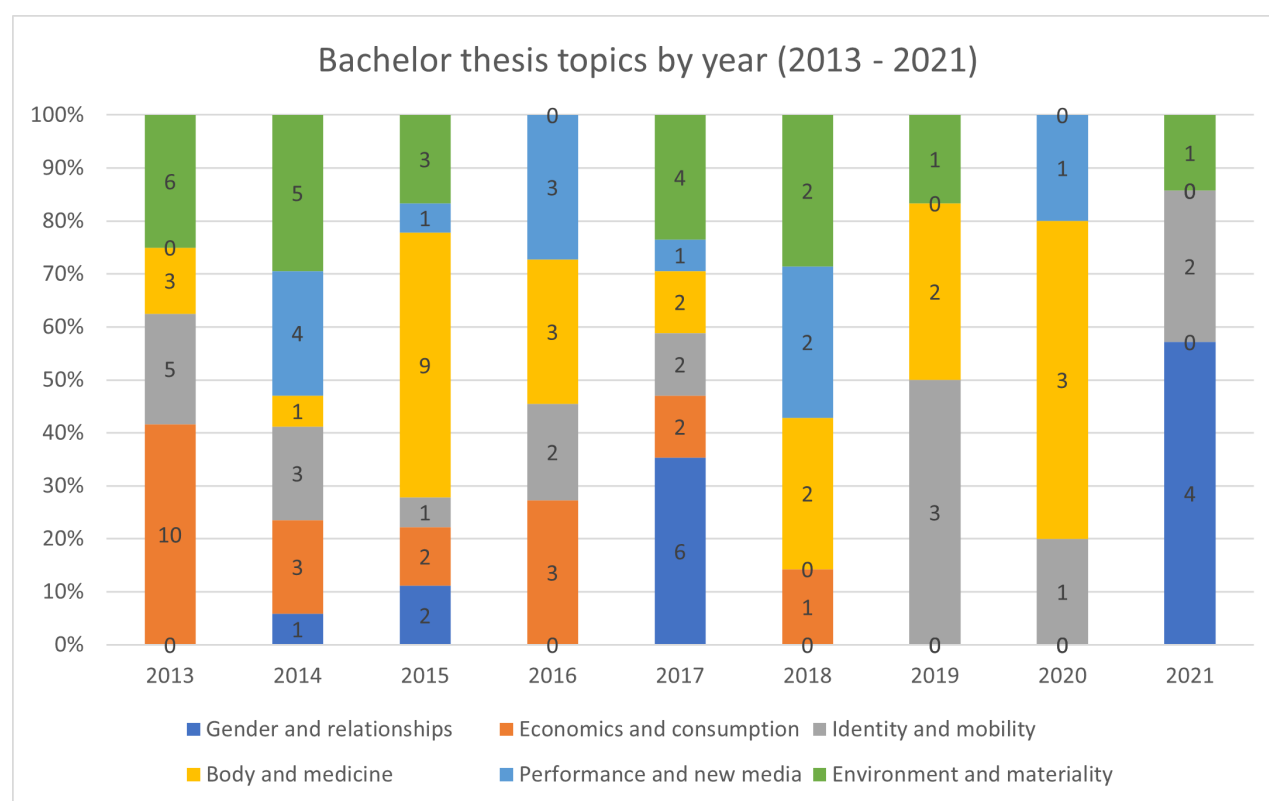
19 works related to the anthropology of identity and mobility. The most works were written in 2013 (5). 9 works written on migration between countries. A large part of these works are about the transnational experiences of Latvians. Some of the works are about social memories, as well as about nationalism, patriotism and militarization.

13 works have been written in the anthropology of family and kinship. The most works were written in 2017 (5). Students focused on family relationships in the workplace, for example in educational institutions or in the military service, as well as couple relationships, for example, in a pre-marriage seminar in a church or in gay and lesbian communities. This theme also includes works that focus on women's experiences of childbirth.

12 works were written in the performance and new media sub-sector. The most works were written in 2016 (3). 3 papers were written about games - 1 about a board role-playing game, 2 about role-

playing computer games. 2 works are about religious organizations, 1 about book collectors, 1 about creating a museum, 1 about video surveillance, 1 about copyright in music.

Figure 3.2.6.2. Themes of BSP CSA bachelor's theses during the reporting period



The distribution of bachelor's thesis grades at the beginning of the reference period represents the ranking of all grades with the median in the middle (see Table 8). In order to improve the evaluation of the work, since 2015, pre-defence of works has been introduced, allowing students to receive feedback earlier and improving the overall result. In 2017, a unified grading system was tested and improved in its final version in 2018, as well as developed guidelines for evaluation for students and lecturers, showing a convincing increase in success. It should be noted that since 2018, a unified evaluation system, based on the achievable indicators of the entire programme, has been gradually introduced in all courses offered by BSP CSA.

Table 3.2.6.1. Grades given to BSP CSA bachelor's theses

BSP CSA	Thesis grading						
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Spring 2013	2	1	4	3	7	2	5
Spring 2014	1	3	3	2	4	2	2

Spring 2015		1	4	5	4	4	
Spring 2016	1	2	1	2	4		1
Fall 2016		1		1			
Spring 2017	3		4	2	1	3	2
Fall 2017	1						1
Spring 2018				2		3	
Spring 2019	1			2	2		1
Spring 2020		1			1		2
Fall 2020		1					
Spring 2021			1		1	2	3

### 3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

**3.3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples.**

BSP CSA is implemented at the Faculty of Social Sciences (FSS) and using the common material and technical base of the faculty and the LU. The overall material and technical provision of the study

direction has already been described above, so in the following paragraphs the aspects of the material and technical provision that apply to BSP CSA students are especially highlighted. The provision of students and lecturers with literature necessary for studies and research, the provision of FSS with rooms suitable for the study process and the overall provision of electronic resources (Moodle environment, remote teaching opportunities on the MS Teams platform) are particularly noteworthy.

In general, the provision of resources by BSP CSA is excellent and fully adequate for achieving the goals of the study programme and implementing a high-quality study process. Literature for KSA BSP is available mainly in English; it is intended for use by students of the English and Latvian language streams. A relatively small number of sources have been translated and created in Latvian, and equivalents of these sources are available in English.

The premises of the LU FSS library, which houses the collection of the social sciences branch, are open to students at their convenience 60 hours a week. An open-access repository is available to users. UL FSS library is located in three rooms, the total area of which is 544 m<sup>2</sup>. 84 workplaces are available for library users, incl. 18 workplaces for working with a computer. The FSS library provides the following services to students and teachers:

Electronic ordering/reserving/extending the terms of use of information resources in the general catalogue of state libraries (hereinafter - General Catalogue) and receiving information resources for use on site in the library's reading room or to take home. The service is available to users registered in the UL Library using

Delivery of information resources is available. When ordering information resources in the Common Catalogue from any library, the academic staff, researchers and doctoral students of the UL have the opportunity to specify the most convenient place of receipt of the reserved information resource - the branch library.

Self-service scanning service available to users.

It is possible to use the collection of reference literature and periodicals, stationary and portable computers (both those of the UL Libraries and users' personal ones), internet connection, including WI-FI, which works in all UL buildings.

The purpose of the "Night subscription" service is to provide the opportunity to use certain information resources outside the UL Library from the time it closes to the time it opens, free of charge. It is possible to reserve the information resource in advance for certain hours.

Delivery of information resources is also possible in the summer. Once a week, users can receive the information resources reserved in the catalogue from the reserve in the most convenient library branch (Library on Raiņa boulevard, Natural Sciences Library, Science House Library).

User information service - consulting, provision of information, training and support in research is one of the main areas of work of the UL Library. The UL Library consultant provides bibliographic, thematic, factual, address, clarifying, etc. inquiries and consultations for LU students, academic, scientific and general staff. Students use consultations more actively during the development of independent work, course work and bachelor theses.

User trainings are organized with the aim of developing users' skills to work independently, find, evaluate and use information resources and e-environment tools. The library actively works with target audiences - students of all study levels, academic, scientific and general staff, in order to promote not only information literacy, but also to provide in-depth knowledge and skills in working with electronic resources. In the first semester of studies, the library organizes and conducts presentations, classes in auditoriums and computer classrooms for students of the social work



programme, such meetings are available remotely for branch students. The purpose of the training is for users to acquire the skills to work with open-access inventory, self-service equipment and office equipment - self-service scanners, copiers, thus improving the competence of independent learning. BSP CSA students are provided with lectures provided by the staff of the FSS library on library resources and the possibilities of their use in the course Introduction to studies and university resources.

E-environment Moodle is available to lecturers for the provision of studies, which is used for distribution of study materials and submission, examination and analysis of study works. Moodle is an e-environmental tool in addition to the UL information system (hereinafter - LUIS) environment, in which study evaluation is entered. Students register for courses electronically in the LUIS environment. Students have access to the support of a study methodologist if they have questions and need help with the study process at LUIS. Study methodologists also provide support to students in organizational issues of the study process, advising students on various issues related to the study process.

UL FSS provides facilities suitable for the study process. Most of the lecturers who are involved in the implementation of BSP CSA are willing to work in the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Latvia, and these lecturers are provided with quality facilities and adequate support. Some of the lecturers are employed at the Faculty of Humanities (hereinafter - HZF). Visiting lecturers have access to work-spaces provided by UL FSS, where lecturers can stay, prepare for lessons and advise students individually.

The study plan for each student cohort is created in the long term, a 3-year course plan is offered at the start of studies. E-environment Moodle is available to lecturers for the provision of studies, which is used for distribution of study materials and submission, examination and analysis of study works. Moodle is an e-environmental tool in addition to LUIS, which provides the entry of study evaluation. Students register electronically for courses in the LUIS environment. The support of a study methodologist is available to students if they have questions and need help with the study process at LUIS. Study methodologists also provide support to students in organizational issues of the study process.

Extensive infrastructure development projects are underway at the University of Latvia, in 2024 it is planned to complete the construction of the building where BSP CSA will be implemented. The construction of the new building will unite the humanities and social sciences under one roof, hopefully facilitating cooperation as well as strengthening anthropology, which combines the traditions of both these directions. A wide collection of anthropology literature is available in the UL Humanities Library, which consists of both new book purchases and collection donations, and students will have access to it, regardless of the faculty implementing the programme. At LU, both HZF and FSS have available workplaces in the computer classroom and in the reading room of the Library of Social Sciences and Humanities, auditoriums equipped with audio and video equipment, which will offer the latest technology and room aesthetics from 2022. LU has developed e-study opportunities.

### **3.3.2. Assessment of the study provision and scientific base support, including the resources provided within the framework of cooperation with other science institutes and higher education institutions (applicable to doctoral study programmes) (if applicable).**

**3.3.3. Indicate data on the available funding for the corresponding study programme, its funding sources and their use for the development of the study programme. Provide information on the costs per one student within this study programme, indicating the items included in the cost calculation and the percentage distribution of funding between the specified items. The minimum number of students in the study programme in order to ensure the profitability of the study programme (indicating separately the information on each language, type and form of the study programme implementation).**

## Revenues

UL uses:

- state budget grant from the Ministry of Education and Science, which in 2021/2022 1630 EUR for full-time face-to-face studies is set for the academic year;
- tuition fees, taking into account all the factors mentioned in the section "Financial provision", which in 2021/2022 for the academic year:
- For full-time face-to-face studies 2200 EUR per year for EU, EEA and Swiss citizens and residents, 2420 for citizens of other countries.

Taking into account the above, the total budget of the study programme according to the data of the 2021/22 study year is expected to be EUR 103,455 per year, the transcript can be seen in table 9.

*Table 3.3.3.1. BSP CSA budget, 2021/22*

Type of studies	Number of students	Tuition/subsidy	Total
Full time (subsidy)	27	1,630	44,010
Full time (tuition EU/EEZ)	23	2,200	50,600
Full time tuition (others)	5	2,420	12,100
Total			<b>106 710</b>

## Programme costs for **full-time studies in Latvian**

In order to assess the amount of funds required for financial support, the cost of study programmes of the UL is calculated according to the methodology developed by the UL, which takes into account the costs of providing the study process described in the section "Financial support of the SD" and information about the plan of the study programme, the participating teaching staff, the planned number of students, etc. aspects, thus ensuring the reliability of forecasts.

BSP CSA implementers use 2021/2022 for calculations. student data of the academic year - 27 students study in the full-time programme, the existing study programme plan and the existing structure of the academic staff involved. Based on this data, the total annual costs of the program are 46 799 EUR and their structure (percentage distribution) is shown in Table 3.3.3.2.

*Table 3.3.3.2. Distribution of costs in the study programme*

Line item	%
Faculty members	54.75 %
General personnel	11 %
Other costs	0.25%
Infrastructure	10 %
Property and services	2%
Indirect costs	22 %
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Figure 3.3.3.1. the cost of the study program (vertical axis) depending on the number of students (horizontal axis), the tuition fee (green line) and the state budget subsidy (blue line) are visually represented with a red line.

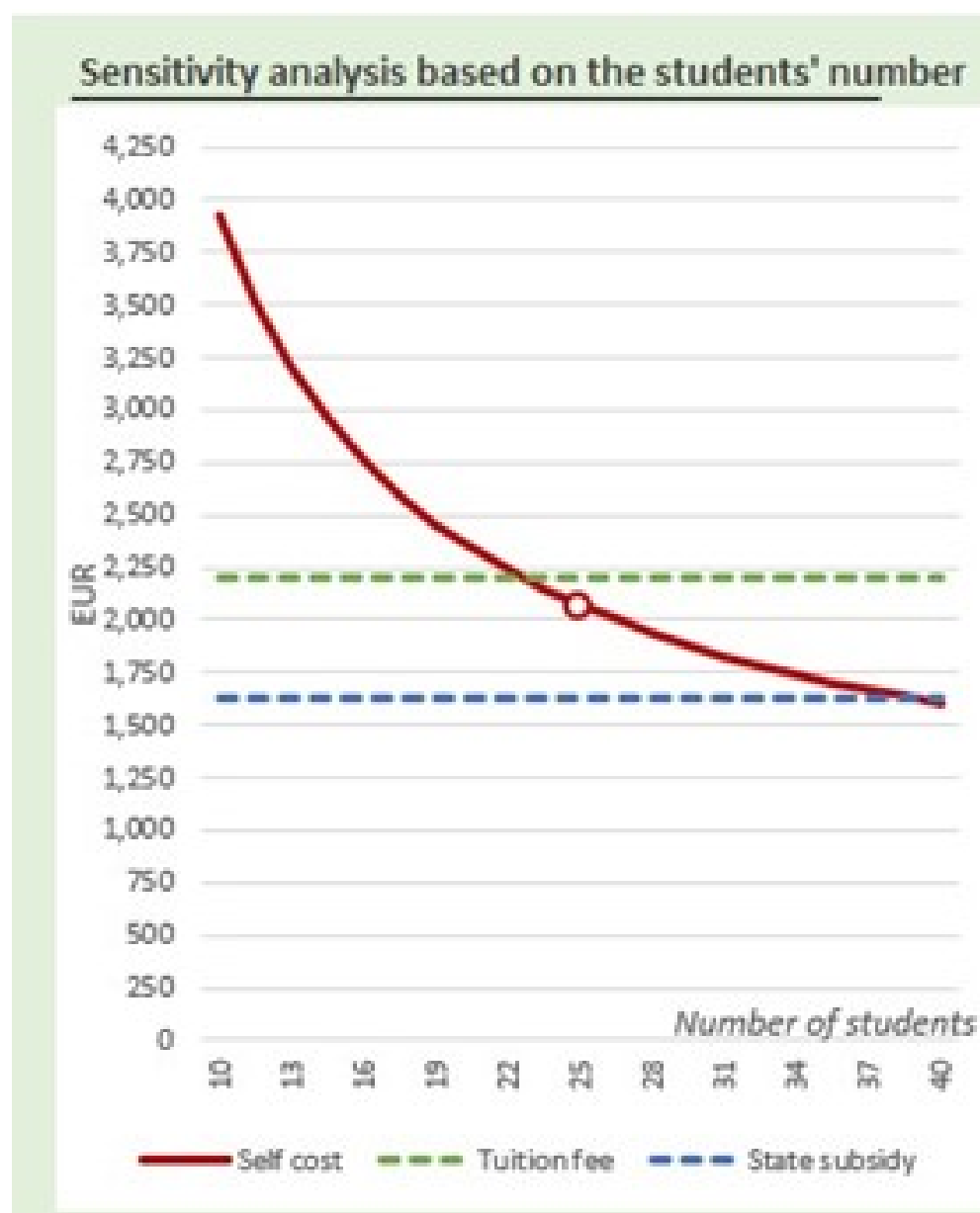


Figure 3.3.3.1. The cost of BSP Cultural and Social Anthropology on the basis of the number of students who are studying in Latvian.

Based on the cost structure and the total number of students - 27, the cost of the program per student (base cost) is 1877 EUR per year.

Based on the calculation, it can be seen that in order for the programme to be profitable and for students to be provided with a high-quality study process, the number of fee-paying students in the Latvian language programme (in all courses together) should be at least 20 (the intersection of the red (own costs) and green (tuition fees) lines is projected on the x axis). On the other hand, if the programme included only budget students studying in Latvian, then their number should reach 36 students. Currently, the state grant covers an insufficient part of the study costs, and for the implementation of the studies, it is necessary to attract students with self-financing.

#### Programme costs for full-time studies in English

BSP CSA implementers use 2021/2022 for calculations. student data of the academic year - 27 students study in the full-time programme, the existing study programme plan and the existing structure of the academic staff involved. Based on this data, the total annual costs of the program are 46 799 EUR and their structure (percentage distribution) is shown in Table 3.3.3.3.

Table 3.3.3.3. Distribution of costs in the study programme

Line item	%
Faculty members	48 %
General personnel	10 %
Other costs	0.25%
Infrastructure	12 %
Property and services	2%
Indirect costs	27.75 %
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>100</b>

Figure 3.3.3.2. the cost of the study program (vertical axis) depending on the number of students (horizontal axis), the tuition fee (green line) and the state budget subsidy (blue line) are visually represented with a red line.

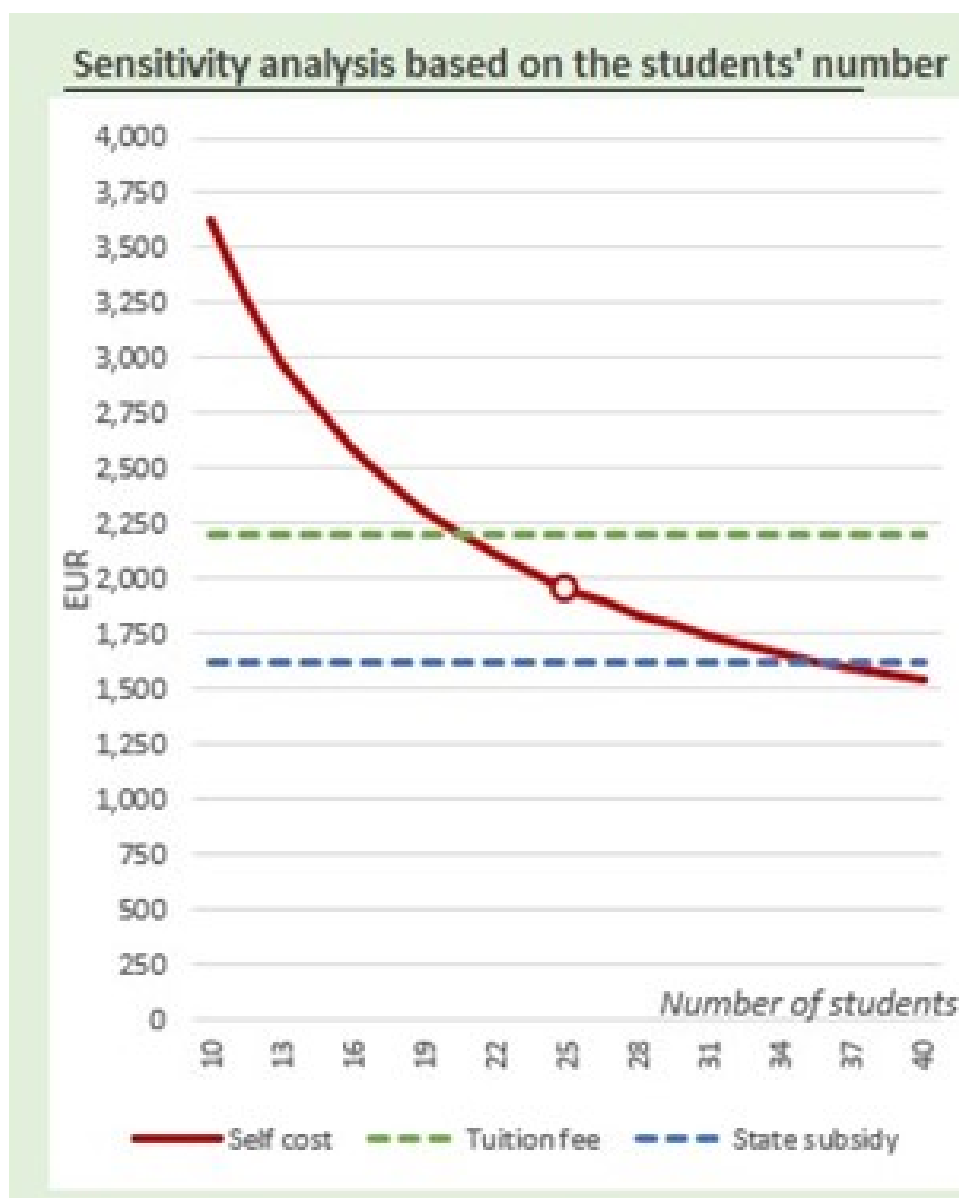


Figure 3.3.3.2. The cost of BSP Cultural and Social Anthropology on the basis of the number of students who are studying in English.

Based on the cost structure and the total number of students - 28, the cost of the program per student (base cost) is 1937 EUR per year.

Based on the calculation, it can be seen that in order for the programme to be profitable and for students to be provided with a high-quality study process, the number of fee-paying students in the English stream must be at least 23.

Table 3.3.3.4. Results of the programme

Type of students	Number of students	Tuition/Subsidy	Total revenues	Total costs
Full-time (subsidy)	27	1,630	44010	46791
Full time (tuition EU/EEZ)	23	2,200	50 600	47265

Full time tuition (others)	5	2420	12,100	10275
<b>Total</b>			<b>106 710</b>	<b>104 311</b>

The cost calculation of BSP CSA, which was carried out using the cost calculation tool developed by the Academic Department of LU and the Department of Finance and Accounting of LU, shows that the costs significantly depend on the number of students in the programme, the number of contact hours allocated for learning 1 cp. The cost of the programme, according to the calculation, covers the cost price.

### 3.4. Teaching Staff

**3.4.1. Assessment of the compliance of the qualification of the teaching staff members (academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants) involved in the implementation of the study programme with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments. Provide information on how the qualification of the teaching staff members contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes.**

The qualification of the academic staff involved in the implementation of the programme corresponds to the achievement of the goals and tasks of the BSP Cultural and Social Anthropology. The study courses of the programme are taught both by the elected teaching staff of the UL FSS and also by the elected teaching staff from other faculties. The selection of teaching staff involved in the study programme is based on the lecturers' academic work experience, qualifications and scientific research activities. 65% of the lecturers involved in the programme have a doctoral degree, which indicates that the qualification of an academician as a staff fully meets the requirements of the bachelor's study programme and ensures the necessary quality of the programme.

Representatives of the academic staff of FSS and other faculties participate in the implementation of BSP: 5 professors, 4 associate professors, 4 assistant professors, 5 lecturers and 7 hourly instructors - researchers and specialists from state and private organizations. FSS teaching staff elected for 6 years in accordance with regulatory enactments are mostly involved in the implementation of the programme. The number of professors and associate professors corresponds to Article 55, Clause 2 of the Law on Universities (at least 5). The policy of renewal, training and development of the academic staff takes place in accordance with individual plans, which are approved when the rector of UL and the dean of FSS conclude an employment contract with the relevant teaching staff.

**Table 3.4.1.1. Faculty members in BSP Cultural and Social Anthropology**

Type	With doctorate	With master's degree	Total
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Professors	5		5
Associate professors	4		4
Assistant professors	4		4
Lectors		5	5
Instructors	3	4	7
Total	16	9	25

Teaching staff involved in BSP CSA participate in international projects, projects of the Latvian Science Council and other institutions (see Appendix No. 10). In 2015-2018, in cooperation with anthropologists from Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, as well as Great Britain and Denmark, a project for the development of anthropology in the Baltic countries, financed by the Wenner Gren Foundation, was implemented, which focused on the teaching of anthropology in the Baltic region, and also made it possible to increase the capacity of lecturers of the Department of Anthropology.

The teaching staff involved in the implementation of the CSR BSP are recognized scientists in their fields in Latvia and abroad, as evidenced by their publications. Lecturers regularly participate in international conferences and publish in recognized publications, including journals indexed in the Scopus and Web of Science databases, thus ensuring the development of study course content in line with industry trends (full teaching staff see the list of publications in the appendix).

Taking into account the above, it can be stated that the composition of teaching staff involved in the implementation of the programme gives the opportunity to fully achieve the goal of the study programme and the planned study results, ensuring both the acquisition of high-quality theoretical knowledge and research skills in the field of anthropological sciences, as well as practical skills that give opportunities successfully engage in solving industry problems.

#### **3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.**

Compared to the 2012/2013 academic year the number of lecturers has decreased by 29%, which is related to the decrease in the number of students throughout the period, as well as the strengthening of the core of elected lecturers and the consolidation of the programme content. The qualitative composition of the teaching staff in percentage terms has not changed significantly during the reporting period.

Changes in the distribution by positions, it should be noted that the proportion of professors and associate professors decreased during the reporting period - from 43% to 36%; the proportion of participating lecturers increased slightly - from 6% to 16%, while the number of teachers increased from 20% to 28%. In general, they can be evaluated as positive qualitative changes, because they increase the cost effectiveness of the programme without reducing the quality and ensure rapid renewal of the study programme.

BSP CSA was established in 2009 and in its initial period a place was sought at the LU. Some of the core lecturers of the programme, anthropologists with foreign doctoral degrees have been

gradually leaving their jobs at the UL since 2012. paid work in Latvia or abroad. In order to retain teaching staff and develop the programme, in the period of 2009-2017, funds from private financiers were attracted to the Latvian University Foundation for the anthropology development project. The funds were obtained from cooperation partners - SEB bank and the Association of Latvian Commercial Banks - and private donations for foreign teaching staff scholarships. During this period, Latvian universities did not have schemes for attracting foreign lecturers, and the salary did not cover the travel and accommodation expenses of foreign lecturers, making it practically impossible to attract teaching staff. In this way, with the funds of the foundation several guest professors were employed. One of them has remained in Latvia and was elected as an assistant professor and actively participates in the department's research projects and teaching. On January 23, 2014, the director of the programme received an award - the rector's gratitude for implementing a strategic perspective and development projects in cooperation with the University of Latvia Foundation and patrons in 2009-2013.

The faculty turnover has given the opportunity for the most talented graduates of the programme to continue working in the department. In 2018, one researcher obtained a doctorate degree at the University of Latvia with an interdisciplinary dissertation in anthropology and folklore, another obtained a doctorate degree at the University of Leeds in Great Britain in 2020 and was elected as an assistant professor, one lecturer plans to obtain a doctorate degree at the University of Tartu in the summer of 2022, one - at LU, while one lecturer started his doctoral studies at Wageningen University in the Netherlands. The Public Anthropology Center of the Department of Anthropology has made it possible to attract project funds during the reporting period in order to achieve the goal defined in the 2013 accreditation report of balancing the research and academic workload of lecturers in the ratio of 50:50. These proportions fluctuate, still sharing the teaching of the courses and allowing the new lecturers to successfully study for a doctorate. Until the offer of wider national scientific project competition in 2018, the lecturers of the department as a research group have actively participated in conducting applied research, fulfilling the orders of the Ministry of Welfare and Health. This has made it possible to raise the research capacity and later successfully launch projects, but has not provided sufficient opportunities to develop the publication of teaching staff. With the availability of fundamental and applied programmes in Latvia, the volume of publications prepared by the lecturers of the Department of Anthropology Studies in internationally cited publications is growing rapidly (more than 13 articles have been submitted and/or published in the last 3 years) and students are also involved in research projects.

In general, it can be concluded that the composition of the teaching staff involved in the BSP CSA and its changes are positive, thus ensuring high quality of education and corresponding to the achievement of the overall study results of the study courses and the programme.

**3.4.3. Information on the number of the scientific publications of the academic staff members, involved in the implementation of doctoral study programme, as published during the reporting period by listing the most significant publications published in Scopus or WoS CC indexed journals. As for the social sciences, humanitarian sciences, and the science of art, the scientific publications published in ERIH+ indexed journals or peer-reviewed monographs may be additionally specified. Information on the teaching staff included in the database of experts of the Latvian Council of Science in the relevant field of science (total number, name of the lecturer, field of science in which the teaching staff has the status of an expert and expiration date of the Latvian Council of Science expert) (if applicable).**



**3.4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).**

**3.4.5. Assessment of the cooperation between the teaching staff members by specifying the mechanisms used to promote the cooperation and ensure the interrelation between the study programme and study courses/ modules. Specify also the proportion of the number of the students and the teaching staff within the study programme (at the moment of the submission of the Self-Assessment Report).**

The core of the teaching staff consists of the teaching staff of the Department of Anthropology Studies, in cooperation with other lecturers of related sciences of FSS and HZH. When creating the core of the teaching staff of the department, much attention has been paid to mutual cooperation and the introduction of a culture of mutual support. Cooperation is ensured by several mechanisms. First of all, department meetings, where issues related to the department's operation and communication issues are considered. So, for example, the ethical policy of the department for the interaction of staff with students was discussed (etiquette for the use of social networks, setting boundaries, maintaining open and friendly relations with students, etc.). Department meetings are also used for solving methodological issues and mutual exchange of knowledge and skills. Thus, at the beginning of the pandemic, the resources available for distance learning were prepared and mutual training was carried out. The knowledge gained in the attended further education courses is multiplied in the department, as the lecturers share the acquired knowledge. Secondly, participation in joint projects of the department provides an opportunity to meet regularly and informally discuss the study process in addition to project issues. For example, in one of the last fundamental and applied research projects, there were 49 meetings during 3 years, which allowed to strengthen mutual relations, create plans and implement the transfer of research ideas to the learning process. Within the projects, the teaching staff of the department participates in academic reading and writing seminars (there have been 5 and 45 of them in the last 3 years, respectively), which are supportable skills for new teachers. Thirdly, mentoring of new teaching staff is used, with a new and an experienced lecturer teaching the course together. Mentoring is also important in encouraging and supporting the creation of publications.

The project of creating a unified evaluation system in 2018 was used as a basis for promoting the interconnection of study courses. This made it possible not only to consolidate the programme and to direct all course results to a common goal, but also gave an opportunity to discuss the content of the courses and their relationship. If before the project, students sometimes complained about overlapping courses in evaluations, since 2018, the linking of courses has been evaluated positively. The changes made in the courses are discussed, in the threads of the successive courses the instructors cooperate, read the course together and consult each other on the content of the

course.

At the time of reporting, the ratio of students to teaching staff is 2.08 students per 1 teacher, which is equivalent to the ratio at the time of the previous accreditation. It should be noted that lecturers have different workloads in the programme.

# Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	Diploma CSA BSP.pdf	KSA BSP diploma paraugs.pdf
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	Statistics CSA BSP.pdf	Statistikas dati KSA BSP.pdf
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard	Education standard CSA BSP.pdf	KSA BSP izglitbas standarts.pdf
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)		
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)		
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	Mapping of the study courses CSA BSP.xlsx	Kursu_kartejums KSA BSP.xlsx
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	Study plan CSA BSP.pdf	KSA BSP plāns.pdf
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	Study courses CSA BSP.pdf	Kursu apraksti KSA BSP.pdf
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)		
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
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 (if applicable)	Study field declaration CSA BSP.pdf	Apliecinājums KSA BSP 55. pants.edoc