

# Expert group joint opinion

Evaluation Procedure: Assessment of Study Field

Higher Education Institution: Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music

Study field: Arts

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

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The Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music (JVLAM) is a higher education institution focused on providing higher education in music, performing arts (choreography) and music related studies such as musicology and sound recording. JVLAM has submitted study programs for evaluation in the fields of "Arts" and "Education and Pedagogy". The institution's vision for 2023 is to be a leading music education center in Latvia and the Baltic region, offering interdisciplinary study programs and engaging in artistic and scientific projects. In 2022, the number of students at the JVLAM is 555. (SAR 1.1.)

The study field and study programmes have clear aims according to the JVLAM specialization. The SWOT analysis has identified fields to work on but the development plan is missing measurable targets. The management structure of the study field and study programmes clearly provide roles of administrative units but the role of the sub-programmes directors is unclear. The JVLAM has approved the admission rules according to the regulation as well as developed procedures for the recognition. Students' achievements are assessed according to unified procedures and students' opinions are considered. Principles of academic integrity are set, promoted and applied.

JVLAM has made significant efforts to work towards establishing a quality policy and a quality assurance system that contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field and relevant study programmes.

The involvement of external experts in the quality system is commendable, but improvements are needed to streamline process descriptions and shift the focus from administration to a stakeholder-centered perspective. The institution's main trackable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) should be clarified, and the quality management system should ensure that all stakeholders, including students and staff, understand its fundamental principles. Given the size of JVLAM, informal and personal approaches can be utilized, and unnecessary bureaucracy should be minimized.

The procedures for the development and review of study programmes at JVLAM are well-defined and involve various stakeholders. However, there are concerns regarding the justification and reasoning behind implementing flagship programmes as professional rather than academic, as well as the lack of a unified and coherent structure for the study programmes.

The JVLAM has got the necessary material equipment for the implementation of study courses. At the same time, the purchase of additional equipment for the implementation of an ever-increasing number of study courses and further development should be planned. During interviews with staff at the evaluators' on site visit (15-17 May 2023), teachers and students stressed the need to create further rooms for choreography teaching and for rehearsing. The JVLAM library (including a phono - theque) is one of the largest libraries in the country, and is renewed and supplemented annually, thus providing students with learning and research materials.

The motivated and qualified academic and administrative staff care about the study subject and students. Their qualifications match programme requirements, and many are active in the cultural and scientific/technological sectors. JVLAM has a tradition of recruiting alumni as teachers, which could benefit from clear policies. But the work on improvement of English language skills of academic staff should continue.

The connection between scientific research and artistic creation is extremely strong at JVLAM because students of musicology start studying the professional bachelor's SP Music and Performing Art and are forced (following Main Objectives of Professional Activities of the Occupational Standard) to play an instrument or sing while studying musicology. At master's and doctoral level they start to focus more on the academic and theoretical side of their studies, still having the possibilities of field studies or the possibility to profit from the artistic and creative side of the parallel Professional

Doctoral study programme Arts. JVLAM offers Ethno-musicology as a field with special connection to the tradition of Latvian culture and attracts attention of international colleagues of that specific area of research. The joint Professional Doctoral Study Programme Arts makes intense use of the artistic and research personalities of three leading Arts Higher Educational Institutions in Latvia and offers a chance for interdisciplinary connection, in particular with the Art Academy of Latvia and the Latvian Academy of Culture.

The JVLAM is active in several international organizations of Europe, providing a variety of activities, including masterclasses, lectures, regular student and lecturer exchange (Erasmus+, NordPlus), participation in international projects, membership in international professional networks, etc.

Overall, the institution have shown progress in implementing recommendations and improving the quality of art education. However, there are areas that require further attention and resources to fully address the remaining recommendations and strengthen the education system.

The Professional bachelors study programme Music and Performing Art and all its subprogrammes at JVLAM aligns with the institution's mission and vision. Its parameters, including the code, degree, aims, objectives, and learning outcomes, in general are justified and interconnected. Recent adjustments, such as merging study programmes and updating content, are reasonable. The programme meets the demand for arts education, prepares graduates for cultural industry careers, and has economic and social justification. The material resources are sufficient, with shared spaces and equipment available to all JVLAM students. Additional financial support enables students to participate in competitions, masterclasses, and study abroad through programs like Erasmus+ and NordPlus. The motivated and qualified academic and administrative staff care about the study subject and students. Their qualifications match programme requirements, and many are active in the cultural and scientific/technological sectors. JVLAM has a tradition of recruiting alumni as teachers, which could benefit from clear policies. As there are many members of academic staff with English language skill below level B2, there is large risk that not all sub-programmes can be implemented in English at the same quality as in Latvian and JVLAM should reconsider the need to do this.

The Academic Master study programme "Music" is in compliance with the study field "Arts" and meets all the requirements set forth in the national legislation. The study programme has economic and social justifications, and graduates have employment prospects in research, education, and cultural institutions. It should be mentioned that the study programme is not closely related to the Polifonia-Dublin-Descriptors. Different study methods are used in the study programme and a programme can be evaluated as student-centered. Material base for studies is sufficient - all necessary equipment is obtained and installed. Teaching staff involved in the study program is highly qualified, active in research and project activities, constantly publishes their research results in scholar journals and implements their achievements into studies. All resources prepared for studies in both languages - Latvian and English. Teaching staff is ready to teach in two languages too.

Professional master study programme "Music and Performing Art" and both subprogrammes (Music and Choreography) by its curriculum, awarded degree and goals do comply with the study field "Arts". The content of the study programme is logical, sufficiently specific and in the meantime broad, but its organizational structure is not in line with the Professional Bachelor's Study programme Music and Performing Arts and with the new Sub programme structure of the Professional Study Programmes. Material base for studies is sufficient - all necessary equipment (including musical instruments) is obtained and installed. The academic and administrative staff is motivated, qualified and cares for the study subject and students. Although the study programme is professional, it does not award professional qualification. The programme and the teaching staff is

ready to start programme implementation in English but continuous work is needed to increase english language level of all involved academic staff.

The Professional Doctoral Study programme “Arts” in Latvia utilizes the resources of three main artistic higher education institutions, providing students with access to well established artistic and research instructors. The competitive admission process ensures a stimulating environment for research and creativity. The program effectively organizes access to international supervisors and fosters innovation through its interdisciplinary study plans. Study programme is student centered and provides equal possibilities for the local and foreign students.

The Academic Doctoral Study Programme “Musicology” and specialisations are justified and complies with the study field. The study programme is recognized by the stakeholders and graduates of the study programme are demanded in the labour market. Although at this moment mostly Latvian students are matriculated the programme has a potential and all necessary resources to be provided also in English. The content of the study courses corresponds to the objectives of the study programme. The JVLAM has all the necessary resources to implement this programme in Latvian and English, and the teaching staff is highly qualified and experienced.

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

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

##### **Analysis**

1.1.1. The aim of the study field is clearly defined and it is relevant to the topics of the study field and its programmes, as well as corresponds to the strategic specialization of the JVLAM (SAR, p. 14-15). The study field aim is also in correspondence with the strategy of JVLAM and development directions stated there. There are five study programmes in the study field (starting from the bachelor level to the doctoral level) and all those programmes fit into the study field. Study programmes provide possibilities for the students to gradually and interconnectedly gain specializations in music and performing arts. The aims of the study programmes are connected with the overall study field aim (SAR, p.87, 132, 168, 197, 238).

The Professional Bachelor's, Master's study program (abbreviation SP) “Music and Performing Art” and the Professional Doctoral SP “Arts” are innovative in the context of international study programmes being mostly academic in the field of Music and Performing Arts.

Apparently, the choice was made to react to current tendencies on the work market calling for more practically orientated Academic education and for introducing professionally important new aspects like entrepreneurship, use of technology, and mainly formalizing aspects of study, that formerly have been done automatically: master classes and artistic projects of the Academy are integrated to the study plans within the category of Internship (SAR pages 106-108). The rules of Internship and their implementation would still need some clarification and calibration between the different types of internship (artistic, scientific, technological and pedagogical) in order to make the justification for introducing Professional Study Programmes more convincing.

During evaluation, one sub programme has been discussed more intensively because of its specific position in the study field: Musicology. The position of Musicology in Latvia is unique in the international context, where musicology belongs mostly to the study fields of Humanities at universities. The Latvian situation can be seen as an inspiration for the international HEI context, offering the advantage of a close connection between research and application of research and the fact that research questions in the context of a HE Music Institution are different from research

questions in the context of a HE Science Institution. The risks of the model have been taken into account by the JVLAM and led to solutions that are not easy on paper, but can be realized in practice. Nevertheless, evaluators suggest to reconsider the lack of alignment in between the three levels of Musicology studies: At Bachelor's level, Musicology is part of the Professional Study Programme Music and Performing Art, at Master's level, Musicology is an Academic Study Programme, at Doctoral level Musicology is again an Academic Study Programme.

1.1.2. JVLAM has performed SWOT analysis of the study field (SAR, p. 15-18). The main strengths are unique study programmes and qualified academic personnel. The main weaknesses are the material and technical base and funding. JVLAM has plans for how to deal with the weaknesses, for example, to negotiate with the ministry, and implement study programmes in English. The study field has a development plan of study field (SAR Annex 2.1. Development Plan of Study Field) that has only four objectives and does not provide measurable targets for the coming years.

Introducing studies in English will certainly be a way to gain prestige, but as Arts' education is based on a high amount of costly individual training and as the cost of such a study system cannot be entirely covered by study fees, internalization will probably not solve the funding situation significantly.

1.1.3. SAR (p.18-21) and its annexes (ENG\_JVLMA\_struktura\_31.08.pdf and 2.1.Structure of managements of study fields Arts) provide information about the persons and institutional units involved in the management of the study field and study programmes. There is a clear division of responsibilities starting from the vice-rector to study programme directors and decision-making process can be evaluated as effective. According to the SAR (p.19), the management structure has been changed to avoid concentration of function in one place. SAR does not provide information about the directors of sub programmes. The distribution of competences formally are unclear. It is possible that the system works in practice, but it is not defined in any of the strategic documents. Also, the structure of the JVLAM is divided into many small departments, all involved in the implementation of the study programme and making it harder to work in a unified manner. According to the SAR, there is no such structure as the study field council that would involve representatives from academic staff, students and employers. Furthermore, the correlation between the five study programmes and the organization scheme of departments is not always evident, showing a clash between the "historically" grown structure of departments being connected from the base out of instrumental and vocal specializations. On-site interviews with the administration and academic staff showed that all together the support provided by the administrative and technical staff ensured the necessary needs of the study programmes.

1.1.4. JVLAM has set Admission Rules for the study programmes that are approved for each academic year (SAR, p.21). Admission rules are also published on the JVLAM webpage in both languages (webpage checked on 01.05.2023.). As this is the "Arts" study field and study programmes, admission requirements are based not only on the marks in the centralized exams but also include entrance examinations, for example, Instrument playing, organ playing, singing, etc.. Such special admission requirements are approved by the Higher Education Council (SAR Annex ``AIP Iemums\_Par papildu prasibu saskanosanu\_28112022.edoc"). Admission rules on the JVLAM webpage are provided for sub programmes (specializations) but there is missing information that sub programmes are part of the larger programmes.

The procedure for the recognition of competencies acquired outside formal education or in professional experience and study results in previous education in JVLAM is defined by internal regulation as two separate procedures (SAR, p.21-22) and those procedures are in accordance with state regulation. SAR gives some examples of when students' previous education was recognised to start studies in later stages. In the recognition process, the Rector of the JVLAM is involved (SAR, p.

22) to give resolution and seems too high level for such decisions. Decision on the recognition of previous education or professional experience is done by the Recognition Commission. SAR does not provide exact information on the number of recognitions done in the assessment report, just some examples. Provided examples and documentation proves that the system is implemented and working. During the meeting with students it was stressed that the recognition process is time consuming and a lot of papers are asked.

1.1.5. The student evaluation system at the JVLAM is regulated by the “Regulations on the procedure for organizing examinations and assessing students’ competence” (SAR, p.23-24). JVLAM uses two guiding principles for assessment – the principle of knowledge and skills assessment transparency, and the principle of compulsory assessment. For study courses JVLAM sets two types of testing: pass-fail tests and examinations (SAR, p.24). Assessment criteria and methods of an examination is set in the study course descriptions. Different forms of tests are used: starting from classical tests (written, oral or combined) to artistic-creative challenges (SAR, p.24). Above mentioned regulations on the procedure also sets the rules for the appeal procedure. Students can submit written complaints about the assessment procedure to the Vice-Rector (SAR, p.24-25). Complaints can be submitted also about the State examinations. JVLAM uses surveys and discussions with students to assess the quality and effectiveness of the evaluation system (SAR, p.25).

1.1.6. JVLAM has developed procedures to promote academic integrity principles. JVLAM has approved “Code of Ethics”, “JVLAM Regulations on Academic Integrity”, which sets basic principles of professional ethics and sets the definitions for plagiarism (SAR, p.26). There is the Ethics Committee and the Academic Arbitration Court (SAR, p.8) as the bodies at the JVLAM dealing also with the academic integrity questions. According to the SAR (p.26), students are informed about the principles of academic integrity in the introductory seminars. Students are informed about the necessity to comply with the academic integrity rules also through the study agreement as this is one of the points in the agreement (SAR p.27). Since 2019 (SAR p.27) JVLAM is one of the universities in Latvia using the Unified Computer Assisted Plagiarism Controls System to check all the final theses submitted (there have not been any cases of such plagiarism). There are no examples of students' breach of academic integrity, only one case of staff plagiarism is described (SAR p.27).

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

The study field and study programmes have clear aims according to the JVLAM specialization. The SWOT analysis has identified fields to work on but the development plan is missing measurable targets. The management structure of the study field and study programmes clearly provide roles of administrative units but the role of the sub-programmes directors is unclear. The JVLAM has approved the admission rules according to the regulation as well as developed procedures for the recognition. Students' achievements are assessed according to unified procedures and students' opinions are considered. Principles of academic integrity are set, promoted and applied.

Strengths:

- 1) The study field includes unique study programmes set on all levels.
- 2) The study programmes make artistic creation and research/application of technologies more visible by giving them space in the internships of the bachelor and master professional study programmes.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The development plan has no measurable targets.
- 2) There is no study field council with the representatives from different target groups.
- 3) The management of study field is complicated.

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

### **Analysis**

1.2.1. The quality management system is designed using a comprehensive quality management approach that integrates elements of the ISO 9001:2015 standard, the excellence model developed by EFQM 2020, and the ESG 2015 standards and guidelines. The JVLAM is in the process of quality improvement, which was provided by outsourced service providers SIA "CSE COE" (within the framework of the European Social Fund project "Ensuring Good Governance at Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music" No. 8.2.3.0/18/A/013). The development of a new Quality Policy of the JVLAM, the development of a Quality Management Manual, the development of 27 process descriptions for the JVLAM, the development of a process measurement system for the JVLAM, and the implementation of risk management were ensured. This shows that the institution is actively working on improving its quality management system, with the help of external experts.

Main documents regarding QMS are the Senate approved the JVLAM Quality Policy, which is available in English as well on the JVLAM website ([https://www.jvlma.lv/data/doc\\_kvalitates\\_vadiba/7.6-quality-policy-jvlma-2020.pdf](https://www.jvlma.lv/data/doc_kvalitates_vadiba/7.6-quality-policy-jvlma-2020.pdf)). The aim of the Quality Policy is to ensure the JVLAM's commitment to quality, as defined in its strategic development directions and stated values. Other document is Quality Manual, which is available on the JVLAM webpage both in Latvian and English languages. ([jvlma-quality-management-manual-02.01.2023.pdf](#)). The purpose of the manual is to ensure a common understanding of the quality management system by all involved stakeholders.

It is important to note, that to ensure the achievement of the objectives and results of the study programmes, structural and substantive changes were made to all professional bachelor study programmes in 2021-2022. The structural changes in the study programme in fact mean the merging of all previously implemented and accredited professional bachelor study programmes (Instrumental Music, Vocal Music, Conducting, Choreography, Composition, Musicology, and Sound Engineering) into a single programme.

While the involvement of external experts in contributing to the quality system is commendable and it is necessary to streamline the 27 process descriptions. The quality documentation currently appears to be excessively verbose and is administration-centric. The documentation should also incorporate a student-centered perspective, and it remains unclear what are the institution's main trackable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The quality management system should be constructed in a way to ensure that all stakeholders, including students and staff, have a clear understanding of its fundamental principles and components. Given the size of JVLAM, it is reasonable to rely on informal and personal approaches. Therefore, it is important to recognize and minimize unnecessary bureaucracy where it is not essential. This means that quality management systems can be simple - streamlined and straightforward - while still maintaining their effectiveness.

JVLAM could focus more on how the quality assurance system ensures continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field and the relevant study programmes. For instance, it could provide (or develop) more details on the processes used to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching, research, study experience, student satisfaction and other activities related to the study programmes. It could also discuss how the institution uses data to inform its decision-making and to identify areas for improvement. Additionally, discussing how the institution utilizes data to guide decision-making and identify areas for improvement would be valuable.

Overall, it seems that JVLAM has established a quality policy and a quality assurance system that

enables possibility to contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field and the relevant study programmes.

However, it is important to note that JVLAM has not provided substantial justification or reasoning, either during visit or in the documentation provided, for implementing its flagship programmes - the multi-specialization bachelor's and master's programs - as professional rather than academic. This raises concerns regarding the principles of quality, as decisions and structures should be based on analysis and justification. Some of the justifications provided were inconsistent. For instance, management mentioned that they chose the professional mode of implementation to extend the bachelor's study programme to four years (160CP). However, the current academic educational standard allows for an academic study programme to be eight semesters long (160CP) as well. Same thing stands for internships - it can be implemented in academic programmes as well. Another reasoning provided was that the professional formal qualification obtained is necessary for employment in education, but this has not been verified. Industry representatives have also not provided any justification for the need for formal professional qualification either. Therefore, these macro issues raise doubts about whether there is a common understanding of the reasons behind certain decisions. The lack of justification provided to the experts' panel raises doubts about whether the macro issues have been accurately analyzed. Based on the currently available information, the experts' panel believes that the academic mode of implementation appears more suitable than the current chosen approach.

The current structure of the study programme also exhibits peculiarities due to the highlighted issue. For instance, Musicology, which is primarily a humanities field involving scholarly analysis and research-based study of music, is combined as a sub-specialization within the professional bachelor programme. However, at the master's level, there is a separation, with one professional master's programme focused on enhancing artistic competencies and one academic master's programme catering to those interested in Musicology. This lack of a unified and coherent structure raises concerns.

The reasoning behind this decision is understandable as the number of Musicology students at the bachelor's level is low, and consolidation helps streamline the administration of state-funded places. However, it can be argued that Musicology should not be considered a "professional art" programme since its methodology is academic and research-based. Additionally, there is an academic master's programme specifically designed for Musicology studies. This issue could be addressed by merging all programmes as academic ones, allowing for the appropriate placement of Musicology while providing more flexibility in curriculum selection for specific sub-programmes and ensuring future-proofing. Currently, the programme is obligated to adhere to professional standards (e.g. professional standard of Instrument Musician, Conductor, Vocalist, Choreographer, Sound Engineer) and overall requirements of Cabinet of Ministers regulation No. 512 "Noteikumi par otrā līmeņa profesionālās augstākās izglītības valsts standartu" granting specific qualifications, which as it seems are not mandated in the industry or other employment opportunities (e.g. teaching in music schools).

However, it is important to acknowledge that HEI has a certain level of autonomy in determining its methods and ways of implementation. Nevertheless, proper communication (in context of QMS) of justification is necessary in order to address the questions and consequences that arise from this decision.

The proficiency in English is another aspect of the quality system that requires attention. The expert panel expresses skepticism about the institution's and its instructors' current ability to fully implement all study programmes with its respective sub-programmes in English. There is a need for a critical reassessment of the institution's capacity to deliver all study programs effectively in English.

A soft recommendation would be to consider implementing separate study programs with their own curriculum, where it can be ensured that all staff members involved have a high level of proficiency



in English. This approach would help maintain the quality across the departments involved and guarantee effective delivery of the programmes.

At the same time, the panel recognizes the institution's need for an English language mode of implementation, as it can enhance internationalization efforts and attract a greater number of students to the study programmes. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to exercise extreme caution to ensure that there are no instances where the quality of English language programmes and courses is compromised, and that both language modes offer the same defined opportunities.

The JVLAM, in accordance with its published rules and criteria, employs a consistent assessment framework to evaluate students' competence. These guidelines can be accessed on the JVLAM website. The evaluation of a study course takes into account its content, assessment criteria, and specified requirements as outlined in the course description. To ensure fairness and uniformity, the JVLAM has established the Procedure for the Organisation of Study Course Examinations and the Assessment of Students' Competence. This regulation, approved by the JVLAM Senate, applies to full-time students enrolled in study programmes at all levels. It encompasses various aspects, including the types of tests and their planning process, test forms, documentation for assessing students' competence, exam scheduling flexibility, conduct of tests, criteria for evaluating knowledge and skills, rights and responsibilities of students, rights and duties and an appeals process for justified student complaints related to assessment outcomes.

The JVLAM, LMA, and LKA are responsible for ensuring the quality of the joint study programme, as specified in Section 4 "Quality Assurance" of the cooperation contract between the higher education institutions. This establishes a shared system and quality mainly coordinated on the level of programme directors. During the visit, the staff and programme management displayed strong motivation to enhance the joint programme, and notable joint improvements to the study programme were highlighted following the procedures. Currently, the joint programme demonstrates good quality and no issues were identified during the evaluation.

1.2.2. The establishment and review of study programmes are regulated by two documents - the JVLAM Study Programme Regulations and the Regulations for the Implementation of the Professional Doctoral Study Programme in Arts. The curriculum review is based on feedback, evaluations, and suggestions from various stakeholders such as students, graduates, academic and general staff, employers, and external experts. The review process involves considering feedback from students, self-assessment reports from departments, comparison with study programs abroad, updating course and module descriptions, and complying with internal and external regulatory acts. More precise analyses regarding feedback mechanisms are included under criteria 1.2.4.

Significant changes have occurred in the structure of JVLAM's Arts field programs, including the merger of professional Master's study programmes and the review of professional Bachelor study programmes. The curriculum development process involves the participation of external and internal experts, including representatives from different stakeholder groups. The relevance of the professional doctoral study programme in Arts has been emphasized in strategic planning documents, and a joint program involving JVLAM, Latvian Academy of Culture (LKA), and Art Academy of Latvia (LMA) was established through cooperation between these institutions.

The joint professional doctoral study program was developed through collaboration, involving representatives from all cooperating institutions. The curriculum design considers input from students, graduates, employers, and employers' organizations in the sector. Surveys and studies on the effectiveness of cultural education and the requirements of the labor market are used to improve study content.

JVLAM aims to introduce the entirety of all five Study programmes also in English (by now, only one of the doctoral study programmes is licensed in English).

The direction and staff of the Academy underlined the wish to welcome international students in an English language mutation of the current Latvian study plans.

For this purpose, all formally requested documents were delivered in Latvian and English (Description of the Study programmes, of Study courses, of staff, the SAR and other internal regulations serving for control of international experts).

For those teachers who do not dispose of the required minimum level of B2 substitute teachers have been foreseen in the curriculum plans (Study programmes, Annexes for accreditation, 3\_2\_1- parts, e.g. for Bachelor level: 3\_2\_1\_d\_PBSP\_Music and Performing Arts\_Curriculum\_.xlsx). This solution raises the question, whether substitute teachers mastering English at the formally requested level have the same artistic/scientific level as the “original” teacher in the Latvian study programme.

Furthermore, B2 is a language level that can be seen as sufficient for artistic and practical work, but is it not necessarily sufficient for knowledge transfer in theoretical study courses, given the fact that in between the academic staff less a very limited number of teachers are native English speakers.

JVLAM claims in it's SAR that the aim of study programmes is to enhance the national, cultural heritage and it states that the politics of the Academy consist in being directly linked to the Latvian national cultural politics. Stressing the will to focus on national cultural heritage is a relatively closed approach. There is no mention on how JVALM ensures openness to the specific interest of international students from different cultural backgrounds.

As the Professional Master's Study Programme Music and Performing Art is not yet aligned with the Professional Bachelor's Study Programme and the Professional Doctoral study programme: the Professional Master's Study Programme still holding older groupings of subprogrammes, it would more natural to first implement all the innovations of the Bachelor's study programme and subprogramme structure to the Master's level before transferring the whole system with all it's inconsistencies to English.

This said, it seemed evident for the interviews with academic staff and students, that there is potential of a certain number of teachers who dispose of both: high artistic/scientific level and high English language level. It would be logical, to use this specific staff potential in creating proper English language study programmes on the base of those teachers who fulfill both criteria (high artistic/scientific level and high English language level) instead of replacing teachers with substitutes in cases where the English language level is less than B2.

If JVLAM aims to stick with the model of translating all Latvian study programmes to English study programmes, it would be advisable to consider a higher proportion of English native speakers amongst the academic staff.

At the current state, a thorough review of the documentation of study programs, curriculum and SAR in English is recommended, because of fundamental inconsistencies:

Study sub-programmes are named differently in different places of the English materials:

“Sound Engineering” (Annex III Description of the Study programme) versus “Sound Recording” in the SAR (e.g. page 89)

“Ancient music” (SAR 92) versus “Early music” (SAR 92) – both words mean a fundamentally different field of research, Ancient music meaning Greek and Roman antiquity, Early music meaning music mainly between 1600-1800.

The Description of Study courses (Annex III) contains a description of the content of study courses in English, but the titles of study courses remained in Latvian.

Some of the English titles of some of the Study sub-programmes are not compliant to current international use, e.g. “Wind Instruments Play” (usually Wind instrument (performance)), or “Academic Music” (usually Classical Music).

During the meeting with the academic staff it was mentioned that academic staff is actively involved in the development and in the review of study programmes and their opinion is taken into account.

1.2.3. The procedure for handling student complaints and proposals at JVLAM is regulated by various internal documents, including the Statute of the Academic Arbitration Court, the Statute of the Ethics Committee, the Internal Regulations for Students, and the Whistleblowing

Procedure. Students can access these documents through the JVLMA Information Guide Student Manual. The institution follows the requirements set forth in the Law on Complaints and encourages problem resolution through negotiation.

If students are unable to resolve issues with lecturers directly, they can contact department heads who are involved in finding solutions. If necessary, the Directorate of Study Programmes intervenes in resolving issues. The institution addresses complaints by conducting questionnaires, hosting discussions, and taking appropriate actions, such as clarifying examination requirements or discontinuing cooperation with lecturers. The JVLAM Student Council actively represents the interests of students and participates in meetings with the Directorate of Study Programmes to address concerns and receive answers to their questions.

In some cases, student-initiated actions, such as a member of the Internal Audit Committee raising concerns, have led to addressing issues. The Academic Arbitration Court has also resolved disputes, ensuring compliance with the institution's laws and regulations while seeking acceptable solutions for all parties involved.

Students have exercised their veto right, leading to the reconsideration of certain matters by the Senate. Requests for grade revision and complaints about unethical conduct have been examined by relevant bodies. Additionally, student feedback has influenced the renewal of study programmes, resulting in adjustments to courses based on their suggestions.

Overall, JVLMA has established procedures and mechanisms to address student complaints and proposals, demonstrating a commitment to finding fair solutions and complying with legal requirements.

1.2.4. Statistical data at JVLAM is categorized into two groups: [1] Data required by external laws and regulations, including information submitted to the State Education Information System and reports to the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Culture as part of the agreements between these institutions and JVLAM. [2] Data defined by internal regulations for internal analysis, improvement of activities, and obtaining necessary information.

To assess students' competences and analyze their achievements, a Student Progress Summary Log is compiled. This information is used by the Scholarship Committee, Study Quality Assessment Board, and Heads of Departments for various purposes such as awarding scholarships, allocating study places, and assessing eligibility for study exchange programs or participation in international competitions.

Feedback at JVLAM is obtained through surveys conducted for students, employers, and alumni. The surveys consist of standard questionnaires with fixed questions used regularly and non-standard questionnaires designed for specific purposes. In addition to formal questionnaires, verbal feedback is also common, especially among parties with longstanding cooperation.

A survey was conducted to assess the availability of technology for distance learning, particularly in music performance-related courses. The survey resulted in identifying the need to purchase technology, organizing the delivery of devices to students, and providing large instruments, such as pianos, in some cases. To ensure systematic feedback collection and its incorporation in the development of the study field, a survey procedure and a new JVLAM Survey System were developed. The system includes various surveys targeting different respondents, such as student satisfaction, admission process, adaptation opportunities, foreign students' experience, prematurely exmatriculated students' feedback, graduates' satisfaction, employers' satisfaction, and non-routine surveys. The implementation of the JVLAM Survey System has been delayed due to several factors, but preparations have been made to launch it successfully in the 2022/2023 academic year.

The response levels from students at the institution have been observed to be low, and the focus primarily lies on individual and informal feedback due to the individualistic and small-group nature of the studies. Although this approach has its benefits, it often leads to a situation where the amount of collected data is solely dependent on individual instructors' discretion. Furthermore, it becomes

challenging to track the actions that have been taken or not taken based on the feedback received. Some departments (katedras) have established systematic feedback processes tailored to their own curriculum, while others lack in this aspect. Furthermore, during meetings with students, there was the impression that numerous suggestions and concerns remain unaddressed. It is unclear whether this is due to information not reaching the intended targets or management failing to respond to feedback effectively. Therefore, there is a need for further development in systematically collecting data from students, specifically through feedback channels. This also applies to engaging other stakeholders, such as employers.

One way to encourage students to engage more actively in providing feedback is by implementing the "closing-the-loop" principle. This principle involves providing students and other stakeholders with a concise summary of all the collected data and the actions taken based on their feedback. By implementing this principle, the issue raised by students regarding the lack of visibility on whether their feedback leads to actual changes can be addressed. This is particularly relevant in cases where surveys are conducted at the end of a semester or course, as students often feel uncertain about the impact of their feedback.

Another suggestion in this regard is to implement mid-semester surveys, providing students with the opportunity to express their opinions during the courses and witness any changes made to their study courses while they are still ongoing. This can enhance student engagement and enable them to observe the impact of their feedback in real time.

Yet another soft recommendation is to regularly organize "class lessons" where the study year cohort can gather with study programme directors, management, and administrative personnel to collectively discuss their study experiences, updates, requirements, concerns, and suggestions. This approach requires a shift away from bureaucratic attitudes and the adoption of a mindset focused on quality and student-centeredness. By fostering open dialogue and active engagement, these sessions can contribute to a more inclusive and responsive learning environment. Simultaneously, this initiative aims to strengthen the cultural community of JVLMA, fostering a sense of belonging and collaboration among students, faculty, and staff. By creating opportunities for meaningful interactions and shared experiences, the cultural fabric of JVLMA can be enriched, leading to a more vibrant and supportive environment for all members of the creative and academic community.

1.2.5. The JVLAM website provides information about the field of study and corresponding study programmes in both Latvian and English versions. The website sections contain practical information with references to relevant documents, and the programme directors are responsible for the accuracy of the information. The JVLAM Study Programme Register, available on the website, provides basic information on study fields, programmes, degrees, and qualifications. The Head of the Study Field is responsible for the content in the register. Information on study programmes, students, and graduates is managed by the Head of the Study Division in the State Education Information System (VIIS). The Head of the Personnel Division is responsible for information on lecturers in the VIIS Academic Staff Register.

The Head of Study Fields manages the information on the E-platform, where eleven study programmes related to the Arts field are currently available. However, only five of these study programmes are being evaluated and accredited, while the remaining six professional bachelor programmes will be closed, and students will transfer to the renewed professional bachelor programme Music and Performing Arts. As a result, the self-assessment report includes information on only the five evaluated study programmes out of the eleven listed on the E-platform.

The current structure of the webpage may give the impression that students will be enrolled in separate study programs focused on sub-specializations, rather than a unified sub-specialization study program. Therefore, it is necessary to restructure and clarify the information on the JVLAM webpage to accurately reflect the nature of the programme.

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

JVLAM has made significant efforts to work towards establishing a quality policy and a quality assurance system that contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field and relevant study programmes.

The involvement of external experts in the quality system is commendable, but improvements are needed to streamline process descriptions and shift the focus from administration to a stakeholder-centered perspective. The institution's main trackable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) should be clarified, and the quality management system should ensure that all stakeholders, including students and staff, understand its fundamental principles. Given the size of JVLAM, informal and personal approaches can be utilized, and unnecessary bureaucracy should be minimized.

The procedures for the development and review of study programmes at JVLAM are well-defined and involve various stakeholders. However, there are concerns regarding the justification and reasoning behind implementing flagship programmes as professional rather than academic, as well as the lack of a unified and coherent structure for the study programmes. This criticism is meant to be an inspiration for the institution, to re-discuss the definition and sense of professional and academic study programmes in Arts with the Ministries responsible for the policy of education.

JVLAM has established effective mechanisms for submitting student complaints and suggestions, with various internal documents regulating the process. The institution shows a commitment to addressing student concerns and incorporating feedback into its decision-making processes.

There is a need for further development in systematically collecting data from students and engaging other stakeholders, such as employers and graduates, to ensure a more comprehensive feedback process. It is crucial to ensure that the structure of the JVLAM webpage accurately represents the nature of the studies.

Envisaging study programmes in English, it is important to look at the alignment of study programmes in between Bachelor, Master and Doctoral level in order to make the system understandable for international colleagues and students. At current state, innovations have been done at Bachelor's level for the Professional Bachelor's Study Programme Music and Performing Art, but at Master's level, former subprogrammes structures have been conserved, which makes the Professional Study programmes not aligned in the different study levels. It would be advisable to first align the Professional Study programmes before transferring them to English.

From a long term perspective, it might be more efficient to develop special study programmes in English instead of copying the existing Latvian programmes as they are (with minimal adjustments) into foreign language because the academic staff consists rather of national than international members.

### Strengths:

- 1) The JVLAM has developed, published and implemented Internal Quality Assurance policy.

### Weaknesses:

- 1) The JVLAM webpage gives wrong impression about the structure of the study programmes.
- 2) Current student feedback levels are at a low level.
- 3) The concept of transferring the whole of Latvian study programmes into English does not correspond to the fact that the academic staff is mainly Latvian - fulfilling formally the request of B2 for the relevant teachers might not fully guarantee a sufficiently high level of communication especially theoretical knowledge in English.
- 4) Furthermore the undifferentiated mere transferring of Latvian programmes to English does not take into account the possibility that international students might have different interests and needs.
- 5) Study programme structure is not fully coherent.

## Assessment of the requirement [1]

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

### **Assessment of compliance:** Partially compliant

There is compliance with the Law on the Higher education, however student engagement levels on feedback and data collection activities conducted by JVLAM are low and follow-up actions are not consistent across all sub-programmes and courses. Study programme structure is not fully coherent and some decisions are not fully justified. There is no clear definition of main KPIs, other metrics or main defined principles of quality system, that is readily available to all involved stakeholders.

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

### **Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The JVLAM has established policies and procedures for quality assurance as shown in SAR (sections 1.3.,1.4,2.2.1-2.2.4) and answers during onsite visit.

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

### **Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

JVLAM has developed mechanisms for study programme development and approval with corresponding internal regulation.

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

### **Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

SAR section 2.1.5 and onsite interviews confirm that there are criteria, conditions and procedures for evaluation student results.

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

### **Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

There are interval procedures and mechanisms to assure the JVLAM academic staff qualification and quality of work (SAR, section 2.3.6).

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

### **Assessment of compliance:** Partially compliant

SAR (section 2.2.4) and onsite interviews confirm that JVLAM collects and analyze data on student achievements, satisfactions and efficiency of the work, however student engagement levels are low and follow-up actions are not consistent.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Onsite interviews with different groups and SAR proves that JVLAM continuously improves study programmes and study field and quality assurance system is implemented.

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

#### Analysis

1.3.1. In order to ensure the matching of the supply of higher education with the needs of the Latvian economy and the labor market, a three-pillar financing model based on core funding, performance funding and development funding is being implemented (regulated by Sections 51 and 52 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/37967> and by Cabinet Regulation of 12 December 2006 Procedures for Financing Universities and Colleges from State Budget Funds, sub-paragraph 17.4. (hereinafter – Regulations), <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/149900>, available only in Latvian).

Base funding in the JVLAM is implemented through state budget funded study places for full-time studies. The number of state-funded study places for full-time students JVLAM is determined in accordance with the projected demand for cultural development, but the amount of the basic funding for studies is determined by the number of study places determined by the State. The basic cost of a study place and the social security costs of a study place shall be determined in accordance with Annex 2 to Regulations.

The budget of the JVLAM is planned for the financial year and contributes to the achievement of the strategic objectives of the JVLAM. The heads of all structural units participate in financial planning. The JVLAM's Senate gives an opinion before approving the budget by the Council.

In order to ensure the high quality implementation of all study programmes and the rational and targeted use of budgetary resources, the budget of the JVLAM is not divided between the study fields and the study programmes (SAR, p. 39–40).

The funding of scientific and creative activities has increased almost 3.5 times in the last 3 years and contributes positively to the development of courses of study and relevant study programmes (SAR, p. 39–40, chapter Other Annexes process description and Figure 24\_Budget formulation and execution monitoring process). Funding for the future development of study programmes is not excessive, but the existing financing procedure for the implementation of the study direction and relevant study programmes, scientific and applied research and artistic creation has been implemented and experts evaluate it as effective.

From the viewpoint of Academic staff members, articulated repeatedly in interviews with evaluators at their on site visit (15 to 17 May 2023), the funding of wages for academic staff is insufficient. Teachers are content with working conditions (apart from the need to give more access to rooms by stretching the opening hours and/or acquiring new rooms) and with the content and forms of work, but expressed concern about their payment.

1.3.2. All study programmes are implemented in the JVLAM building on Krišjāņa Barona Street 1. In order to ensure an effective learning process, all teaching staff and students use the ASIMUT room reservation system. The JVLAM has all the necessary material equipment for the implementation of study courses.

Additional equipment is also available for the implementation of individual study courses, but there is continued communication with the founder of the JVLAM to provide additional equipment for the implementation of an ever-increasing number of study courses.

In interviews with Academic staff members, experts made sure that the JVLAM has established a

system for the improvement and purchase of material, methodological etc. The Head of Study Fields annually identifies all needs, sets up a list of common needs and evaluates purchasing opportunities. During the report period a number of new musical instruments and accessories, including a new teaching organ, as well as additional lighting for concert arrangements in the Great Hall of the JVLAM (SAR, p. 44) have been purchased.

Considering that JVLAM makes effective use of electronic systems for learning (MOODLE), study administration (LAIS) and room reservation (ASIMUT), the JVLAM also provide support staff for academic staff to consultancy for the solution of individual problems experienced or for training of systems. The inclusion of international teachers especially for doctoral students and students of Musicology has been made by using online tools. Critical reflection of pandemic experiences led the Academy to using Distance learning predominantly for theoretical courses (SAR p. 112).

Although during the experts' visit the students claimed that the JVLMA does not provide musical instruments on loan, the information on the JVLMA webpage indicates that musical instruments are being loaned to students. That limits students from families with a low income who cannot afford to buy high quality instruments. Additionally students expressed a wish to extend working hours of an institution for an individual practicing, especially on weekends. The existing time-limits for the use of rooms are especially influencing specialisations/sub-programmes, where only specific rooms can be used, for example, choreography (as mentioned by the students during on-site visit). But altogether experts opinion is that the infrastructure resources and material and technical resources for students and academic staff are adequate to implement study field with all the study programmes.

1.3.3. Development Plan of an institution includes detailed steps for an improvement and purchase of methodological and informative provision. This Plan correlate with a financial Plan of an institution and is realized each year by obtaining necessary information resources (internet, databases, music scores) as well as methodological material (books, teaching methods, supporting materials).

JVLAM library (including phonotheque) is one of the largest music libraries in the country. Library is an active member of IAML (International association of music libraries) and follows international standards and trends in music librarianship. In cooperation with the heads of the departments and the teaching staff of study courses, the teaching facilities of the library shall be renewed and supplemented.

The library's resources and services are available to all students of the JVLAM both in person and remotely. The library provides students with learning materials - literature, sheet music, monographs, sound and video recordings. Students have access to 3 library databases and 9 subscription databases (chapter Other Annexes section named as "JVLAM Bibliotēkas krājuma komplektēšanas kārtība", available only in Latvian). Though main material is collected in Latvian, there is enough amount of material (theoretical and science books) in English and other languages. As for music scores and music recordings, they are universal for studies in any language.

The library is structured in three departments: Music department, Book department and reading room and Audiovisual department. All departments are available to students and dockers 6 days a week, except Sundays. (SAR, p. 45–47).

1.3.4. Several information and communication technology solutions are used in the implementation of the study process, the most of which are: the subsystems of the University of Latvia Information System (hereinafter – LAIS), The ASIMUT system and the JVLAM e-learning environment (MOODLE platform).

LAIS provides documentation of the study process and is used to enter and maintain data on students, prepare study agreements and orders related to the study process, register students for study courses, enter up-to-date study plans and link them to student profiles, for lecturers to enter course grades, etc.

The ASIMUT system provides for planning the study process and creating a lesson schedule. It is



essential that the ASIMUT system is available for use on computers and mobile phones, providing information about the locations and times of classes, so both students and JVLAM staff can keep track of group class schedules and book rooms for their own rehearsals.

The JVLAM e-learning environment (MOODLE platform) is a learning environment in which the teaching staff can easily share with students the materials necessary for the study process, track students' activities in a given study course, conduct knowledge and skills tests, fill in surveys, and get full feedback (SAR, p. 49).

The restrictions imposed by the epidemiological situation (Covid-19) have increased the importance and increased use of information and communication technology solutions.

1.3.5. The JVLAM has approved a Personnel Policy, which defines the principles of the JVLAM in the areas of human resources planning, remuneration, staff development and professional development, etc. The elections of JVLAM teaching staff shall be held in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/37967>, available only in Latvian) and 25 February 2021 Cabinet Regulation No. 129 Procedures for the evaluation of the scientific and pedagogical qualifications or the artistic creation of a candidate for the post of professor or associate professor and of an incumbent professor or associate professor Requirements (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/321300>, available only in Latvian).

In order to ensure the development of academic staff, the JVLAM involves graduates who are currently active not only in Latvia but also abroad.

The process of recruitment and employment of teaching staff is regulated and publicly available on the JVLAM website, including for those persons who wish to apply for academic positions (SAR, p. 50–52).

1.3.6. The JVLAM has developed a procedure to ensure the qualifications and quality of work of academic staff. Has also been created a unified position and quality assessment system, which includes all groups of academic positions, which provides an opportunity to assess the quantitative achievements of teaching work in relation to qualitative indicators.

Each year, based on an assessment of their capabilities and needs, academic staff are offered further training opportunities in different segments. For example, the JVLAM organizes English language courses, in which 38 staff members have already improved their knowledge of a foreign language. Faculty members are also offered opportunities to participate in various conferences, seminars and workshops throughout the academic year, for example, one lecturer participated in the international conference on supervision of artistic research doctoral theses “Advancing Supervision for Artistic Research Doctorates” at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna in 2021, one professor travelled to Malta in 2020 to participate in the international scientific conference “Performance Knowledges: Transmission, Composition, Praxis” and lead workshops (SAR, p. 53). In the evaluation of each training year, the Academic staff shall provide an opinion on visited masterclasses, seminars, quality of exchange programmes, providing a backward link to The Head of Study Fields for future work and planning of relevant activities.

1.3.7. In the implementation of the Arts study field 224 teaching staff members are involved, 113 of them are elected to one of the academic positions at the JVLAM.

The workload of academic staff, the rate of workload, the distribution of types of work shall be reflected in the academic staff wage rates. The total workload of a lecturer (including additional work) shall not exceed the normal weekly working time set by the Labour Law - 40 hours per week or 1600 hours per academic year.

The JVLAM has attracted teaching staff, assessing their education and professional experience in a specific sector, providing a balanced workload as far as possible (SAR, p. 54–56).

Clearly workshops of teaching staff are complex and include teaching, course preparation, advising

student, research and administrative work. Digitization, for example, using electronic systems for learning (MOODLE), study administration (LAIS) and room reservation (ASIMUT), is key to tackling the problem of workload balance.

Given that most teaching staff also work in other workplaces, it is generally concluded that mostly workload is balanced between academic, research and administrative work.

1.3.8. JVLAM provides support for the study process, as well as career and psychological support, by providing students free of charge to use the JVLAM premises, sports complex, sound recording studio, enabling them to apply for financial support for participation in international competitions, etc.

In 2019 the Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Music Academy Support Foundation was established, a public benefit organization to support the process of professional development and creative activity of the most talented students in the fields of music, dance, education and research, as well as to promote all types of educational, musicological and interdisciplinary scientific and cultural projects. For example, in the academic year 2021/2022, nine students of the JVLAM have received a scholarship from JSC "Latvijas Finieris" for the purchase of instruments or technical equipment (SAR, p. 57–58).

During the reporting period, the JVLAM has provided support to three students with visual impairments who have studied in the professional bachelor study programmes of the JVLAM study field Arts. Students of all programmes of the JVLAM study field Arts are regularly offered opportunities to participate in various master classes, competitions and exchanges of experience, which contribute to the development of their professional skills and support them in their career development. For example, students of Conducting, Vocal Music programmes are able to visit The Latvian National Opera, rehearsals, someone already is members of opera choir; students of Conducting are involved in working with amateur choirs; students of Early Music are involved in various Riga Early Music Centre projects etc. Also in January this year, students of vocal art – debuted at the Latvian National Opera in the production of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's opera "Don Giovanni".

It is positive that young talents are assessed and promoted annually with annual awards as the JVLAM and LMT Annual Award.

To develop the skills necessary for a successful professional career teachers invite students to join them in various professional artistic activities, participating in rehearsals, performances and recordings, including helping students to gradually integrate into the professional community.

Given the lack of teachers in the labor market, it is essential that a student of the JVLAM study field Arts is given the opportunity to acquire the right to teach alongside their professional qualification during their studies (SAR, p. 55–59).

Additional support necessary for students' participation in foreign competitions, festivals, seminars, etc., is provided by personal application of a student to the rector (Experts' Meeting with students).

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

The number of state-funded study places for full-time students JVLMA is determined in accordance with the projected demand for cultural development and is implemented through state budget funding.

The JVLAM has all the necessary material equipment for the implementation of study courses. At the same time, the purchase of additional equipment for the implementation of an ever-increasing number of study courses and further development should be planned.

JVLAM library (including phonotheque) is one of the largest libraries in the country, which is renewed and supplemented annually by providing students with learning and research materials.

Several information and communication technology solutions (LAIS, The ASIMUT system and MOODLE platform) are used for the implementation of the study process, providing convenient

information exchange, including keeping track of class group schedules and reserve rooms for rehearsals.

The JVLAM has attracted teaching staff, assessing their education and professional experience in a specific sector, providing a balanced workload as far as possible. In order to ensure the development of academic staff, the JVLAM involves graduates who are currently active not only in Latvia but also abroad. Academic staff are offered further training opportunities in different segments.

To develop the skills necessary for a successful professional career, the teaching staff invites students to join them in various professional artistic activities, participating in rehearsals, performances and recordings, including helping students to gradually integrate into the professional community.

Open hours of an institution do not fit for the real needs of students' individual practice.

Strengths:

- 1) The funding of scientific and creative activities has increased in the last 3 years and contributes positively to the development of courses of study and relevant study programmes.
- 2) JVLAM library (including phonotheque) is one of the largest libraries in the country, regularly participating in international activities (IAML - International Association of Music Libraries).

Weaknesses:

- 1) Limited opening hours - not enough access for individual practicing.
- 2) Lack of rooms for some sub programmes (choreography).

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

### **Analysis**

1.4.1. The directions of scientific research and artistic creation in JVLAM directly correspond to the main aims and goal of the institution to provide higher education in the fields of music and performing arts, arts education and science, and to preserve and develop the Latvian national musical cultural traditions (SAR, 60). Institution develops academic and professional study programmes, scientific and artistic research, artistic creation and performance, which train human resources necessary for the state and national economy, and ensure preservation of cultural heritage and intercultural communication.

A Scientific Research Centre was established in 2018. It coordinates and develops scientific research at JVLAM including national and international projects, especially in the field of systematic musicology and ethnomusicology.

JVLAM constantly participates in international scientific activities and implements the newest trends in music research and performance. For example, JVLAM participates in the European Platform for Artistic Research in Music (EPARM) since it was established in 2008 and in every year meetings of Association of European Conservatoires (AEC).

Third level studies – doctor of arts – was established at JVLAM under the implementation of experience of international practice and participation in EPARM and AEC.

In 2022 JVLAM organized a world international conference on artistic research in music, visual and audiovisual arts and design.

Artistic creation is one of the strongest sides of the institution. Exploring 3 concert halls JVLAM is an important element of musical and cultural life not only in Riga, but also in all the country and even internationally – many invited performers/professors held concerts and presented new compositions in JVLAM. Artistic creation accounts up to 20% of academic staff workload (SAR, 61).

JVLAM ensures the training of top professionals in music and performing arts-related fields at all levels of higher educational studies. The institution runs BA, MA and doctoral studies. Doctoral studies in musicology is the only such program in the country. A very positive step in the

development of these studies is an agreement with Lithuanian and Estonian music academies to establish a joint Doctoral School in Musicology. Doctoral studies in Arts is run in collaboration with other Latvian higher art institutions – Art Academy of Latvia and Latvian Academy of Culture.

Musicology has previously been seen as a domain of scientific universities, and in an international context musicology is usually part of the Study field Humanities. Offering the Bachelor (formerly Music Theory and History), Master and Doctoral education in Musicology within the Study field of Arts and in the frame of a Music Academy is an important statement, putting a message, that research can come out of practice. This unique position brings the already mentioned advantages of bringing research and application together, but there are also disadvantages: as musicology has no universitarian tradition in Latvia, students have to be recruited for this specific study programme. JVLAM found a solution that works in practice, but is not that logical formally: students are recruited during a PROFESSIONAL bachelor's study programme Music and Performing Art, during which they can have practical experiences with instrumental and vocal performance besides the theoretical and research study courses. At Master's and Doctoral level, they continue in academic study programmes of different names: the Academic Study Programme "Music" and the Doctoral study programme "Musicology". This non-alignment has been explained from a practical point of view during the evaluators' onsite visit of the Academy (15 to 17 May 2023), but it remains a challenge for the future to find a more convincing formal and systemic solution.

Nationally, as well as in international context, the definition of Artistic research is still very broad and deserves further precision. Out of the description of study courses it is not that easily visible, to what extent students are in contact with philological musicology or musicology dealing with Artistic research (apart from the Laboratory of Systematic Musicology).

1.4.2. There are direct links between study programmes and scientific or artistic research at JVLAM. All study programmes are designed as integrated studies where academic work is linked to artistic creation and research. Practice (internship) includes participating in public concerts, seminars, conferences and publications in various journals. There is though no direct link between the practice part of the studies and the science part of studies, that means, artistic creation is reflected generally, but there is no formal place, where students could receive direct theoretical links to what they are doing practically.

The academic staff of JVLAM consists of Latvian experts of national and international level and ensures the highest level of artistic experience to be implemented into all studies of JVLAM. Guest lectures from abroad ensure the link between the study process and international research practice (SAR, 63). For example, students participate in various master classes, seminars, and rehearsals of visiting foreign ensembles, and they publish their research results in various academic journals including "Mūzikas akadēmijas raksti" [Music Academy Writings] (SAR, 64; meeting with heads of departments).

The Laboratory of Systematic Musicology and the Laboratory of Music Psychology are the cornerstones in relation and development of scientific and artistic research and study process (meeting with teaching staff). Students are involved into a process of research via exact tasks they need to realize in the Laboratory. Most distinguished achievements are presented at national and international conferences. For example, links between music and language were researched during studies and presented at the 15th International Symposium on Cognitive Science in 2021 (Symposium program online).

Another tool for integration of artistic creation into studies is the Creative Projects Division. Division implements the strategy of artistic-creative practice of students and lecturers of JVLAM (SAR, 63). Most important events of the institution's ensembles (orchestra, choir, opera studio) are included in the Annual Events Plan. Students are involved in real concert life which contributes to the relation between artistic activities/research and studies.

1.4.3. The institution has a strong and constant practice of international collaboration. It covers all study programmes of all levels and are realized mostly via short-term activities, mobility programs, various events and projects.

Erasmus+ and Nordplus programs are used as a base for international collaboration. JVLAM has around 100 bilateral agreements with European music universities. Each year up to 10% of students and up to 20% of academic staff take part in these programs (Annex 2.5. Mobility of Students; Mobility of Academic Staff). In such a way number of personal creativity (concerts, new teaching methods obtained) and scientific publications increase each year (Annex 2.4).

SAR presents a lot of international activities where students and institutions take part. For example, North Star Big Band project (2022), Young Euro Class (2016), BAO Symphony Orchestra project (2017-2019) can be mentioned as only a few examples of a long list of activities.

A very innovative and progressive collaboration is realized between neurosciences, medical doctors and music researchers (Music and Brain research group, LongGold project, Brain-Computer Music Interfacing for Embodied Musical Interaction).

Ethnomusicologists participate in the activities of the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM), and musicologists take part in International Musicological Society (IMS).

Development of an international cooperation is organized according to the main aim and vision of an institution. It is directly related with a development Plan of an institution and with learning outcomes of each study program. Main criteria for development of international cooperation are: a) to share professional experience internationally; b) to reach higher level of studies and research; c) to obtain new methodology of studies; d) to gain an international experience of practical professional activities (Annex 2.1. Development Plan of Study Field; meeting with the management (Rector and vice-rectors); meeting with directors of study programs).

1.4.4. Scientific research and artistic creation is obligatory for teaching staff according to the Law on Higher Education Institutions. Heads of departments are responsible for planning and coordination of research/creative activities of staff. Teachers report on their performance and research activities at the end of each academic year.

Priorities of the scientific work are defined in the Development Strategy of Scientific Activity Strategy of the JVLAM.

Since 2018 the project "Development of international cooperation projects in research and innovation" has been started by JVLAM to support activities in artistic creativity and research.

Since 2016 the Scientific and Creative Activity Development Project Competition has been organized regularly. It aims to promote academic staff with additional funding for their creative/research activities.

The institution investigates particular tools for researchers' needs. For example, the Music Psychology Department obtained in 2019 EEG measuring equipment, microtonal instruments, and analytical data processing software (SAR, 67). That allows them to integrate JAVA projects into the leading systematic music science institutes.

Institution constantly organizes concerts, festivals, master classes, and creative projects. The amount of annual public events exceeds 300 events per year.

1.4.5. Scientific research is organized by the Scientific Research Centre (SRC), Scientific Council and Doctoral Council. SCR organizes implementation of the scientific plan confirmed by the Senate. It promotes the involvement of students of all levels into scientific or artistic research and performance.

Students' artistic activity is planned and assessed by the head of departments. It includes student practice concerts, academic concerts of lecturer classes (students), memorial evenings of composers, participation in masterclass concerts, music competitions, festivals, etc.

All levels of studies include a final research thesis (musicology) or public concert (performance

studies).

Students can apply for financial support for their research/creative activities from the JVLAM or from personal grants administered by institutions (Boris and Ināra Teterev grant; SAR, 70).

During the studies students are involved in research/creative activities via: a) research projects organized and granted by institutions; b) conferences; c) local and international music competitions. Success of students at various levels of competitions confirms the successful involvement of students in artistic creativity (SAR, 71).

1.4.6. JVLAM obtained and installed an ASIMUT system used for schedule planning for all institutions. It led to organizing all types of institution activity more effectively and more precisely.

Innovations in the studies (updated curricula) were implemented after comparison to the several European universities (SAR, 72).

Masterclass and Creative Project, as special courses for studies, were implemented after feedback of students.

The Professional doctorate of Arts was launched for the first time in Latvia in 2021.

Pandemic situation stimulated more innovations into the study process. Various online tools (Zoom, Google Meet), studies with phonograms, MIDI and WAV files, synchronous and asynchronous online methods were involved in the study process.

JVLAM has reflected critically about the use of online rules, stating that distance learning for theoretical courses are successful, while specially collective artistic courses and more specifically conducting courses demanding a high degree of interaction with musicians and singers where not satisfying with accessible technical means. For those sectors, online can be used only "as an exception and in the short term." (SAR, p. 112) It seems that those experiences have yet not been formalized into rules about distance learning of the institution.

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

The connection between scientific research and artistic creation is extremely strong at JVLAM because students of musicology start studying the professional bachelor's SP Music and Performing Art and are forced (following Main Objectives of Professional Activities of the Occupational Standard) to play an instrument or sing while studying musicology. At master's and doctoral level they start to focus more on the academic and theoretical side of their studies, still having the possibilities of field studies or the possibility to profit from the artistic and creative side of the parallel Professional Doctoral study programme Arts. JVLAM offers Ethno-musicology as a field with special connection to the tradition of Latvian culture and attracts attention of international colleagues of that specific area of research. The joint Professional Doctoral Study Programme Arts makes intense use of the artistic and research personalities of three leading Arts Higher Educational Institutions in Latvia and offers a chance for interdisciplinary connection.

While speaking about the advantage of a strong connection between scientific research and artistic creation in the reality of studies at the Academy, there is still a weakness in the formal aspects of the position of musicology studies, because the position of musicology is not aligned in between the three levels of studies (bachelor, master, doctoral).

Artistic and philological research are treated in study plans - unclear to what extent students of the Professional Study Programmes are able to discern both approaches.

Students are involved in scientific/artistic research starting from a bachelor level. Study programs are organized in such a way that students constantly receive tasks on development their scientific/artistic research skills. Additionally institution organizes a lot of external activities where students have possibility to extend their practical skills in scientific/artistic research (masterclasses, seminars, presentations in conferences).

Strengths:

- 1) Strong connection between scientific research and artistic creation, because musicology is part of the study field Arts - a unique situation in international context.
- 2) Strong use of resources of the Latvian Higher Educational Institutions in Arts and Culture through an attractively constructed Joint Professional Doctoral Study Programme.
- 3) Competent academic staff consisting of internationally and nationally acknowledged experts in the field.

Weaknesses:

- 1) The position of Musicology within the Study programmes is not aligned in Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral level.

## **Assessment of the requirement [2]**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Partially compliant

There is a strong connection between scientific research and artistic creation, but the position of Musicology within the PBSP Music and Performing Art is not aligned with the master's and doctoral levels of Musicology.

## **1.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation**

### **Analysis**

1.5.1. Cooperation with Latvia's universities, employers, professional non-governmental organizations and cultural education institutions is essential for ensuring a quality and development-oriented study programme. Cooperation is mutual and provides support for the achievement of the objectives of the courses of study field and programmes.

Cooperation with the Art Academy of Latvia and the Latvian Academy of Culture is essential, not only in developing and implementing the professional doctoral programme in Arts, but also in working together as the Association of Arts Universities on the development of cultural policy documents and in developing a unified opinion of the universities in politics (SAR, p. 74).

Cooperation is extensive, strengthened in the form of an agreement and provides practical facilities, joint implementation of artistic, scientific research projects, to develop professional skills, etc. (SAR, Annex "List of cooperation agreements.docx").

In the framework of cooperation with professional organizations in the field are organized, such as masterclasses, seminars, national examinations of students, international competitions, etc. For example, cooperated with State Limited Liability Company "The State Choir "Latvija" " in providing rehearsals and national examinations for the JVLAM choir conducting students; cooperated with the Latvian National Center for Culture organized teacher training courses "Methodology and music theory learning", "Methodology and string instruments learning", etc. Similarly, the principles of professional cultural institutions, the playing artists, the conductors are the JVLAM teaching staff, which at the same time strengthens mutual cooperation.

As part of the cooperation, students of higher education institutions and secondary music schools and teachers have been given the opportunity to use the resources of the JVLAM Library, as well as the subscribed databases, which are essential for ensuring the quality of the learning process (SAR, p. 74–75). The choice of partners is based on the specific features of the study field and study programmes.

1.5.2. In view of the open European labor market and the possibility to cooperate with foreign higher education institutions, the JVLAM also promotes and develops international cooperation in a variety of ways. The JVLAM is active in several international organizations of Europe. For example, European Piano Teachers Association, European Voice Teachers Association, Association of the Nordic Music Academies etc. JVLAM's membership in the European Association of Music Universities is important, which provides expanded opportunities for cooperation with specialized music universities.

International cooperation provides a variety of activities, including masterclasses, seminars, lectures, regular student and lecturer exchange (Erasmus+, NordPlus), participation in international projects, membership in international professional networks, etc. Thus, not only students of the JVLAM gain knowledge in higher education institutions in Europe, but the knowledge is provided by the teaching staff of European universities here in Latvia, thereby ensuring a higher audience of students of Latvia (SAR, p. 77–78). The choice of partners is based on the specific features of the study field and study programmes (Piano, String instruments, Vocal music etc).

Although the Latvian labor market requires professional musicians, sometimes during the exchange of an Erasmus+ traineeship, students receive a job offer and don't return to Latvia.

1.5.3. Currently, only one in five study programmes corresponding to the study field Arts has been implemented in English. The other programmes shall be implemented only in Latvian, with the exception that one fifth of the amount of study programme credit points may be conducted in other official languages of the European Union, such as English. The JVLAM has submitted an application for the evaluation of study field in order to obtain the right to implement all study programmes of the Arts study field in English, which would allow more foreign students to be attracted.

In the near future, the JVLMA have to draw attention to possible influence of foreign teaching staff on the quality and improvement of studies, as well as more authorized methods of study content acquisition and understanding the organization and requirements of studies in other countries.

The recruitment of foreign students and teaching staff was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Erasmus University Charter and individual study plans. Student mobility has increased significantly in recent years - If in the 2013-2014 academic year inbound student mobility was 11 students, then in the 2021-2022 academic year it reached 25 students; outgoing mobility has increased significantly, from 6 cases in the academic year 2014-2015 to 24 cases in the academic year 2021-2022; the highest activity in student inbound and outbound mobility is among instrumentalists and vocalists. The dynamics of teaching staff mobility are stable, with the exception of 2020-2021 academic year, when it was disrupted by the Covid pandemic - inbound teaching mobility of staff ranged from 54 to 72 cases per year, but outgoing mobility of teaching staff: teaching mobility ranged from 20 to 43 units per year, while learning mobility ranged from 28 to 63 units per year (SAR, p. 79–80, SAR Annex "Foreign Students and Academic Staff.xlsx", "Mobility of students.doc", "Mobility of Mobility", "Mobility of academic staff.doc").

The future development of the JVLAM should focus more on long-term cooperation as the multi-year project Crossing Keyboards, which is implemented by the Piano Department in cooperation with the Baltic and Nordic music universities with the support of the NORDPLUS programme, or as the Jazz Department of the JVLAM has the regular cooperation with the Viljandi Academy of Culture at the level of faculty and students.

No PR strategy for the acquisition of international students is visible. The majority of teachers are Latvian nationals, and the connection of the Academy to the global market is based only on personal contacts of the Academy's management and artistic and personal contacts of teachers.

Considering that the JVLAM wants to implement programmes in English, the JVLAM urgently needs to develop and implement a strategy for attracting teaching staff and students from abroad.

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



The JVLAM cooperation with Latvian universities, employers, professional non-governmental organizations and cultural education institutions is extensive, in particular with the Art Academy of Latvia and the Latvian Academy of Culture implementing the professional doctoral programme in Art, providing practical facilities, joint implementation of artistic, scientific research projects, etc. The JVLAM is active in several international organizations of Europe, providing a variety of activities, including masterclasses, lectures, regular student and lecturer exchange (Erasmus+, NordPlus), participation in international projects, membership in international professional networks, etc. Currently, only one in five study programmes corresponding to the study field Arts has been implemented in English.

**Strengths:**

- 1) The JVLAM cooperation with Latvian universities, employers, professional non-governmental organizations and cultural education institutions is extensive.
- 2) International cooperation provides regular student and lecturer exchange (Erasmus+, NordPlus).

**Weaknesses:**

- 1) The departments should focus more on long-term cooperation (as in project Crossing Keyboards) for the future development of the JVLAM.
- 2) With an academic staff of mainly Latvian teachers and no PR strategy for the global market, it might be difficult to attract a significant number of international students.

**Assessment of the requirement [3]**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The JVLAM cooperation with organizations ensures the achievement of the aims of the study field.

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

**Analysis**

1.6.1. During the reporting period, several changes and licensing procedures have taken place in the field of study, including:

[1] The merger of the Professional Master's Degree Programmes in Music and Choreography into a single programme called Music and Performing Arts in 2016. This change resulted in improvements in study programme curriculum and the implementation of individual courses, as well as the implementation of a similar structure of Bachelor's levels programme.

[2] The licensing of the Joint Professional Doctoral Programme in Arts in 2020, which included the sub-programme of Music and Performing Arts. This evaluation process led to recommendations for the programme's content review, with some recommendations already implemented and others still standing.

[3] Changes to the Professional Bachelor's Degree Programme in Music and Performing Arts in 2022, where seven separate programmes were merged into a single programme with various sub-programmes, aiming to enhance quality processes, state budget place allocation efficiency and reduce fragmentation.

A detailed report on the implementation of the recommendations is provided in the attached Annex (2.6.Recommendations.docx). Work on implementing the recommendations is ongoing, with an

implementation plan in place. Due to the timelines and the ongoing evaluation process, the full impact of the recommendations on the quality of studies cannot be assessed at this time. Progress has been made in areas such as auditing course descriptions and the new Sound Recording professional standard has been approved.

Recommendations made by the expert group for the field of study Arts can be summarized as following:

1. Art Academy of Latvia, Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music, and Latvian Academy of Culture are the institutions that impose the national standard in higher art education. The common platform should be established by these three institutions for the purpose of closer communication on interdisciplinary basis and for facilitating the access to resources available.

The recommendation has been fully implemented. A joint study program has been created and started in September 2020.

2. There is a need for the development of internationalization strategy within art education sector and diversification of access to potential customers, especially in non-governmental sector.

The recommendation has been partially implemented. Internationalization has been incorporated in JVLMA's development strategy. However, the current aim of gaining accreditation for flagship study programmes in its entirety for English language mode does not correspond with capacity of maintaining the same level of quality across all various sub programmes.

3. To consider the possibility of giving the newly established programme a more appropriate title, e.g. Music and Choreography, which would correspond to study programme group Music and Performing Arts of the field of study Arts of the current Latvian Classification of Education

The issue regarding study programme titles persists, as the expert panel has reiterated their recommendation for a change in these titles. The panel suggests that the study programme titles be revised to better reflect curriculum.

4. In the future, the possibility of developing a Music and Performing Arts programme at both Bachelor's and Master's level may be considered, if the academy deems it appropriate. Only it should be done in a substantiated and consistent manner.

Recommendation has been implemented. Programmes have been consolidated.

5. To pay attention to the titles of some study courses and the content thereof, which would be more in line with the Master's level, e.g. second-level studies should not teach a foreign language, but the discourse of the specialty in a foreign language.

JVLAM claims that the recommendation has been fully implemented – the titles and content of the study courses have been evaluated.

6. The final thesis of the professional Master's study programme, entitled Diploma Report (Diplomreferāts), is a bit confusing and not good for the external prestige of the academy. Having looked at these works, it had to be concluded that, despite their somewhat more limited volume, they fully meet the requirements for a Master's thesis and could be called a Diploma Thesis (Diplomdarbs) or a Master's Thesis (Maģistra darbs). Differences between the requirements for academic and professional graduates can be addressed in the academy's regulations on final theses.

The recommendation has been fully implemented – the title of the national examination in the professional Master's study programme has been changed to Diplomdarbs (Diploma Thesis).

7. To provide more precise course descriptions with a more clearly marked list of literature, to make clearer what is taught in the course.

The recommendation has been fully implemented – the structure of study course descriptions have been revisited.

Recommendations for Professional Bachelor's study programme Music and Performing Arts (Changes in the professional Bachelor's study programme Music and Performing Arts of the field of

study Arts, expert's opinion from 29.07.2022) can be summarized as following:

1. To develop a methodological plan for academic staff by 31 December 2022, including regular training of the teaching staff in the form of lectures, seminars and/or workshops to foster collaboration and knowledge transfer.

Implementation is in process. Recommendation still stands.

2. To re-audit study course descriptions before the start of implementation of each study sub-programme, addressing gaps such as incomplete additions to the list of literature and information sources (including separation of required, supplementary literature and other information sources), e.g. Practice in Sound Systems, Learning Rhythm, uniform approach to the explanation of assessment, updating content to the realities of the labour market, e.g. Multimedia in the Creative Industries.

JVLAM notes that for the two sub-programmes (Jazz Music and Sound Engineering), the recommendation has been implemented. For the newly developed study courses in these sub-programmes, the study course content is being validated during the current academic year. For the remaining six sub-programmes, which will be implemented starting from the academic year 2023/2024, the recommendation is in the process of being implemented.

3. When starting the implementation of the study programme, some study courses should be implemented in smaller groups of students to ensure the quality of studies, for example, Stress Management, Psychology.

Recommendation is fulfilled. JVLAM highlights, that Psychology study course will be replaced by the Educational Psychology study course from the next academic year. The Stage Stress Management course, on the other hand, will only be offered to students of certain specializations.

4. To revise the management structure of the study programme before the accreditation of the field of study, eliminating the use of two positions – director of study programme and head of division, and creating a single position with appropriate functions for work with both students and teaching staff.

JVLAM states that the recommendation is being in process of implementation. By 1 September 2023, a record-keeping unit will be established, which will reduce the burden on heads of divisions / directors of study programmes. By 31.12.2024, significant changes will be made to the management structures – division/department, separating the management of study programmes from the division management.

5. To introduce a career guidance solution for students by the time the field of study is accredited, e.g. by creating a new position or a mentoring programme for students in cooperation with employers.

JVLAM states that funding is not sufficient for this recommendation to be implemented, another option is the delegation of the relevant function to the Creative Projects Department, covering the work (part-time) of a career coordinator (cooperation with employers). Status of this is unknown.

6. To promote the development of a professional standard for the qualification of Sound Engineer until the accreditation of the field of study, facilitating the involvement of employers. To make the necessary changes to the study programme within 6 months after the adoption of the new professional standard.

Recommendation has been implemented. Professional standard has been approved on 7th of June this year.

7. To supplement the book section of the JVLMA Library with up-to-date scientific literature on entrepreneurship, marketing, project management, etc. until the accreditation of the field of study.

JVLAM claims, that the recommendation is being implemented. Library in experts' opinion is in good order.

8. Until the accreditation of the field of study, to develop an annual self-assessment questionnaire for teaching staff, which would reflect not only the creative and scientific activity, but also the transfer of experience by participating in the exams of other departments as a member of the

commission or as a free listener and the introduction of interdisciplinary activities within the study course, for example, promoting cooperation between students of different specialisations. An annual self-assessment questionnaire for teaching staff has been developed to be used from the academic year 2023/2024. Recommendation is completed.

Recommendations for Professional doctoral study programme Arts can be summarized as following:

1. In the short term, experts call for the amount of required reading in study course descriptions to be proportionate to the number of credits and the time available for study.

JVLAM claims that study courses have been updated. Recommendation is completed.

2. Taking into account the differences in the coefficients of the thematic areas, the calculation of the cost of study places should be done in the same format and shared by all three parties involved.

Until the implementation of the study programme in February 2021, JVLMA, LMA, and LKA collaborated to establish a standardized method for calculating study place costs. Recommendation is completed.

3. In the long term, to review the possibility of closer cooperation between higher education institutions in the context of the implementation of study process of the sub-programmes, by providing more study courses at other higher education institutions involved.

There has been a review of the potential for enhanced collaboration among higher education institutions during the implementation of sub-programme study processes. This involves offering additional study courses at other participating institutions. JVLMA, LMA, and LKA plan to realize this recommendation by organizing specific artistic interdisciplinary activities in Part B of the study plan. These activities will involve two or three doctoral students from the participating institutions in the study programme implementation. Recommendation is completed.

4. To evaluate the content of the programme to avoid placing Choreography and its genre of Contemporary Dance in separate sub-programmes, resulting in a fragmented programme.

JVLAM decided to prevent the separation of Choreography and its genre of Contemporary Dance into distinct sub-programmes until the assessment of the study field of Arts. Recommendation is completed.

5. To increase the number of lecturers with English language skills at C1 and C2 level in the long term.

JVLMA, LMA, and LKA are planning to implement various projects aimed at enhancing the English language proficiency of their lecturers. However, in the long run, these higher education institutions will prioritize a substantial increase in the number of lecturers who possess English language skills at the C1 and C2 levels within the study programme. On doctoral level as of now the language generally is not an issue, however it is relevant to other study programmes in the study field. Recommendation is completed.

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

Overall, the institution have shown progress in implementing recommendations and improving the quality of art education. However, there are areas that require further attention and resources to fully address the remaining recommendations and strengthen the education system.

Recommendations that still stands from previous procedures:

- Implement the proposed changes to the management structure of the study programme, separating study programme management from division management.

- Consider alternative options or funding sources to introduce a career guidance solution for students.

- Revise study programme titles to align them more accurately with the content and curriculum.

- Continue efforts to enhance lecturers' English language skills, particularly at C1 and C2 levels, to support internationalization efforts.

#### Strengths:

- 1) The implementation of joint study programs and collaboration among institutions demonstrates a commitment to interdisciplinary cooperation and resource optimization.
- 2) Efforts to review and update study course descriptions, implement internationalization strategies, and develop a professional standard for the qualification of Sound Engineers showcase a focus on improving curriculum and aligning with industry needs.
- 3) The establishment of a record-keeping unit and proposed changes in the management structure indicate an intention to streamline administrative processes and enhance efficiency, however its eventual efficiency is still to be reviewed.

#### Weaknesses:

- 1) Insufficient funding has hindered the implementation of certain recommendations, such as the introduction of a career guidance solution for students.
- 2) The issue of study programme titles persists, with the expert panel reiterating the need for revisions to better reflect curriculum content.
- 3) The development of lecturers' English language skills, particularly at C1 and C2 levels, still needs improvement to meet internationalization goals fully.

### Assessment of the requirement [4]

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Partially compliant

In summary, while there has been progress in implementing recommendations, however there are still areas that need additional attention.

### 1.7. Recommendations for the Study Field

#### Short-term recommendations

Before next academic year, make changes to the JVLAM webpage to show actual structure of the study programmes

Review the capacity of the premises and increase the opening hours of the Academy for individual practicing (within 2 years)

Implement possibilities of more formalized and visible student feedback - and describe actions taken (within 2 years)

#### Long-term recommendations

Consider aligning the position of musicology within bachelor, master and doctoral study programmes (within 3 years)

Encourage systematic, longterm cooperation between the departments of JVLAM (within 3 years)

Consider creating separated Study programmes for implementation only in English (until next accreditation)

Create a strategy to promote study programmes in English on the international market (within 3 years)

Encourage academic staff to continue improve English language skills (within 3 years)
Implement study field council with representatives from different target groups (within 3 years)
Make changes to the development plan to add measurable targets (within 3 years)
Continue systematic work with governmental institutions, and employers to get additional financing to JVLAM to implement all recommendations from this and previous accreditation (within 3 years)

## II - "Music and Performing Art" ASSESSMENT

### II - "Music and Performing Art" ASSESSMENT

#### 2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

##### Analysis

2.1.1. Professional bachelor study programme "Music and Performing Art" by its curriculum, awarded qualification and goals does comply with the study field "Arts". There is no indication that casts doubts on compliance with the chosen study field. The content of the study program is also in compliance with the mission and vision of JVLAM.

2.1.2. Study programme code is 42212. Code 42 corresponds to second level professional higher education - professional bachelor's programme. Code 212 corresponds to the field of "Music and Stage Art" under section of "Arts". Study programme code is relevant. Degree to be obtained after graduating the study programme is Professional Bachelor's Degree in Music with qualification of Sound Engineer; Instrumental Musician; Vocalist; Conductor; Composer; Musicologist or Professional Bachelor's Degree in Choreography with qualification of Choreographer. There are 7 relevant professional standards - Instrument Musician (5th level - approved on 14.12.2011), Conductor (5th level - approved on 23.09.2015), Vocalist (5th level - approved on 25.01.2012), Choreographer (5th level - approved on 25.01.2012), Sound Engineer (5th level - approved on 07.06.2023.), Composer (5th level - approved on 14.12.2011) and Musicologist (5th level - approved on 15.02.2012).

The Professional Bachelor's Study Programme "Music and Performing Art" realizes the new structure of 8 sub programmes Academic music (containing sub-specializations Keyboard instruments, String instruments, Wind instruments, Percussions instruments, and Vocal Music), Early music, Jazz music, Composition, Conducting (containing sub-specializations: Symphony orchestra conducting, Choral conducting, brass band conducting), Choreography, Musicology, Sound recording.

Because of the inclusion of Musicology and Sound recording - two non performing disciplines - it might be good to rethink the name of programme and to choose a name that would cover all disciplines, e.g. "Music and Music Related Studies", or "Music, Musicology, Sound recording and Choreography".

The expert panel acknowledges the limitations of science classification within the regulatory framework and recognizes the historical context in which musicology is taught at JVLAM. The institution possesses the necessary knowledge base to effectively implement musicology; however, it is recommended that the institution consider necessary adjustments or reforms to better align the study program with the broader understanding of the discipline. One potential solution could be to rename the study program to previously proposed options - "Music and Music Related Studies", or "Music, Musicology, Sound recording and Choreography" or to something similar in order to more accurately reflect the scope of the discipline. However, the decision regarding this matter ultimately rests with the institution, but some action or alignment is strongly required to structure the program's curriculum in a more cohesive (not only in context of general understanding of discipline,

but in context of placement of Musicology in programme and in overall JVLAM program offering as well) manner.

The sub-programmes within the study programme align their goals, tasks, and study outcomes with the overall study programme, with a specific focus on the knowledge, skills, and competences relevant to each sub-programme and specialization within the respective professional field. In the sub-programmes of Academic Music, Early Music, and Jazz Music, the study outcomes revolve around the professional aspects of the performing arts (music), catering to instrumental musicians and vocalists. The sub-programme of Conducting aims to develop the necessary skills for professional conductors, while the sub-programme of Composition focuses on cultivating the abilities of aspiring composers. For the sub-programme of Sound Recording, the study outcomes are geared towards training competent sound engineers. In the sub-programme of Musicology, the study outcomes are designed to equip students with the expertise needed for professional musicologists. Lastly, in the sub-programme of Choreography, the study outcomes address the professional aspects of dance and aim to prepare students for careers as choreographers.

Studies are conducted in Latvian (however JVLAM strives to obtain ability to conduct programme in English as well) in the form of full-time studies (4 years) with the volume of 160 CP, after successful completion of the programme the graduates are also able to continue their education at other higher education institutions to obtain Master degree. The study programme has several main objectives outlining necessary knowledge, skills and competences formulated in accordance with the LQF level 6 -requirements.

The admission process for the Professional Bachelor study programme in Music and Performing Arts follows the regulations outlined in Section 46 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions and the JVLAM Admission Rules for Arts Study Programmes. To be eligible for admission, applicants must have a general secondary or professional secondary education and have completed centralized secondary school examinations in Latvian language, Mathematics, and Foreign language.

To assess the applicants level of professional preparation for starting their studies, all applicants are required to undergo additional requirements tests. These tests are based on the specific knowledge and skills needed for each sub-programme and specialization within the programme. For all sub-programmes, except Choreography, an examination in music theory and analysis is conducted. The content of the tasks in this examination is tailored to the required knowledge level for entry into the respective sub-programme. Additionally, each sub-programme organizes one or more tests to evaluate the skills necessary for the chosen specialization, according to the specific sub-programme or specialization.

While the full-time Latvian implementation of this study programme is generally deemed justified, the application for an English language mode requires closer attention. According to the experts' opinion, there is a significant risk that the study programme, in its entirety and across its various subprogrammes, may not be able to ensure the same level of quality as its Latvian language counterpart. SAR annex 2.3. "Arts list of academic staff" shows that more than 40 members of academic staff involved in the implementation of this study programme had English language skill's level below B2, so they can not teach in English - so there will be differences in teaching staff for programme implementation in both languages. A soft recommendation would be to develop specific English language programmes with a tailored curriculum that aligns with the capacities and strategic goals for English language education. This approach would enable a more targeted and effective delivery of the study programmes in English, ensuring that they meet the desired standards and provide a high-quality educational experience for students.

2.1.3. The Professional Bachelor study programme "Music and Performing Arts" underwent significant changes that had already been assessed by one expert and confirmed by the Study Quality Commission. It involved merging separate study programmes into a single Professional Bachelor degree programme with an updated structure and content. The aim was to enhance

compatibility between sub-programmes, equalize study loads for different specializations, and address the issue of insufficient student numbers in certain programmes (by providing easier ways to manage budget places across programmes).

Implementation of the updated study plan began in the academic year 2022/2023 for the sub-programmes of Sound Recording and Jazz Music. The remaining sub-programmes will commence in the academic year 2023/2024, with existing students from other bachelor programmes transferring to the corresponding sub-programmes of the Music and Performing Arts programme. The changes to the study programme content are estimated to be around 15-20% across different specializations. Changes are to be supported and study programme can be implemented in Latvian and English.

2.1.4. The Professional Bachelor study programme in Music and Performing Arts has been developed based on both national socio-economic justifications and the demand for music and performing arts education in society. The programme aligns with the Cultural Policy Guidelines for 2014-2020, which emphasize creativity in lifelong learning, labor market-oriented cultural education, and competitive cultural and creative industries. The demand for music and performing arts education remains high despite demographic and economic challenges. The programme addresses the need for specialists in the cultural industry. Graduates are in demand both in Latvia and abroad, and there is a demand for qualified teachers (which seems to be one of the central focuses of the programme) in music and art HEIs.

Higher Education Graduates Monitoring Tool shows relatively high employment rates for JVLAM graduates in comparison to other Art HEIs. Overall, the Professional Bachelor study programme in Music and Performing Arts responds to societal needs, fosters cultural and creative industries, and prepares graduates for careers in their respective fields.

The analysis of student data in the field of study Professional Bachelor of Arts reveals that the number of state-funded study places remains stable. However, there can be variation in the number of students across different specializations, particularly in orchestral instrument specializations. Competition for state-funded places is high, with several applicants competing for each spot. The percentage of fee-paying students in the program ranged from 8% to 18% during the reporting period. The average enrollment in the Professional Bachelor of Arts program is 92 students per year, with some fluctuation. The total number of students in the program remained relatively stable during the reporting period. The number of students with personal funding decreased in the second half of the reporting period, which aligns with the general trend in the country. The dropout rate in the programme ranged from 15 to 26 students per year, with reasons including migration to foreign institutions, changes in study priorities, and non-return from study breaks. The COVID-19 pandemic also impacted dropout rates. The program sees an average of 70 graduates per year, with some variation due to study breaks and circumstances.

2.1.5. Not applicable

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

Study programme complies with the study field of "Arts" and aligns with the mission and vision of JVLAM. The study programme's parameters, including the code, degree to be obtained, aims, objectives, and learning outcomes, generally are interrelated and justified. Each sub-programme focuses on specific knowledge, skills, and competences relevant to its respective professional field. The sub-programmes include Academic Music, Early Music, Jazz Music, Conducting, Composition, Sound Recording, Musicology, and Choreography. Each sub-programme caters to the professional aspects of its field. The study outcomes of each sub-programme are tailored to prepare students for successful careers in their respective areas of specialization. The content of the programme supports the achievement of the stipulated learning outcomes for various qualifications within the



music and performing arts field. The recent corrections made to the programme's parameters, such as merging separate study programmes and updating the structure and content, are reasonable. The programme also has economic and social justification, meeting the demand for music and performing arts education and preparing graduates for careers in the cultural industry. There is some challenges associated with implementation of study programme in English.

**Strengths:**

- 1) One, joint study programme instead of previous multiple programmes in the same field. The new structure is clearer and complies with the strategy of the Academy.
- 2) The study programme is economically and socially justified.

**Weaknesses:**

- 1) The study programme title does not fully represent its content. Because of the inclusion of Musicology and sound recording - two non performing disciplines - it might be good to rethink the name of programme and to choose a name that would cover all disciplines, e.g. "Music and Music Related Studies", or "Music, Musicology, Sound recording and Choreography".
- 2) The position of Musicology at Bachelor's level (as a professional study programme and as a part of Music and Performing Art) is not aligned with its position in Master's and Doctoral level (as an academic study programme, separated from the study programmes of Music and Performing Art at Master's level and Arts at Doctoral level).
- 3) There are certain challenges associated with the potential mode of delivering the programme in English.

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

### **Analysis**

2.2.1. The study programme complies with the requirements of the Cabinet of Ministers regulation Nb. 512 (SAR, p. 106-109, annexes "3\_2\_1\_a\_PBSP\_Compliance\_state\_stand\_MK512.pdf", "3\_2\_1\_b\_PBSP\_Mapping\_profession\_standards.zip", "3\_2\_1\_d\_PMSP\_Music and Performing Art\_Curriculum.xlsx") that was active till December 31 of 2022 (new regulations are not approved (May 2023)). Programme total amount is 160 CP and length 4 years, it includes necessary compulsory content, such as, general education courses, theoretical basic course, elective courses (6 CP), professional specialization courses. Internship is 23 CP. State examination is 12 CP (minimal requirement). Programme study plan includes Latvian language for the programme in English and Environment protection and Civil protection study courses. After graduation, students can obtain one of the seven professional qualifications. Study courses ensure that requirements of respective standards of profession are fulfilled. The Mandatory content is fulfilled, a business module being included, that deserves further development in the future. All the sub-programmes and specialisation have common mandatory part consisting of study courses such as Foreign language, Introduction to the History of Culture and Arts, Pedagogical Psychology, Pedagogy, Entrepreneurship, Civil defence and Environment Protection.

Innovations coming out of former recommendations and of own reaction to the change of paradigma in European HEI education and on the labor market have led to innovations, like the introduction of "creative project" subject within the Internship Part of studies, or the introduction of new Study courses to the Part A program.

The content of the study courses is a result of the visible effort of constantly innovating and caring for a varied and student-centered offer. The structure of the programme containing many sub-programmes of different character leads to an enormous range of study courses related to the needs of the different sub-programmes and sub-specialization programmes.

The advantage of this situation is the complexness and complementarity of study courses. The enormous number of study courses is also a result of the high degree of individualisation of teaching. The disadvantage of this system is the fact that this diversity and individuality leads to high costs of the study programme and makes it difficult to keep an overview on the entity of study courses.

The integration and high value of professional practice within the Internship/Practice part of studies complies with the character of a professional study programme. Because of the extremely wide variety of possible internship forms (pedagogical, artistic, technological, scientific field studies) the rules for internship as stated in the document 3\_2\_4\_Organisation\_of\_internship is very complex.

The needs to prepare the students to professional integration is starting to be visible in the study course "Entrepreneurship in the Creative Industries", but it might be worth of consideration to deepen and vary the training in the field of Module for building professional business competence as demanded in the National Standard MK 512 (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation of 26 August 2014 No. 512).

The study programme generally meets the needs of the industry and labour market as was expressed during the onsite interview with the students and employers.

A question mark appears upon the aim to offer the study programme in English language for the entire programme and all sub-programmes.

#### 2.2.2. Not applicable.

2.2.3. The study implementation methods contain a wide range of methods: from individual artistic, scientific and technological tuition to lectures, seminars, practical training to project creation, internship practice. The content and order of study courses is designed in a way that ensures growth and logical development of knowledge, skills and competences.

The partition of studies into five parts (see 2.2.1.) as well as the wide variety of attributed study courses give a firm framework to achieving the aims and learning outcomes defined in the study programme.

Student-centered learning principles are applied already by a high amount of contact teaching and a high amount of individual and small group work.

Concerning implementation of the study plan into English, only one adaptation to needs of international students is foreseen: the Study plan counts with alternative teachers for certain study courses, if the teachers of the Latvian study courses do not dispose of sufficient English language skills (B2 being demanded).

2.2.4. Study programme included internship of 23 CP and amount exceed minimum requirements for the professional bachelor programme (SAR, p. 106-109, annexes "3\_2\_1\_a\_PBSP\_Compliance\_state\_stand\_MK512.pdf", "3\_2\_4\_Organization\_of\_internship.pdf"). JVLAM has approved regulations on the organization of internships. There are also course descriptions for the internships courses included in the study programme.

Through the innovative element of internship as an important element of professional study plans, existent artistic projects of the institution and institutional partners have been integrated to the study programme and have thus been formalized.

Because of the extremely varied content of internships, the Rules for internships are extremely complex.

Internships can be pedagogical, artistic, inside and outside the Academy, within the own work place of students or within a project of the Academy, from simple participation in a master class organized by the institution up to composing, planning, organizing, realizing a National radio project. It is stated (SAR p. 107) that the sub programmes all have their own study course description of internship, but in the interviews of experts on site in May 15 to 17 the academic staff and students

would not be able to describe how individual and collective preparation and self evaluation of internship practice have been realized. To calibrate the realization and assessment of such a complex variety of so different targets is extremely difficult and needs reflections on how to simplify this format.

The tasks of the internship are directly related to the learning outcomes achievable in the particular study programme. During the on-site interviews with the employers, it was stated that generally there should not be problems to provide internship positions for the foreign students studying in English. According to the SAR, staff of JVLAM is involved in the process of providing internship places for the students outside the JVLAM.

2.2.5. Not applicable.

2.2.6. The principles and the given examples of students' final theses are relevant to the field and correspond to the study programme. The chosen themes are mostly related to the specific instrumental, choreographic or vocal practice or technological equipment use, or - in case of the musicology programme - to specified research goals connected with the overall aim of the study programme. The chosen themes are related to, for example, the use of folklore elements in choral music, multilingual pieces in Latvian composers' choral musics, Latvian Musicians' Society, etc (SAR, p. 116-117).

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

The programme is highly student centered with a high amount of specialized study courses and a very individually solved access to internship and professional practice. The topics of students' final theses are relevant, the difference between performing students' papers and musicology students' papers are clearly defined and realized. Different sub-programmes integrates into one programme and meets the requirements of professional standards. Study process can be evaluated as successful to achieve goals.

Strengths:

- 1) student centered content and methods
- 2) well organized distinction of research between performing/technological and musicologist students
- 3) internship in the sense of professional, pedagogical, technical or research practice have a high level in study plans and implementation thereof

Weaknesses:

- 1) The "Regulation of the Organisation of Internship" issued by the Senate on 31 August 2022 is extremely complicated and formalized. It might be advisable to search for a simplification that would guarantee a common part of preparation and reflection and mainly simplify the comparison of internship outcomes.

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

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

Not applicable

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

### **Analysis**

2.3.1. All students and teaching staff of the Professional Bachelor study programme Music and Performing Arts uses the available infrastructure of the JVLAM – classrooms, the library (including literature, sheet music, monographs, sound and video recordings), sports complex etc. The JVLAM shall ensure that the technical and material base is regularly upgraded and renewed. The above points out that the resources available at the JVLAM are sufficient to implement the study programme. (SAR, p. 118). Though main material in library is collected in Latvian, there is enough amount of books and methodological resources in English. As for music scores and music recordings, they are universal for studies and usage in any language. Library collection is formed according to the needs of each subprogram. Information of needed material is collected each year by filling in special library form (meeting with teaching staff; meeting with heads of departments).

2.3.2. Not applicable.

2.3.3. The budget of the JVLAM for ensuring the study process is based on funding from the state budget, which in addition is supported by project funding from the European Structural Funds and mobility programmes.

Whereas the resources needed to implement the programmes differ, the costs of study plans for different specializations are also different within the framework of the study programme. The optimal financing of the study programme is calculated, based on the historical average total number of students in the programme, i.e. 280 full time students per year. The programme was developed with the aim to make financially viable studies in select specializations (rare musical instruments, etc.) even with one student per specialization. Since the contribution from internationally recognized academic staff members is very important in respective study programme, the calculations take into account the additional costs that may potentially be created by the management of individual and group study courses in English language. As the proportion of individual contact hours is high and was initially taken into account in the cost calculations of the study programme, the cost-effectiveness of the study programme remains high even if the number of students drops to 30% of the current number of students. Important, that the JVLAM has calculated the costs of study programmes according to the respective base funding and the coefficient of the respective field in such a way that the study process is viable with one student in the respective specialization or subprogramme. The costs of the study specializations are calculated separately for each specialization, with support staff being funded at the rate of the costs for academic work and material-specific funding at the rate of maintenance costs. Also, the funding for the improvement of the study programme is appropriate, which shows the study program is sustainable. At the same time, the JVLAM by organizing admission should plan optimal group size for students, including to providing lessons in English according to the programme, which will determine the cost effectiveness of the programmes.

Since 2022, when the JVLAM was revising the study programme structure and study plan, the compatibility of sub programmes was improved, enabling the introduction of several group courses for students of different sub programmes, thus reducing the fragmentation of the professional bachelor's programmes, creating the possibility the redistribution of the state budget funding amongst the sub programmes (SAR, p. 119).

All students at the JVLAM are provided with opportunities to apply for financial support (by personal application to the rector) to participate in international competitions, other creative or research projects.

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

Material base for studies is sufficient. Students of a program use the same building, classrooms and other spaces used by all students of JVLAM. In the library is enough amount of books and methodological resources in English. As for music scores and music recordings, they are universal for studies and usage in any language. All necessary equipment (including musical instruments) is obtained and installed. There is additional financial support from administration for students going to competitions, masterclasses, etc. abroad as well as possibilities to use international Erasmus+ and NordPlus programs.

The budget of the JVLAM for ensuring the study process is based on funding from the state budget. Whereas the resources needed to implement the programmes differ, the costs of study plans for different specializations are also different within the framework of the study programme. The JVLAM by organizing admission should plan optimal group size for students, which will determine the cost effectiveness of the programmes.

Strengths:

- 1) Well equipped and well installed classrooms, rich library and phonotheque.
- 2) Additional financial support for students' international activities (participation in competitions, masterclasses abroad).

Weaknesses:

- 1) Current time schedule of building/classrooms opening/closing limits students' possibilities to use institutional resources effectively for their studies and individual practice.

## **Assessment of the requirement [6]**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Informative, material and technical provision and financial provision correspond and are sufficient with the conditions for the implementation of programme in both languages - Latvian and English.

## **2.4. Teaching Staff**

### **Analysis**

2.4.1. JVLAM presents the requested information basis about academic staff in both Latvian and English in ANNEX II, Description of the Study Field, first in 2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field in the following documents: 2.3.Arts\_list of academic staff.xlsx, 2.3.CV of academic staff.zip, 2.3.Knowledge of the state language of academic staff.docx, 2.3.Knowledge of English language of academic staff.docx, and in 2.4 Scientific Research and Artistic Creation. with the 2.4.List of publications, works of artistic creativity.

The artistic and research qualification is proven individually by presenting CVs and lists of publications works of artistic creativity, and a quantitative list of publications in total of all staff is presented which presents a sufficient amount and variety of publications. The state of employment (e.g. professor, associate professor, assistant etc.) comes implicitly out of internal rules that control the qualification profile of each teacher. At the visit on site, evaluators interviewed the academic staff of different study programme levels (bach., master, doctoral) and the rules for career progression are clear to the academic staff. Academic staff members show a regular activity in professional development.

Although it is planned that members of the staff with appropriate English language knowledge level will be involved in the implementation of the study programme in English, the number of English speaking academic staff is lower as the number of academic staff involved in the implementation of the programme in Latvian. It could make problems to provide all the study courses if some of the staff are missing but at the moment there is at least one teaching staff member for each study course to be implemented in English. During the onsite-visit administration members informed that it is planned that for each study course there will be substitute teacher with appropriate English language skills.

During interviews at the experts' visit on site, academic staff as well as students expressed the situation of JVLAM being the only HEI institution in the field of Music. It has been expressed that a lot of staff members are former alumni of the institution. Out of documents it is not visible whether the direction of the Academy has a strategy to balance the number of staff coming from their own institution and staff coming from outside. Expert could suggest to work more on attracting academic staff outside JVLAM (graduated elsewhere), as such academic staff could bring more new ideas and methods to study programme. Most of the academic staff are Latvian nationals and international teachers are mostly working remotely.

2.4.2. The Academy SAR describes in detail renewals taken in the last five years. The changes lead to introduction of new study courses, which have carefully been taken care of by relevant teachers. The academic staff structure reflects the changes by integrating a wide range of music-related disciplines. The changes in the composition of the teaching staff during evaluation period also has happened due to the changes in programme structure, as well as, due to fact that of the invited teaching staff have become permanent teaching staff members. This system - start as a invited lectures and only if work is succesfull, then become permanent member proves that changes process is gradual and that does not reduce quality of the study programme.

2.4.3. Not applicable.

2.4.4. JVLAM presents the requested information basis about academic staff in both Latvian and English in ANNEX II, Description of the Study Field, first in 2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field in the following documents: 2.3.Arts\_list of academic staff.xlsx, 2.3.CV of academic staff.zip, 2.4.List of publications, works of artistic creativity.docx

Each member of the academic staff has been publishing or creating a representative quantity and quality of research, artistic or practical activities in the form of concerts, recordings, creation of compositions and their performance, participation in conferences in different roles, master classes, professional development activities, international project and mobilities within and without the ERASMUS+ framework, expert work, scientific publications, journalistic publications, editing work or participation in research projects. The list is given for a longer span (2013-2022), but the activity is sufficiently present within the given span of six years.

Artistic and research results are on a high level, including international awards and results.

2.4.5. According to SAR (p.128-130) there is cooperation between the teaching staff of the study programme and this cooperation is performed at different levels. Main cooperation is within the departments where regular department meetings are held to discuss the content of the study programme or topical issues of the study courses. There are also informal and formal meetings between teaching staff of different departments. The teaching staff has been also involved in the development of the updated study programme plan (SAR, p.129). Another form of cooperation is also joint study courses between departments or joint artistic activities. The examples provided show that cooperation is in place and it is effective.

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

The academic and administrative staff is motivated, qualified and cares for the study subject and students. The qualification specter corresponds with the requirements of the study programme. A significant part of the academic staff is also active in the relevant cultural and scientific/technological sector. Apparently, the JVLAM being the only HEI in Music, has a strong tradition of recruiting teachers from alumni. That is not negative as such, but policies of how to deal with this question could be helpful.

Not all of the academic staff members have the declared minimum English language level of B2, but in the curricula of the study programmes in the Annexes to the Study Programmes, (tables 3\_2-1\_) JVLAM suggests substitute teacher with B2 level. It is not clear whether the substitute teachers are at the same expert level as the “original” teachers.

Strengths:

- 1) Highly motivated and loyal academic staff:
- 2) Broad and high quality professional activities of a significant part of the staff members

Weaknesses:

- 1) Teachers are in large majority Latvian nationals. International teachers teach mostly online. In case of a growing amount of international study programmes and students, there might be a necessity to support the internationalization of academic staff.
- 2) JVLAM plans to engage substitute teachers for those teachers who do not have B2 level, but it is not clear whether the substitutes always are at the same artistic/scientific level as the “original” teachers.
- 3) Apparently, there is no declared strategy of balancing the amount of teachers coming from outside and the number of teachers who graduated at JVLAM and are now part of Academic staff. The risk of inbreeding is not yet dealt with in official strategic documents.
- 4) Not all of the staff members have English language level at level B2.

## Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Highly qualified and motivated academic staff.

Professional development activities of teachers are supported, teachers use the support and are highly active in self-development.

With a low amount of English native speakers in between the staff, JVLAM proposes a system of substitute/alternative teachers from the institution, who fulfill the formal requirement of B2 English language level. It is not clear whether this system guarantees the same quality level of the English version of the study programme.

## 2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

### Requirements

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Attached document ("3\_2\_1\_a\_PBSP\_Compliance\_state\_stand\_MK512\_.pdf") confirms that the study programme complies with Cabinet regulation No. 512 "Noteikumi par otrā līmeņa profesionālās augstākās izglītības valsts standartu".

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Attached document ("3\_2\_1\_b\_PBSP\_Mapping\_profession\_standards\_.zip") confirms that the respective sub programmes is compliant with professional standards of Instrument Musician (approved on December 14, 2011), Conductor (approved on September 23, 2015), Vocalist (approved January 25, 2012), Choreographer (approved on 25 January, 2012), Sound Engineer (approved on June 7, 2023), Composer (approved on December 14, 2011) and Musicologist (approved on February 15, 2012).

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Study course descriptions are prepared in Latvian and English languages and contains all the parts necessary according to the Law in Higher Education Insitutions (Annex 3\_2\_1\_e\_Descriptions\_Study\_courses.zip). Available literature is generally up-to-date and relevant to study courses. Required reading in some cases feature a sizable amount of latvian language materials, however generally in additional reading some english language sources are provided as well.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The issued diploma complies with the state regulation - Cabinet of Ministers regulation No. 202 "Procedures by which documents certifying higher education recognition by the State shall be issued" (SAR annex 3\_1\_2\_PBSP\_diploma\_samples.zip)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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



**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme in Latvian are proficient in the official language (SAR Annexes 2.3. Knowledge of the state language of academic staff.docx and 3\_2\_1\_d\_PBSP\_Music and Performing Arts\_Curriculum.xlsx)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Partially compliant

Not all of the academic staff has got a sufficient B2 level of English language. JVLAM therefore uses a substitute system, that means that teachers without the required English language level are substituted by teachers with required English language level. Formally, the requirements for B2 level are fulfilled by all teachers involved in the English language study programmes, but the substitute system raises the question, whether the substitute teachers will have the same scientific and artistic level as the "original" teachers (Annex 2.3.Arts\_list of academic staff.xlsx).

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Study agreement complies with the national legislation and includes all the necessary parts (SAR Annex Studiju Ligumi\_ENG.zip)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

JVLAM has provided a list of contracts (SAR Annex Ligumi\_LV\_zip.zip). In case of closure students have the opportunity to continue education in Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre bachelor study programmes (subject to specialisation): Classical Music Performance, Jazz Studies, Composition and Music Technology. Language of studies is in Estonian or English. It is also a best solution for student who studies in Latvian, to extend their competencies and abilities on contemporary international level. There is no other HEI in Latvia with similar programmes.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The JVLAM has provided a warranty signed by the rector that there will be compensations (SAR Annex 2.1. Warranty for compensation of losses.docx)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

### **Assessment of the requirement [8]**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Study programme formally complies with regulatory enactments, however there are reasonable doubts that study programme in its entirety can be implemented in English while maintaining same level of quality as Latvian language mode. According to SAR information, there are more than 40 members of academic staff with English language levels skills below level B2. Therefore experts suggest reconsider possibilities of JVLAM to implement the study programme with all sub-programmes in English.

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

The professional bachelor study programme and all its subprogrammes at JVLAM aligns with the institution's mission and vision. Its parameters, including the code, degree, aims, objectives, and learning outcomes, in general are justified and interconnected. Recent adjustments, such as merging study programmes and updating content, are reasonable. The programme meets the demand for arts education, prepares graduates for cultural industry careers, and has economic and social justification. The material resources are sufficient, with shared spaces and equipment available to all JVLAM students. Additional financial support enables students to participate in competitions, masterclasses, and study abroad through programs like Erasmus+ and NordPlus. The motivated and qualified academic and administrative staff care about the study subject and students. Their qualifications match programme requirements, and many are active in the cultural and scientific/technological sectors. JVLAM has a tradition of recruiting alumni as teachers, which could benefit from clear policies. As there are many members of academic staff with English language skill below level B2, there is large risk that not all sub-programmes can be implemented in English at the same quality as in Latvian and JVLAM should reconsider the need to do this.

Strengths:

- 1) One, joint study programme instead of previous multiple programmes in the same field. The new structure is clearer and complies with the strategy of the Academy.
- 2) The study programme is economically and socially justified.
- 3) student centered content and methods
- 4) well organized distinction of research between performing/technological and musicologist students
- 3) internship in the sense of professional, pedagogical, technical or research practice have a high level in study plans and implementation thereof
- 5) Well equipped and well installed classrooms, rich library and phonotheque.
- 6) Additional financial support for students' international activities (participation in competitions,

masterclasses abroad).

7) Highly motivated and loyal academic staff:

8) Broad and high quality professional activities of a significant part of the staff members

Weaknesses:

1) The study programme title does not fully represent its content. Because of the inclusion of Musicology and sound recording - two non performing disciplines - it might be good to rethink the name of programme and to choose a name that would cover all disciplines, e.g. "Music and Music Related Studies", or "Music, Musicology, Sound recording and Choreography".

2) The position of Musicology at Bachelor's level (as a professional study programme and as a part of Music and Performing Art) is not aligned with its position in Master's and Doctoral level (as an academic study programme, separated from the study programmes of Music and Performing Art at Master's level and Arts at Doctoral level.

3) There are certain challenges associated with the potential mode of delivering the programme in English.

4) The "Regulation of the Organisation of Internship" issued by the Senate on 31 August 2022 is extremely complicated and formalized. It might be advisable to search for a simplification that would guarantee a common part of preparation and reflection and mainly simplify the comparison of internship outcomes.

5) Current time schedule of building/classrooms opening/closing limits students' possibilities to use institutional resources effectively for their studies and individual practice.

6) Teachers are in large majority Latvian nationals. International teachers teach mostly online. In case of a growing amount of international study programmes and students, there might be a necessity to support the internationalization of academic staff.

7) JVLAM plans to engage substitute teachers for those teachers who do not have B2 level, but it is not clear whether the substitutes always are at the same artistic/scientific level as the "original" teachers.

8) Apparently, there is no declared strategy of balancing the amount of teachers coming from outside and the number of teachers who graduated at JVLAM and are now part of Academic staff. The risk of inbreeding is not yet dealt with in official strategic documents.

9) Not all of the staff members have English language level at level B2.

## **Evaluation of the study programme "Music and Performing Art"**

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

## **2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Music and Performing Art"**

### **Short-term recommendations**

Simplify the "Regulation of the Organisation of Internship" to make it more clear (within 2 years)
Change opening times of the JVLAM to increase possibilities for students to use premises (within 2 years)
Reconsider possibilities of JVLAM to implement the study programme with all sub-programmes in English (until the hearing of the Study Quality Committee)

### **Long-term recommendations**

Establish a policy on how to deal with the risk of inbreeding. It is not evident from the documents, neither from the interviews, whether the management of the Academy is aware of a healthy relation between teachers who were former students and teachers coming from a different background and thus bringing new impulses and knowledge to the institution (until next accreditation)

Continue to raise the English language knowledge level of the academic staff (within 3 years).

Increase the number of international staff (until next accreditation).

Consider changing the title of the Professional Bachelor's Study Programme from "Music and Performing Art" to a title that reflects more the reality of having Music and Choreography on one side, and Musicology and Sound Recording/Engineering on the other side. Also align position of musicology in bachelor programme with the position of musicology in other level programmes (until next accreditation)

## II - "Music" ASSESSMENT

### II - "Music" ASSESSMENT

#### 2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

##### Analysis

2.1.1. In the Western tradition of higher education and research, Musicology is typically classified within the humanities, which is more closely associated with fields such as history or cultural studies rather than fine arts. However, it is worth noting that some aspects of music research can have a scientific focus, such as psychological, sociological, acoustical, neurological, and computational approaches. As a result, Musicology, as a field of study, does not strictly align with the field of Arts in its entirety. Nevertheless, considering the local tradition, the research capacity in the field, and the impracticality of establishing a new study field, it can be concluded that the academic masters study programme "Music" does comply with the broader study field of "Arts." JVLAM has the necessary capabilities to successfully implement this study programme, and its content aligns with the mission and vision of JVLAM.

2.1.2. Study programme code is 45212. Code 45 corresponds to academic masters education. Code 212 corresponds to the field of "Music and Stage Art" under section of "Arts". The relevance of the study programme code stems from the fact that the Cabinet of Ministers regulation "Noteikumi par Latvijas izglītības klasifikāciju" No. 322 and, in experts opinion, does not offer a suitable code for accurately categorizing the field of study for Musicology. The available options within the subfield of Humanities that experts see as more appropriate are limited and not comprehensive, making it challenging to assign the appropriate code.

Degree to be obtained after graduating the study programme is Master's Degree in Arts, Humanities.

The study programme titled "Music" aims to provide education and training in music-related sub-disciplines to meet the cultural and social needs of the country. The programme's goal is to equip students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competences for academic and scientific activities, promoting competitiveness in the labor market, professional development, and continued education. The admission requirements and programme content ensure the attainment of the specified knowledge and competences, leading to the degree of Master of Arts in Humanities. The programme adheres to the national standard for academic education.

The naming convention within JVLAM raises questions regarding the study programme's name. It

seems inconsistent that the study programme is not simply named "Musicology," which would align naturally with the sub-specialization of "Musicology" in the professional bachelor programme and the doctoral study programme of the same name.

Study programme is a 2 year full-time programme - 80 credit points (120 ECTS). Study language is Latvian, however JVLAM seeks to obtain the possibility to conduct studies in English as well. Achievable study results are in accordance with the 7th level of the Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF). With emphasis on students ability to acquire in-depth or extended knowledge and understanding in music-related sub-disciplines, apply theories, methods, and skills to scientific and artistic research, analyze complex aspects of the music sector and the musician's professional field, guide competence development, and undertake further research or learning.

To be admitted to the Academic Master study programme in Music, applicants must hold a bachelor's degree in natural sciences, medical and health sciences, social sciences, or arts and humanities. All applicants, regardless of their previous education, are required to pass an entrance examination that includes a colloquium on the Master's thesis topic and the chosen specialization. Structured colloquium evaluate potential of a candidate to study in this program. Selected form is acceptable and sufficient to select best students to a program.

The duration and scope of the study programme implementation (including different study programme implementation options), as well as the implementation language, are reasonable and justified.

2.1.3. Since the previous accreditation of the study field, non-specific learning outcomes of the study programme have been revised and updated in order to meet current requirements (according to SAR 3.1.1). Changes made to learning outcomes are justified and supported by the experts. No other changes were reported. As it is planned to implement study programme in English, in the opinion of experts, this programme is ready for that, including teaching staff - in this study programme only a small part of teaching staff is included and except one, all have knowledge of English language at least at level B2.

2.1.4. Study programme aligns with the national cultural policy goals outlined in "Creative Latvia". The programme integrates research, innovation, and artistic activities to enhance the competitiveness of the higher education system. Internship courses and assistantship training are included to promote practical experience and research skills. JVLAM is the only institution in Latvia offering a Master's degree in Music. According to the JVLAM, the program services as a bridge between professional bachelor and academic doctoral studies (after graduating subprogramme "Musicology" or with the required knowledge, skills and competences level after graduating any other sub-programme of the professional bachelor's programme). Programme benefits from the expertise of JVLAM's academic staff and the Scientific Research Centre.

Graduates of the program tend to find careers in research, education, and cultural institutions. Average percent of employment is very high and reach 91% (SER, 98). Many return to JVLAM as faculty members, while others contribute to music research, journalism, and teaching.

The study program in Music has seen a slight decrease in the number of students and state-funded study places. The program has a relatively small number of students, but it plays a crucial role in scientific and artistic research in the field and provides qualified teaching staff for art universities and the cultural education sector. During the reporting period, the average enrollment in the program was 3.2 Master's students per year. The majority of students used state budget funds, while only one student studied with personal funding. The overall trend of decreasing student numbers in Latvian higher education is reflected in the program as well. Over the 10-year period, an average of 0.8 students per year have been exmatriculated from the program. Reasons for exmatriculation include not returning from a study break, voluntary termination, failure to meet program requirements, and failure to pass final examinations. The program has an average of 2.3

graduates per year. Despite the decreasing trend in student numbers, it is expected that the inflow of applicants to the program will remain relatively stable due to the increasing number of students in related bachelor's level specializations.

2.1.5. Not applicable.

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

The Academic Master study programme "Music" is in compliance with the study field "Arts". The study programme's title, code, degree, aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements are well-coordinated and reasonable. The study programme has economic and social justifications, and graduates have employment prospects in research, education, and cultural institutions. Overall, the study programme meets the necessary criteria and demonstrates its relevance and value within the field of arts. The study program is more focused on research and scientific work than on music creation or performance. It is possible to implement study programme also in the English language.

Strengths:

1) Study programme is economically and socially justified, with very good employment prospects for the graduates.

Weaknesses:

1) Title of the programme is not consistent. It is not clear why the title of the study programme is not "Musicology".

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

### **Analysis**

2.2.1. Study program fits all the official state requirements: it contains 80 CP, where the compulsory part is 26 CP, specialization profile courses – 10 CP, free elective study courses – 4 CP, and the state examination part of the study plan consists of the development and defense of a Master's thesis – 40 CP. Though learning outcomes of the study program correspond to the current trends in music science, it could be more tightly related with the European tendencies expressed in Polifonia-Dublin-Descriptors. Nevertheless the structure of the program demonstrates potential to follow these current musicological trends (courses "Theories and Paradigms in [selected specialization]") and has some elements of interdisciplinarity (courses "Interdisciplinary Research in Systematic Musicology", "Interpretation of the sources of Music history, Fieldwork, Music and cognition", and Master thesis) (SAR, 180-181). Students additionally have to take Environment protection and Civil protection courses if they haven't taken those courses previously. For the programme in English, according to national regulation, foreign students have to take Latvian language course (SAR, p. 178-181, annex "3\_2\_1\_a\_AMSP\_Compliance\_state\_stand\_MK240.xlsx").

The scope of study courses, their titles and content are related to the competences required for the specialization of musicologist (SAR, 179) and include fields of historical musicology, systematic musicology and ethnomusicology. All three specializations have a module of 10 CP with an aim to provide knowledge and competences in the selected profile of the program. Content of courses is systematically updated under feedback of all interested parties, also under proposals of the JVLAM Scientific Council and Doctoral Council.

Though study program meets all general the needs of the industry, labor market and follows scientific trends, it was expressed a wish to focus more on the main aim of the studies and to adapt content of courses "Music Anthropology", "Cultural projects", "Music didactic" and even Latvian

language to the musicology studies (Experts' meeting with students and graduates).

2.2.2. Studies are finished with a Master's thesis in a selected specialization. Theoretical knowledge of a student is tested in written form (Master's thesis) and oral form (defense of Master's thesis). The development and defense of the Master's thesis is carried out in accordance with the methodological guidelines developed by the JVLAM (SAR, 181).

Commission of the final exam is formed of three persons approved by the Academic Board. The process and all requirements for a final exam are described in the course description (Development and Defense of Master's Thesis). Award of Master of Arts degree and the Master's Diploma is given in case students obtain a grade not less than "four" or "pass" in all final examinations.

All awardings of a degree are based on the achievements and findings of the relevant field of science. For example, students are encouraged to use specialized laboratory and resources of research center (Meeting with students). Titles and research methods used in a final thesis correspond to the contemporary tendencies in the field ("Imants Ramiņš' Opera "Lakstīgala" in the Context of Development of Children's Opera Genre: Stylistic and Production Aspects"; SER, 186)

2.2.3. According to the peculiarities of a study program, studies are organized in flow and group classes as well in personal lecturing. It uses typical methods and ways of studies: lectures, seminars, colloquia, personal practical work. Additionally, each student is given an individual approach, depending on his/her skills, abilities and preferences (SAR, 183). Possibility to take lectures in other institutions is very positively evaluated by students (Experts' meeting with students).

Study program is student-centered. Individual research interests of each student are taken into account when drawing up the study plan. Methods used during the studies include model analysis, demonstrations, model improvisations, model tables. Since there are only a few students in a group, not all methods of studies can be used effectively. But a variety of study methods can be extended, for example, including more effective methods, like design thinking or mind mapping. According the SAR and interviews during site-visit, for the english speaking students the same study process will be used.

2.2.4. Although this is an academic programme, it includes implementation of scientific and academic practice. Internship is determined by the JVLAM documents (Regulations on the Organization of Internship Work in Art Study Programmes).

There are three types of internship possible in the study program: university assistantship, specialization internship, research internship. University internship consists of teaching for Bachelor students under the supervision of a lecturer. Specialization and research internship is realized via participation in conferences organized by JVLAM, or other Latvian institutions, or (more rare cases) included in research projects run by JVLAM teachers. Students of ethnomusicology specialization are doing field research.

The Head of Department assists in finding and selecting the internship opportunities. Though it is stated that internship corresponds with learning outcomes of the study program, it was not given examples in SAR and not explained how it is. Internships for foreign students could be limited in Latvia firstly by not sufficient Latvian language skills of foreign students. But during the interview with the employers it was also mentioned that at least for orchestra there is no problems to provide internship as there already is an international environment.

2.2.5. Not applicable.

2.2.6. Given examples of topics ("Traditions of Harmony Teaching in Latvia and Possibilities of Course Development in Secondary Music School"; "Stylistics of Mārgeris Zariņš' Choral Music"; "Listening to Music as a Theoretical Study: the Interaction of Perceptive Processes"; SAR, 186)

demonstrate that the topics of students' final theses are relevant to the field and correspond to the study programme. Given topics are related to the needs of the labor market, which refers to a didactical aim first of all, and development of research skills needed for further studies in doctoral level. Examples of final thesis demonstrated via Experts site visit to institution confirmed opinion about relevance of final theses to the study program.

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

The Academic Master study programme complies with all official regulations but it is not closely related to the Polifonia-Dublin-Descriptors. The study content is related to the competencies required for the specialization in musicology and the content is systematically updated. The awarding of a master's degree is based on the defence of a master's thesis (scientific work). Different study methods are used in the study programme and a programme can be evaluated as student-centered. Although the study programme is academic, it includes scientific and academic practice.

#### **Strengths:**

1) Study program meets all official state requirements and is organized in a way to achieve main aims and learning outcomes.

#### **Weaknesses:**

1) Though learning outcomes are linked with the main aims of a study program, it should be more tightly corresponding with Polifonia-Dublin-Descriptors, which are directly formed for European music studies.

2) The specific position of musicology, at Bachelor level professional study programme, at Master level Academic programme should be explained at least at the Study programme overview level. On a long-term level, it might be useful to rethink the position of musicology at different levels of studies.

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

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The study programme for obtaining a master degree is based on the achievements in the relevant field of science which can be seen in master thesis and research of academic staff.

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

### **Analysis**

2.3.1. All students and teaching staff of the Academic Master's study programme Music use the available infrastructure of the JVLAM – classrooms, the library (including literature, sheet music, monographs, sound and video recordings), sports complex etc. It's important that the library gives students access to many electronic databases, such as Oxford Music Online, ScienceDirect, SCOPUS, Web of Science, JSTOR Arts & Sciences III, Naxos Music Library, while providing support to students in research work. The JVLAM shall ensure that the technical and material base is regularly upgraded and renewed. Though main material in library is collected in Latvian, there is enough books and



methodological resources in English. As for music scores and music recordings, they are universal for studies and usage in any language. Library has one of the largest collections of music recordings in Latvia. Classrooms are filled in with all necessary equipment for studies (instruments, sound performing tools, internet).The above points out that the resources available at the JVLAM are sufficient to implement the study programme. (SAR, p. 186–187).

#### 2.3.2. Not applicable

2.3.3. The budget of the JVLAM for ensuring the study process is based on funding from the state budget, which in addition is supported by project funding from the European Structural Funds and mobility programmes.

Whereas the resources needed to implement the programmes differ, the costs of study plans for different specializations are also different within the framework of the study programme. By adding English language as a second language of implementation of this study programme, it is intended to attract foreign students who will study for a fee, covering the costs of their studies according to prepared individual cost estimates. The optimum financing for the study programme is calculated for the average of 6 state budget study places per year for studies in Latvian, with part of the study content implemented in English language. The profitability of the programme remains high even if the number of students drops to 2 Master's students per study cycle. The JVLAM by organizing admission should plan optimal group size for students, including to providing lessons in English according to the programme, which will determine the cost effectiveness of the programmes.

Calculated profitability indicators of implementation of the programme have been met during the reporting period.

All students at the JVLAM are provided with opportunities to apply for financial support (by personal application to the rector) to participate in international competitions, other creative or research projects.

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

Material base for studies is sufficient. Students of a program use the same building, classrooms and other spaces used by all students of JVLAM. In the library is enough amount of books and methodological resources in English. As for music scores and music recordings, they are universal for studies and usage in any language. All necessary equipment is obtained and installed. There is additional financial support from administration for students going to conferences, seminars, etc. abroad as well as possibilities to use international Erasmus+ and NordPlus programs.

The budget of the JVLAM for ensuring the study process is based on funding from the state budget. Whereas the resources needed to implement the programmes differ, the costs of study plans for different specializations are also different within the framework of the study programme. The JVLAM by organizing admission should plan optimal group size for students, which will determine the cost effectiveness of the programmes.

#### Strengths:

- 1) Well equipped and well installed classrooms, rich library and phonotheque.
- 2) Additional financial support for students' international activities (participation in competitions, masterclasses abroad).

#### Weaknesses:

- 1) Current time schedule of building/library opening/closing limits students' possibilities to use institutional resources effectively for their studies and individual practice.

## Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Informative, material and technical provision and financial provision correspond with the conditions for the implementation of programme

## 2.4. Teaching Staff

### Analysis

2.4.1. The qualifications and competences of teaching staff (permanent and temporal) comply with requirements and official regulations of JVLAM: they are active in creative and research fields, speak Latvian language, and know one foreign (English) language (Annex 2.3 – list and CVs of academic staff). All teaching staff are highly qualified and competent to reach all learning outcomes of the study program. There are 9 professors and 12 doctors teaching in a program (SAR, 191). They carry out individual research work in fields related to music history, theory, ethnomusicology and music psychology. artistic creativity, scientific research and participate in the education of students.

Invited foreign lecturers, who do not know the state language (Latvian language), teach in English according to the Law on Higher Education Institutions. JVLAM plans to appoint academic staff members with sufficient language skills (at least B2) to the study courses in English language, when the study programme will commence in English (no sooner than in 2024/2025) (SAR, 190-191). There is at least one teaching staff member for each subject to be implemented in English. Variety of experience and specializations of academic staff ensures successful achievements of all learning outcomes of a study program. The same persons are involved also in the Doctoral studies and it ensures very high quality of studies in the Master level program

Many teachers are involved in research projects and provide latest information on the musicology research for students on their own projects and study tasks (SAR, 192).

2.4.2. Changes in the composition of the teaching staff are driven by generational changes, as well as by the need to define the specialization choices and research interests of Master's students (SAR, 192). Transformations in the study program and updating it only into 3 specializations also affected the decrease of teaching staff. These changes have had a positive impact on the quality of studies and didn't reduce the quality of implementation of the study program (SAR, 193). Elected academic staff have taken advantage of various opportunities to upgrade their qualifications and were attracted to teach specialized study courses.

2.4.3. Not applicable.

2.4.4. All members of academic staff are active in research and artistic creativity. Each member of the academic staff has published in peer reviewed journals and fit all necessary requirements of the Law on Higher Education Institutions. During the assessment period there were 174 scientific publications (including monographs), 103 other publications, 318 presentations in conferences and symposia, organized 16 conferences (national and international), 199 seminars, lectures and guest lectures (Annex 2.4. Quantitative data on artistic creativity). Number of scientific publications included into Scopus and Web of Science databases is 29 (SAR, 158-162). There are still many publications (108) published in non-peer reviewed journals.

2.4.5. The teaching staff of the academic master study programme cooperate in a different form – by participating in the meetings of the department, by interacting with the heads of departments, who later interact with heads of division, common research and artistic activities (SAR, p. 194-195). Teaching staff cooperate also by participating in collective study courses of the study programme. The examples provided show that cooperation is in place and it is effective.

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

Teaching staff involved in the study program is highly qualified, active in research and project activities, constantly publishes their research results in scholar journals and implements their achievements into studies.

There is at least one teaching staff member for each subject to be implemented in English.

Changes in the staff have had a positive impact on the quality of studies and didn't reduce the quality of implementation of the study program.

Strengths:

- 1) Highly qualified and experienced academic staff. The same persons are involved also in the Doctoral studies and it ensures very high quality of studies in the Master level program.
- 2) Academic staff actively participates in national and international research projects, scientific events (conferences, seminars). Publications of academic staff are involved into study process.

Weaknesses:

- 1) There are still many publications (108) published in non-peer reviewed journals.

### **Assessment of the requirement [7]**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The qualification of the teaching staff is high, with rather active scientific and artistic activity and satisfies requirements of regulatory enactments.

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

### **Requirements**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Attached document ("3\_2\_1\_a\_AMSP\_Compliance\_state\_stand\_MK240.xlsx") confirms that the study programme complies with Cabinet regulation No. 240 "Noteikumi par valsts akadēmiskās izglītības standartu"

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Attached study course descriptions ("3\_2\_1\_d\_AMSP\_course\_descriptions\_.zip") are prepared in English and Latvian. Descriptions complies with regulations set forth in Law on Higher Education Institutions. Study materials are prepared in both languages and are up-to-date.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The issued diploma complies with the state regulation - Cabinet of Ministers regulation No. 202 "Procedures by which documents certifying higher education recognition by the State shall be issued" (SAR annex 3\_1\_2\_AMSP\_diploma\_sample.zip)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

There are at least 5 associate professors and professors of the JVLMA involved in the implementation of the study programme (SAR annex 2.3.Arts\_list of academic staff.xlsx).

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme in Latvian are proficient in the official language (SAR Annexes 2.3. Knowledge of the state language of academic staff.docx and 3\_2\_1\_c\_AMSP\_Music\_Curriculum.xlsx)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All off the teaching staff planned to be involved in the implementation of study programme in English language, has the English language knowledge at least at B2 level (Annex 2.3.Arts\_list of academic staff.xlsx)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Study agreement complies with the national legislation and includes all the necessary parts (SAR Annex Studiju Ligumi\_ENG.zip)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

There is an agreement with the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre that students will have possibility to continue studies (SAR Annex Ligumi\_ENG.zip). These studies will be run in English, and it is also a best solution for student who studies in Latvian, to extend their competencies and abilities on contemporary international level. There is no other HEI in Latvia with similar programmes.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The JVLAM has provided a warranty signed by the rector that there will be compensations (SAR Annex 2.1. Warranty for compensation of losses.docx)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

**Assessment of the requirement [8]**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All the requirements set forth in the national legislation have been met and implemented.

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

The Academic Master study programme "Music" is in compliance with the study field "Arts" and meets all the requirements set forth in the national legislation. The study programme has economic and social justifications, and graduates have employment prospects in research, education, and cultural institutions. It should be mentioned that the study programme is not closely related to the Polifonia-Dublin-Descriptors. Different study methods are used in the study programme and a programme can be evaluated as student-centered. Material base for studies is sufficient - all necessary equipment is obtained and installed. Teaching staff involved in the study program is highly qualified, active in research and project activities, constantly publishes their research results in scholar journals and implements their achievements into studies. All resources prepared for studies in both languages - Latvian and English. Teaching staff is ready to teach in two languages too.

#### Strengths:

- 1) Study programme is economically and socially justified, with very good employment prospects for the graduates.
- 2) Study program meets all official state requirements and is organized in a way to achieve main aims and learning outcomes.
- 3) Well equipped and well installed classrooms, rich library and phonotheque.
- 4) Additional financial support for students' international activities (participation in competitions, masterclasses abroad).
- 5) Highly qualified and experienced academic staff. The same persons are involved also in the Doctoral studies and it ensures very high quality of studies in the Master level program.
- 6) Academic staff actively participates in national and international research projects, scientific events (conferences, seminars). Publications of academic staff are involved into study process.

#### Weaknesses:

- 1) Title of the programme is not consistent. It is not clear why the title of the study programme is not "Musicology".
- 2) Though learning outcomes are linked with the main aims of a study program, it should be more tightly corresponding with Polifonia-Dublin-Descriptors, which are directly formed for European music studies.
- 3) Current time schedule of building/library opening/closing limits students' possibilities to use institutional resources effectively for their studies and individual practice.
- 4) There are still many publications (108) published in non-peer reviewed journals.

### **Evaluation of the study programme "Music"**

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

### **2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Music"**

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

To review study subjects with an aim to refresh content (more oriented to contemporary trends in musicology) and methods of studies. Extend studies with more effective methods of studies (for example, design thinking, mind mapping, etc.) (within 2 years)

Review the capacity of the premises (rooms) and increase the opening hours of the institution for individual practicing. (until the beginning of the next academic year)

## Long-term recommendations

Consider to change name of the study programme from “Music” to “Musicology” to better reflect study programme content. (until the next accreditation)

Focus on peer-reviewed journals and especially to internationally recognized publications, included into Scopus and Web of Science databases (until the next accreditation)

## II - "Music and Performing Art" ASSESSMENT

### II - "Music and Performing Art" ASSESSMENT

#### 2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

##### Analysis

2.1.1. Professional master study programme “Music and Performing Art” by its curriculum, awarded degree and goals does comply with the study field “Arts”. There is no indication that casts doubts on compliance with the chosen study field. The content of the study program is also in compliance with the mission and vision of JVLAM. At this moment no qualification is awarded but since 13.06.2023. there is new regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers (Nb 305) "Noteikumi par valsts profesionālās augstākās izglītības standartu" where point 38. states that after master programme master degree and professional qualification diploma is given.

2.1.2. Study programme code is 47212. Code 47 corresponds to second level professional higher education - professional masters programme. Code 212 corresponds to the field of “Music and Stage Art” under section of “Arts”. Study programme code is relevant. The study programme is implemented as a full-time programme with a duration of two years and a total of 80 credit points (120 ECTS). The curriculum emphasizes individual lessons, practice, collaboration, and internships, making part-time or distance learning formats less suitable.

Degree to be obtained after graduating the study programme is Professional Master's degree in Music (sub-programme Music) and Professional Master's degree in Choreography (sub-programme Choreography).

To be admitted to the Professional Master's study program in Music and Performing Arts, the Music sub-programme, and its specializations in Conducting, Composition, Vocal Music, and Sound Recording, applicants need to hold a Professional Bachelor's degree in Music and a 6th level professional qualification equivalent to Professional Bachelor's studies. The admission committee evaluates the submitted documents, considers the specialization-related study courses and acquired skills, and assesses whether the results achieved in professional experience are sufficient for starting the relevant specialization at the master's level.

For admission to the Professional Master's degree program in Music and Performing Arts, sub-programme Music, specializations in Instrumental Music and Music and Education, applicants should have a Bachelor's degree in Music or Music Pedagogy and a 6th level professional qualification equivalent to Professional Bachelor's studies. Alternatively, they should have the right to teach in the specialization they intend to deepen and/or extend in the Professional Master's study program.

Admission to the Professional Master's degree program in Music and Performing Arts, sub-programme Choreography, requires a Bachelor's degree in Choreography for Dance Education and a 6th level professional qualification at the Bachelor's level. Alternatively, applicants may hold a 2nd level professional higher education qualification in Choreography/Dance with the right to study at the Master's level.

Applicants are also required to take entrance examinations relevant to their chosen sub-programme

and specialization. These examinations are designed to assess applicants' motivation for the Master's degree, their intended research focus, and their specific specialization. Each sub-programme and specialization has its own set of additional entrance examinations.

While the full-time Latvian implementation of this study programme is generally deemed justified, the application for an English language mode requires closer attention. According to the experts' opinion, there is a significant risk that the study programme, in its entirety and across its various subprogrammes, may not be able to ensure the same level of quality as its Latvian language counterpart. SAR annex 2.3. "Arts list of academic staff" shows that more than 20 members of academic staff involved in the implementation of this study programme had English language skill's level below B2, so they can not teach in English - so there will be differences in teaching staff for programme implementation in both languages. A soft recommendation would be to develop specific English language programmes with a tailored curriculum that aligns with the capacities and strategic goals for English language education. This approach would enable a more targeted and effective delivery of the study programmes in English, ensuring that they meet the desired standards and provide a high-quality educational experience for students.

2.1.3. Since the previous accreditation of the study field, non-specific learning outcomes of the study programme have been revised and updated in order to meet current requirements according (SAR 3.1.1). No other changes were reported. All changes already made are to be supported. However, during the visit experts' were reassured that JVLAM is planning to change this programme in order to align it with the professional bachelors programme structurally. According to prima facie evidence these changes are likely to be supported. As it is planned to implement a study programme in English, in the opinion of experts, this programme is only partially ready for that, because not all members of academic staff have English language level of B2 and that adds risks that not all subprogrammes can be implemented in English with the same quality as in Latvian.

2.1.4. The Professional Master's study programme has been developed and updated based on social, economic, and cultural justifications. Programme addresses priorities such as creativity in lifelong learning, labor market-oriented cultural education, and competitive cultural and creative industries. The programme promotes the integration of research, scientific innovation, and artistic activity, emphasizing the inclusion of practical experience throughout higher education. The programme also recognizes the importance of teachers from art HEIs and the cultural education sector in furthering education and research skills. It prepares students for pedagogical work at the higher education level and focuses on scientific and creative excellence through individualized study plans and up-to-date content. Close cooperation between students, faculty, and representatives of the labor market contributes to meeting these obligations, for example, graduates, students and teaching staff working on joint projects. The demand for music and performing arts studies at the Master's level is driven by social and economic factors. Despite demographic and economic challenges, there is consistent interest in Master's level studies.

The study program has maintained a stable number of state-funded study places, with an average of 2-3 applicants competing for each place. Applicants who are not admitted to the state-funded places have the option to study for a tuition fee. Dropout rates have varied, with reasons ranging from students leaving for opportunities abroad or in the job market, changing priorities, health issues, or non-compliance with Covid-19 vaccination requirements. Despite a decrease in the overall number of students, the program has maintained a stable student population. The number of graduates has shown an increasing trend over the reporting period. While the number of tuition fee-paying students has decreased. On average over 40 students are enrolled in the programme annually. On average 2.33 students have dropped out annually over the last 3 years.

According to Higher Education Graduates Monitoring Tool (SER 3.1.3) data indicates that the employment rate of JVLAM graduates is high, with 89% of graduates in higher qualification



professions, ranking third among state universities in Latvia. Additionally, the employment rate of JVLAM Master's graduates in 2020 was 93%, with 95% of them in highly skilled professions. In comparison to other thematic groups, the employment rates of JVLAM Master's graduates in the Humanities and Arts field are among the highest in the country. JVLAM Master's graduates find employment opportunities in various cultural and educational institutions, including opera, theaters, orchestras, ensembles, choirs, and cultural education institutions.

2.1.5. Not applicable.

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

Professional master study programme "Music and Performing Art" by its curriculum, awarded degree and goals does comply with the study field "Arts". The study programme's name, code, degree, goals, objectives, study outcomes, and admission requirements are closely interconnected. The Professional Master's study programme has been developed and updated based on social, economic, and cultural justifications. There is a close cooperation between students, faculty and representatives of the labor market. JVLAM graduates have a high employment rate. There is a risks to implement all sub-programmes in English. No qualification is given but it is required by the newest Cabinet of Ministers regulation (Nr. 305).

Strengths:

1) Very close cooperation between students, academic staff and the labor market.

Weaknesses:

1) English language skills of the part of the teaching staff is below B2, adding risk to fully implementing the programme in English.

2) No qualification is awarded

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

#### **Analysis**

2.2.1. The study programme complies with the requirements of the Cabinet of Ministers regulation Nb. 512 (SAR, p. 213-217, annexes "3\_2\_1\_a\_PMSP\_Compliance\_state\_stand\_MK512.pdf", "3\_2\_1\_c\_PMSP\_Music and Performing Art\_Curriculum.xlsx") that was active till December 31 of 2022 (new regulations are not approved (May 2023)). Programme total amount is 80 CP and length 2 years, it includes necessary compulsory content, such as, courses of in-depth study of the latest developments, creative work and management studies. Internship is 12 CP and as only professional bachelor students are admitted, the amount is appropriate. Programme study plan includes Latvian language for the programme in English and students have to take Environment protection and Civil protection study courses if they have not done it in previous studies.

The content of the Professional Master's Study Programme "Music and Performing Art" is a consistent continuation and upgrade of the Professional Bachelor Study Programme "Music and Performing Art". Logically the A1 part of the Master's degree study plans is reduced and more specific in comparison to the A1 part of the Bachelor's study plans, the content of A2 part is more specific in Master's studies, the B part contains adequate small adaptations of the more advanced study level, by keeping the importance of main subject studies. The option of Free Electives in part C of the study plans is preserved, the importance of being able to choose electives more freely in Master's level of studies could be eventually reinforced by attributing more credit points to part C of studies. That would perhaps also solve the significant discrepancy of attributing 12 CP to State Examinations at Bachelor level and 40 CP (!) at Master's level. Although the part of study

programme allocated to the study courses is relative small compared to the master thesis, there is a strong variety of study courses available for the students to chose from.

Whereas the content of study plans of the Professional Master's Study Programme Music and Performing Art 47212 and its sub programmes is logically designed and is an efficient continuation of the Bachelor's level study programme, the structure and organization of this programme still sticks to former, older structures and organization forms. This leads to illogical discrepancies of the Bachelor's and Master's level of the same study programme at the level of the Overview of the study programme (significant differences in sub programmes and specializations), but also on the Curriculum description level (in Bachelor featuring Study programme, Sub programmes and Specialisations, in Master featuring Study programme, Sub programme, Specialisations and Profiles with different grouping and content between Bachelor and Master).

The overview of sub programmes and specializations of this Master's level study programme does not comply with the structure and organization of the Bachelor's level study programme "Music and Performing Art" 42212. Whereas the PBSP 42212 complies with the new Study programme structure as described in the SAR, p. 213-217, the PMSP 47212 sticks with previous, older groupings of sub programmes and specializations. The Curriculum overview, describing the specific study plan of each sub-programme and specialization in the Professional Master's Study programme (Annex 3.2.1.c\_PMSP\_Music and Performing Arts\_curriculum.xlsx)m approved by the JVLAM Senate on 30.03.2022) is not compliant with the description of the Study Programme as mentioned in SAR, p. 213-217:

Firstly, instead of "Internship" one finds "Practice" and it's not clear whether both comply.

Secondly, the structure of the study programme, sub-programmes, specializations and profiles (only in the Professional Master Programme) does not comply with the structure of the Professional Bachelor's Study Programme:

The Professional Bachelor's Study programme features: Study programme: Music and Performing Art, sub-programme e.g. Conducting, specializations: choir, symphonic orchestra, symphonic band conducting.

The Professional Master's Study programme features: Study programme Music and Performing Art (compliant), but defined as sub programme: Music (!), Specialization: Conducting, Profile (!): Choir conducting.

Whereas the Professional Bachelor's study programme Music and Performing Art (42212) groups into sub programmes as: Academic Music, Early Music, Jazzy Music, Conducting, Choreography, Composition, Sound Recording and Musicology, the Professional master's study programme Music and Performing Art (47212) groups into Instrumental Music, Vocal Music, Conducting, Composition, Sound Recording, Music and Education, Choreography in the overview, and going into the curriculum descriptions of the sub programmes, there is still another inconsistency, because the sub programme title is named only as: Music.

As there are various forms of study programmes coexisting (professional and academic), it's highly important to keep the structures simple and consistent.

It is very hard to preserve an overview and to understand the relationships between the different study programmes, because the terminology and the organization structures are different.

The implementation of the updated curriculum is planned for the academic year 2023/2024, which means that the future system will still maintain those inconsistencies toward the Professional Bachelor Programme.

JVLAM reacted to the above mentioned lack of alignment of the professional bachelors' and master's Study programmes Music and Performing Art.

During the interviews on site at the experts' on site visit 'May 15 to 17, 2023 it was stated by the programme directors, that the non-alignment of formal aspects is transitional.

The reasoning behind this was the fact that the Academy wanted to test the new structure of Professional programmes in the entirely renewed Professional Bachelor's Study Programme Music

and Performing Art. Nevertheless, the formal grouping of sub programmes could have been aligned, as it is a purely formal aspect of the study programme.

Inconsistencies are also visible in the Study course descriptions in the Annexes of Study programmes, where the old structure of the former Academic study programme still appears. An alignment of inconsistencies and the completion of the innovation process are an important basis for further development and evaluation.

2.2.2. Studies are finished with a Master's thesis in a selected specialization. Theoretical knowledge of a student is tested in written form (Master's thesis) and oral form (defense of Master's thesis). The development and defense of the Master's thesis is carried out in accordance with the methodological guidelines developed by the JVLAM.

All awardings of a degree are based on the achievements and findings of the relevant field of science. For example, students are encouraged to use specialized laboratory and resources of research center (Meeting with students).

2.2.3. From the accessible documentation as well as from interviews with the academic staff and students of the relevant study programme it is evident that the study implementation methods (lectures, seminars, colloquia, individual classes) do contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes. The content and order of study courses is designed in a way that ensures growth and logical development of knowledge, skills and competences. The design of the study programme, the choice of study courses as well as the realized support for artistic, technological and research activities is extremely individualized, and guarantees student centered learning to an extremely high degree. Study program is student-centered. Individual research interests of each student are taken into account when drawing up the study plan. Study plan and study methods are adapted according to students abilities, JVLAM also tries to adapt to possibilities for the working students to combine both things. In individual courses previous experience of the student is taken into account. Students regularly receive feedback of their performance.

Concerning implementation of the study plan into English, only one adaptation to needs of international students is foreseen: the Study plan counts with alternative teachers for certain study courses, if the teachers of the Latvian study courses do not dispose of sufficient English language skills (B2 being demanded).

2.2.4. Study programme included internship of 12 CP and amount exceed minimum requirements for the master programme after professional bachelor programme (SAR, p. 213-217, annexes "3\_2\_1\_a\_PMSP\_Compliance\_state\_stand\_MK512.pdf", "3\_2\_4\_Organisation\_of\_internship.pdf"). JVLAM has approved regulations on the organization of internships. There are also course descriptions for the internships courses included in the study programme.

The internship/practice is considered to be an important part of studies, it brings a double amount of CP to the students compared with the part C - free electives. Every study sub programme has a description of internship in the Study course descriptions (Study programmes - Annexes Description of the Study programme, documents 3\_2\_1.) and the Academic Senate approved general rules for Internship (Annexes, Supplement 3.2.4., Regulations on the Organisation of Internships, 31.8.2022). As internship contains a wide range of activities (pedagogical, research, artistic) with various formats (from teaching in music schools to performing in Latvian radio), and its documentation, rules and descriptions is distributed by at least four different documents, it is recommended to simplify the description, rules and assessment in order to make the process, outcomes and result assessment as transparent as possible. From interviews it is evident that the Academy attributes a lot of systematic and individual care to the students in order to ensure some degree of practice to all students. Nevertheless, in reality, not all students seem to understand that internship does not only

mean the realization of or creative activity (artistic, technical, research).

The tasks of the internship are directly related to the learning outcomes achievable in the particular study programme. During the on-site interviews with the employers it was stated that generally there should not be problems to provide internship positions for the foreign students studying in English. According to the SAR, staff of JVLAM is involved in the process of providing internship places for the students outside the JVLAM.

2.2.5. Not applicable.

2.2.6. The topics described in the relevant passage of the Description of Study programmes reveal a variety of themes that correspond to the study programme and to the given specialization. Furthermore, the tendency to include methods and research questions from the field of Artistic and/or other research is understandable. Examples of the master thesis topics are about the role of the orchestra in the professional growth of young musicians, the role of harmony in dramaturgy works, curvatures of spine impact on singing, etc.

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

The content of the Professional Master's Study programme "Music and Performing Art" is logical, sufficiently specific and in the meantime broad, but its organizational structure is not in line with the Professional Bachelor's Study programme Music and Performing Arts and with the new Sub programme structure of the Professional Study Programmes. (This remark does not include Musicology, where the specific position within the Study field and the consequent oscillation between Professional and Academic study programmes has been explained.)

The assessment of Internship activities of students is described, but the rules for the organization, for giving theoretical background and for the compatibility of different kinds of internship are not clear at all.

Strengths:

- 1) very well balanced amount of common and specific elements in between the sub programmes and specializations
- 2) strong variety of study courses, the offer being sufficiently broad and specialized at the same time
- 3) The content of the Master's SP is a logical continuation of the Bachelor's SP.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Structure and organization of sub programmes not aligned with the Professional Bachelor's SP. Study course descriptions of the previous academic study programmes are mixed with study course description of the new professional study programmes
- 2) It's logical, that the CP for state examinations are higher in master level than in bachelor level, but the relation 40 CP to 12 CP is questionable.
- 3) The description of different kinds of Internship, the interconnection between practice and theory and the comparability of different kinds of Internships should be clarified and simplified.

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

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The study programme for obtaining a master degree is based on the achievements in the relevant field of artistic creation and science.

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

#### **Analysis**

2.3.1. All students and teaching staff of the Professional master study programme Music and Performing Art uses the available infrastructure of the JVLAM – classrooms, the library (including literature, sheet music, monographs, sound and video recordings), sports complex etc. It's important that the library provides students with access to many electronic databases, such as Oxford Music Online, ScienceDirect, SCOPUS, Web of Science, JSTOR Arts & Sciences III, Naxos Music Library, while providing support to students in research work. Though main material in the library is collected in Latvian, there is enough amount of books and methodological resources in English. As for music scores and music recordings, they are universal for studies and usage in any language. The JVLAM shall ensure that the technical and material base is regularly upgraded and renewed. The above points out that the resources available at the JVLAM are sufficient to implement the study programme (SAR, p. 226).

Additionally students expressed a wish to extend working hours of an institution for an individual practicing, especially on weekends.

2.3.2. Not applicable.

2.3.3. The budget of the JVLAM for ensuring the study process is based on funding from the state budget, which in addition is supported by project funding from the European Structural Funds and mobility programmes.

Whereas the resources needed to implement the programmes differ, the costs of study plans for different specializations are also different within the framework of the study programme. The optimal financing of the study programme is calculated, based on the historical average total number of students in the programme, i.e. 85 full time students per year. By adding English language as a second language of implementation of this study programme, it is intended to attract foreign students who will study for a fee, covering the costs of their studies according to prepared individual cost estimates. The programme was developed with the aim to make financially viable studies in select specializations (rare musical instruments, etc.) even with one student per specialization. As the proportion of individual contact hours of the study programme is high and was initially taken into account in the cost calculations of the study programme, the costeffectiveness of the study programme remains high even in the event of a 50% decrease in the number of students. The JVLAM by organizing admission should plan optimal group size for students, including to providing lessons in English according to the programme, which will determine the cost effectiveness of the programmes.

All students at the JVLAM are provided with opportunities to apply for financial support (by personal application to the rector) to participate in international competitions, other creative or research projects.

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

Material base for studies is sufficient. Students of a program use the same building, classrooms and other spaces used by all students of JVLAM. All necessary equipment (including musical instruments) is obtained and installed. There is additional financial support from administration for students going to competitions, masterclasses, etc. abroad as well as possibilities to use international Erasmus+ and NordPlus programs.

The budget of the JVLAM for ensuring the study process is based on funding from the state budget. Whereas the resources needed to implement the programmes differ, the costs of study plans for different specializations are also different within the framework of the study programme. The JVLAM by organizing admission should plan optimal group size for students, which will determine the cost effectiveness of the programmes.

**Strengths:**

- 1) Well equipped and well installed classrooms, rich library and phonotheque.
- 2) Additional financial support for students' international activities (participation in competitions, masterclasses abroad).

**Weaknesses:**

- 1) Current time schedule of building/classrooms opening/closing limits students' possibilities to use institutional resources effectively for their studies and individual practice.

## **Assessment of the requirement [6]**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Informative, material and technical provision and financial provision correspond with the conditions for the implementation of programme

## **2.4. Teaching Staff**

### **Analysis**

2.4.1. JVLAM presents the requested information basis about academic staff in both Latvian and English in ANNEX II, Description of the Study Field, first in 2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field in the following documents: 2.3.Arts\_list of academic staff.xlsx, 2.3.CV of academic staff.zip, 2.3.Knowledge of the state language of academic staff.docx, 2.3.Knowledge of English language of academic staff.docx, and in 2.4 Scientific Research and Artistic Creation. with the 2.4.List of publications, works of artistic creativity.

The artistic and research qualification is proven individually by presenting CVs and lists of publications works of artistic creativity, and a quantitative list of publications in total of all staff is presented which presents a sufficient amount and variety of publications. The state of employment (e.g. professor, associate professor, assistant etc.) comes implicitly out of internal rules that control the qualification profile of each teacher. At the visit on site, evaluators interviewed the academic staff of different study programme levels (bach., master, doctoral) and the rules for career progression are clear to the academic staff. In the Professional Doctoral joint study programme "Music and Performing Art" implemented in Latvian and English, international guest teachers are engaged. The spectrum of qualification is highly responding to the needs of the study programme and its sub-programmes.

Academic staff members show a regular activity in professional development, they are motivated to work in JVLAM (onsite interviews with academic staff).

Although it is planned that in the implementation of the study programme in English members of the staff with appropriate English language knowledge level will be involved, their number is lower as the number of staff involved in the implementation of the programme in Latvian. This could make problems to provide all the study courses if some of the staff are missing but at the moment there is

at least one teaching staff member for each study course to be implemented in English.

During interviews at the experts' visit on site, academic staff as well as students expressed the situation of JVLAM being the only HEI institution in the field of Music. It has been expressed that a lot of staff members are former alumni of the institution. Out of documents it is not visible whether the direction of the Academy has a strategy to balance the number of staff coming from their own institution and staff coming from outside. Expert could suggest to work more on attracting academic staff outside JVLAM (graduated elsewhere), as such academic staff could bring more new ideas and methods to study programme. Most of the academic staff are Latvian nationals and international teachers are mostly working remotely.

2.4.2. The Academy SAR (p. 232-234) describes in detail renewals taken in the last five years. The changes lead to introduction of new study courses, which have carefully been taken care of by relevant teachers. The academic staff structure reflects the changes by integrating a wide range of music-related disciplines. The changes in the composition of the teaching staff during evaluation period also has happened due to the changes in programme structure, as well as, due to fact that of the invited teaching staff have become permanent teaching staff members. This system - start as a invited lectures and only if work is succesful, then become permanent member proves that changes process is graduall and that does not reduce quality of the study programme.

2.4.3. Not applicable.

2.4.4. JVLAM presents the requested information basis about academic staff in both Latvian and English in ANNEX II, Description of the Study Field, first in 2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field in the following documents: 2.3.Arts\_list of academic staff.xlsx, 2.3.CV of academic staff.zip, 2.4.List of publications, works of artistic creativity.docx

Each member of the academic staff has been publishing or creating a representative quantity and quality of research, artistic or practical activities in the form of concerts, recordings, creation of compositions and their performance, participation in conferences in different roles, master classes, professional development activities, international project and mobilities within and without the ERASMUS+ framework, expert work, scientific publications, journalistic publications, editing work or participation in research projects. The list is given for a longer span (2013-2022), but the activity is sufficiently present within the given span of six years.

Artistic and research results are on a high level, including international awards and results.

2.4.5. According to SAR (p.234-236) there is cooperation between the teaching staff of the study programme and this cooperation is performed at different levels. Main cooperation is within the departments where regular department meetings are held to discuss the content of the study programme or topical issues of the study courses. There are also informal and formal meetings between teaching staff of different departments. Another form of cooperation is also joint study courses between departments or joint artistic activities. The examples provided show that cooperation is in place and it is effective.

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

The academic and administrative staff is motivated, qualified and cares for the study subject and students. The qualification specter corresponds with the requirements of the study programme. A significant part of the academic staff is also active in the relevant cultural and scientific/technological sector. Apparently, the JVLAM being the only HEI in Music, has a strong tradition of recruiting teachers from alumni. That is not negative as such, but policies of how to deal with this question could be helpful.

Strengths:

- 1) Highly motivated and loyal academic staff;
- 2) Broad and high quality professional activities of a significant part of the staff members

Weaknesses:

- 1) Teachers are in large majority Latvian nationals. International teachers teach mostly online. In case of a growing amount of international study programmes and students, there might be a necessity to support the internationalization of academic staff.
- 2) Apparently, there is no declared strategy of balancing the amount of teachers coming from outside and the number of teachers who graduated at JVLAM and are now part of Academic staff. The risk of inbreeding is not yet dealt with in official strategic documents.
- 3) Not all of the staff members have English language level at level B2, JVLAM should prevent the risk that such teaching staff would be substitute staff in programmes English implementation form.

### Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Highly qualified and motivated academic staff.

Professional development activities of teachers are supported, teachers use the support and are highly active in self-development.

### 2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

#### Requirements

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Attached document ("3\_2\_1\_a\_PMSP\_Compliance\_state\_stand\_MK512\_.pdf") confirms that the study programme complies with Cabinet regulation No. 512 "Noteikumi par otrā līmeņa profesionālās augstākās izglītības valsts standartu"

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Partially compliant

Study programme, while being a professional masters programme, does not award any qualification. Since 13.06.2023. there is new regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers (Nb 305) "Noteikumi par valsts profesionālās augstākās izglītības standartu" where point 38. states that after master programme master degree and professional qualification diploma is given.

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



**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Attached study course descriptions ("3\_2\_1\_d\_PMSP\_course\_descriptions\_.zip") are prepared in Latvian and English. Descriptions formally comply with regulations set forth in Law on Higher Education Institutions. Available literature is generally up-to-date and relevant to study courses. Required reading in some cases features a sizable amount of Latvian language materials, however generally in additional reading some English language sources are provided as well.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The issued diploma complies with the state regulation - Cabinet of Ministers regulation No. 202 "Procedures by which documents certifying higher education recognition by the State shall be issued" (SAR annex 3\_1\_2\_PMSP\_diploma\_samples.zip)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme in Latvian are proficient in the official language (SAR Annexes 2.3. Knowledge of the state language of academic staff.docx and 3\_2\_1\_c\_PMSP\_Music and Performing Arts\_Curriculum.xlsx)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All of the teaching staff planned to be involved in the implementation of study programme in English language, has the English language knowledge at least at B2 level (Annex 2.3.Arts\_list of

academic staff.xlsx)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Study agreement complies with the national legislation and includes all the necessary parts (SAR Annex Studiju Ligumi\_ENG.zip)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

There is an agreement with the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre that students will have possibility to continue studies (SAR Annex Ligumi\_ENG.zip). These studies will be run in English, and it is also a best solution for student who studies in Latvian, to extend their competencies and abilities on contemporary international level. There is no other HEI in Latvia with similar programmes.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The JVLAM has provided a warranty signed by the rector that there will be compensations (SAR Annex 2.1. Warranty for compensation of losses.docx)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

### **Assessment of the requirement [8]**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Partially compliant

Study programme does not award professional qualification, which should be awarded according to the latest amendments of the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers (21.06.2023.).

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

Professional master study programme "Music and Performing Art" and both subprogrammes (Music and Choreography) by its curriculum, awarded degree and goals do comply with the study field "Arts". The content of the study programme is logical, sufficiently specific and in the meantime

broad, but its organizational structure is not in line with the Professional Bachelor's Study programme Music and Performing Arts and with the new Sub programme structure of the Professional Study Programmes. Material base for studies is sufficient - all necessary equipment (including musical instruments) is obtained and installed. The academic and administrative staff is motivated, qualified and cares for the study subject and students. Although the study programme is professional, it does not award professional qualification. The programme and the teaching staff is ready to start programme implementation in English but continuous work is needed to increase english language level of all involved academic staff.

#### Strengths:

- 1) Very close cooperation between students, academic staff and the labor market.
- 2) very well balanced amount of common and specific elements in between the sub programmes and specializations
- 3) strong variety of study courses, the offer being sufficiently broad and specialized at the same time
- 4) The content of the Master's SP is a logical continuation of the Bachelor's SP.
- 5) Well equipped and well installed classrooms, rich library and phonotheque.
- 6) Additional financial support for students' international activities (participation in competitions, masterclasses abroad).
- 7) Highly motivated and loyal academic staff;
- 8) Broad and high quality professional activities of a significant part of the staff members

#### Weaknesses:

- 1) English language skills of the part of the teaching staff is below B2, adding risk to fully implementing the programme in English.
- 2) No qualification is awarded
- 3) Structure and organization of sub programmes not aligned with the Professional Bachelor's SP. Study course descriptions of the previous academic study programmes are mixed with study course description of the new professional study programmes
- 4) It's logical, that the CP for state examinations are higher in master level than in bachelor level, but the relation 40 CP to 12 CP is questionable.
- 5) The specific position of musicology, at Bachelor level professional study programme, at Master level Academic programme should be explained at least at the Study programme overview level. On a long-term level, it might be useful to rethink the position of musicology at different levels of studies.
- 6) The description of different kinds of Internship, the interconnection between practice and theory and the comparability of different kinds of Internships should be clarified and simplified.
- 7) Current time schedule of building/classrooms opening/closing limits students' possibilities to use institutional resources effectively for their studies and individual practice.
- 8) Teachers are in large majority Latvian nationals. International teachers teach mostly online. In case of a growing amount of international study programmes and students, there might be a necessity to support the internationalization of academic staff.
- 9) Apparently, there is no declared strategy of balancing the amount of teachers coming from outside and the number of teachers who graduated at JVLAM and are now part of Academic staff. The risk of inbreeding is not yet dealt with in official strategic documents.

### **Evaluation of the study programme "Music and Performing Art"**

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

## 2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Music and Performing Art"

### Short-term recommendations

The structure of the professional master study programme should be consistent with the professional bachelor study programme (within 2 years).

Change opening times of the JVLAM to increase possibilities for students to use premises (within 2 years).

According to recent changes of the Cabinet of Ministers regulation, professional qualification should be awarded (within 2 years).

Make descriptions of internships more united (within 2 years).

### Long-term recommendations

The part of the study programme amount in credit points allocated to final examination and master thesis should be reevaluated (decreasing), allowing to implement new study courses needed for professional development (until next accreditation).

Establish a policy on how to deal with the risk of inbreeding (within 3 years).

Continue to raise the English language knowledge level of the academic staff and/or create a specific English study programme, where the staff resources are used in an optimal way (within 3 years).

Increase the number of international staff (until next accreditation).

Rethink the position of musicology at different levels of studies (until next accreditation).

## II - "Arts" ASSESSMENT

### II - "Arts" ASSESSMENT

#### 2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

##### Analysis

2.1.1. As the study field "Arts" contains all forms of Arts the trifold cooperation between the three leading cultural and Arts' institutions in Riga is an exact realization of an interdisciplinary cooperation, that is innovative in the field and complementary.

The content of the Study Programme is not only compliant with the study field Arts, but does also make use of all topical resources of the JVLAM itself (including national and international teachers out of the musicology field). The most striking achievement of this study programme is the fact that the Joint Programme enables the Music Academy to include all other Arts taught in Latvia by including the staff and infrastructure resources of the Visual Arts Academy of Latvia and the Latvian Academy of Culture (SAR, p. 242-245).

As a consequence, the content of studies and implementation of the Professional Doctoral Study Programme Arts 51211 is designed in a way that ensures a higher and more specific level of education than the previous Professional bachelor's and master's study programmes.

Therefore Doctoral study programme "Arts" by its curriculum, awarded qualification and goals does comply with the study field "Arts". There is no indication that casts doubts on compliance with the chosen study field. The content of the study program is also in compliance with the mission and

vision of JVLAM.

2.1.2. The title, code and degree to be obtained (Professional doctoral degree in Arts) as well as the duration and scope of the joint study programme implementations correspond to the defined aim and outcomes of the Joint study programme. There is no qualification to be obtained. The Joint Professional Doctoral Study Programme complies with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 617 (2 October 2018) "Regulations on the National Standard of the Professional Higher Education for the Doctoral Degree and the Procedures for Awarding of the Professional Doctoral Degree in Arts". The whole study programme has code 51211 and sub-programme "Music and Performing Arts" has code 51212 that corresponds to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 322 (13 June 2017) "Regulation on the Latvian education classification".

The duration of Full Time studies is defined by 3 years, which sets an ambitious frame to a complex study plan structure, but it is a possible frame.

The programme attributes 132 CP which corresponds to the logic of the bachelor four years study programme with 160 CP and the Master Two years study programme with 80 CP.

Admission requirements are academic or professional master's degree in social sciences or humanities and arts or equivalent higher education, as well as entrance examination. Admission requirements are justified for the particular study programme and degree to be obtained.

The programme is implemented in Latvian and in English with the same, corresponding parameters. The choice to implement the study programme in both languages is reasonable and justified.

2.1.3. The study programme was licenced in the 2020 and the first enrolment took place in January 2021 (SAR, p.241-242). Since the licensing process no changes to the parameters have been made and therefore no assessment can be done.

2.1.4. There are 45 students studying within the programme (from which 11 students are in sub-programme "Music and Performing Arts"), a large number of doctoral students are recruited by academic staff wanting to enhance their own artistic and research horizon and wishing to access a doctoral degree for their own pedagogical and professional development. At this moment there has been only three admissions (2021. spring and autumn, 2022. autumn), with three, three and five students admitted (that corresponds to the number of budget study places).

As there are no graduates yet, it is not yet that evident, to what specific employment situation a professional joint doctoral study programme can lead. Supposedly the main specialization of the student will still be prevailing in searching for pedagogical employment or artistic activity. But the Joint study programme is compliant with the global trend in arts and sciences to broaden the qualification of students and to enlarge their portfolio of activities.

The need of the study programme is socially justified as this programme is already mentioned in "Cultural Education Sector Strategy 2014-2020" and there has been changes in the national legislation to allow implementation of the professional doctoral study programme in arts (SAR, p. 245-246). At this moment there is a minimal number of international students. During on-site visit, academic staff mentioned that recruitment of international students mainly is done based on the individual activities of staff members.

2.1.5. The resources of the three engaged Art, Culture and Music Academies guarantee a high degree of professionalism and quality, already readable in the staff description of JVLAM. Bringing together Arts is an innovative process and during the experts' visit on site (May 15 - 17, 2023) academic staff as well as students of the programme declared enthusiastically the benefits of the joint study programme, giving access to the best artistic and pedagogical staff of all the involved artistic disciplines.

Students stated that their research questions, methods and outcomes have been influenced by the

inspiring interdisciplinary environment of the study programme. Furthermore, the study course structure gives students higher access to international (guest) teachers of the home institution (JVLAM). Experienced students, already engaged in prestigious Latvian and International artistic institutions stated, that the doctoral joint studies enriched their own artistic practice and creativity.

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

The PDST Arts makes use of the specific resources of three main artistic HEI in Latvia giving access to high quality artistic and research teachers. The interest for this study programme being strong, admission was competitive and led to a creative and nourishing research and creativity environment. Access to international teachers is well organized and the interdisciplinary structure of study plans leads to innovation in the research and artistic practice of students. The need for the programme is socially justified.

Strengths:

- 1) access to high level experts of a wide range of artistic disciplines
- 2) high level teachers involved, international experts included
- 3) all resources of all three involved institutions accessible for students

Weaknesses:

- 1) No visible politics to promote the study programme systematically on an international level. The recruitment of international students seems to be based on the individual activities of the Academy management and professional networking of its staff members.

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

### **Analysis**

2.2.1. The programme amount of 132 CP corresponds to Cabinet of Ministers regulation Nb. 617. (SAR, p. 249-253, annex "6. Compliance with national education standard.doc"), the programme has compulsory, restricted elective and elective (8 CP) parts, including artistic practice (34 CP). Programme study plan includes Latvian language for the programme in English and students have to take Environment protection and Civil protection study courses if they have not done it in previous studies.

The total amount of CP is proportional and logical in the context of all other study programs of JVLAM.

The content of study courses is interdisciplinary, intersectoral and presents the latest international achievements in the field, including practical aspects of being artist. For example, "Arts of Living on Arts"; "Contexts of Contemporary Arts and Design", "Interdisciplinary Aspects of Culture and Arts Studies" (SAR, Annex "3.2. Study course descriptions PD"). Courses ensure students reach the main goal and learning outcomes of the doctoral studies. The topics correspond to the need of the industry and labor market, as well as a new programme with newly developed study courses, it includes also latest scientific trends.

Study courses are interconnected. The balance between common parts of all institutions and specific parts is very well equilibrated. The only question is the slight prioritization of 20th and 21st century analysis within a context that should allow broad choices.

2.2.2. The academic staff involved in the Joint programme judging from the documented staff description of JVLAM (see Annexes III Description of the Study programme) and in the Table of participation of academic staff in national and international research projects proves, that the pedagogical resources are sufficient for ensuring adequate quality in the relevant field of science

and artistic creation. Student artistic creations in the particular sub-programme mainly are in music and choreography.

During experts' visit on site (May 15 to 17, 2023) interviews confirmed the first, document based impression of highly qualified staff, including artistic and research leaders of the field.

2.2.3. The amount of joint study courses and individual study courses is well balanced. Each doctoral student has her or his own consultant(s) and the attribution of the consultant to the student came out of mutual agreement.

Different teaching methods are used to achieve study programme and study course objectives (SAR, p. 255-258). There are theoretical seminars, lectures, individual tasks and internship. Contact hours are held as flows, group work and individual sessions.

Student-centered studies are organized by using individual study plans, personalized study methods, appropriate learning paths, improving methods based on student autonomy. There are also hybrid (on-site and online) possibilities to attend seminars.

As this programme is licensed in English as well, care has been taken to involve international experts contributing with online lessons. The echo of academic staff and students seen during the interviews on site (May 17, 2023) showed that online learning forms of international experts are fully accepted. The only concern consisted in the subject of the business model, where certain elements were repetitive due to the engagement of different teachers at the same study course who didn't communicate in between themselves about the procedures and contents. Students stated that the level of management skills teaching was too basic for them, as most of the students are already engaged in their profession.

2.2.4. The study programme includes an internship (Creative practice) with a total amount 34 CP (SAR, p. 249-253, annex "6. Compliance with national education standard.doc"), exceeding the minimum amount of 20 CP set by the Cabinet of Ministers regulation Nb. 617. JVLAM has approved regulation for the internship (SAR annex "3.2. Regulation on Traineeship.doc"). There is also HEI Traineeship. Tasks of the internship are related to the results achievable during the study programme, as well as to the individual results achievable for each particular doctoral student. The three academies have signed multiple agreements to provide internship possibilities for doctoral students, in Latvian and in English (foreign students). All those agreements prove that there are enough possibilities for the students to do the internship.

Because of the extremely high amount of individual coaching, secondly because of the fact that each student has her or his own consultant and thirdly because of the very advanced artistic and research level of the students, realizing an internship seems to be natural and successful. As the study programme exists for only two years, this part of studies has to be observed at further evaluations.

2.2.5. The study programme description defines clearly the process of doctoral thesis defence. Students have to complete the study programme and then there is defense of an artistic newly created work and theoretical study, after which degree is awarded by the State Examination Commission (SAR, p. 260-261). The process is organized according to the legislation. As there are no graduates at this moment, the practical process has not been evaluated.

2.2.6. Most of the students come either out of previous studies at the institution, or out of professional practice, therefore the students' research questions and final thesis topics are relevant to the field and correspond to the programme. Furthermore, the study and research topic is already discussed during the admission exam and plays an important role during the admission process. It is not yet clear, to what extent the topics of studies make use of the full range of interdisciplinary possibilities already when entering the programmes. Apparently, students understand the chances

and possibilities during the study process and because of experiences with teachers of the joint partner academies.

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

The study programme offers a nourishing and inspiring study environment and enhances interdisciplinary research questions and artistic project realizations. The international accent is guaranteed at this state mainly by international teaching staff (only one international student entered the programme at this early stage of existence of the programme). The teaching methods and their implementation are highly individual and student-centred with respect to the individual development of each student. Entrepreneurial online courses were the only slightly criticized study courses as their organization and content did not sufficiently take into account the high level of professional experiences of most of the doctoral students and because of lacking coordination of the experts in between themselves. The internship possibilities are provided both for local and for foreign students.

Strengths:

- 1) The methods and context of research methods and research topics is highly individualized and adequate to the level of the students
- 2) An international environment is created by international guest teachers, at this state of the study programme (after a year of existence).
- 3) The content of the Professional Joint Doctoral Programme is well balanced between a general part for all students and an individual part for each student.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Whereas the artistic and research study courses gained enthusiastic reactions from students, the feedback on entrepreneurial online courses stated, that the study courses content of a range of international guest teachers repetitive and was not sufficiently aimed at a target group of doctoral students with already very developed professional experience.

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

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The study programme for obtaining a doctoral degree is based on the achievements in the relevant field of science which can be seen in artistic creation and research of academic staff.

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

### **Analysis**

2.3.1. All students and teaching staff of the Professional Doctoral Study Programme Arts uses the available infrastructure of the JVLAM – classrooms, the library (including literature, sheet music, monographs, sound and video recordings), Concert Hall, Ballet Hall, Sound recording studio etc. The library provides methodological and reference literature and provides students with access to many electronic databases, such as Oxford Music Online, ScienceDirect, SCOPUS, Web of Science, JSTOR Arts & Sciences III, Naxos Music Library, while providing support to students in research work. The EBSCO database of full-text publications is also available on the JVLAM network. Though main material in library is collected in Latvian, there is enough amount of books and methodological



resources in English. As for music scores and music recordings, they are universal for studies and usage in any language. The JVLAM shall ensure that the technical and material base is regularly upgraded and renewed.

The implementation of the Professional Doctoral Study Programme Arts together with the Latvian Cultural Academy and the Latvian Academy of Arts shall at the same time provide students with access to the libraries, equipment and material resources of the cooperation of higher education institutions.

An important part in ensuring the study process and accumulation and transfer of knowledge is a collaboration with the National Film School of the Latvian Cultural Academy, Scientific Research Centre of the Latvian Cultural Academy, the Latvian National Library. Thus, for example, ensures contemporary infrastructure and technical base for audiovisual art education, premises that are adequately equipped, along with hardware with professional computer graphics, photo processing, sound, audio file processing software. Collaboration will be promoting interaction of artistic practice and research of students of the professional doctoral programme (SAR, p. 261–265).

2.3.2. All students of the Professional Doctoral Study Programme Arts uses the available infrastructure of the JVLAM and have access to the study bases of the sub-programmes “Visual Arts and Design” and “Audiovisual Arts, Theatre and Contemporary Dance” administered by the Latvian Academy of Arts and the Latvian Cultural Academy (hereinafter - LKA) (SAR, p. 265).

Also, the libraries of higher education institutions provide students and lecturers with study aids and information necessary for the acquisition of study programme content. The LKA Creative Activity Centre, LKA Riga Cinema Museum and LKA Eduards Smiļģis Theatre Museum ensure students’ research and artistic creativity base and add traineeship opportunities for the students. The LKA Library plays an important part in ensuring the study process, and its resources are regularly supplemented by procuring books, subscribing to databases, which will be very useful for students in the professional doctoral study programme “In Arts”.

2.3.3. All doctoral students in the JVLAM study on budget funds. The JVLAM, the Latvian Academy of Arts and the Latvian Cultural Academy have agreed on the principles of financing the study programme - that each academy receives money for they students, each academy can set own fees and each year there are separate agreements about payment for common study courses (SAR Annex 18 “Sadarbības\_līgums.docx”).

In order to ensure quality study process within the study programme, the preliminary number of students per academic year planned by the universities is as follows: in sub-programme Music and Performing Arts - 3-5; in sub-programme Visual Arts and Design - 8-9; in sub-programme Audiovisual Arts, Theatre and Contemporary Dance - 3-4. This proportion has already been implemented in three admission processes - in the spring and autumn semesters of 2021 and in the autumn semester of 2022.

The minimum number of students studying in English in the JVLAM-administered sub-program "Music and Performing Arts" is one doctoral student, but in Latvian - three students, which is implemented in academic year 2022/2023 (SAR, p. 252–254) and those numbers are met. There are on average 30% allocation of received funding to the costs of the equipment and maintenance.

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

The program is realized using the same resources and provisions used for all other study programs: building, rooms, library, recording studio. All students have access to the study bases, equipment and material resources of the Latvian Academy of Arts and the Latvian Cultural Academy. Financial provision from the side of administration is sufficient to realize the study program and to make improvements to it.

Strengths:

- 1) Rich and fully equipped library (including phonotheque), with subscriptions of main international research databases and journals.
- 2) There are specialized classrooms (recording studio, music psychology studio) used for research and practice of studies.

Weaknesses:

- 1) None identified

## **Assessment of the requirement [6]**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Informative, material and technical provision and financial provision correspond with the conditions for the implementation of programme

## **2.4. Teaching Staff**

### **Analysis**

2.4.1. The qualification of the teaching staff members of the home institution (JVLAM) has been documented sufficiently in ANNEX II, Description of the Study Field, first in 2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field in the following documents: 2.3.Arts\_list of academic staff.xlsx, 2.3.CV of academic staff.zip, 2.3.Knowledge of the state language of academic staff.docx, 2.3.Knowledge of English language of academic staff.docx, and in 2.4 Scientific Research and Artistic Creation. with the 2.4.List of publications, works of artistic creativity. 14 academic staff members are elected a the JVLAM and 13 of them have doctoral degree (SAR, p.268). The teaching staff of the joint partner Academies are documented in their own documents basis. During onsite visit of experts (May 15 to 17, 2023), the director of the study programmes as well as invited experts and teachers from all three involved Academies stated the high level and qualification of involved staff. Doctoral students outlined enthusiastically the involvement of extremely highly acclaimed artists and researchers of different artistic disciplines into the study programme. Academic staff have both the scientific competence, as well as active artistic activities.

2.4.2. The JVLAM practices stable staff politics. Changes lead to an engagement of further experts rather than to a substantial reduction of staff, therefore the basis of stability is given and the risk of fluctuation that would endanger the quality of the study programme does not seem to be probable.

2.4.3. The publication of the staff involved in the realization of the professional Doctoral study programmes Arts is well balanced between high level artistic and scientific publications including international projects. Academic staff have published in the reporting period 74 scientific publications, participated in local and international projects (for example, "Neuronale Grundlagen der Klangwahrnehmung und musikalisches Lernen", funded by the Neurology Clinic at the University of Heidelberg (Germany) and the German government), academic staff is active also in the artistic field (for example, recorded albums of piano music, acting as the principal conductor at the National Opera and Ballet) (SAR, p. 272-273).

2.4.4. Due to the orientation of the Study programmes towards an intensive connection between

artistic, interdisciplinary practice and scientific research, the focus of assessing publications must be orientated to publication forms that reflect the interconnected character of research and artistic practice. In this optique the publication list is of very high quality. Altogether there are 74 publications in the reporting period (SAR, p. 272-275). Each member of the academic staff has scientific publications or artistic achievements.

2.4.5. The main form of cooperation between the teaching staff according to the SAR (p.276) is participation in the theoretical seminars at the end of each semester. Seminars are for doctoral students and teaching staff, and it is possible to exchange information between staff. SAR also mentions some forms of international cooperation. As the future perspective for cooperation participation in conferences is mentioned (SAR, p.276). Although this is a joint programme between three universities, the SAR does not provide information about the cooperation of the teaching staff of different universities.

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

The teaching staff consists of highly qualified researchers and artists. The nature of the Study Programme demands a special respect for the connection of research and artistic practice which has been perfectly respected by the choice of national and international leading experts in both fields. Although information about the teaching staff of the two joint Academies cannot be accessed by evaluators, the on site reactions of programme directors, students and academic staff of the home institution JVLAM testify the inclusion of the top researchers and artists from the partner institutions during the onsite visit of evaluators in May 17, 2023. Each member of the academic staff has publications or artistic activities.

Strengths:

1) Highly qualified and motivated staff with a high degree of connectedness between research and artistic activity.

Weaknesses:

Not yet visible.

### **Assessment of the requirement [7]**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Material about staff of home institution fully compliant (see I., 2.4. of this report), qualification and high level profile of teaching staff of the two partner institutions observed through feedback of students and academic staff of the home institution. Furthermore academic staff of Academies was controlled and approved during licencing process of the national authority.

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

#### **Requirements**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The study programme fully complies with the Professional Higher Education Standard (Cabinet of Ministers regulation Nb. 617.) (SAR, p. 249-253, annex "6. Compliance with national education standard.doc")

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Study course descriptions are prepared in Latvian and English languages and contains all the parts necessary according to the Law in Higher Education Institutions (Annex 3.2.Study course descriptions\_PD.zip). Literature included in the courses is up-to-date and corresponds to the implementation of the study program in national and foreign (English) languages.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The issued diploma complies with the state regulation - Cabinet of Ministers regulation No. 202 "Procedures by which documents certifying higher education recognition by the State shall be issued" (SAR annex 3.1.PD\_Diploma pielikums.pdf)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

There are at least 5 teaching staff members of JVLMA involved in the implementation of the study programme with doctoral degree (SAR annex 2.3.Arts\_list of academic staff.xlsx).

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme in Latvian are proficient in the official language (SAR Annexes 2.3. Knowledge of the state language of academic staff.docx and 3.2.ADSP\_Music\_Curriculum.xlsx)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All off the teaching staff planned to be involved in the implementation of study programme in English language, has the English language knowledge at least at B2 level (Annex 2.3.Arts\_list of academic staff.xlsx)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Study agreement complies with the national legislation and includes all the necessary parts (SAR Annex Studiju Ligumi\_ENG.zip)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

There is an agreement with the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre that students will have possibility to continue studies (SAR Annex Ligumi\_ENG.zip). These studies will be run in English, and it is also a best solution for student who studies in Latvian, to extend their competencies and abilities on contemporary international level. There is no other HEI in Latvia with similar programmes.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The JVLAM has provided a warranty signed by the rector that there will be compensations (SAR Annex 2.1. Warranty for compensation of losses.docx)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The joint study programme complies with requirements of the Law on Higher Education as described in the SAR Annex 3.1. Compliance of joint study programme.doc

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

#### **Assessment of the requirement [8]**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All the requirements set forth in the national legislation has been met and implemented.

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

The PDST Arts program in Latvia utilizes the resources of three main artistic higher education institutions, providing students with access to well established artistic and research instructors. The competitive admission process ensures a stimulating environment for research and creativity. The program effectively organizes access to international supervisors and fosters innovation through its interdisciplinary study plans. Study programme is student centered and provides equal possibilities for the local and foreign students.

##### **Strengths:**

1. High level teachers involved, international experts included
2. All resources of all three involved institutions accessible for students giving thus access to high level experts of a wide range of artistic disciplines
3. The methods and context of research methods and research topics are highly individualized and adequate to the level of the students
4. An international environment is created by international guest teachers, at this state of the study programme (after a year of existence), only one international student has been accepted, but the academic staff is confident in expecting a larger number of qualified applicants in the future.
5. The content of the Professional Joint Doctoral Programme is well balanced between a general part for all students and an individual part for each student.
6. Rich and fully equipped library (including phonotheque), with subscriptions of main international research databases and journals.
7. There are specialized classrooms (recording studio, music psychology studio) used for research and practice of studies.
8. Highly qualified and motivated staff with a high degree of connectedness between research and artistic activity.

##### **Weaknesses:**

1. No visible politics to promote the study programme systematically on an international level. The recruitment of international students seems to be based on the individual activities of the Academy management and professional networking of its staff members.
2. Whereas the artistic and research study courses gained enthusiastic reactions of students, the feedback on entrepreneurial online courses stated that the study courses content of a range of international guest teachers was repetitive and was not sufficiently aimed at a target group of doctoral students with already very developed professional experience.

## Evaluation of the study programme "Arts"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Excellent

## 2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Arts"

### Short-term recommendations

The content and list of invited lecturers for the entrepreneurial study course should be reevaluated to meet the expectation of the students and to correspond to Latvian and European situations (until next academic year).

### Long-term recommendations

Work at JVLAM level on the promotion of the study programme on the international market (within 3 years)

## II - "Musicology" ASSESSMENT

### II - "Musicology" ASSESSMENT

#### 2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

##### Analysis

2.1.1. In the Western tradition of higher education and research, Musicology is typically classified within the humanities, which is more closely associated with fields such as history or cultural studies rather than fine arts. However, it is worth noting that some aspects of music research can have a scientific focus, such as psychological, sociological, acoustical, neurological, and computational approaches. As a result, Musicology, as a field of study, does not strictly align with the field of Arts in its entirety. Nevertheless, considering the local tradition, the research capacity in the field, and the impracticality of establishing a new study field, it can be concluded that the doctoral study programme "Musicology" does comply with the broader study field of "Arts." JVLAM has the necessary capabilities to successfully implement this study programme, and its content aligns with the mission and vision of JVLAM.

2.1.2. Study programme code is 51212. Code 51 corresponds to doctoral level education. Code 212 corresponds to the field of "Music and Stage Art" under section of "Arts". Study programme code is relevant. The relevance of the study programme code stems from the fact that the Cabinet of Ministers regulation "Noteikumi par Latvijas izglītības klasifikāciju" No. 322 and, in experts opinion, does not offer a suitable code for accurately categorizing the field of study for Musicology. The available options within the subfield of Humanities that experts see as more appropriate are limited and not comprehensive, making it challenging to assign the appropriate code.

The duration of the study programme at JVLAM is three years full-time (120CP). Each doctoral student collaborates with their thesis supervisor to develop individual work plans and reports, which are then approved by the Programme Director. The progress of doctoral students in fulfilling their individual plans is monitored by the thesis supervisor and the Programme Director. The objective of this study programme is to achieve a Doctoral Degree of Science (Ph.D.) in Humanities, preparing highly qualified specialists who are competitive in the international academic community for academic, scientific, and organizational roles in JVLAM, other higher education institutions, as well as

public and private cultural institutions. The study programme encompasses various tasks, including the maximization of scientific and research abilities of each doctoral student, the provision of in-depth theoretical knowledge in the chosen field of musicology, the development of academic work skills through engagement with university students and music secondary school students, the opportunity to engage with the international scientific community during the studies, and the provision of necessary methodological and organizational support for completing the programme with the defense of a doctoral thesis. The study programme's name, code, degree, goals, objectives, study outcomes, and admission requirements are closely interconnected.

Admission to the study programme follows the JVLAM admission rules and content requirements. Applicants for the doctoral study programme in Musicology are required to present the topic of their doctoral thesis and demonstrate their research work (such as a master's thesis, research project, or publication) in the Colloquium during the entrance examination. This serves to showcase their experience and research achievements thus far. The entrance examination evaluates applicants' background knowledge of theories and research methods relevant to their chosen subfield (Systematic Musicology, Historical Musicology, Ethnomusicology), their ability to produce original research findings, and their aptitude for communication and discussion in their chosen research area. Applicants are expected to describe their previous experience, formulate research questions and objectives, outline necessary resources for their research, and demonstrate their role in current research projects at JVLAM. The admission requirements ensure that applicants possess the necessary background knowledge to successfully achieve the study programme's outcomes, considering the limited time available for completing a doctoral study programme and the required preparation.

Study program is registered to run in Latvian language. But it is able to run this program in English language too - all subjects have prepared English versions (Annex 3.2), and teaching staff involved in this program is able to teach in English as well (Annex 2.3). Overall, the duration and scope of the study programme implementation are reasonable and justified.

2.1.3. Previous volume of the Doctoral study programme was 144 CP. However, based on comparisons with similar programs at other universities and adjustments to the scope of semesters, the program's volume has been reduced to 120 CP. This reduction primarily affects the independent work component of the "Doctoral Thesis and Literature Studies" course in the 2nd, 4th, and 6th semesters.

The content of the study plan has been updated and refined, taking into account contemporary scientific findings and the interdisciplinary nature of musicology. The changes include the incorporation of restricted elective and specialization profile courses, which were not clearly defined in the previous study plan. The aim is to provide balanced and relevant content aligned with international scientific discourse. Additionally, the changes eliminate the previous division between separate literature studies and the elaboration of the doctoral thesis, integrating literature study into the thesis development process. Additionally, study program is prepared to run in English language, if institution decide to do that in future, because all subjects are translated into English, teaching material is collected, teaching staff have reached sufficient level of English knowledge.

2.1.4. Doctoral study programme is the only program in Latvia offering a doctoral degree in science in musicology. It follows a logical sequence with bachelor's and master's study programs, providing an opportunity for graduates of the JVLAM academic master's program to pursue doctoral studies in musicology. The program not only allows students to obtain a doctoral degree in science in Latvia but also prepares highly competent personnel for music and scientific institutions in all sub-disciplines of musicology. The social justification of the program lies in the need to offer third-cycle studies in musicology, contributing to the overall scientific coverage in Latvia and enhancing the country's role in international music science.



Graduates of the program find employment in higher education and research institutions, such as JVLAM, University of Latvia, Latvian Academy of Culture, and other universities. They work as researchers, teaching staff, and general staff, and contribute to various European Structural Funds projects and national research programs. Many graduates are involved in international research networks and projects, showcasing the program's international recognition. They also work in music education institutions, media organizations, concert agencies, and pursue careers as composers and performing artists. Average percent of employment is very high and reach 91% (SER, 98)

The number of students in the Doctoral Study Programme in Musicology has remained relatively stable over the years, with an average of 9 students per academic year. However, there have been fluctuations in the number of students in the specialization fields of the program.

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

It can be concluded that the Academic Doctor study programme "Musicology" is in compliance with the study field "Arts" in its broader sense. The study programme's name, code, degree, goals, objectives, study outcomes, and admission requirements are closely interconnected. The study programme has economic and social justifications, and graduates have employment prospects in research, higher education, and cultural institutions. Overall, the study programme meets the necessary criteria and demonstrates its relevance and value within the field of arts. Study program is prepared to run in English language, if institution decide to do that in future.

Strengths:

1. The only study programme in Latvia to prepare doctors in science in musicology
2. Optimal duration of studies (three years) is a common international practice, which is implemented in this study program. It means the program correlate with current international trends in doctoral studies.

Weaknesses:

None identified

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

### **Analysis**

2.2.1. The structure and content of the study program corresponds to the requirements of the doctoral level program in arts. It contains 68 CP for individual research work and doctoral thesis, 40 CP for specialization profile, 6 CP for elective courses and 6 CP for research work approbation practice.

Programme study plan includes Latvian language for the programme in English and students have to take Environment protection and Civil protection study courses if they have not done it in previous studies (SAR annex "3.2.ADSP\_Music\_Curriculum.xlsx").

The content of study courses is interdisciplinary, intersectoral and presents the latest international achievements in the field. For example, "Interdisciplinary Aspects of Culture and Arts Studies"; "Interconnections and Role of the Arts within the Context of Developments of the 20th and 21st Centuries" (Annex 9). Courses ensure students reach the main goal and learning outcomes of the doctoral studies.

Studies are based on a personal supervision of the teacher – the main part of doctoral studies are focused on individual research work. Other parts of studies include a group courses for development of skills on interdisciplinary research (module "Interdisciplinary research") and foreign language

studies. Free elective courses aim to deepen or broaden previously acquired knowledge and skills necessary for elaboration of the doctoral thesis. Practice course focuses first of all on the development of his/her teaching skills.

Relevance of the doctoral studies to the market and sectorial need is regularly monitored and discussed at musicology seminars as well as inviting leading foreign researchers to teach in the program. Kevin Karnes (USA), Markus Christiner (Austria) and Ardian Ahmedaja (Austria) are mentioned in SAR (SAR, 142).

Program is updated each year under the feedback of students and graduates' opinions and suggestions, and taking into account the proposals of the JVLAM Scientific Council and Doctoral Council. All changes are approved by the Senate.

During the meeting of PhD students it was expressed a wish to extend doctoral studies with contemporary popular music (Experts' meeting with PhD students during the site visit).

2.2.2. Awarding of a Doctoral degree is based on a doctoral thesis which can be presented in three forms: dissertation, published monograph, collection of publications. All work should demonstrate and be based on the original research, followed by presentations at international conferences, and publications in scientific journals.

There are three specializations in the program: historical musicology, systematic musicology and ethnomusicology. Historical musicology is focused on the study of Latvian and world music history. Systematic musicology deals with a wide range of issues in music theory, music psychology, music therapy and music pedagogy. Ethnomusicology studies are linked to social processes and relation with local culture.

Titles of dissertations, mentioned in SAR, confirm that research is based on achievements and findings of the relevant field of science (SAR, 143). Some of titles: "Concept music by Latvian composers of the youngest generation"; "Pitch and rhythm structures for aural attention training"; "Historical and stylistic development of piano texture and its manifestation in Latvian music" (SAR, 150).

2.2.3. All study implementation methods used in Doctoral studies, contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study program. First of all, Doctoral studies seeks to involve students into research work from the first year of studies. It is expressed via individual research work based on scientific criteria, study of literature and sources, participation in academic discussions, interdisciplinary and international events.

Doctoral students learn the content of their studies through contact hours and independent work. Contact hours are organised in flow, group and individual sessions. According to the course description plan, lecturers structure stream and group classes in the form of lectures, seminars, colloquia, and individual classes in the form of practical work (SAR, 145).

Student-centered studies are organized by using individual study plans, personalized study methods, appropriate learning paths, improving methods based on student autonomy. On the other hand students expressed a wish to hold more lectures in groups because of a lack of social and research communication (Experts Meeting with students).

Some courses are taught online and in English. It is typically held by invited foreign teachers. Methods used by online teaching are successfully adapted and implemented into a study program. There are international online discussions, presentations and video conferences used (SAR, 145).

The Latvian, Estonian and Lithuanian Music Academies have agreed to establish a joint Baltic Doctoral School, and some kind of cooperation already takes place (SAR, 145). It will solve the problem of the small number of students in all of these countries and to intensify exchange of teaching staff. Of course, there will be a need to run program in English, but it is already prepared. Changing into English will not have any differences in the program.

2.2.4. Although this is an academic programme, it includes implementation of scientific and academic practice. SAR annex “description-of-practice-organization” gives information about the organization principles but there are no special practice regulation documents provided for doctoral studies. Nevertheless, internship is directly related to the learning outcomes of a program and helps to reach it.

Scientific practice is realized at JVLAM Scientific Research Centre, or by using Erasmus and other mobility programs and a network of Latvian academic and research institutions. Practice has various forms: participation in research projects, writing and publishing research articles, doing presentations at conferences and seminars. Scientific practice is supervised by a practice teacher who runs the practice course.

Academic practice is realized at JVLAM by teaching courses for BA and MA students. This practice is supervised by students’ doctoral thesis supervisor. Institution provides an academic internship for students.

Students have the possibility of additional financial support from institution on request for their internship and practice outside the institution. It also includes the possibility to apply for additional support from Erasmus+ and NordPlus programs (Experts’ meeting with Directors of study programs and with Academic Staff). All internship provided by institution is able for English students too.

2.2.5. Procedure and functions of all members and units involved in the doctoral thesis defense are clearly described in detail. The promotion process is regulated by the Regulations on the Procedure and Criteria developed in accordance with the Regulation of Minister (SAR, 148). According to these regulations, doctoral thesis shall be evaluated by the Promotion Council. Structure and functions of a Promotional Council are explained in detail.

The process of objection is explained clearly and in all described steps and terms. The role of reviewers as well as the question who can be a reviewer is presented in SAR as well. The role of the State Scientific Qualifications Commission is debatable in the promotion process and should be changed according to the decision of the ministry (SAR, 149).

Student receives constant promotion from: a) his personal supervisor; b) from doctoral committee members; c) from department of doctoral studies. Additional support, if needed, is provided from vicerektor-for-research institution. Such a complex system of promotion guarantees successful studies and preparation of final doctoral thesis/dissertation.

2.2.6. All final thesis topics (for example, “Chants of the Riga Missal in the Context of Medieval European Gregorian Tradition”; Jāzeps Vītols in the dynamics of cultural memory: canons and archives”), presented in SAR, are relevant to the field and correspond to the study program. Each topic is selected according to main criteria: scientific novelty, topicality in the industry and practical applicability. Publications at the scientific journals let you correct the topic and content of the final version of the dissertation (if it is necessary). Publications are reviewed by leading experts from academic fields and industry, so it guarantees quality of final thesis and direct relations to the field and study program (SAR, 150).

Institution received several additional grants for doctoral studies, and it led to an enlarged number of students during the evaluation period. For example, in 2009 it received a “Support of the Doctoral Study Programme...” from EU Social Fund and in 2021 it received 3 grants according to the project “Academic Staff Development...” (SAR, 151).

JVLAM installed additional non-material grants for doctoral students and provides titles of *summa cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, *cum laude*, *satis bene*, *rite*, *non rite*; *non probatum*. It was noted that mostly all dissertations were given names *cum laude*, *magna cum laude* and *summa cum laude* (SAR, 151).

Doctoral students can choose to write dissertations in English to make them accessible to an international audience and evaluation.

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

The structure and content of the doctoral study program "Musicology" corresponds to the requirements of the doctoral level program in arts. The content of study courses is interdisciplinary, intersectoral and presents the latest international achievements in the field. Relevance of the doctoral studies to the market and sectorial need is regularly monitored and discussed. Doctoral studies seeks to involve students into research work from the first year of studies. Student-centered studies are organized by using individual study plans, personalized study methods, appropriate learning paths, improving methods based on student autonomy. Although this is an academic programme, it includes implementation of scientific and academic practice. Procedure and functions of all members and units involved in the doctoral thesis defense are clearly described in detail.

### **Strengths:**

- 1) Study program is organized according to the contemporary trends and needs of musicology, courses are interdisciplinary, intersectoral and present the latest international achievements in the field.
- 2) Doctoral studies are personalized and supported with all necessary resources (library, phonotheque, subscribed databases). Students have the possibility to receive additional financial support for their research and presentation of their achievements (including conferences abroad, internship outside institution).
- 3) There is a well organized system of students' promotion opportunities, where direct supervisor, doctoral committee and department of doctoral studies are involved.

### **Weaknesses:**

- 1) There are only 1-2 state places for doctoral students per year. It limits the possibility to organize group courses and students feel a lack of social and research communication. Situation will be solved after the Baltic Doctoral School of Musicology starts to work.

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

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The study programme for obtaining a doctoral degree is based on the achievements in the relevant field of science which can be seen in doctoral thesis and research of academic staff is topical.

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

### **Analysis**

2.3.1. All students and teaching staff of the Doctoral Study Programme Musicology uses the available infrastructure of the JVLAM – classrooms, the library (including literature, sheet music, monographs, sound and video recordings), sports complex etc. It's important that the library provides students with access to many electronic databases, such as Oxford Music Online, ScienceDirect, SCOPUS, Web of Science, JSTOR Arts & Sciences III, Naxos Music Library, while providing support to students in research work. All these databases are accessible online 24/7 and there is no need to follow open hours of library. The JVLAM shall ensure that the technical and material base is regularly upgraded and renewed. Informative provision is suitable also for the implementation of the programme in english.

The JVLAM also benefited from ESF project, Academic Staff Development - Approval of the Doctoral Grant Approach and Attraction of Foreign Academic Staff at the Latvian Academy of Culture, Art Academy of Latvia and Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music project and Brain-Computer Music Interfacing for Embodied Musical Interaction project funding for the implementation of the Doctoral Study Programme Musicology. For example, for research in music psychology: technologies for data reading and processing and an electroencephalograph. Purchase of specific software for recording and processing neurofunctional data: NeuroGuide, Matlab, Simulink, MAX/MSP etc. Purchased information technology equipment such as audio-acoustic speakers, digital voice recorder, TV displays, large format monitors, WEB Kamera Logitech C925e 1 USB web camera with superior sensor for tracking a 3D object in low-light conditions etc. (SAR, p. 152). There is a music psychology classroom and research center with equipment as well as recording studio with appropriate equipment.

2.3.2. The JVLAM has been cooperating with higher education and scientific institutions to through joint cooperation projects and by inviting teaching staff and researchers, for example, with Riga Stradiņš University, Latvian Academy of Culture, Institute of Literature, Art and Folklore at the University of Latvia, University of Heidelberg (Germany), University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna (Austria).

Since 2019 the JVLAM was established successful collaboration with the Institute of Biosciences of Vilnius University (Lithuania) and the National Sun-Yat Sen University in Gaosōng (Taiwan) (SAR, p. 153).

All students of the Doctoral Study Programme Musicology use the available infrastructure of the JVLAM and have access to the study bases of the Latvian Academy of Arts and the Latvian Cultural Academy (SAR, p. 265).

The libraries of the JVLAM and cooperation higher education institutions provide students and lecturers with study aids and information necessary for the acquisition of study programme content and support to students in research work.

2.3.3. There is a very low number of students in doctoral studies Musicology (1-3 per year). It depends on the funds received by state (doctoral programme is funded by the state budget). The balance of finances is reached by sharing a) staff, who are also involved in other study programs; b) usage of the same resources of the institution, used also by other study programs. Studies in English are self-financed. The largest part of the doctoral studies costs consists of the remuneration of highly qualified lecturers and support staff, provision of support activities (SAR, p. 154). There are no minimum limits of students to run doctoral studies, but the profitability of the studies is ensured and depends on the rational balance of human resources, facilities and finances shared by institution between all study programs.

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

The program is realized using the same resources and provisions used for all other study programs: building, rooms, library, recording studio. Financial provision from the side of administration is sufficient to realize the study program.

Strengths:

- 1) Rich and fully equipped library (including phonotheque), with subscriptions of main international research databases and journals.
- 2) There are specialized classrooms (recording studio, music psychology studio) used for research and practice of studies.

3) Rationally balanced human resources, facilities and finances ensure a successful process of studies.

Weaknesses:

1) None identified

### **Assessment of the requirement [6]**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Informative, material and technical provision and financial provision correspond with the conditions for the implementation of programme

## **2.4. Teaching Staff**

### **Analysis**

2.4.1. Teaching staff involved in the study program is highly qualified and competent. There are 9 lecturers involved in the implementation of the mandatory part of the study program, all of them have PhD degrees and demonstrate activity in research publications, scientific projects and conferences. Though the study program is in Latvian language, all of the teaching staff can use English at C1 level (SAR, 155) or B2 (Annex 2.3.Arts\_list of academic staff.xlsx).

Qualification of the teaching staff members ensures achievement of the learning outcomes of the study program. It is obvious after detailed analysis of the CVs of staff members where there are a number of examples to confirm that. For example, some of professors are involved in the project "European Voices: Audiovisuals", "Neuronale Grundlagen der Klangwahrnehmung und musikalisches Lernen of the research group of the Neurology Clinic", "Brain-Computer Music Interfacing for Embodied Musical Interaction", and activities at the Research Center for European Multipart Music. (SAR, 157).

Invited foreign teachers are leaders in their taught subject and field of research. They constantly help students to involve them in international projects and conferences abroad and also become supervisors of students (Experts' meeting with Teaching staff and Students).

2.4.2. It is a core of teaching staff (70%) which is stable and not changed during the review period. Visiting and guest staff changes according to the personalized approach to each doctoral student. Involvement of leading foreign lectures strengthened and enlarged doctoral studies with the contemporary research achievements in the field. Changes of the teaching staff are small and do not have a negative impact on studies.

There are state and Institutional requirements for the teaching staff at doctoral level studies. Assessment of teachers is organized systematically and periodically. All teaching staff are assessed for doctoral level teaching (SAR, 155; Appendix – CV of academic staff; List of publications, works of artistic creativity). Feedback from students is taken into account during the selection process of teaching staff (Experts meeting with the directors of the study program).

2.4.3. There are 97 publications published during the review period and 29 of them are included into journals indexed in Scopus/Web of Science/ ERIH+ databases and written by 7 authors (SAR, 158-162).

There were 7 members of the teaching staff involved in the doctoral study program during the

review period. Four of them are also experts of the Latvian Council of Science. It confirms that teaching staff contributes to the implementation of a high-quality doctoral study program.

2.4.4. Teaching staff is highly qualified and experienced. There are 4 experts of the Latvian Council of Science in the elected teaching staff of the JVLAM doctoral study program.

Local and invited foreign teachers are active in research publications and international conference presentations (SAR Annex 2.4: List of publications, works of artistic creativity).

There are 97 publications issued by all staff of doctoral studies during the evaluation period (SAR, 158). But only a few of these publications are published in journals of Scopus and Web of Science databases. Understanding the specific field of musicology where there are only a few journals included into previously mentioned databases, experts see the potential of teaching staff to increase the amount of publications in high level scientific journals.

2.4.5. The teaching staff of the doctoral study programme cooperate in a different form – by participating in joint projects, networks, meetings, and the Doctoral Council (SAR, p. 165-166). There are special doctoral seminars (implemented at the suggestion of students) where students' works and problems in the study process are discussed. Teaching staff cooperate also by participating in collective study courses of the study programme. The examples provided show that cooperation is in place and it is effective.

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

Academic staff of doctoral studies is highly qualified and experienced. 4 members of staff are also members of Latvian Council of Science. Academic staff is very active in scientific life, publications and research projects. Implementation of current discoveries and research results into studies is constant and effective.

Strengths:

- 1) Academic staff included in doctoral studies are highly qualified and have a big potential for wider international spread of their research. Invited foreign lecturers are famous specialists of their field and strengthen studies with their own unique experience.
- 2) Student-centered and personalized studies ensure a high level of studies' quality and efficiency.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Only a few members of the teaching staff constantly publish in international journals. Amount of 29 publications included into databases of Scopus/Web of Science/ EARTH during the last 10 years (review period) published by 9 members of teaching staff included into doctoral study program demonstrates passiveness of researchers and regional level of publications (only 1 publication of high level journals in 3 years).

### **Assessment of the requirement [7]**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The qualification of the teaching staff is high, with active scientific and artistic activity and fully satisfies requirements set out in the respective regulatory enactments. For further development teaching staff should constantly publish in international journals.

## 2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

### Requirements

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Study course descriptions are prepared in Latvian and English languages and contains all the parts necessary according to the Law in Higher Education Institutions (Annex 3.2.AD\_Study course descriptions.7z). Literature included in the courses is up-to-date and corresponds to the implementation of the study program in national and foreign (English) languages.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The diploma issued complies with the state regulation "Procedures by which documents certifying higher Education recognised by the State shall be issued" (Cabinet of Ministers No. 202). SAR annex: 3.1.AD\_Diploma.docx

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

There are at least 5 associate professors and professors of the JVLMA involved in the implementation of the study programme (SAR annex 2.3.Arts\_list of academic staff.xlsx).

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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



**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

There are more than five teaching staff members with a doctoral degree and four members of staff are also experts of Latvian Council of Science (SAR, p.158-163).

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme in Latvian are proficient in the official language (SAR Annexes 2.3. Knowledge of the state language of academic staff.docx and 3.2.ADSP\_Music\_Curriculum.xlsx)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All ten members of teaching staff have the english language knowledge level at least at B2 levels (Annex 2.3.Arts\_list of academic staff.xlsx)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Study agreement complies with the national legislation and includes all the necessary parts (SAR Annex Studiju Ligumi\_ENG.zip)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

There is an agreement with the Lithuanian Academy of Music that students will have possibility continue studies (SAR Annex Ligumi\_ENG.zip). These studies will be run in English, and it is also a best solution for student who studies in Latvian, to extend their competencies and abilities on contemporary international level. Also there is no other higher education institution in Latvia who provides the similar education.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The JVLAM has provided a warranty signed by the rector that there will be compensations (SAR Annex 2.1. Warranty for compensation of losses.docx)

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

### **Assessment of the requirement [8]**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All the requirements set forth in the Law on Higher Education has been met and implemented.

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

The study programme and specialisations are justified and complies with the study field. The study programme is recognized by the stakeholders and graduates of the study programme are demanded in the labour market. Although at this moment mostly Latvian students are matriculated the programme has a potential and all necessary resources to be provided also in English. The content of the study courses corresponds to the objectives of the study programme. The JVLAM has all the necessary resources to implement this programme in Latvian and English, and the teaching staff is highly qualified and experienced.

Strengths:

1. The only study programme in Latvia to prepare doctors in science in musicology
  2. Optimal duration of studies (three years) is a common international practice, which is implemented in this study program. It means the program correlate with current international trends in doctoral studies.
  3. Study program is organized according to the contemporary trends and needs of musicology, courses are interdisciplinary, intersectoral and present the latest international achievements in the field.
  4. Doctoral studies are personalized and supported with all necessary resources (library, phonotheque, subscribed databases). Students have the possibility to receive additional financial support for their research and presentation of their achievements (including conferences abroad, internship outside institution).
  5. There is a well organized system of students' promotion opportunities, where direct supervisor, doctoral committee and department of doctoral studies are involved.
  6. Rich and fully equipped library (including phonotheque), with subscriptions of main international research databases and journals.
  7. There are specialized classrooms (recording studio, music psychology studio) used for research and practice of studies.
- Rationally balanced human resources, facilities and finances ensure a successful process of studies.
8. Academic staff included in doctoral studies are highly qualified and have a big potential for wider international spread of their research. Invited foreign lecturers are famous specialists of their field and strengthen studies with their own unique experience.
  9. Student-centered and personalized studies ensure a high level of studies' quality and efficiency.

Weaknesses:

1. There are only 1-2 state places for doctoral students per year. It limits the possibility to organize group courses and students feel a lack of social and research communication. Situation will be

solved after the Baltic Doctoral School of Musicology starts to work.

2. Only a few members of the teaching staff constantly publish in international journals. Amount of 29 publications included into databases of Scopus/Web of Science/ EARTH during the last 10 years (review period) published by 9 members of teaching staff included into doctoral study program demonstrates passiveness of researchers and regional level of publications (only 1 publication of high level journals in 3 years).

### **Evaluation of the study programme "Musicology"**

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

### **2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Musicology"**

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

#### **Long-term recommendations**

Look for the possibilities to increase the number of the state funded study places. Discussions with Lithuanian and Estonian music academies to establish a joined doctoral school of musicology is one of the best solutions (until next accreditation).

Teaching staff should be encouraged and supported to have larger number of the scientific publications included in the Scopus/Web of Science databases (within 3 years).

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

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

#### **Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field**

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation		Comment
R1 - Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 2.1 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field whilst implementing its internal quality assurance system:		Partially compliant	There is compliance with the Law on the Higher education, however student engagement levels on feedback and data collection activities conducted by JVLAM are low and follow-up actions are not consistent across all sub-programmes and courses. Study programme structure is not fully coherent and some decisions are not fully justified. There is no clear definition of main KPIs, other metrics or main defined principles of quality system, that is readily available to all involved stakeholders.
R2 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the level of development of scientific research and artistic creation (if applicable)		Partially compliant	There is a strong connection between scientific research and artistic creation, but the position of Musicology within the PBSP Music and Performing Art is not aligned with the master's and doctoral levels of Musicology.
R3 - The cooperation implemented within the study field with various Latvian and foreign organizations ensures the achievement of the aims of the study field.	Fully compliant		The JVLAM cooperation with organizations ensures the achievement of the aims of the study field.
R4 - Elimination of deficiencies and shortcomings identified in the previous assessment of the study field, if any, or implementation of the recommendations provided.		Partially compliant	In summary, while there has been progress in implementing recommendations, however there are still areas that need additional attention.

#### Assessment of the Requirements for the Relevant Study Programmes of the Study Field

<b>No.</b>	<b>Study programme</b>	<b>R5</b>	<b>R6</b>	<b>R7</b>	<b>R8</b>	<b>Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)</b>
1	Music and Performing Art (42212)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
2	Music (45212)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good
3	Music and Performing Art (47212)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Good
4	Arts (51211)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Excellent
5	Musicology (51212)	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Good

#### **The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts**

Not applicable