

APPLICATION

Study field "Health Care" for assessment

Study field	<i>Health Care</i>
Title of the higher education institution	<i>Latvijas Universitātes aģentūra "Latvijas Universitātes Rīgas 1. medicīnas koledža"</i>
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Self-evaluation report

Study field "Health Care"

Agency of the University of Latvia "Riga First Medical College of the University
of Latvia"

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1. Information on the Higher Education Institution/College

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

Since 1 July 2019 the University of Latvia agency "Riga First Medical College of the University of Latvia" has been an educational institution under the supervision of the University of Latvia (hereinafter - *University of Latvia* or *LU*), established by the Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 643 of 29 November 2018 "On the Reorganization of Riga First Medical College" and the LU Senate Decision No. 168 of 8 January 2018. This was reorganization of Riga First Medical College under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Science (hereinafter - *MES*). Until 2005, Riga First Medical College was known as Riga First Medical School, which with the Ministry of Education and Science Order of 25 August 2005 acquired the status of a college, taking over the rights and legal obligations of Riga First Medical School.

LU RFMC is one of the oldest and most experienced medical education institutions in Latvia with its historical roots dating back to 1902 when the first information about this educational institution surfaced.

It was in 2007 when LU RFMC was accredited as a college for the first time (Accreditation Sheet No. 071), when accreditation was granted for 6 years to all first level professional higher education programs implemented at the College, which are still being implemented and developed today:

- "Medicine" (41721) with the professional qualification of a physician assistant
- "Medicine" (41721) with the professional qualification of a midwife
- "Nursing" (41723) with the professional qualification of a nurse
- "Pharmacy" (41725) with the professional qualification of a pharmacist assistant.

Additionally, LU RFMC implements the following professional secondary and vocational study programs:

- "Dentistry" (35b724001) with the qualification of a dental technician
- "Dentistry" (35b724001) with the qualification of a dental assistant (with the qualification of a dental nurse until 2020)
- "Nursing" (35a723001) with the qualification of a nursing assistant
- "Nursing" (32a723001) with the qualification of a nursing assistant
- "Social care" (35a762031) with the qualification of a caregiver
- "Social care" (32a762031) with the qualification of a caregiver

In 2012 and 2013, the outcome of the reaccreditation process was the high evaluation of the study direction "Health Care" which was assessed as qualitative and sustainable. International and Latvian experts highly evaluated the College and the study direction.[\[1\]](#)

According to the data of the Ministry of Education and Science of 2012, LU RFMC was ranked the first in the study quality assessment among Latvian higher education institutions. In 2020 and 2021, the survey of Latvian employers, organized by the Confederation of Latvian Employers (hereinafter - *LDDK, LV*), indicated that employers included LU RFMC into TOP 10 education institutions to acquire a profession[\[2\]](#). The results of the survey were published on the portal Prakse.lv

LU RFMC is the only educational institution in Latvia that has been awarded the David Hieronymus Grindel Medal for its contribution to the training of pharmacists and other medical staff. David Hieronymus Grindel was a famous chemist, pharmacist, doctor and the first Latvian naturalist.

Table 1

Dynamics of the number of students in the study direction "Health care"

2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
484	446	545	580	674	673	647	567	532

Table 2

Dynamics of the number of students in professional secondary and vocational education programs implemented by LU RFMC

2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
512	474	492	553	520	455	378	377	382

The total number of students of LU RFMC as of 1 October 2021 is 928, including:

- first level professional higher education programs – 532
- professional secondary and vocational education programs – 382
- further professional development program "Outpatient Activities of the Physician Assistant"-14

Basic studies at LU RFMC are funded from the state budget. LU RFMC fulfills the admission plan every year. Taking into account the demand of employers, the College also implements self-paid studies. For example, 186 pharmacist assistants graduated from LU RFMC from the self-paid studies from 2016 to 2021. They are currently working in such pharmacy networks as "Sentor Farm Aptiekas" ("Sentor Farm Pharmacies"), "Mēness Aptiekas" ("Mēness Pharmacies"), "BENU Aptiekas Latvija" ("BENU Pharmacy Latvia"), "Euroaptieka" ("Europharmacy"), "Latvijas Aptieka" ("Latvian Pharmacy"), etc.

The LU RFMC students tend to come from the families of medical professionals. When asked about the choice of the education institution, applicants responded that their parents, relatives and acquaintances who had once graduated from LU RFMC recommended the College and considered it to be a prestigious, modern and competitive education institution.

In accordance with the internship agreements, the College provides 100% of students with internship placement, which often becomes students' employers after students have graduated from the College. Currently the College has cooperation agreements with more than 200 internship providers.

The College replenishes its study and technical facilities. With the support of employers, the College has set up a pharmacy model for practical training of pharmacist assistants, which creates the environment similar to the real work environment. In 2020, the LU RFMC completed the

implementation of the EU-funded project "Modernization of the STEM Study Program Infrastructure at Riga First Medical College" (Agreement No. 8.1.4.0/17/I/003), as a result of which the following exercise equipment was purchased:

- a training module similar to an EMS vehicle to train students in emergency medical algorithms;
- a training neonatal intensive care unit (10 steps) as well as a geriatric and palliative care unit;
- a new, technologically innovative 3D equipment of the CAD/CAM system for training dental technicians, which complies with the international technological standards in the production of dentures.

The financial budget of LU RFMC consists of state grants and own revenues. In 2020, the total budget of the educational institution was EUR 2,8 million, including EUR 2,5 million of state grants.

LU RFMC operates in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions, Law on Education, Law on Professional Education, Law on Scientific Activity, other related external and internal regulatory enactments as well as the regulations of the University of Latvia Agency "Riga First Medical College" (Decision No. 299 approved by the LU Senate on 15/04/2019).

LU RFMC mission and vision

Mission: training of highly qualified and competitive health care and social care professionals that are in demand in the Latvian labor market; creating a stable foundation for lifelong learning.

Vision: a modern and prestigious college with an attractive communication and cultural environment; a stable professional base implementing and developing sustainable professional and competitive education in health care and social care.

The LU RFMC Development Strategy is available on the following sites:

- Latvian: https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Stratija_.pdf
- English: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Strategy-of-Riga-1st-Medical-College-of-the-University-of-Latvia.pdf>

Currently, the new strategy of LU RFMC for 2021-2027 is being developed. In accordance with the priority development directions, the development plan of the study direction "Health Care" for 6 years (2021-2027) has already been prepared (see [Annex 3](#)).

The College development policy described in the College development strategy of 2021-2027 is based on the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) (available at: https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf) and will be linked to the objectives of the Osnabrück Declaration on education development priorities: quality, sustainability, lifelong learning, digitization, development of professional education in the international space, etc. (available at: <https://liddk.lv/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Osnabiskas-deklaracija-un-tas-ietekme-uz-PI-attistibu-Latvija.pdf>).

The College development plan of the study direction "Health Care" for 2021-2027 ([Annex 3](#)) emphasizes the following directions of strategic development:

1. Enhancement of the contents of the study programs
2. Enhancement of the study process
3. Competent and highly qualified teaching staff
4. Ongoing research on topical issues, including labor market interests

5. Stable and modern teaching material and technical base
6. Properly developed study environment, including e-environment
7. Cooperation with graduates
8. Recognizable study programs
9. Cooperation with professional organizations, employers, other HEIs
10. New study programs and lifelong learning within the study direction.

[1] See the results of the reaccreditation of the study direction "Health Care" of 2012-2013 on the College website at https://www.rmkl.lv/lv/document_category/2012-2013-g-akreditacijas-rezultati/.

[2] See the College cooperation partners at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/lv/par-koledzu/sadarbibas-partneri>

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

The LU RFMC performance is regulated by the Law on Higher Education Institutions, Law on Education, Law on Professional Education, Law on Scientific Activity, Law on Public Agencies as well as the Regulations of the University of Latvia Agency "Riga University Medical College" (approved by LU Senate Decision No.299 of 15 April 2019). The LU RFMC decision-making is ensured by the LU RFMC Council acting as a collegial representation, management and decision-making body of the College staff and LU RFMC director as the highest ranking official of the College that carry out the general administrative and economic management of the College and represents the College in all its affairs. The College Council consists of 11 Council members: 5 persons elected to academic positions in the College (46%), 1 representative of general staff (9%), 3 representatives of Students' Self-government (27%), 2 authorized representatives of employers or professional organizations (18%). The College Council determines the main directions of academic activities, approves the College structure proposed by the director, approves the regulations of the College structural units, etc., in accordance with the LU RFMC regulations.

The College performance is managed by the College director, who acts in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions, Law on Public Agencies, Constitution of the University of Latvia and the Regulations of the University of Latvia Agency "Riga First Medical College".

Effective management and supervision of operational tasks at LU RFMC are carried out by 2 deputy directors - deputy director for academic affairs and deputy director for professional academic affairs.

The College forms structural units (departments, divisions) for executing the study process and carrying out research, organizational, economic or service activities. The structure of the College is determined by its director and approved by the College Council. The tasks, functions, responsibilities and rights of structural units are determined in the regulations of the structural units, which are approved by the College Council. The head of a structural unit is responsible for the performance of this structural unit.

The department is a structural unit executing education and research activities, which implements similar study programs of the first level professional higher education. The task of the department is to implement study programs, conduct research, cooperate with other structural units of the College, educational institutions, employers and non-governmental organizations.

LU RFMC MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

APPROVED
By Decision No.1 of 28 February 2020 of the
University of Latvia Agency
"Riga First Medical College of the University of Latvia"

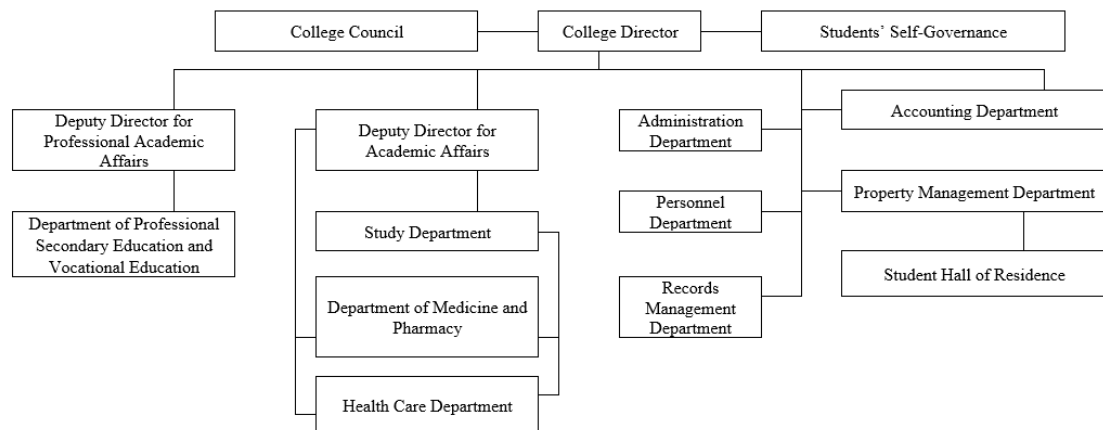


Fig. 1. LU RFMC management structure

The LU RFMC management structure scheme is available at <https://www.rmkl.lv/lv/par-koledzu/> and in Annex 2.

Participation of external partners in decision-making

One of the most active forms of participation of external partners in the College decision-making processes is in the Council of the LU Riga First Medical College (2 authorized representatives of employers or professional organizations). Recommendations, decisions, evaluations of other employers are also taken into account when developing new study programs, updating the content of study courses, expanding further education opportunities, evaluating study results, developing study materials, technical and methodological base, preparing the LU RFMC strategy, etc.

Student participation in decision-making

The Students' Self-government represents the interests of students in the Council of the LU Riga First Medical College, Ethics Commission, Scholarship Awarding Commission, Study Program Council, Commission for Recognition of Study Results Achieved in Previous Education or Professional Experience, etc. The Students' Self-government of the LU Riga First Medical College cooperates with the Student Council of the Association of Latvian Colleges, which has one LU RFMC student representative in its members. The LU RFMC Students' Self-government has the right to request and receive information and explanations on issues that affect the interests of students from the College self-government institutions and heads of structural units. Representatives of the Students' Self-government in the LU RFMC Council have the right of veto in matters that affect the interests of students. Upon the approval of the College Council, the decisions of the Students' Self-government are binding on all students of the College.

Participation of structural units in decision-making

Considering the LU RFMC strategy, every year the College Administration approves the action plan coordinated with the University of Latvia, delegates specific objectives and tasks to the structural units of the College. The structural units carry out their tasks necessary to achieve the specified objectives. Although responsibilities of structural units are specified in the College regulations, it is the cooperation between the structural units that is considered important for achieving the common aims of the LU Riga First Medical College. For the implementation of new

projects and processes, the College establishes working groups, discussion and idea-sharing workshops, thus involving staff and managers in decision-making as much as possible.

The list of LU RFMC internal normative documents is available at

https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Normativo-dokumentu-saraksts_LUR1MK.pdf.

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

The LU RFMC quality policy (*available only in the Latvian language at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Kvalitates-politika.pdf>*) focuses on the implementation of the College mission, attainment of strategic aims and sustainable performance, ensuring a high level of stakeholder involvement, satisfaction with the quality of studies, research and services provided by the College and yielding a positive impact on economic development of the country.

Basic principles of College quality policy:

Student-centered approach

- Involvement of students in the improvement of the study process, promotion of equality and mutual interaction between the teaching staff and students, boosting motivation of the teaching staff to use interactive teaching methods, while creating a modern study and research environment and infrastructure.

Competence

- The quality of the College performance is ensured by staff with advanced professional knowledge and skills, experience and continuous professional development, which provide students with the opportunity to obtain high quality education.

Partnership

- Effective long-term cooperation with stakeholders in the health care sectors in Latvia and other countries.

Sustainability

- Active and responsible actions within the study direction for sustainable development and for satisfying the needs of society.

The aim of the quality policy is to promote the College development by establishing guidelines and principles ensuring a consistently high quality of the College performance.

The quality policy is implemented in accordance with the following documents:

- Law on Higher Education Institutions, Law on Education, Law on Professional Education, other regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia, which determine the functions and tasks of the College;
- standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG);

- strategic development directions, values and activities of the College, which promote the College recognition in the health care and related fields;
- LU RFMC regulations and Code of Ethics.

To implement the quality policy, the College:

- develops and implements the quality culture at the macro- and micro-levels of the College workplace organization consistent with the College values of excellence, creativity and openness;
- ensures that the quality management system is guided by the EFQM guidelines;
- ensures that every member of the College staff is motivated to participate in the development, maintenance and improvement of the quality management system;
- plans and ensures the necessary support for the implementation of the quality management system by providing human, training, financial, material and technical resources;
- cooperates with students, employers as well as other stakeholders to obtain feedback;
- evaluates the achieved results and identifies further essential development directions considering regular self-assessment;
- publishes objective and regular information about its performance.

To ensure the quality of the College's education, a quality management system has been created (the link to the Quality Manual available in the Latvian language is here: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/LU-R1MK-Kvalitates-rokasgramata-.pdf>). The aims of the quality management system are set and formulated consistent with the mission and quality policy of LU RFMC. Their performance is regularly assessed at meetings of various levels of quality management review. The formulation of aims, the staff responsible for specific tasks, deadlines, analysis of results, revision of aims, setting new aims and other issues relevant to the quality system are recorded in the protocol.

The Director of the College is generally responsible for the LU RFMC quality management system, determining the quality policy, ensuring appropriate resources, approving the Quality Manual of the University of Latvia RFMC and other quality management documents.

The quality management system is supervised by the quality manager. Any activity of the College that requires resources and that is managed is considered a process in order to turn investment into an outcome. Processes are grouped into separate stages, each of which receives a relatively measurable outcome. The progress of each process group is connected to the College's strategy.

For example, the basic study processes and their activities, the final result of which is the provision of higher education to the College's students, are combined in the following stages:

- market research;
- content creation and design;
- admission and resources;
- studies;
- validation.

The key processes in the group of processes forming the College activities are the following:

- College's strategy;
- Integrated management;
- Analysis and planning;
- External regulatory enactments;
- Internal regulations.

The key processes in the group of processing supporting the College activities are the following:

- Financial accounting and reporting;
- ICT provision;
- Provision of infrastructure;
- Human resource management;
- Student advisory support;
- Document management;
- Project management;
- Legal support;
- Communication;
- Library.

Annex 3 of the Quality Manual (available in the Latvian language here: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/LU-R1MK-Kvalitates-rokasgramata-.pdf>) provides a summary of quality management indicators: 1. Leadership, management; 2. Policy and strategy; 3. Personnel management; 4. Resources; 5. Student satisfaction; 6. Process management; 7. Satisfaction of the professional field (employers); 8. Staff satisfaction; 9. Financial results; 10. Student flow; 11. Business activities; 12. Innovation; 13. Staff; 14. External evaluation.

In accordance with the quality policy, there has been developed a quality action policy (available only in the Latvian language at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Kvalitates-ricibpolitika.pdf>), which provides the quality management guidelines for the College strategic development directions.

All College structural units and staff implement the quality policy, thus, achieving the strategic aims at both the structural and individual levels. The detailed description of the quality assurance system and its activities is included in the Quality Manual (available only in the Latvian language at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/LU-R1MK-Kvalitates-rokasgramata-.pdf>) and in the Study Quality Manual (available only in the Latvian language at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/LU-RIGAS-1.MEDICINAS-KOLEDZAS-STUDIJU-KVALITATES-ROKASGRAMATA.pdf>).

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

1.	<p>The higher education institution/ college has established a policy and procedures for assuring the quality of higher education.</p>	<p>The LU RFMC quality policy formulates a set of quality principles, aims and actions necessary to achieve them, which LU RFMC implements in accordance with international standards for higher education and organizational management. The aim of the quality policy is to promote the implementation of the LU RFMC mission, the achievement of strategic aims and sustainable development, setting guidelines and principles ensuring a consistently high quality of operations. This policy together with other policies and a set of processes ensures the coordinated planning and implementation of LU RFMC activities. This policy is part of the quality management system, which applies to all areas of LU RFMC activities and provides for their implementation within a single system at all levels of LU RFMC management. When implementing the quality management system, LU RFMC provides a specific set of activities and methods for which quality management is planned, implemented, systematically evaluated and continuously improved, thus facilitating the attainment of the LU RFMC aims and satisfaction of the parties involved. To ensure the implementation of comprehensive quality management, LU RFMC uses the quality management methodology proposed by the EFQM excellence model. Some areas have been subjected to the advanced quality management system, which ensures the compliance with current industry standards and frameworks, one of them being ESG in the study process.</p> <p>LU RFMC has identified, formalized and implemented procedures for ensuring the quality of higher education in accordance with the requirements of Latvian legislation, the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European higher education area (ESG) and in accordance with internal needs.</p> <p>LU RFMC has established a system for quality assessment and improvement of the study direction and the study programs included in it, which is a component of the overall LU RFMC quality management system. This guarantees the responsible involvement of all levels of study direction management in regular study quality assessment, planning and enhancement.</p> <p>The internal control of the quality of the study direction is implemented by the heads of study programs, heads of departments, the Study Department, the deputy director for academic affairs, the Study Program Council, whereas in case of external quality assessment, also the College Council, involving Students' Self-government at all levels of decision-making. The assessment of study quality involves planning and review cycles of both the study direction and each study program.</p>
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2.	<p>A mechanism for the creation and internal approval of the study programmes of the higher education institution/ college, as well as the supervision of their performance and periodic inspection thereof, has been developed.</p>	<p>The development of the LU RFMC study programs, internal approval and supervision as well as periodic inspection of their activities proceed in accordance with relevant external regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia and internal LU RFMC regulatory enactments.</p> <p>The aim of the "Regulations of the Study Programs and Further Education Programs of LU Riga First Medical College" (LU RFMC Council Decision No. 5 of 2 June 2020) is to determine the contents and implementation requirements of study programs and further education programs, which ensures the delivery of high quality, modern and value-added study programs competitive on the international and Latvian market as well as effective use of resources. The Regulations determine the principles of the structure, content and management of study programs and further education programs of LU RFMC. The Regulations include the description of study programs and further education programs implemented by LU RFMC, their structure and the regulations for the development of study programs. The Regulations stipulate that the development of study program concepts and full study programs may be proposed by the LU RFMC staff and collegial decision-making bodies as well as persons not related to LU RFMC (for example, employers). The development and assessment of new study programs proceed in accordance with the LU RFMC procedures specified in the LU RFMC Regulations (LU Senate Decision No. 299 of 15 April 2019) and in the following successive stages:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The development of study programs and its independent expertise are organized by the relevant department in cooperation with the Study Program Council. 2) The relevant department submits the description of the study program together with the expert opinion to the College Council for approval. 3) The College Council secretary submits the description of the study program to the Study Department of the University of Latvia for further assessment and approval, enclosing the minutes of the Council in accordance with the procedures specified by the University of Latvia. 4) The LU Senate approves the study program of the College. 5) The minimum number of study subjects (courses) to be acquired within the study programs to be implemented at the College in the regulated professions in medicine is determined by regulatory enactments on the minimum requirements for educational programs awarding a professional qualification for a specific and regulated profession. 6) assessment and approval of the College study programs in the LU Study Department and LU Senate proceed in accordance with internal regulatory enactments. <p>The annual assessment of the implemented LU RFMC study programs takes place in accordance with the "Procedure for Preparation of Annual Reports of LU Study Directions" (Order No. 1/255), which sets uniform requirements for preparation, assessment, approval and publication of the LU RFMC annual report on the study direction development, which ensures the uniform internal quality principles of the implementation of the study direction at the University of Latvia and the College.</p>
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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 made public.	"Procedure for the Development and Renewal of Study Courses of LU Riga First Medical College" (College Council Decision No. 15 of 27/11/2020) stipulates that the intended learning outcomes and their assessment criteria are formulated in the description of each study course, which are subsequently published in the e-study environment.
4.	Internal procedures and mechanisms for assuring the qualifications of the academic staff and the work quality have been developed.	<p>In order to ensure modern and effective solution of staff management issues in the organization in accordance with the strategy, vision, mission and values of LU RFMC, the "Staff Management Policy of LU Riga First Medical College" has been developed and implemented (College Council Decision No. 14 of 27/11/2020). It describes the principles and procedures of LU RFMC in staff selection, employment relations, provision of motivation system and staff development.</p> <p>In order to ensure the purposeful professional development of the LU RFMC teaching staff, the LU RFMC Annual Action Plans provide for the improvement of the professional and pedagogical competences of the academic and general staff in a separate section. For example, in the 2020 and 2021 plans, it is point 3 (available at: https://www.rmkl.lv/lv/document_category/gada-plan-i/)</p>
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.	<p>The "Regulations on Regular Surveys of the Riga First Medical College of the University of Latvia" stipulate that the College Study Department in cooperation with the Administration Department organizes surveys of students, graduates and employers every academic year.</p> <p>The results of these surveys are described and analyzed in regular College meetings at various levels (administration, departments, program management, student self-government) and in study direction reports. Information on students' progress is stored in the College information system. It is available in various sections for analysis and review of the development of study directions and study programs.</p>

6	The higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field whilst implementing their quality assurance systems.	The implementation of the internal quality assurance system of the study direction at LU RFMC proceeds in accordance with the "Procedure for Preparation of Annual Reports of LU Study Directions" (order No.1/255), according to which the College annually prepares and submits a LU report on the improvement and development of study direction "Health Care". Within the set deadlines, the College study direction "Health Care" is forwarded for reaccreditation. The efficiency and competitiveness of the implementation of the study direction is ensured by the quality system, whose principles are defined in the LU RFMC Quality Manual (available only in latvian at: https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/LU-R1MK-Kvalitates-rokasgramata-.pdf).
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2.1. Management of the Study Field

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

LU RFMC implements four study programs of the study direction "Health Care" (see Table 3):

Table 3

Study programs of the study direction "Health Care"

No.	Name	Amount in CP	Awarded qualification	Study mode	Level
1.	Nursing (until 31/12/2022)	120	Nurse	Full-time on-site day studies	First level higher education
2.	Medicine		Physician assistant		
3.	Medicine		Midwife		
4.	Pharmacy	100	Pharmacist assistant		

The topicality of the study direction "Health Care" is determined by the requirements and opportunities of the labor market - the labor market guarantees the development of the education system in accordance with its requirements. The report of the State Audit Office of the Republic of Latvia (hereinafter - SAO) on the availability of human resources in the health care sector concludes that "the growing gap between the supply of health care professionals and the demand for their services is recognized as a major issue in the health care development worldwide". The World Health Organization (hereinafter - WHO) supports the conclusion that the availability and qualifications of health care workers are crucial for enhancing health care.^[1]

Demographic estimates also suggest that the demand for health care services will increase in the long term. Consistent with the conceptual report of the Ministry of Health (hereinafter - MH) "On the Reform of the Health Care System", the population of Latvia is decreasing, which is why the Latvian society is rapidly aging.

Furthermore, public health indicators in Latvia lag far behind other EU member states.[2]

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, despite existing difficulties, the asset of the Latvian health care is excellent medical education. Latvian medical higher education institutions and colleges provide training for highly qualified medical professionals who are able to perform the highest quality diagnostics, treatment and care.[3]

"In order to attain good public health indicators, it is crucial to use modern technologies, new and effective medicine, advanced diagnostic and treatment methods. However, despite the rapid development of medical technologies and health care services in the world, including Latvia, human resources will continue to be an important and indispensable part of the health care sector now and in the future." [4] Consequently, educational institutions need to continue training of professional health care specialists in order to ensure a significant increase in the number of such professionals.

The aims of the study direction "Health Care" correspond to the areas of activities of LU RFMC, strategic development directions, needs and tendencies of development of society and the national economy.

LU Riga First Medical College Strategy for 2015-2020 set the following development directions, which were used as indicators of high quality of the study programs that train health care specialists with high-level competences and that offer internationally competitive training in accordance with the demand of the Latvian and European labor markets:

1. College as a labor market oriented professional higher education institution
2. College as a cooperation partner of higher education institutions, including colleges
3. Modern college
4. Internationally recognized college
5. Study programs complying with the requirements of the labor market
6. Student as a priority in the study process
7. Cooperation with graduates
8. Competent teaching staff
9. Current research in line with the needs of the labor market
10. Stable, safe and modern training materials and technical facilities
11. Cooperation to increase the quality of professional education
12. Appropriate financial planning for the implementation of the strategy.

The College Strategy for 2021-2027, which is currently being developed, is based on standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) (available at: https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf) and relates to the educational development priorities set out in the Osnabrück Declaration: quality,

sustainability, lifelong learning, digitalisation, the development of professional education over the international scope, etc. (available at: <https://liddk.lv/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Osnabrikas-deklaracija-un-tas-ietekme-uz-PI-attistibu-Latvija.pdf>).

The development plan of the College study direction "Health Care" 2021-2027 (Annex 3) emphasizes the following strategic development directions:

1. Enhancement of the contents of the College study programs
2. Enhancement of the study process
3. Competent and highly qualified teaching staff
4. Current research in line with the needs of the labor market
5. Stable and modern training materials and technical facilities
6. Well-developed study environment, including e-environment
7. Cooperation with graduates
8. Recognizable study programs
9. Cooperation with professional organizations, employers, other HEIs
10. New study programs for the lifelong learning direction.

General aims of the study direction

1. To ensure the acquisition of the first level professional higher education in the study programs "Nursing" (until 31/12/2022), "Pharmacy", "Medicine" (with the qualifications of a physician assistant and midwife).
2. To train professional nurses, physician assistants, midwives and pharmacist assistants whose competences meet European standards and who are able to satisfy the needs of public health.
3. To promote professional development and provide an opportunity to prepare students for pursuing the second level professional higher education.

The study direction provides a scientific foundation for carrying out professional actions, developing the ability to independently conduct scientific research, developing analytical skills in care (study program "Nursing"), diagnosing diseases and providing emergency medical aid, organizing and managing obstetric care (study program "Medicine"), training professional health care specialists for pharmacies, drug wholesalers, production of drugs under the supervision of a pharmacist (in the study program "Pharmacy"), promoting further professional development and creating motivation for continuing education.

With the accession of the college to the University of Latvia, the quality standards of the University of Latvia Riga First Medical College have been changing positively, for example, there has been an increase in student research presentations and abstract publications in English and in the quality level of students' independent work, supervised by the teaching staff, etc. In the next action period, one of the aims of the College to be attained in cooperation with the University of Latvia is to motivate students to continue their education at a higher level.

Links to LU RFMC Strategy for 2015-2020

- In Latvia: https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Stratija_.pdf,
- In English:
<https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Strategy-of-Riga-1st-Medical-College-of-the-University-of-Latvia.pdf>

Currently, the College is developing a new strategy for 2021-2027. In accordance with the priority development directions, the six-year development plan of the College study direction "Health Care" (2021-2027) has already been prepared (see Annex 3).

The correspondence between successful and synergistic aims of the study direction "Health Care" and their qualitative implementation in accordance with the strategic development directions of LU RFMC is evidenced by the successfully implemented study direction programs, positive feedback from graduates and employers, the number of the awarded state scholarships covering the College tuition fees and positive evaluations of external experts in the accreditation documents of the study direction "Health Care".

The interconnection of the programs implemented in the study direction is formed logically in a mutually complementary manner:

- in accordance with the aims of the study direction and study programs and the learning outcomes to be achieved;
- considering the interconnection of uniform quality requirements and criteria of the study process and the students' theses, including the methodology of writing theses (*the link to Study Quality Manual only in latvian is available at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/LU-RIGAS-1.MEDICINAS-KOLEZIJAS-STUDIJU-KVALITATES-ROKASGRAMATA.pdf>*);
- in cooperation with the College departments and Study Program Council on issues of research, study methodology, annual and strategic planning and lecturer training (Annex 3);
- in planning and provision of resources (teaching staff, study technical facilities, digital technologies);
- in organizing internships in cooperation with employers ;
- etc.

In accordance with the nursing education reform and the Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 537 of 29/10/2019 "On the Conceptual Report Regarding the Future Development of the Nursing Profession", the study program "Nursing" has not been submitted for the assessment within the study direction. In the future, LU RFMC intends to co-operate with the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Latvia on nurse training, including the practical study facilities of the College and the teaching staff of the College (cooperation agreement between LU and LU RFMC of 19/01/2017)

We believe that this will not significantly affect the interconnection of other study programs of the study direction. The process of strategic development of the study direction includes cooperation with professional associations on opening new college-level study programs that are relevant to the needs of employers and thus are demanded by employers (See Annex 3 Study direction

development plan for 6 years).

[1] State Audit Office of the Republic of Latvia "Human Resource in Health Care" (2019). // available at: <https://static.lsm.lv/documents/oy.pdf>

[2] Conceptual Report of the Ministry of Health "On the Reform of the Health Care System" (2017). // available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/292718-par-konceptualo-zinojumu-par-veselibas-aprupes-sistemas-reformu>

[3] The same document

[4] State Audit Office of the Republic of Latvia "Human Resource in Health Care" (2019). // available at: <https://static.lsm.lv/documents/oy.pdf>

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

The SWOT analysis is available in Annex 21.

In order to sustain the strengths of the College, the material and technical facilities need to be maintained and further improved, the e-learning environment and its contents should be expanded and further developed in accordance with the current trends of development of the study process. Teaching staff should be motivated to maintain and improve their qualifications and professional level. New lecturers should be attracted consistent with the policy of the development of teaching staff. Consistent with the requirements of the labor market and students' interests, it is essential that the qualitative acquisition of a wide range of knowledge, skills and competences be ensured, enabling graduates to successfully pursue a career in health care in the future. While studying in the first level professional higher education programs, students need to be informed about the opportunity to acquire advanced knowledge of topical issues in health care and social care in Bachelor's and Master's programs, thus, ultimately obtaining a more competitive education.

In order to use the opportunities of the College, surveys of various labor market needs will be conducted and relevant analyzes will be performed, the outcomes of which will be integrated into the content of study courses and development of the e-environment. In order to engage teaching staff in research activities more actively and to strengthen cooperation with relevant institutions in the field, the College needs to continue to participate in various projects, including international ones, seeking new financially supported research and communication opportunities, which would create the grounds for attracting foreign lecturers. Participation in projects and active involvement of students and teaching staff in international cooperation programs is also a way to ensure wider publicity and international recognition of the study direction and study programs.

In order to reduce weaknesses and minimize threats, LU RFMC will continue to develop cooperation with industry professional associations, creating continuing education programs and organizing lifelong learning events for medical practitioners, thus not only promoting the acquisition of new knowledge, skills and competences, but also promoting further professional and career development for medical practitioners. While preparing accreditation materials for the study direction "Health Care", in 2020 in cooperation with EMS, LU RFMC developed and approved a new professional development program "Outpatient Physician Assistant" (611 hours) and in 2021 a professional development program "Nurse in Psychiatry and Narcology" with the specialization in psychiatry and narcology.

In order to promote research activities, the College is planning to organize an internal research project/grant competition and develop regulations for the LU RFMC internal research project competition.

Development plan of the study direction

The development plan of the study direction "Health Care" has been developed taking into account the LU RFMC strategic principles and development priorities, the current and previous LU RFMC experience and the identified priorities in the development of study quality in compliance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions, Law on Professional Education, Law on Scientific Activity as well as health care, education and science policy planning documents. The main development priorities of LU RFMC in the near future are related to the expansion of the e-learning environment and the development of research and lifelong learning. The development plan of the study direction has been developed in cooperation with specialists of the health care sector and representatives of other structural units of LU RFMC and has been approved by the Study Program Council of LU RFMC. The development plan of the study direction is included in Annex 3.

Evaluating the development plan of the study direction for the next six years and the development process of the LU RFMC strategy for 2021-2027, the following conclusions were postulated: the correspondence between the planning documents, useful specification and supplement to the development priorities, and the focus on the issues, the solution of which significantly boosts the capacity and competitiveness of the study direction "Health Care".

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

The management of the study direction proceeds in accordance with the regulations of LU RFMC and internal regulatory documents regulating the management process of the study direction and relevant study programs.

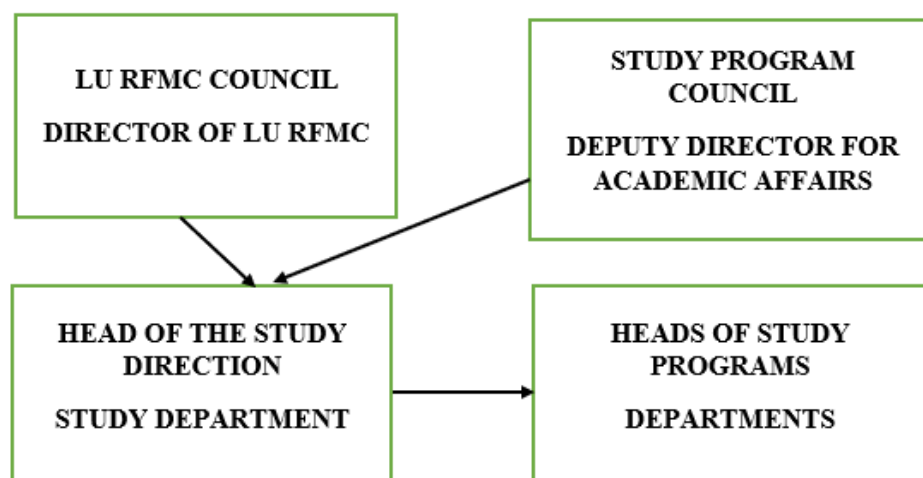


Fig. 2 Management structure of the study direction "Health Care"

The establishment of the study direction and strategic action plan are approved by the College Council, which consists of 1 pharmaceutical, 1 emergency medicine representative (in 2021) and the College Director. The development of the direction is coordinated and managed by the Study Program Council and the Deputy Director for Academic Affairs. The head of the study direction and the heads of study programs ensure and coordinate the practical implementation of the first level professional higher education programs at LU RFMC throughout all stages of the study process. An important structural unit ensuring the practical implementation of the study direction is the Study Department, which organizes lectures, practical classes, internships, exam planning, etc., for study programs; cooperates with students, heads of study programs, heads of departments, teaching staff, other structural units of LU RFMC, LU Study Department; collects and accumulates information, maintains a student database, which includes student progress and changes in the number of students, prepares and provides information and reports on the activities of the departments, students, practical implementation of study programs, carries out control measures ensuring the study quality, prepares and provides proposals for improving the quality of study programs.

The heads of study programs are responsible for the organization and supervision of the study process. Their responsibilities include organizing and managing the development of the study program in accordance with the requirements of the relevant field of science, preparing, implementing and developing the study program strategy in accordance with the mission, aims and operational strategy of LU RFMC, ensuring systematic improvement of the study program, planning the engagement and development of teaching staff in accordance with the study program strategy, organizing the activities of teaching staff, analyzing the quality of performance of teaching staff of the study program, cooperating with Latvian and foreign higher

education institutions/colleges in matters of the study content coordination and experience exchange. In 2021/2022, the direct supervision of the contents of the study programs is performed by the following heads of the study programs:

- Study program "Nursing" - lecturer Maira Vīksna
- Study program "Medicine" with the qualification of the physician assistant - lecturer Inese Indrāne
- Study program "Medicine" with the qualification of the midwife - lecturer Maira Vīksna
- Study program "Pharmacy" - Kārlis Mačāns.

Representatives of the College students are involved in the management of the study direction and study programs at all levels.

Departments cooperate with employers, professional associations and societies, develop and implement further education programs, organize research activities of students and teaching staff, carry out control measures of the study quality, prepare and provide proposals for improving the quality of the study direction and study programs, codevelop new study programs with the heads of the study programs in accordance with the requirements of the relevant field of science and approve these new study programs, prepare, implement and develop the study direction strategy in accordance with the mission, aims and operational strategy of LU RFMC.

The Administration Department organizes the promotion of the study direction and study programs of LU RFMC, coordinates the scientific research activities of teaching staff and students in cooperation with the departments, organizes work in international projects (Erasmus+, Nordplus, etc.), organizes events for improving pedagogical competences of teaching staff.

The main task of the Accounting Department is to monitor and plan the College budget expenditures and revenues.

In order to ensure the successful organization of the LU RFMC study process, the employees of the College structural units form close communication with each other on a daily basis, which is supplemented by regular meetings aiming to promote the achievement of a common aim.

Annex 2. Organizational structure of LU RFMC.

Annex 4. Management structure of the study direction "Health Care". Decision-making and feedback in the study process in the study programs of the study direction "Health Care".

2.1.4. Description and assessment of the requirements and the system for the admission of students by specifying, inter alia, the regulatory framework of the admission procedures and requirements. The assessment of options for the students to have their study period, professional experience, and the previously acquired formal and non-formal

education recognised within the study field by providing specific examples of the application of these procedures.

The admission process is regulated by the College Admission Regulations, which are approved by the College Council and coordinated with the LU Study Service and National Education Content Center. In accordance with the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 846 of 10 October 2006 "Regulations on Requirements, Criteria and Procedures for Admission to Study Programs", the admission regulations for the next academic year are published on the College website by November 1 (available only in the Latvian language at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/lv/studiju-iespejas/ieraksts/pirma-limena-profesionalas-augstak-as-izglibas-uznemsanas-noteikumi/>).

The admission regulations set out the admission requirements and criteria for the first level professional higher education study programs, determine the procedure for submitting documents, determine the types of documents, submission deadlines, course of competitions, appeals, contestation and decisions related to admission, the procedure for concluding a study contract and matriculation, the rights and obligations of the applicant and the College.

The competition for enrollment in the College study programs proceeds considering the results of all centralized examinations or certificate marks for persons who have been exempted from the centralized examinations or have obtained secondary education abroad or else have acquired secondary education before 2004. The transcript of the secondary education for the study program "Pharmacy" with the qualification of a pharmacist assistant has to include a passing mark in the subjects of chemistry or natural sciences.

As a result of the competition, applicants are ranked according to the points obtained. According to the position obtained as a result of the competition (from the highest to the lowest result), applicants are invited to sign study agreements considering the number of study places in the specific study program. Orphans and children left without parental support are admitted outside the competition.

Admission to later stages of studies at LU RFMC takes place on the basis of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 932 of 16 November 2004 "Procedure for Commencement of Studies in Later Study Stages" and Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 505 of 14 August 2018 "Regulations for the Recognition of Competences Acquired outside Formal Education or through Professional Experience and Learning Outcomes Achieved in Previous Education".

All admission-related information is published and available on the College website. Students are provided with the opportunity to receive consultations on the preparation of the admission application on the premises of the College (at the Study Department) or by contacting the Study Department by e-mail or phone.

The precondition for starting studies in later study stages is the recognition of previously completed study courses. The procedure for recognition of study courses is specified in the regulatory enactment of LU RFMC "Procedure for Recognition of Study Courses at Riga First Medical College of the University of Latvia" (available only in the Latvian language at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Studiju-kursu-atzisanas-kartiba-LUR1MK.pdf>).

In accordance with the above-mentioned procedure and on the basis of the student's application, the possibility of recognizing study courses acquired in another Latvian higher education

institution, university abroad or in the previous study period is considered. The documents submitted by students are evaluated by the head of the department or the head of the study program in all study programs, and the prepared comparison protocols are submitted to the Study Program Council of LU RFMC. The Study Program Council prepares its decision for the College Director to issue an order.

Table 4

Number of students for whom previously acquired study courses have been recognized

	Study year and number of students for whom study courses were recognized									Total in the study program
	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	
Study program "Medicine" with the qualification of a physician assistant	6	7	6	7	7	7	4	20	32	96
Study program "Medicine" with the qualification of a midwife	10	9	7	3	3	5	10	7	7	61
Study program "Nursing" with the qualification of a nurse	10	5	6	14	15	23	22	2	3	100
Study program "Pharmacy" with the qualification of a pharmacist assistant	6	14	13	13	50	27	20	7	10	160
Total in the academic year	32	35	32	37	75	62	56	36	52	417

Since 2013, LU RFMC has reviewed 417 applications and has issued relevant decisions (data as of 01/10/2021).

Table 4 shows that over the reporting period most applications for recognition of previously acquired study courses were submitted to the study program "Pharmacy" with the qualification of a pharmacist assistant (in the reporting period 2013-2021, such were 38% of the total number of applications).

Surveys of applicants indicate that 30% of future pharmacist assistants have decided to acquire this profession as their second or even third specialty.

In the reporting period 2013-2021, 18 persons used the opportunity to recognize study results obtained in previous education (including further education program) or professional experience ("Regulations on Recognition of Competences Acquired outside Formal Education or through Professional Experience and the Learning Outcomes Achieved in Previous Education at Riga First Medical College of the University of Latvia" available only in the Latvian language at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Nolikums-par-iepriekseja-izglitiba-sasnietu-vezultatu-atzisanu.pdf>).

Applications for the recognition of knowledge, skills and competences acquired outside formal education or through professional experience and learning outcomes from previous education

	Study year and number of student applications					2021/2022	Total in the study program
	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021		
Study program "Nursing" with the qualification of a nurse	4	1	2	9		—	16
Study program "Medicine" with the qualification of a physician assistant					2	—	2

In accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 505 of 14 August 2018 "Regulations on Recognition of Competences Acquired outside Formal Education or through Professional Experience and Learning Outcomes Achieved in Previous Education", a person has the right to apply to LU RFMC with an application on recognition of knowledge, skills and competences acquired outside formal education or through professional experience, and the learning outcomes achieved in previous education.

The decision on the recognition of knowledge, skills and competences acquired outside formal education or through professional experience, and the learning outcomes achieved in previous education is made by the Study Result Recognition Commission established by LU RFMC for the study direction "Health Care". Its rights, obligations, formation conditions are included in the regulations "Recognition of Competences Acquired outside Formal Education or through Professional Experience and Learning Outcomes Achieved in Previous Education" (available only in the Latvian language at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Nolikums-par-iepriekseja-izglitiba-sasnietu-rezultatu-atzisanu.pdf>).

One example of recognition of knowledge, skills and competences acquired through professional experience is the following: upon enrollment in the College study program "Medicine" with the qualification of a physician assistant, the applicant requested that the learning outcomes achieved in his professional experience be equated to the study courses E-health and Outpatient Care.

The applicant received a consultation on this process, requirements and documents to be submitted to the Study Department. The head of the department introduced the applicant to the learning outcomes of the study courses E-health and Outpatient Care, and they were analysed considering the applicant's previous work experience in the family doctor's practice. In the application, the applicant described his experience working in the family doctor's practice, substantiating the compliance of the practical experience with the aims of the study course. The application was substantiated with a statement from the workplace, which indicated both the length of the service and the work duties performed. The Commission, examining the submitted

documents, concluded that the applicant had acquired the planned learning outcomes of the study courses E-health and Outpatient Care through professional experience. The College organized an examination for the applicant, which was an integrated test, and an expert visited the applicant's workplace in order to make observations. Based on the test assessment and the expert report, a decision was made to recognize the knowledge, skills and competences acquired through professional experience as corresponding to the aims of the study courses implemented at the College. The reference to the decision of the Study Result Recognition Commission on the recognition of the study courses E-health and Outpatient Care is reflected in the diploma supplement.

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

The external and internal regulatory enactments regulating students' achievements and assessment of learning outcomes are the following:

- Law on Higher Education Institutions
- Education Law
- LU RFMC Regulation on the Study and Examination Procedures (available at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Nolikums-par-studiju-un-parbaudijumu-kartibu.pdf>),
- LU RFMC Regulation on the Organization and Conduct of State Final Examinations in the First Level Professional Higher Education Programs (available at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Nolikums-par-Valsts-nosleguma-parbaudijumu-organizesanu.pdf>),
- LU RFMC Procedure for the Development and Renewal of Study Courses (available at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Nolikums-par-studiju-kursu-izstradi.pdf>),
- LU RFMC Internship Regulation (available at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Nolikums-par-praksi.pdf>)
- LU RFMC Regulation on the Development and Formatting of Theses (available at: https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Nolikums-par-KD-izstradi-un-noformesanu_2019.pdf)
- Other LU RFMC internal regulatory documents.

The College has developed the LU RFMC internal regulatory document "Procedure for the Development and Renewal of LU RFMC Study Courses" in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions, Law on Professional Education, the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No.141 of 20/03/2001. This document stipulates that information

on the aim, enrollment conditions, tasks, requirements for obtaining credit points, content of the study course, organization of the study process in classes, organization and tasks of independent work, anticipated learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, competences), assessment methods and criteria is included in the descriptions of all study courses that are available to students in the College Study Department, College e-learning environment and that can be obtained from the heads of the study programs and departments. Registration and record-keeping of student marks take place in the student record-keeping system *Win Students* in the Study Department. All study programs and study courses have their learning outcomes formulated as an overall set of knowledge, skills and competences. The courses of the study programs are developed in accordance with the principles of gradation and succession. In order to ensure this, the study programs have mapped the learning outcomes of the study programs with those of the study courses. The mapping results are available in Annexes 27, 36 and 46.

Students are informed about the study organization and implementation in the specific study program. In the beginning of each study course, teaching staff inform students about the course organization, content, requirements, anticipated learning outcomes, tests and assessment criteria, and explain the essence of the study course in the overall system of attainment of learning outcomes of the study program. Students can get acquainted with the assessment criteria and conditions as well as binding procedures in the study course descriptions and e-learning environment; additionally, in the beginning of the first lecture in each study course, a lecturer introduces students to the course organization requirements, brief description of mid-term and final assessment requirements, assessment criteria and the examination conduct procedure. A lecturer cannot change these requirements and assessment criteria later during the semester.

The academic progress of students and implementation of the study program are monitored 4 times a year, which allows to timely plan additional consultations of lecturers and individual work with students who experience difficulties in completing study requirements, thus ensuring a decrease in the number of exmatriculated students, especially in the first year of study:

- At the end of the first and second semester, students' learning outcomes are summarized by study courses and study subjects; the level of learning outcomes is then used to determine the quality of the study program acquisition (criterion: 7-10 point proportion). Students' academic debts are recorded, and the reasons causing such academic debts are analyzed.
- In the middle of each semester on November 1 and April 1 a mid-term assessment (attestation) of learning outcomes is completed for all study courses. Such a practice is valuable because it promotes early identification of students experiencing difficulties in completing a study course. The collected information is reviewed in the methodological meetings of the teaching staff and is analyzed in the Study Program Council.

Every year teaching staff update the student knowledge assessment forms in order to ensure the achievement of the anticipated learning outcomes of the study course and the study program as much as possible. When evaluating students' knowledge and skills, it is important to test the specifics of the content of the study course, which can be accomplished by using various types of assessment. In order to complete the acquisition of a study program, students have to pass examinations and other forms of assessment set for specific study courses. To evaluate the ongoing academic progress of students, various forms of assessment are used (tests, reports, essays), the outcomes of which can be assessed with "Passed" or "Failed". Study courses are concluded with the final test or exam, which is assessed on the ten-point marking scale. Assessment is considered successful if a student has received the mark "almost satisfactory" (4 points) or higher.

Different types of assessment are used to test students' knowledge and skills in examinations and theoretical tests: written, oral, computer-based, combined (for example, written and oral), and objectively structured clinical examination. Prior to examination, in addition to classes provided for in the study course, teaching staff offer consultations. The final examination can be taken only by those students who have fulfilled all the requirements specified in the study course description (passed all assessment forms) and by those students who have fulfilled all financial obligations specified in the study agreement (when studies are funded by natural/legal persons).

The outcome of a study course is a mark. If a student has obtained a passing mark in all the assessment criteria specified in the study course, the course is considered to be successfully completed by the student. In student survey, students characterize the assessment system of learning outcomes as understandable and clear. When assessing students' knowledge, skills and competences, learning outcome criteria are used to assess students' performance on the ten-point marking scale in each study course. The formulation of the assessment criteria is based on the learning outcomes of a specific study course and the explanation of marks.

As for the assessment of the outcomes of the LU RFMC students' internship, it is regulated by the internship regulations of LU RFMC (*available at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Nolikums-par-praksi.pdf>*).

Internship outcomes are assessed on a two-part assessment scale ("Passed" or "Failed"). The internship test is organized by the head of the department/methodological supervisor of internship. The internship test evaluates the following aspects:

- reference for the intern from the internship placement (on a 10-point marking scale)
- entries in the internship diary
- entries in the work record sheet
- other internship report documents approved by the department (manipulation sheets, reports, reviews, etc.)

- internship assessment criteria in each study program are developed by the specific department and approved at the department meeting, then submitted to the head of the Study Department.

Internship aims, tasks, assessment procedure for internship achievement are designed as an integral part of the internship 3-party agreement. The results of the internship test are reflected in the test protocol, which is submitted to the head of the Study Department (a copy to the head of the department). The reference for the intern from the internship placement and the internship record timesheet are included in the student's personal file. The head of the Study Department coordinates activities on including these documents in the student's personal file.

The compliance of assessment methods and procedures with the attainment of the study program aims and the satisfaction of the needs of students is analyzed and improved by considering the experience of the teaching staff, analyzing the student learning outcomes and student survey results over the period of several academic years. In the surveys, students admit that clearly defined learning outcomes and assessment criteria as well as regular feedback on students' progress in the study process are paramount for studying. To ensure this, the teaching staff systematically analyze their experience, cooperate with colleagues, analyze student achievements, enhance course descriptions and e-learning environment, develop assessment criteria corresponding to the specified learning outcomes, thus ensuring the justification of assessment.

The assessment of learning outcomes proceeds in compliance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No.141 of 20 March 2001 on "Regulations on the State Standard of the First Level Professional Higher Education":

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

LU RFMC has developed the LU RFMC Code of Ethics for students, teaching staff and general employees, which sets out the basic principles of ethical conduct and the basic ethical requirements for students, teaching staff and general employees (*available only in latvian at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Etikas-kodekss.pdf>*).

The regulations of the Ethics Commission of LU RFMC (*available only in latvian at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Etikas-komisija-Nolikums.pdf>*) define the powers of the Ethics Commission and the procedure for reviewing cases, the procedure for reviewing student applications, decision-making of the Ethics Commission and implementation of decisions.

In order to promote a common framework to the definition, identification, review and application of penalties for violations of academic integrity, LU RFMC has developed the Regulation on Academic Integrity (*available only in latvian at:*

<https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Noteikumi-par-akademisko-godigumu.pdf>).

The purpose of this regulation is to strengthen academic culture and academic integrity in the academic environment of the College. The regulation explains academic integrity and related actions, lists the most common violations of the principles of academic integrity in the academic environment and the responsibilities of College staff and students in preventing academic dishonesty. Annex 1 to the Regulation "Plagiarism and its Detection" lists the types of plagiarism typical in the academic environment and the subsequent actions in detecting the signs of plagiarism. Annex 2 to the Regulation "Report on Violation of Student Academic Integrity" indicates the actions in establishing a violation of student academic integrity and the procedure for making a decision on imposing a penalty.

As part of the study process, LU RFMC implements the following preventive anti-plagiarism measures aiming at reducing the probability of plagiarism:

- In 2019, thesis templates and "Methodological Regulations on the Development and Defense of Theses" were renewed. These regulations stipulated the inadmissibility of plagiarism, specified thesis formatting requirements (bibliography, references, tables and figures), and informed on the capacity to establish similarity with papers produced at other educational institutions.
- Regular plagiarism checks of theses in order to detect and prevent plagiarism already during the writing stage. Plagiarism checks are performed by thesis supervisors and the lecturer of the course on Foundation of Research.
- Thesis themes which reduce the probability of analogues papers in other educational institutions
- Discussions and lectures on academic integrity
- The requirements of compliance with academic integrity principles are incorporated in the following College internal regulatory enactments: "LU RFMC Code of Ethics for Students, Teaching staff and Employees" (*available only in latvian at:* <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Etikas-kodekss.pdf>), "LU RFMC Regulations on the Study and Assessment Procedure" (*available only in latvian at:* <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Nolikums-par-studiju-un-parbaudijumu-kartibu.pdf>), "LU RFMC Regulations on Scientific Research Activities" (*available only in latvian at:* <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Nolikums-par-zinatnisko-darbu.pdf>), "LU RFMC Regulations on Academic Integrity" (*available only in latvian at:* <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Noteikumi-par-akademisko-godigumu.pdf>), etc.

- Already in 2008, the College created a thesis database to monitor possible plagiarism cases in future theses.

Students and teaching staff can individually use the plagiarism search systems *www.plag.lv* and *Etxt Антиплагиат*. Currently, the Study Department and departments are able to monitor and identify plagiarism issues in theses. The College is also planning to join a unified plagiarism control system in cooperation with the University of Latvia.

One of the mechanisms ensuring the compliance with the principles of academic integrity, especially when organizing the study process remotely due to the restrictions set by COVID-19, is the requirement for students to turn on a camera when participating in online lectures and practical classes and to log in with their first name and surname. Written assignments of online examinations are completed under time constraints, and a second camera must be turned on to monitor the student's desk and activity on the computer screen.

In order to promote transparency and consistency in decision-making on plagiarism issues, the College is planning to establish a new centralized commission that would contribute to the development of the internal academic integrity system, to the development and verification of relevant procedures and regulations so that they are appropriately adjusted to review all cases of violations of academic integrity by LU RFMC students. Such a system would help the commission to make decisions appropriate for specific cases following a common academic integrity approach within one common academic integrity system for students of all programs. This would ensure adequacy of the passed decisions, compliance with internal regulatory framework and consistency in decision-making. The project envisages the involvement of an external expert for the implementation and enforcement of this action.

LU RFMC supports mutual agreement of HEIs on cooperation in promoting ethics and academic integrity in tackling such issues.

Overall, LU Riga First Medical College complies with the principles of academic integrity in the study process.

2.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System

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

The LU RFMC activities consist of continuous interaction of many processes, constant exchange of information between the structural units of the College, and coordination of decision-making and

implementation processes. The sustainable development and successful performance of the College is based on the transparency of processes, their mutual coherence and manageability, as well as compliance with the general operating policy and aims of the educational institution.

Quality management is one of the essential tools that provides a well-thought-out and systematic approach to process management, which makes it easier to manage, measure and improve the processes implemented at the College, thus yielding a foundation for the gradual enhancement of current LU RFMC internal processes and for the development of new ones, which ultimately leads to the improvement of the quality of services.

The quality management of the study direction is ensured in accordance with the quality assurance mechanism and procedures established by the LU Riga First Medical College. Students, teaching staff, heads of study programs, heads of departments, the Study Department, etc., participate in the management of the study direction. For the effective operation of the internal quality system, the College has developed the Quality Manual (*available only in latvian at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/LU-R1MK-Kvalitates-rokasgramata-.pdf>*) and the Study Quality Manual (*available only in latvian: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/LU-RIGAS-1.MEDICINAS-KOLEDZAS-STUDIJU-KVALITATES-ROKASGRAMATA.pdf>*).

The Deming cycle "Plan-Do-Check-Act" has been applied for the implementation and enforcement of the internal quality system (see Figure 3).

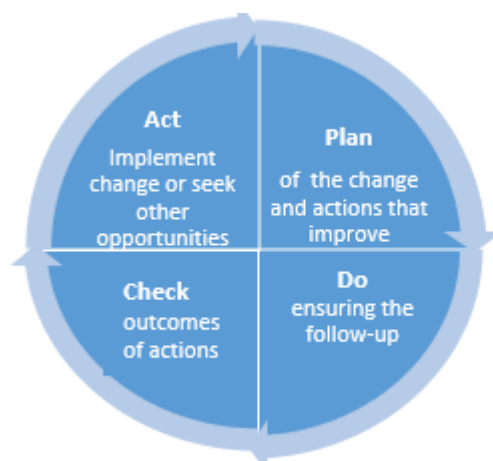


Fig 3. Deming cycle

Overall, the supervision of the LU RFMC activities is ensured by performing many actions that are integrated into daily activities, such as approval, coordination, evaluation of the quality of performance, division of duties and responsibilities, etc. At the same time, targeted control measures have been put in place at various times throughout the year.

The study programs included in the study direction are regularly provided with the review of study courses, performance of regular surveys and measurements, self-assessment, etc., in accordance with the LU RFMC procedures. The study direction improvement activities are planned for the period of six years in line with the LU RFMC development strategy, industry and labor market trends, study direction results, stakeholder needs, and recommendations provided in internal and external (accreditation, licensing) quality assessment. For example, experts suggested that the foreign language knowledge of the College staff be improved. Therefore, the College organizes English language courses at the College, teaching staff are encouraged to attend foreign language courses offered by the University of Latvia and to participate in international conferences, seminars, etc. As a result, the English language skills of the College teaching staff have obviously

improved.

The College implements various actions for regular analysis and renewal of study programs and for determining the need for improvement of the study process, including purposeful cooperation with employers and professional organizations, formal/informal surveys of employers and social partners, focus group discussions, student surveys on the quality and organization of the study process, graduate and student surveys on the quality of study programs, career monitoring of graduates, etc. At the same time, continuous feedback is provided to inform the College stakeholders about the learning outcomes and competences attained by students and graduates.

An important factor in quality assurance is international cooperation with analogous study programs abroad, involvement of employers and social partners in the development of study content, participation in the assessment of students' achievements during the entire study process, development of theses, etc. For example, in September 2017, during the visit to the Utena University of Applied Sciences, representatives of the LU RFMC teaching staff and the teaching staff of this Lithuanian University compared and evaluated the quality of the implementation and improvement of the nursing study programs in Latvia and Lithuania. In 2018, I. Zeleniene, a lecturer of Klaipeda State University of Applied Sciences and the head of Erasmus+ internship program of LU RFMC, led a working group at LU RFMC and shared her experience on organizing and managing high-quality internships for nurses and physician assistants. In the next planning period, the comparison of such quality-oriented experience will be carried out for all study programs of the study direction.

Cooperation among the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study direction programs is ensured by various actions, including mutual evaluation of the teaching staff in observations and regular evaluation of the performance of teaching staff in the departments. Based on the results of observations, new lecturers are recommended to consult and practically learn from the methodological and pedagogical experience of the top lecturers of the College, such as lecturer S.Melberga's study courses "Anatomy", "Physiology" (for nurses, midwives, pharmacist assistants), lecturer T.Kļaveniece's study course "Professional and Technical Skills" (for physician assistants), lecturer L.Kukule's study course "Pharmaceutical Care" (for pharmacist assistants), lecturer I.Miķele's study course "Legislation in Health Care" (for nurses, midwives, physician assistants), M.Vīksna's study course "Patient Medical Care", "Pharmacology", etc. (for nurses), R.Kidika study course "Health Care Products" (for pharmacist assistants), etc.

Teaching staff are motivated in accordance the assessment outcomes and the remuneration regulations of the College - "Regulations on Remuneration and Workload of RFMC Academic Staff" (College Council Decision No.10 of 16/09/2020).

Current issues in quality assurance of the study direction and results of the study programs, annual report, changes in study programs and other issues are regularly reviewed and discussed in the meetings of the Study Program Council and departments. For example, following the evaluation and identification of the optimal time for student internship by the Department of Medicine, Department of Pharmacy and employers, in 2018, a decision was made to change the internship schedule for the second year students in all the programs of the study direction within the framework of the study process so that LU RFMC interns could attend internship organizations when there are fewer trainees from other higher education institutions, thus enabling the students of LU RFMC to complete the tasks of the internship program more productively, which has been acknowledged by students.

The successful implementation of the programs of the study direction, positive feedback obtained from graduates and employers, annually received state scholarships covering the College tuition fees, all of which are always awarded to students, and the positive accreditation of the study

direction "Health Care" by external experts confirm the effective management of the College and the study direction "Health Care" as well as the attainment of strategic aims carried out cohesively in a unified manner by the LU RFMC team. The efficiency of the study direction management is continuously improved. The study direction is managed in accordance with several documents approved by the LU RFMC Council, including those that are coordinated and approved by the University of Latvia. These documents regulate the mutual relations of the administrative staff, teaching staff and students, which are based on the principles of democracy (list of the main internal regulatory enactments and regulations of the College is available in Annex 1).

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

LU RFMC has set up requirements for the development, internal approval, updating and monitoring of study programs.

The development and approval of new study programs proceed in accordance with the "Regulations of LU RFMC on Study Programs and Continuing Education Programs" (College Council Decision No.5 of 02/06/2020; available only in Latvian at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Nolikums-par-studiju-programmam.pdf>).

The development and updating of study course descriptions is specified in the "Procedure for the Development and Renewal of LU RFMC Study Courses" (College Council Decision No.15 of 27/11/2020, available only in Latvian at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Nolikums-par-studiju-kursu-izstradi.pdf>).

Successive activities of the development and approval of study programs and continuing education programs take place in accordance with the requirements specified in the regulations of the LU Riga First Medical College (approved by the LU Senate Decision No.299 of 15/04/2019) and in accordance with the "Regulations of LU RFMC on the Study Programs and Continuing Education Programs". The College develops and implements study programs and continuing education programs in one field. The development of the first level professional higher education programs at the College proceeds in successive stages:

- development of the study program concept;
- development and approval of a full-scale study program;
- licensing and accreditation of the study program.

The development of the concept of the study program or the development of the full study program may be proposed by the College representatives and employees, the

College collegial decision-making bodies as well as persons not related to the College, including employers.

The concept of the study program includes:

- description of the structure, content, learning outcomes
- name of the qualification to be awarded
- research of the possible labor markets for the graduates of the program
- feedback from potential employers
- research of education offers in Latvia and abroad
- comparison of the purpose of the program with similar Latvian and foreign study programs at higher education institutions
- analysis of the availability of academic potential
- analysis of cooperation opportunities with other study programs and universities
- description of necessary material resources, including library resources
- program cost assessment.

The development and assessment of new study programs take place in the following order:

- development of study programs and its independent expertise is organized by the department in cooperation with the Study Program Council
- the study program along with the expert opinion is submitted by the department for approval to the College Council, by including an extract from the minutes of the Council in accordance with the procedure specified by the University of Latvia
- secretary of the College Council submits the study program to the LU Study Department for further evaluation and approval, attaching an extract of the Council Protocol in accordance with the procedure specified by the University of Latvia
- The College study programs are approved by the Senate of the University of Latvia
- The minimum of study subjects (courses) in medicine to be acquired within the study programs at the College in the regulated professions in medicine is determined by regulatory enactments regarding the minimum requirements for study programs for obtaining a professional qualification in the relevant regulated profession.
- Evaluation and approval of the College study programs in the LU Study Department and the LU Senate take place in accordance with the internal regulatory enactments of the University of Latvia.

The development of continuing education programs is organized by the basic academic structural unit of the College - the department - in close cooperation with the employers in the relevant field. The developed continuing education programs are coordinated with the Deputy Director for Academic Affairs and then are approved by the order of the College Director. Continuing education programs are registered with

an industry-specific professional association if credit points are to be awarded.

Study courses are developed in line with the aims, tasks and expected learning outcomes of these study courses, which ensures that contents of study courses, examinations, assessment requirements and procedures of the awarded degrees and titles, obtained diplomas and professional qualifications, a completed part of the study program are mutually recognized by Latvian and foreign universities. A mandatory requirement before teaching of any study course is a description of the study course, which is to be developed by a lecturer teaching this course.

After the development of the description of the study course, the lecturer submits it to the head of the department for review and approval at the meeting of the teaching staff of the department. Then, the description of the study course is reviewed and approved by the Study Program Council, which prepares a draft order and submits it to the Deputy Director for Academic Affairs for further approval of the description of the study course.

The development, renewal and use of study course descriptions are supervised by the Deputy Director for Academic Affairs. The description of the study course is reviewed and specified at least once an academic year, when it is supplemented with the latest news and information. The description of the study course has to be updated before the academic year when the self-assessment report is prepared for the regular accreditation of the study direction. If changes and clarifications in the description of the study course do not affect the study plan because, for example, the name of the program, CP, types of examination and semester do not alter, then the changes are considered non-significant and are reviewed only at the meeting of the teaching staff of the respective department. The heads of study programs and the heads of departments who tackle such course descriptions are responsible for the renewal of study courses.

The annual self-assessment of study directions and study programs takes place once per year. Within the framework of the annual self-assessment, the contents of study course descriptions and methodological materials are reviewed considering student feedback, feedback from the head of the respective study program, other types of information, such as employer feedback and industry expert feedback on the teaching quality of study courses.

The supervision of the implementation of a study program and its quality is ensured by the head of the study program via evaluating the study process, learning outcomes, analyzing the results of student surveys, changes in labor market trends and current developments in the industry and the world. The qualification to be awarded is specified in the licensing and accreditation documents of the study programs of the study directions, descriptions of study programs and study directions, admission regulations and diplomas.

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

In accordance with the principles of democracy and equality as well as the LU RFMC quality policy, LU RFMC ensures the participation of applicants and students in the evaluation of the College study process throughout all stages of the study process - from admission to writing a thesis.

The right of LU RFMC applicants to submit complaints about violations in the admission procedure is ensured by the "Admission Rules of LU RFMC first level professional higher education programs" (College Council Decision No.13 of 29/10/2020, available only in Latvian at:

<https://www.rmkl.lv/lv/studiju-iespejas/ieraksts/pirma-limena-profesionalas-augstakas-izglitiba-uznemsanas-noteikumi/>).

To improve the quality of studies, students have the right to submit proposals and complaints about the implementation of the study process, including the assessment of examinations and theses. In order to ensure the quality of the study process, LU RFMC has developed and implemented the "Procedure for Submission and Review of Student Proposals and Complaints" (available only in Latvian at:

<https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Studejoso-priekslikumu-un-sudzibu-iesniegšanas-un-izskatšanas-kartiba.pdf>). The procedure determines the form in which students can submit proposals and complaints individually or in groups as well as the procedure for registration and evaluation of applications.

Students can submit proposals on the following issues to the specified members of LU RFMC administration staff:

- on the contents and quality of studies to the the Deputy Director for Academic Affairs or the College Director
- on the academic calendar to the Deputy Director for Academic Affairs
- on study regulatory documents and organizational issues to the College Director
- on the study organization to the Deputy Director for Academic Affairs
- on the schedule of classes to the Head of the Study Department
- on the enhancement of the contents of the study program to the Head of the Study Program.

Proposals are reviewed and decided on by specified officials/responsible persons. Proposers receive responses within 15 working days or within 30 working days if the specified officials/responsible persons need further consultation, in which case proposers are promptly notified about it.

Complaints may be submitted about the violation of the LU RFMC procedure by staff (non-compliance with the internal procedure rules and work norms, non-fulfillment and incomplete fulfillment of work duties, intentional or unintentional non-compliance with the employer and supervisor orders), non-compliance with working hours and non-compliance with study documents in cases when the specific facts mentioned in the complaint have directly affected the student's study process or restricted the student's rights. The student may submit complaints:

- to the College Director if the complaint focuses on the issues within the scope of responsibilities of the College Director (organization of the study process, study quality as well as non-fulfillment or incomplete fulfillment of staff duties, etc.)
- to the LU RFMC Council if the essence of the complaint pertains to the performance of the LU RFMC administration.

Complaints can be submitted in person or electronically. A separate register has been created for registration of complaints in accordance with the documents regulating the record-keeping activities of the LU Riga First Medical College.

According to the LU RFMC Code of Ethics (available only in Latvian at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Etikas-kodekss.pdf>), any representative of the College, including a student, is encouraged to inform the College Ethics Commission about the violation of the Code of Ethics fairly and honestly by submitting his/her proposals to the Commission. The Regulations of the LU RFMC Ethics Commission (available only in Latvian at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Etikas-komisija-Nolikums.pdf>) determine the procedure by which students and the Students' Self-government may submit complaints on ethical issues.

To assess the LU RFMC study processes, the College has developed and implemented the "Regulations of Riga First Medical College of the University of Latvia on the Study and Examination Procedure" (College Council Decision No.15 of 27/11/2020, available only in Latvian at:

<https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Nolikums-par-studiju-un-parbaudiju-mu-kartibu.pdf>). In pertinence to theses, the College has passed the "Regulations on the Organization and Procedure for the Final State Examinations in the First Level Professional Higher Education Programs" (LU RFMC Order No.1.14/171 of 27/04/2020, available only in Latvian at:

<https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Nolikums-par-Valsts-nosleguma-par-baudijumu-organizesanu.pdf>).

Observing the rights of students outside the study process, for those students who stay in the LU RFMC student hall of residence, the rights and obligations of students, including the right to submit proposals and complaints about problems in the student hall of residence, are determined by the "Regulations on the Student Hall of Residence" and the internal regulations (LU RFMC order No.1.14./47 of 28/02/2018, available only in Latvian at:

<https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Studentu-Dienesta-viesnicas-kartibas-noteikumi.pdf>).

Overall, it can be concluded that the system of submission and review of complaints and proposals at the LU Riga First Medical College covers all components of daily student's study life, as it applies to admission to LU RFMC, to the entire cycle of studies and to the final examinations. Students' written applications are considered in accordance with the LU RFMC internal regulatory documents.

The number of LU RFMC students is optimal to ensure regular individual communication and mutual exchange of ideas throughout the study process between students and the College Administration, heads of structural units, teaching staff. The College Director and deputy directors regularly review students' opinion expressed in the meetings of the Students' Self-government, Scholarship Awarding Commission, Student Hall of Residence Council. Students' proposals or objections to any issue related to the study process or students' everyday life are usually discussed and resolved even before it escalates into a conflict.

Regarding matters of ethical nature and when wishing to sustain confidentiality, students seek assistance of the College Director to resolve an issue. The LU RFMC administration is always open to students' proposals; no complaint is rejected but handled objectively and democratically.

Some examples are the following:

- The College Administration has repeatedly received complaints from students about the limited range of meals at the College canteen, small portions and relatively high prices. As the previous complaints of students were ignored by the company supplying meals to the canteen, the College Administration terminated the contract with the company and announced a new tender for a new catering service provider, as a result of which another company started to provide meals in the College canteen in 2020 and since then no complaints have been received.
- In 2018, the Students' Self-government expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that not all activities (daily meetings, preparation of events) have suitable premises. In response to that complaint, since 2019 the Students' Self-government has been working from a properly equipped room (with a computer, printer, photocopier, etc.) on the ground floor of the Student Hall of Residence.

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

The collection of statistical data at the College proceeds in accordance with external regulatory enactments (Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 348 of 02/05/2006 "Procedures for Submitting Information Regarding Activity by an Institution of Higher Education and College to the Ministry of Education and Science", Regulations No. 276 of 25/06/2019 "Regulations of the State Education Information System", Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 585 of 21/10/2003 "Regulations on Accounting Procedure and Organization", LU orders binding on the College regarding the information to be submitted, etc.) and in accordance with the College internal regulatory documents, for example, "Accounting Policy of Riga First Medical College of the University of Latvia" (Order No.1.14/23 of 30/08/2019), quantitative and qualitative performance indicators of the College quality system and planned performance results in the medium term and over the scope of a year. The aim of statistical data collection and analysis is to use the data results for the improvement of the study direction. The College uses internal electronic databases and the *Win Students* program to compile statistical data (lists of students and lecturers, entering grades/assessment results, creating diploma supplements, etc.).

Every year the following information is collected and summarized for the purpose of submission to the Central Statistical Bureau: The Report of the Higher Education Institution, College, Report on Scientific Activities, Report on Investment, etc.

All structural units of the College are subject to the same mechanism of collecting and summarizing statistical data. The data assessment system is defined in the College Quality Manual (Annex 3 "Summary of Quality Management Indicators" (available only in Latvian at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/LU-R1MK-Kvalitates-rokasgramata-.pdf>).

Study process

Within the framework of the study process the movement of students in the state-financed study places is analyzed and forecasted. The data on the number of students in the state-financed study programs and on students who acquire the profession using personal financial resources or funding of legal persons are analyzed every month. Additionally, the College collects and analyzes the information on the reasons for students' exmatriculation (outstanding academic obligations, family circumstances, economic or social problems) and on students on a study break (academic leave).

The academic progress of students and the implementation of the program are monitored 4 times a year, which allows to timely plan additional consultations of lecturers and individual work with students who experience difficulties in completing study requirements, thus, ensuring a decrease in the number of exmatriculated students, especially in the first year of study.

At least once a year a survey is conducted on the quality of study courses and study program implementation, which includes students, graduates, employers and teaching staff, analysis of survey data and feedback, and is reflected in the regulations on LU RFMC regular surveys (available only in Latvian at:

<https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Nolikums-par-LU-R1MK-regularajam-aptaujam.pdf>).

The results of the survey data are reviewed at various meetings, such as the meetings of departments, program teaching staff, College Administration, Study Program Council, College Council, and are used in annual reports as well as planning of study program and study direction development. As students participate not only in study course and program evaluation surveys, but also in the College Council and the College Study Council, the study course contents are renewed annually in accordance with the assessment provided by students. Overall, LU RFMC implements

student-centered education, which is one of the basic principles of the College quality policy. Feedback from employers, in turn, is obtained from their participation in working groups of departments, College Council and examination commissions, including state final examination commissions.

A applicant survey on commencing studies is conducted electronically every summer when study agreements are concluded. The aim of the survey is to find out the applicants' motivation for choosing the College and a specific study program and for identifying sources that applicants use to obtain information about the study opportunities offered by the College. The task of the survey is to obtain applicants' assessment of the application and admission process.

The survey of first year students and their initial study experience is conducted electronically once a year in the first courses. The aim of the survey is to obtain an assessment of the first study experience and study support measures in order to improve the study environment and promote student adaptation to the study environment.

In order to obtain students' evaluation of the contents of the study courses and of the performance of teaching staff, **a study course survey** is conducted electronically every semester. While data analysis is conducted by the head of a department, the necessary improvement measures are approved by the Study Program Council.

In order to enhance the organization of study internship, **a study internship survey** is conducted electronically. The aim of the survey is obtain information on students' experience on the internship site and to obtain the assessment of internship supervisors.

In order to obtain students' assessment of the study program for its further development and for the enhancement of its study process, its quality and study environment, the College conducts **the last year student survey**. This survey aims at evaluating the entire period of studies in the study program. This is the most comprehensive of all the surveys, as it includes questions about the study environment, staff, library, Students' Self-government, study process, class attendance, study time, learning outcomes, employment and future plans for continuing education.

The main reasons for students' dropping out of the College are studied via **a survey on students intending to drop out of the College or those who have already dropped out of the College**. The outcomes of this survey helps to reduce the number of exmatriculated students. The survey is administered electronically throughout the academic year, while the results of the survey are compiled by the Study Department once a semester.

The aim of the **graduate survey** is to obtain the graduates' assessment of their satisfaction with the quality of their study program and with the knowledge, skills and competences developed at the College, and to learn about graduates' perception of the study program contribution to their employment and about their plans for continuing education.

The aim of the **employer survey** is to determine how employers evaluate the correspondence between the knowledge, skills and competences acquired by the College graduates and the requirements of the labor market, on the one hand, and to receive employers' recommendations on the improvement of a study program, on the other hand.

In order to enhance the working conditions of the teaching staff of the College and to obtain their views on the improvement of the study process and study programs, the College conducts the **teaching staff survey** electronically once a year. Its aim is to understand how teaching staff evaluate their working conditions, available support and information, general atmosphere in the College and to receive the respondents' proposals for improving the motivation of the teaching staff, the study process and study programs.

To understand how the teaching staff evaluate their own professional performance at the College, the College administers the second **teaching staff survey** – self-assessment of own performance. The survey is administered electronically once a year.

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

The address of the LU RFMC website is <https://www.rmkl.lv/lv/>. The target audience of the website is the current and future students, teaching staff, employees, cooperation partners and the general public. The website is intended for making the information about LU RFMC available to the public and for storing it, thus, providing an opportunity for its visitors to learn about the LU RFMC activities, study programs, regulatory documents, current events and communication opportunities.

Since 27 May 2020 the College has had a new website meeting modern requirements, because the previous website was technically outdated. The strengths of the new website include the ease of use and transparency, which is supported by the student survey data revealing that the College students find the website easy to navigate because information can easily be found and reviewed. The information on the website is regularly updated. The website design and article illustrations use images and photos, which facilitates the perception of information and attracts more visitors to the website. The website is equally easy to view on computer screens, mobile devices and tablets. Statistics (*Google Analytics*) indicate that 64% of users view the College website on a mobile device, 35% - on a computer, 1% - on a tablet computer.

The number of website visitors and clicks relate to current events in the specific period of the academic year. The greatest interest in the College website has been identified at the time of admission; for example, in August 2020, the College website was viewed more than 74,000 times, while the total number of users that month was 6,562. In total, the average session time per website visit is 3 minutes and 34 seconds. Visitors can pose questions to the specified members of staff responsible for such communications in the specific section of the website designed for such interaction.

The website contains the following **main sections**:

News

- Important events and news since the academic year 2010/2011
- *Calendar* contains information on the most important upcoming events (conferences, meetings, events) at the College and outside it.
- *Gallery* contains digital photo albums and video stories about studies at the College, social engagements of students and teaching staff, conferences since

2012.

Study opportunities

- *Study Opportunities* contain information about students' admission to the College (admission rules) and study programs (program aims, tasks, learning outcomes, credit points and duration, language of instruction, job opportunities after graduation). Each study program has its own contact information of a member of staff responsible for such communication. This section attracts the greatest number of prospective students and, according to statistics, is the third most visited section of the website.

Students

- *Class Schedule* is published for each study program. Statistics show that the class schedule section is the most frequently visited section of the website.
- *Calendar* publishes information on current events.
- Information and pictures about the College Library and Student Hall of Residence.
- *Consultations* contain contact information of the College academic staff.

The *Students* section is the second most visited section of the website.

About the College

- Information about the history and development of the College, its becoming an agency of the University of Latvia
- Regulatory documents binding on the College (LU RFMC regulations, etc.), annual public reports, annual plans, strategies, self-assessment reports, accreditation results, themes of theses
- Information on procurement (current and completed)
- Alarm information
- Vacancies
- Information and pictures about the College learning environment, including modern equipment and technical facilities
- *Budget* provides a link to the section of the State Treasury website that publishes current estimates of all state budget programs and sub-programs
- Price list of the College services, information about tuition fees.
- List of the College cooperation partners in Latvia and abroad.

Continuing education

- Information about continuing education opportunities at the College

International cooperation

- Information about Erasmus+, Nordplus, ESF, ERDF, CCFI projects: description, documents and news.

Electronic admission

- One reason for creating this section of the website in July 2020 was to make it easier for applicants to apply for studies. Another reason pertained to digitalisation trends in Latvia and to global digitalisation tendencies due to which the Electronic Admission section was created and which continues to serve as an alternative to the on-site admission. The creation of the section should be seen as a valuable innovation because a large number of students who applied for studies in the academic year 2020/2021 took this opportunity and submitted copies of documents electronically. The section is going to be available on the website during the admission period every year.

Contacts

- Contact information of the College general staff (telephone numbers, e-mail addresses).
- Contact information of the College teaching staff (e-mail addresses)
- College contact information: telephone number, e-mail address, address, opening hours, bank details
- College location on a map and information on how to get to the College by public transport.
- Opportunity to ask questions. This section is mostly used by prospective students wishing to obtain more information on the study programs, student hall of residence and other opportunities provided by the College. Most questions are received during admission. The answers to the questions in the electronic format (by e-mail) are provided by the College public relations specialist in cooperation with the Head of the Study Department.

The top of the website displays a search bar offering the key word search option for finding specific information on the website. The icon of the social network Facebook is set next to the search bar, and when it is clicked, it takes the site visitor to the College Facebook profile. The website visitor can select and adjust the viewing and font size options of the site. The Privacy Policy, Cookie Policy, Sitemap are published at the bottom of the website.

The English version of the website (available at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/en/>) publishes the most important or basic information about the College, such as a brief description of the College activities and history, structure scheme, reflection of the College learning environment, list of cooperation partners, the key documents (LU RFMC regulations and strategy). This information provides foreigners with an idea of the College activities and its role in the Latvian education and health care system and on the international arena. The English version contains the official e-mail address of the College, telephone number and contact information of the College staff. This information is important for foreigners because by writing an e-mail or calling a staff member, they can receive answers to their questions about studies and cooperation opportunities with the College. Questions can also be submitted in the Questions section. If foreign guests are interested in visiting the College in person, they can obtain relevant information in English on the English version of the website, for

example, it can be the College address, location on the map, opening hours, public transport options. The English version of the website also provides information on the following sections: *Study Opportunities*, which publishes comprehensive information about study opportunities at the College, including the descriptions of the study programs (their structure, aims and tasks); *Students*, which introduces foreign students to the College library and accommodation offer – a student hall of residence; *International Cooperation*, which is useful for existing and potentially new partners, exchange students and visiting lecturers because it mentions the projects implemented by the College (Erasmus+, Nordplus, ESF, CCFI, ERDF). Considering the interest of the website visitors, the most comprehensive information published in English is about the Erasmus+ project, specifically, Erasmus+ University Charter, application for the exchange program (for students, academic and administrative staff), contact information of the project coordinator. The English version of the College website takes into account the English website versions of other educational institutions - their contents and form.

The information for the website is prepared and published by the College public relations specialist and in some cases by the IT specialist. The specialists of the Study Department publish a list of password-protected classes on the website. This information can be viewed only by the students and lecturers of the respective study program. The heads of the College study programs are responsible for the correctness and update of relevant information on the website. The public relations specialist is responsible for publishing and regularly updating information, whereas the IT specialist is responsible for maintaining the website and security issues. The persons responsible for ensuring the compliance of the information available on the website with the information available in official registers (VIIS, E-platform) are appointed in accordance with the order of the Director of LU RFMC.

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field

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

Financial provision of study direction and study programs

The financial resources of the study direction consist of the state budget grant, own revenues, financing of EU, ESF and ERDF projects, etc. and other revenues under the concluded contracts. Before each academic year and taking into account the expected admission, the College plans and prepares an estimate of the amount of available

funding and its deployment. The College annual estimate is included in the total budget of the University of Latvia, which is approved by the Senate of the University of Latvia. The control of the use of financial resources is regulated by the procedures provided for in the regulations of LU RFMC, by the College accounting policy and by coordinating financial plans and reports with the University of Latvia and the Ministry of Education and Science. For each financial year, the College prepares an annual report using accounting data, which are categorized in accordance with regulatory enactments on budget accounting.

Revenues include:

- a grant from the basic state budget
- tuition fees
- services of the student hall of residence
- rent of non-residential premises
- participation fees in continuing education seminars, courses
- attracted European funds (ESF, ERDF, ERASMUS+, etc.)
- attracted financial resources of cooperation partners to support specific target programs

Table 6

Distribution of funding for the study direction "Health Care" by years

Type of financial resources	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
State budget grant	832 138	1 215 983	1 221 017	1 221 899	1 348 473	1 406 771	1 475 518	1 488 213
Own revenue from paid services	82 550	65 039	60 640	80 511	183 237	253 825	269 327	223 356
ERASMUS+	-	15 194	14 832	24 285	39 120	43 171	58 422	49 606
ERDF STEM project	-	-	-	-	3 318	283 946	121 314	26 678
Total	914 688	1 296 216	1 296 489	1 326 695	1 574 148	1 987 713	1 924 581	1 787 853

The financial indicators of the College indicate a stable financial development. The share of own revenues is about 13% of the budget.

The analysis of the study direction funding and available resources is performed every year, and it includes the identification of current needs and planning of the long-term necessary investment. Every year the College Administration meets with the teaching staff and the heads of study programs to discuss the results achieved during the previous academic year and to review needs of specific study direction programs for the next planning stage.

The system for determining the financial provision of the College, including the study direction "Health Care", is incorporated in the set of internal regulatory enactments of the University of Latvia RFMC "Accounting Policy" (approved by the College Order No. 1.14/23 of 16/09/2019) .

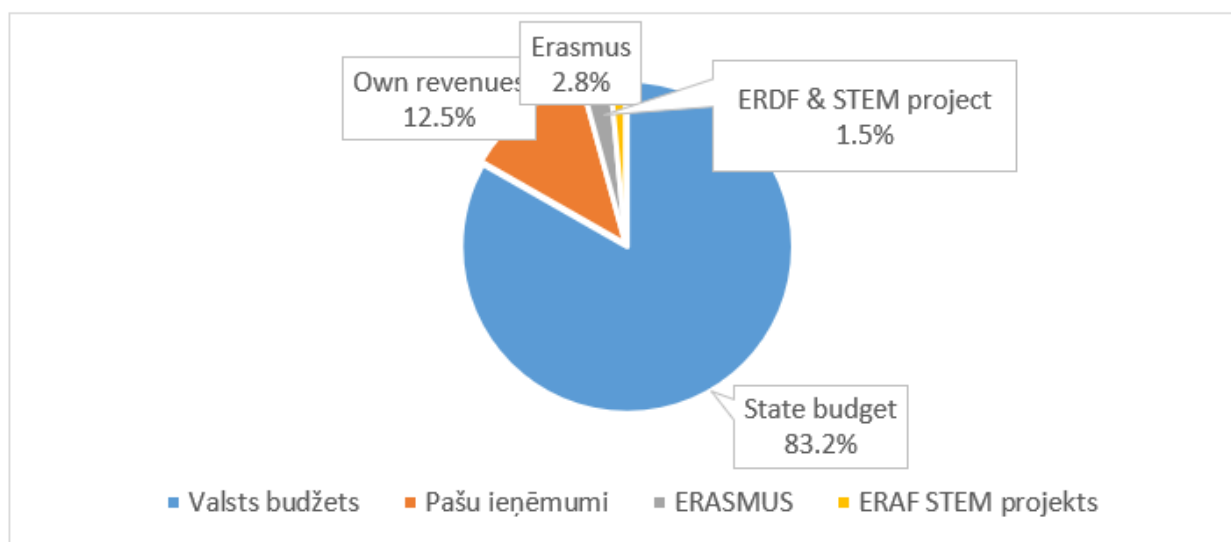


Fig. 4. Revenue structure in 2020

Using the obtained funds, the study directions and the activities of the College are financed in accordance with the prepared action plan and the approved budget. The College Administration and the Accounting Department meticulously control the use of funds in accordance with the approved budget.

Expenses and resources to cover expenses are planned in accordance with regulatory enactments of the budget expense planning. The main items of expenses are the following:

- staff remuneration
- premises maintenance expenses and utilities
- scholarship costs
- material expenses of the study process
- purchase of new equipment
- reconstruction and repairs of premises.

Table 7

Grant funded expenses and own revenues

Grant funded expenses and own revenues	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Breakdown of expenses in 2020 (%)
Remuneration	602 170	839 643	818 577	829 979	913056	1066067	1076320	993748	64.89%
Mandatory State Social Insurance Contributions	138 819	181 563	188 438	195 792	256939	276225	264544	241735	15.79%
Costs of goods and services	112 137	196 211	210 652	208 779	201327	220574	245308	188880	12.33%
Capital expenses	13 763	11 097	11 838	19 073	18860	37095	26711	26036	1.70%
Scholarships	52 185	56 541	74 671	64 421	53541	53541	53541	80979	5.29%
In total	919 074	1 285 055	1 304 176	1 318 044	1443723	1653502	1666424	1531378	100%

The amount and criteria of remuneration of the academic staff of the College are determined in accordance with Article 14 of the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Institutions, Cabinet Regulation No. 445 of

05/07/2016 "Regulations on Remuneration of Teaching Staff" and the College internal "Regulations on Remuneration and Workload of RFMC Academic Staff" (approved by the College Council Decision No.10 of 16/09/2020).

Tuition fees and information on other paid services are specified in the price list of paid services of RFMC, which was approved by the orders of the University of Latvia in 2019 and 2020 (available at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/lv/par-koledzu/cenradis/>).

At the end of each semester, the students' learning achievements and attendance are summarized, after which the Scholarship Commission makes decisions on the award of scholarships in accordance with external regulations and the regulations for awarding scholarships financed from the LU RFMC state budget. Such decisions are subsequently approved by the order of the College Director. Scholarship payments are made promptly and within budget.

Table 8

State budget expenditure per student of the study direction "Health Care" in 2020

Number of study places financed by the state budget	347	
Types of expenses	EUR	%
Salary per student per year	1562.89	61.19
Compulsory employer's state social insurance contributions per student per year	376.50	14.74
Payment for services per student per year	391.33	15.32
Material, energy resource, water and inventory expenses per student per year	148.54	5.82
Acquisition of fixed assets per student per year	75.03	2.94
Total study expenses per student per year	2554.29	100.00

Two buildings with a total area of 10,169.6 sq.m are used in the implementation of the study direction program, which are located on 37 Tomsona street and 39 Tomsona street.

Computers with the installed Windows operating system, conference systems, video cameras, wall screens, multimedia screens, tablets, various types of simulators, including simulator manikins, visual aids, etc., have been purchased to ensure the implementation of the study process. Specialized equipment is used both for the implementation of study programs in the study direction and for the organization of innovative further education and professional development courses for health care professionals, such as nurses, physician assistants, pharmacist assistants and midwives.

Students and teaching staff are provided access to the College Library funds (see section 3.3 "Methodological and Informative Provision" for more information)

*Information on the state budget expenditure per student in the study program "Nursing" (nurse)

(which is implemented until 31/12/2022) is available in Annex 54.

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

The studies within the LU RFMC study direction "Health Care" are provided with the infrastructure, material provision and technical facilities essential for achieving the set aims and expected learning outcomes and for satisfying the needs of the study course contents, which are regularly updated and supplemented. Infrastructure, material and technical support is available to LU RFMC, including students and the teaching staff.

Lectures and practical classes take place in two buildings in Riga – on 37 Tomsona street and in study rooms on 39 Tomsona street adjacent to the student hall of residence. All College lecture rooms and classrooms have been properly equipped to ensure the achievement of the set study aims and to enable the deployment of the selected teaching methods. The equipment and other material resources have been purchased using state budget funds, STEM [1] and ERDF [2] funds as well as the College own financial resources. The College provides teaching equipment corresponding to modern technologies.

The College building on 37 Tomsona street has 11 well-equipped lecture rooms, which can accommodate 40 to 160 students (depending on the size of the lecture room). The building of the student hall of residence on 39 Thomsona street has 5 well-equipped lecture rooms, each being able to accommodate up to 70 students. Lecture rooms are equipped with convenient general equipment enabling the implementation of the study process. The available equipment enables the deployment of information technologies for the delivery of various types and sources of information during classroom activities. Lecture rooms have multimedia equipment, such as laptops, projectors for illustrating lecture materials, seminar content and demonstration of various presentations, video conferencing systems, portable interactive whiteboards for visualization of the lesson content. Computer equipment enables operative use of Internet resources and other information, including visual, and is a tool ensuring the application of the selected teaching method.

To facilitate the acquisition of specific course themes and to train future medical practitioners in specific specialties, the College has set up training classrooms that have been equipped with specialized equipment similar to the one used in real work environment. The general equipment in the classrooms performs the auxiliary functions in the learning environment, while the specialized equipment is intended for the development of professional skills of students. There is a total of 19 such training classrooms equipped with modern simulators, manipulation models, various mock-ups, manikins and other technological equipment. To facilitate the development of skills essential for medical manipulations, the College has set up a properly prepared, processed and sterilized instrument base. Experiments require special materials, visual aids and technological equipment. Specialized study equipment and instruments have been acquired for the implementation of the study program "Medicine" with the professional qualification of the midwife (for more information, see Annex 40), study program "Medicine" with the professional qualification of the physician assistant (for more information, see Annex 51), study program "Pharmacy" with the professional qualification of the pharmacist assistant (for more information, see Annex 30). Some lecture rooms

and classrooms are equipped with multimedia equipment (laptops, tablets, scanners, interactive whiteboards, video cameras). Classrooms are also equipped with durable furniture, which is selected to fit the function of the room. Each training room can simultaneously accommodate up to 15 students.

Table 9

Number of lecture rooms and practical classrooms

Location	Lecture rooms (amount)	Training classrooms (amount)
College building on 37 Tomsona street	11	15
Student hall of residence building on 39 Tomsona street	5	4

Table 10

Capacity of lecture rooms and practical activity classrooms

Location	Capacity for lecture rooms (amount)	Capacity of training classrooms (amount)
College building on 37 Tomsona street	40 to 160 students in each lecture rooms	Up to 15 students in each classroom
Student hall of residence building on 39 Tomsona street	Up to 70 students in each lecture rooms	Up to 15 students in each classroom

In recent years, the College has invested considerable resources into the provision of technical and material support for lectures and other types of classes. The most important works that have been carried out for improving the learning environment have been the following:

- Equipment and facility renewal and supplementation in the classrooms allocated to training of nurses, physician assistants, midwives and pharmacist assistants, including the acquisition of a pharmacy model for training pharmacist assistants, which was set up with the support of "BENU Aptieka Latvija", Ltd., and the establishment of the training environment for the development of medicine preparation skills;
- Purchase of 14 innovative interactive whiteboards (4 of them are mobile) and displays "Samsung 65' Led", which improve the quality of teaching and learning;
- Two video conferencing systems for providing online lectures and for ensuring the participation of the College staff in conferences and seminars.

In the first half of 2020, the last stage of the strategically important EU-funded STEM project "Modernization of STEM educational program infrastructure at LU Riga First Medical College" was completed, the outcome of which was the delivery of new modern equipment to STEM training rooms, which has become an integral part of student training. The STEM project resulted in the acquisition of the following equipment and the creation of training environment for specific medical purposes:

- a training EMS vehicle model similar to real EMS vehicles to enable students to acquire emergency medical algorithms and practical skills
- a training neonatal intensive care unit (10 steps)
- a computerized multifunctional birthing simulator manikin

- a health care and palliative care unit
- two new training rooms equipped for conducting specific medical manipulations
- environment created for practicing health care and basic need satisfaction skills

Modern equipment provides students with an opportunity to develop skills essential for carrying out any relevant medical manipulation in any relevant clinical context because the created study environment is similar to the real work environment.

The LU RFMC students and lecturers are provided with a well developed IT infrastructure (see Table 11). The study process uses computer equipment, multimedia equipment, projectors, interactive whiteboards, video conferencing systems, webcams, digital document cameras and wireless Internet. Students and academic staff have access to computers, including free-access computers, and the Internet in a computer classroom, library, departments, seminar rooms, specific study rooms, student hall of residence, and free-access computers are available. Students and academic staff use licensed *Microsoft* software on a daily basis. In order to acquire the competences in information technologies essential for health care staff, the College has acquire the *SmartMedical* system. Multifunctional printing equipment is available in the College. Wireless Internet is available in the College and student hall of residence. The IT specialist, working on site of the College, provides the academic staff with necessary support for video recording, online lectures and lectures taking place in classrooms with complex multimedia equipment.

Table 11

Provision of IT infrastructure at LU RFMC

Items	Amount
Computerized workplaces	91
laptops	42
Tablets	124
Projectors	37
Interactive whiteboards (large touch screen monitors)	14
Information displays and televisions	14
Video conferencing systems	2
Digital document cameras	7
Webcams	8
Video surveillance equipment	3
Security cameras	18
Wireless network access points	24
Servers	5
Multifunction devices (including printers and copiers)	55

The College sustains safety and an attractive aesthetic environment on its premises and territory, including its equipment. The College regularly carries out improvement works, such as renovations and repairs, in the College building and student hall of residence, which ensures safe building exploitation and creates orderly environment. A new video surveillance system with 3 video cameras has been installed in the building on 37 Tomsona street. Students have provided positive feedback on significant improvements in living conditions in the student hall of residence (new household appliances, renovated WC and shower rooms, new plumbing products, well equipped modern kitchens, lounge furniture, etc.).

At the suggestion of students, the College canteen has been made more attractive and comfortable. In 2020, extensive renovations were carried out in the College study rooms and

student hall of residence. In 2020, in order to implement epidemiological safety measures aimed at reducing the spread of Covid-19 and for the convenience of visitors, the College purchased two contactless hand sanitizer dispenser stands, placed at the entrances to the College building and to the student hall of residence. Large-format monitors are now located in the hallways of the College and student hall of residence to inform visitors of epidemiological safety measures.

All LU RFMC study rooms are suitable for studies, and they fully comply with sanitary requirements and other current regulatory enactments on the quality of study rooms.

The College students, academic staff and guests can use the College car park and bicycle parking stand. The College has a canteen, lounge and gym. All students who need accommodation are provided with bed places in the student hall of residence.

[1] The Action Program "Growth and Employment" of the Ministry of Education and Science under the specific support objective 8.1.4 "Improvement of the study environment of the first level professional higher education STEM, including medical and creative industries, study environment in colleges" implements the support for the development of the College infrastructure and modernization of equipment, facilitates the acquisition of equipment and facilities for implementation of the first level professional higher education study programs. The project aim is to improve the study/learning environment at Riga First Medical College of the University of Latvia by modernizing the infrastructure of the STEM health care first level professional higher education programs "Medicine", "Pharmacy" and "Nursing".

[2] European Regional Development Funds

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

LU RFMC students have access to all necessary information about studies, the study process and various services provided by the College, such as electronic lecture schedules, descriptions of study courses and the assessment criteria of learning outcomes, study regulatory documents, internship documents, research paper documents, current information about student life in the student hall of residence and planned events during the academic year.

Each study course has a private e-mail site, where the teaching staff upload their study resources and other necessary information about the course.

To improve and acquire the infrastructure resources, material and technical provision, methodological support of the study direction, the College applies the regulations on preparing and conducting procurement at LU RFMC, which determine the procedure for the development, approval and updating of the procurement plan for the current calendar year, the activities of the Procurement Commission, procurement

procedures, etc.

To purchase new resources, the College has developed an application procedure with the following justification steps:

- Application of the Head of a Study Program ☐ Department ☐ Material and Technical Provision Commission → Purchasing Commission
- Application of the person responsible for a classroom ☐ Department ☐ Material and Technical Provision Commission → Purchasing Commission
- Application of the Head of a Structural Unit ☐ Director ☐ Material and Technical Provision Commission → Purchasing Commission

Assessment of information resources (library and available databases)

The open access subscription of the library is available to students and staff from 9 am to 6 pm from Monday to Friday and from 10 am to 1 pm on Saturdays. The total area of the library premises is 80 m². The library users have access to 16 reading places and 6 workstations equipped with computers and the wireless Internet. The library offers an open access subscription providing an opportunity to receive books for home use and to use the library book collection in the library (for the on-site use of books).

Library services

The LU RFMC library offers a wide range of printed and electronic information resources, individual consultations on printing matters, search for electronic and other information, electronic catalogs of LNL, RCL and foreign libraries, and search for specified thematic information. The library provides books and other information resources for work at home. The reading room contains the latest study and scientific literature collection, periodicals and theses that students can read and that have been appropriately systematized since 2010.

The library visitors have access to 4 desktop computers with the Internet access and *Microsoft Office* applications, such as *Word*, *PowerPoint*, *Excel*, etc. The library visitors have the opportunity to access wireless Internet or WiFi and use it on their personal laptops or a smart device. The library offers black and white copying of A4 and A3 documents and computer prints. The library environment is gradually being improved, for example, in 2018, there were acquired new bookshelves and monitors for staff and library users. In June 2019, the library collection was systematized, and the entry of books in the library information system *ALISE* was completed. Since October 2020, books have been issued to students electronically.

Library collection

The library provides free access to its resources to LU RFMC students and academic staff. The collection is arranged according to the Universal Decimal Classification (UDC). As of October 2021, the library collection contains 8052 physical items, including 3014 textbooks and 18 periodicals. Most items in the collection are

resources in medicine and related fields, however, there is also a wide range of literature on education, philosophy and religion. The library contains a reference resource, dictionary, encyclopedia and fiction collections. The library has more than 1,900 publications in foreign languages, most of which are in English. There are books on medicine, dentistry, gynecology, anatomy, pharmacy, nursing, etc. The library contains resources of such famous publishing houses as *Elsevier*, *Oxford University Press (OUP)*, *Springer International Publishing*, *Wolters Kluwer*. There are foreign language dictionaries, terminology and foreign language glossaries and encyclopedic publications.

Information sources in the collection of the LU RFMC library are available in the electronic catalog *BIS ALISE*. The library collection includes open access e-resources.

Electronic catalogs

- Catalog of universities and special libraries
- Join catalog of libraries of national significance
- LNL resource *ACADEMIA*
- Joint catalog of Riga Central Library

Electronic journals and books

- Database of the internationally cited medical journals PubMed
- PRIMO - Unified Information Search Tool
- JAMA & Archives - journal database of the USA Medical Association
- Cambridge Journals database
- Questia
- Science Books Online

Recent years have been marked by the increasing importance of databases and Internet resources. The indicators of their usage has been showing an increasing trend. Internet resources are available on the College website in the Library section containing more than 150 e-resources, such as databases in evidence-based medicine and online resources in medicine, anatomy, pharmacy, gynecology, nursing, dentistry, infectious diseases, disaster medicine and first aid, nutrition therapy, etc.

The College has developed training programs on how to search for medical information in electronic resources: Module I "Basics of Searching for Medical Information in Electronic Resources"; Module II "Open Access to Evidence-Based Medical Resources"; Module III "Acquisition of information search in the database of internationally cited medical journals PubMed". Furthermore, the College is currently considering a possibility to subscribe to the EBSCO database and to explore free trials of the Cultural Information Systems Center (CISC) databases.

In order to improve the library collection consistent with the needs of students, the data on the issued resources are being analyzed, the academic staff are involved in the acquisition of literature for the library collection, users are encouraged to fill in a recommendation questionnaire.

Renewal of information provision

Users are offered various types of electronic resources: scientific paper databases, e-book databases, evidence-based medicine databases, databases on publication bibliographic and citation information, news and reference databases. Information on the available library e-resources is published on the College website. The College implements a training program on the advanced medical information search options on the Internet and the development of practical skills for such search in order to support the academic progress of medical students.

The informative provision collection of study programs has been gradually renewed and supplemented, specifically:

- All literature requests of the academic staff of study programs are fulfilled.
- The latest books published in Latvia in the fields of medicine, social sciences and humanities are regularly purchased.
- The library offers important literature in other fields of science, too (communication, political science, psychology, research methods, education, ethics, etc.).

The library resources can be assessed as good and meeting the demand of students and teaching staff, which ensures the acquisition of study courses. As for the coursebooks in Latvian, one might wish to have new editions published, as it is the case in foreign countries following the receipt of new edition requests. The library actively cooperates with the Students' Self-government and jointly organizes competitions, thematic exhibitions, etc.

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

The implementation of information and communication technology solutions in the study process proceeds in accordance with the 6-year development plan for the LU RFMC study direction "Health Care" (Annex 3) and the directions of the cross-curricular development plan, for example in relation to the program content improvement, study process improvement, including e-environment, ensuring stable and modern study material and technical provision.

The basic information and communication technology solutions at LU RFMC, which are used in the study process, encompass the E-learning environment (MOODLE), virtual cooperation platforms for students and the teaching staff (ZOOM, Google Workspace applications), the platform E-class for communication and learning process management.

The College E-learning environment at <http://estudijas.rmkl.lv/login/index.php> provides students with access to information on study courses to be acquired (description of study courses), contact information of lecturers teaching such courses, study materials created or adapted by the teaching

staff, tests, student surveys, and other materials, which are systematized in 5 blocks within the framework of each study course - lecture materials, practical class materials, additional study materials, independent work assignments and tests.

To support student and teaching staff activities in the E-learning environment at <http://estudijas.rmkl.lv/login/index.php>, on cooperation platforms (ZOOM, Google Workspace) and on the platform E-class, designed for communication and learning process management, the College employs 2 computer network administrators. Methodical activities are coordinated by the Study Department.

The College continues to work on increasing the efficiency of the use of the e-learning environment in the study process by developing the teaching staff skills for work in the e-learning environment aimed at reducing one-way communication, such as merely uploading study materials in the e-environment.

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

The College employs academic staff for the study programs of the study direction "Health Care" in accordance with the provisions of Part 1 of Section 55, Sections 10¹ and 39 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions. The College employs highly qualified academic and pedagogical staff (with advanced qualifications), appropriate competences and good reputation to implement the study direction and achieve the expected learning outcomes.

The personnel selection process focuses on the assessment of candidates' competences, professional skills and self-motivation. The College staff need to have good English language skills for transnational mobility. The increasing share of IT systems in various processes requires excellent digital skills and systematic thinking. Applicants for the academic positions have to meet high pedagogical qualification requirements and have excellent organizational and professional competences.

Competitions for the academic and general staff positions and the positions of the Heads of Departments proceed in accordance with the LU RFMC regulations (approved by the University of Latvia Senate decision No.299 of 15/04/2019) and are announced openly on the College website and on the portal "Latvijas Vēstnesis".

Applicants for academic positions are evaluated based on their application documentation, submitted recommendations and previous pedagogical experience. The qualifications and competences of the academic staff are continuously improved, ensuring the enhancement of pedagogical skills and the English language knowledge as well as further professional training in the areas of specialization.

When recruiting guest lecturers, their practical work experience and the relevance of that experience to study courses are considered a priority.

The selection and recruitment of academic staff, announcement of vacancies, competition rules, election procedures and their assessment are regulated by the following LU RFMC internal regulatory enactments: "LU RFMC Personnel Management Policy" (available only in latvian at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/LUR1MK-Personala-vadibas-politika.pdf>), "LU RFMC Regulations of the Employment Procedure" (available only in latvian at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/LU-R1MK-Darba-kartibas-noteikumi.pdf>), "LU RFMC Regulations on Academic and Administrative Positions" (available only in latvian at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/nolikums-par-koled%C5%BEas-akad%C4%93miskajiem-un-administrat%C4%ABvajiem-amatiem.pdf>).

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

One of the key aspects of the development direction "Competent Academic Staff" of the LU RFMC Development Strategy for 2015 - 2020 was the development of the system of further professional development of academic staff, which is set to continue in the next period - from 2021 to 2027. LU RFMC is aware of the changing and important role of the College lecturer in ensuring the study quality and promoting the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences by students. Therefore, in accordance with the College strategy, the College implements a consistent LU RFMC system of further professional development of academic staff, which offers further professional development opportunities to academic staff.

Professional development of the academic staff at the University of Latvia is organized in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia Regulation No.662 of 11/09/2018 "Regulations on the Education and Professional Qualifications of Academic Staff and the Procedure for Improving the Professional Competence of Academic Staff", and specifically, Paragraph 16, which stipulates that "university and college academic staff must acquire professional development programs on innovations in higher education in the amount of 160 academic hours (including at least 60 contact hours) by the end of their election term. Professional development may include international mobility corresponding to the purpose of professional development, participation in conferences and seminars, as evidenced by the submitted documents."

The LU RFMC Study Department and Administration Department provide informative, consultative and methodological support to the College academic staff on university didactics, organize guest lectures in pedagogy and methodology, offer the academic staff to acquire the professional development program "University Didactics: Modern Theories and Practice" (in cooperation with the LU Faculty of Education, Psychology and Arts), encourage the academic staff to enrol in other continuing education programs of LU and other education and medical science universities on issues in education and medicine (in line with the study direction "Health Care"). For example, in 2019, 38 members of the College academic staff completed the program "University Didactics: Modern Theories and Practice" as a result of organizational involvement of the Heads of Departments. As the majority of the academic staff participating in the implementation of the study direction are practicing medical professionals in their specific field of health care (in 2020, 81% of the 21 elected academic staff worked in hospitals, pharmacies, health centers, EMS), the formal and informal professional development of these lecturers takes place several times a year and includes their participation in international professional development activities. In 2019-2021, many lecturers attended English language courses, including those organized by LU and LU RFMC. The LU RFMC Personnel Department provided the teaching staff of the study direction "Health Care" with information on the most significant professional development events in 2013-2020. The Heads of Study Programs and the Heads of Departments organize observation of lecturers of the teaching staff, which is especially important for new lecturers. Importantly, the academic staff use their new competences when updating the contents of their study courses, improving their teaching methods, etc., which, according to the results of student surveys, is positively assessed by students. In general, this system ensures the high quality of all study programs of the study direction "Health Care".

The enhancement of academic staff competences and their performance quality are assessed and motivated in accordance with the regulatory document "Regulations on Remuneration and Workload of RFMC Academic Staff" (approved by the LU RFMC Council Decision No.10 of 16/09/2020), which define the quality criteria for the award of bonuses and cash prizes to the College academic staff:

- quality of pedagogical process
- supervision of students' theses
- methodological activities in the study program and study course
- scientific research activities
- international mobility
- participation in projects
- further development of competences
- work experience at LU RFMC
- boosting the prestige of the College
- loyalty.

The quality assurance system for professional activities of the academic staff is

integrated into the quality policy guidelines and quality policy of the College (available at: LU RFMC Quality Manual - <https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/LU-R1MK-Kvalitates-rokasgramata-.pdf>).

Annex 55. Examples of Involvement of the Teaching Staff in Staff Development Events

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

The elected academic staff (assistant professors and lecturers) and guest lecturers participate in the implementation of the study direction "Health Care". In the period from 2013 to 2021, 2 (two) elections of the academic staff for the period of 6 years were organized – one took place in 2013 when 6 assistant professors and 38 lecturers were elected as members of the College academic staff, and another one was organized in 2019, when 3 assistant professors and 18 lecturers became elected members of the academic staff.

In 2019, when determining the number of academic staff for the next 6 years, the rates of academic workload were updated in order to ensure the rational use of academic potential.

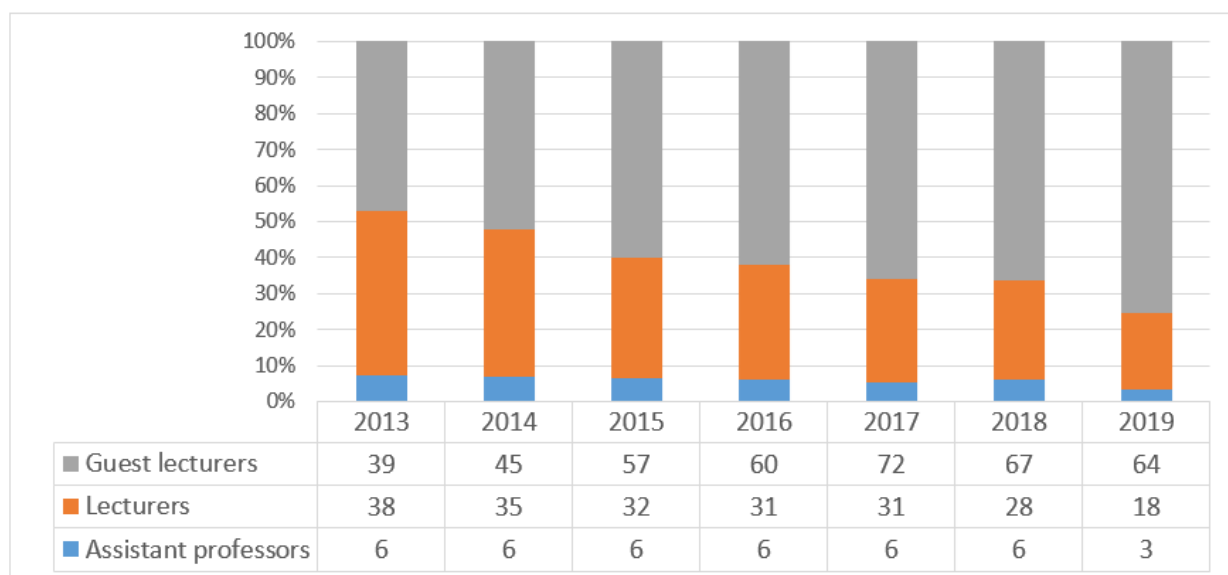


Fig. 5. Elected academic staff of the study direction "Health Care"

There are 85 members of the teaching staff in the study direction of whom 21 person or 25% are elected academic staff. The majority of the teaching staff of the College first-level professional study programs are medical practitioners or practicing specialists in their specific area of medicine, who, alongside teaching activities, work

in health care clinics, pharmacies, EMS service, family doctor's practices, social care institutions, etc. For example, in 2016, 27 members of the academic staff (out of 37 (elected) academic staff), or 72%, were such professionals, whereas in 2020, out of 21, they were 81%. Consequently, such academic staff expand and enhance their professional qualifications in medicine several times a year in accordance with the regulatory enactments for medical practitioners.

Pedagogical competences of academic staff comply with the criteria specified in regulatory documents and are regularly improved in compliance with the provisions of Clause 16 of the Cabinet of Ministers regulations of 11/09/2018 "Regulations on Education and Professional Qualifications of Academic Staff and Procedures for Improving Academic Staff Professional Competences".

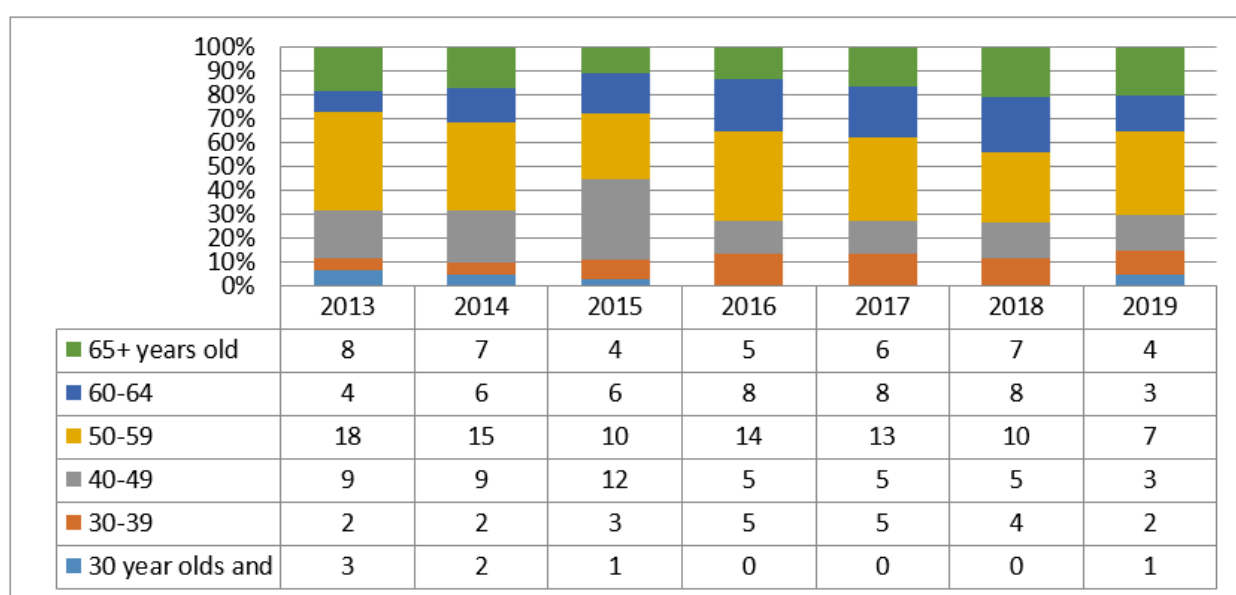


Fig. 6. Breakdown of elected academic staff by age groups

The balance of the academic and research workload of the teaching staff is determined in Annex 1 "Workload Standards of the Academic Staff" of the College's internal regulation "Regulations on the Remuneration and Workload of the Academic Staff of LU RFMC", which defines the lecturers' classroom workload, consultations, scientific activities, methodological activities, internship supervision and other proportions of the workload.

The College Board focuses on the renewal of academic staff. While the teaching staff elected in 2019 were mostly of the middle age, the age range of 64 recruited guest lecturers in 2019/2020 was the following: up to the age of 30 years - 14 (22%); age of 30-39 years - 19 (30%); age of 40-49 years - 12 (19%); age of 50-59 years - 11 (17%); age of 60-64 years - 6 (9%); age of 65 years - 2 (3%). This also confirms the successful symbiosis of the teaching staff of different ages and experiences involved in the implementation of the study direction.

The lecturers involved in the implementation of the study programs of the study direction plan their pedagogical workload in accordance with the study program of

each study semester in the academic year. Specific study courses and workload are reviewed in accordance with the need and provisions of regulatory enactments. The College promotes a balanced life style of workload and rest as well as a healthy lifestyle for lecturers to reduce and prevent the risk of burnout of academic staff. In order to facilitate the acquisition of full-fledged knowledge and skills valued in the labor market, in addition to the permanent staff, the College recruits pedagogical staff on a contract basis for a definite term. Among these teaching staff, there are medical professionals and academic staff elected in other higher education institutions.

In order to ensure teaching and study support functions, record keeping and quality management, staff and financial management as well as legal issue resolutions, the College employs general and administrative staff. The maintenance staff ensure the management of the buildings and territory, infrastructure development and are accountable for vehicle maintenance.

Annex 9. Basic Information about Academic Staff of the Study Direction

Annex 10. Biographies of Academic Staff (Curriculum Vitae)

Annex 17. Statistical Data on Incoming and Outgoing Mobility of Academic Staff in the Reporting Period

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

The College students pursue their education and live their lives (student hall of residence) in a comfortable environment. They participate in extracurricular activities (Students' Self-government events, vocal ensemble, sports classes, etc.). At the beginning of each academic year, new students are introduced to the study premises, the content and form of the study process; they meet with academic and administrative staff. First-year students have the opportunity to receive support and answers to various questions about studies, activities of the College and other issues from their experienced colleagues – senior year students.

All conflict situations are resolved collegially. The relationship between administration, academic staff and students is based on agreeableness, understanding and mutual respect.

"The LU RFMC Regulations on Internal Procedures" are democratic and collegial. The College Administration always engages in a dialogue with students, including individual consultations.

In order to facilitate students' adaptation to the study environment and promote

interest in the pursued profession, a Career Day - Introduction to Specialty/Meeting with a Star - is organized every year. During this event, students meet potential employers from Children's University Hospitals, Riga East Clinical University Hospital, P. Stradiņš Clinical University Hospital, EMS, Latvian Dental Association, Pharmacists' Society of Latvia, etc.

The College purposefully involves support staff and structural units in work with students in order to timely identify possible communication barriers with the academic staff, personal psychological problems, etc. During the admission period, applicants are interviewed to determine their goals and motivation, thus, promptly reducing the risk of students' premature dropping out of the College.

We offer an opportunity for foreign students, for example, those having an Erasmus+ internship, to use the College student accommodations, College canteen services, computer class and library; at the beginning of the internship, a coordinator from the Student Self-government is assigned to each foreign student, who helps them to adapt to the new environment, get to know the city and how to get to the internship place (clinic), etc. Some students with disabilities also study at the College, but in a form that allows them to acquire the medical profession without difficulty. If necessary, there is a mobile wheelchair lift available, which has been purchased by the College. All programs offered at the College are full-time and face-to-face. During the Covid-19 pandemic, students can use various learning materials in the e-environment, Moodle and databases recommended by the library in distance learning classes.

Every year students' well-being and available support are studied in student surveys which are completed by students of all years, including the first year students (available at:

<https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Nolikums-par-LU-R1MK-regularajam-aptaujam.pdf>).

2.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation

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

Scientific research activities at the College are organized in accordance with the College strategy (available only in Latvian at: https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Stratija_.pdf) and are relevant to the aims of the study direction "Health Care".

Research activities are carried out in cooperation with health care specialists, developing cooperation between students and academic staff. Priority research directions are identified in accordance with current and important topics in health care. The College supports research that could contribute to the promotion of public health.

Scientific research activities at the College are assessed considering the following aspects:

- connection between research and the study process (academic aims and results)
- correspondence between scientific activities of academic staff and the scientific directions of departments, scientific interests of academic staff (including the cooperation of students, academic staff and scientific supervisors).

The College Strategy for 2015-2020 contains research directions in health care put forward for students and academic staff, some of which remain topical research areas in the next period of 2021-2027:

- All study programs: Prophylaxis direction as a priority research direction of the College
- "Pharmacy": Pharmaceutical care in dispensing over-the-counter medicines to customers
- "Medical Treatment": Spirography - screening in the diagnosis of lung diseases
- "Medicine": Prophylaxis and promotion of reproductive health
- "Pharmacy": Joint research with *Eiroaptieka* "Customer flow in pharmacy and efficiency of pharmacist assistant services as an indicator of the pharmaceutical care quality", which is envisaged to continue in the format of the international research direction implemented in collaboration with partners from Tallinn Health College and Kaunas College
- "Medicine": Skills and competences of a physician assistant in tackling emergencies in the context of an increased terrorist threat in Europe
- "Nursing" and "Medicine": Intercultural communication skills in the implementation of the refugee integration process and their medical care;
- "Nursing": Intercultural and multidisciplinary patient care at primary, secondary and tertiary care levels;
- Dental implants for health and aesthetics purposes

The College promotes also other important research areas in health care, such as E-health, improving the quality of life of gerontological patients, family health, quality of life and sustainability of the nation, prophylaxis of infectious diseases, etc.

The College scientific research activities are regulated by internal regulations, such as Regulations on Scientific Research Activities (available only in Latvian at:

<https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Nolikums-par-zinatnisko-darbibu.pdf>), Code of Ethics (available only in Latvian at:

<https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Etikas-kodekss.pdf>), Regulations of the Ethics Commission (available only in Latvian at:

<https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Etikas-komisija-Nolikums.pdf>).

Regulations on Academic Integrity (available only in Latvian at:

<https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Noteikumi-par-akademisko-godigumu.pdf>).

Regulations on Writing and Formatting Theses (available only in Latvian at:

https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Nolikums-par-KD-izstradi-un-noformesanu_2019.pdf), Methodical Instructions for Writing and Formatting Theses (available only in Latvian at:

https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/KD_metodiskie-Noteikumi.pdf), Regulations on the Internal Scientific Research Project Competition (draft), and other internal regulatory enactments.

The main structural research unit of the College is a department. At the administrative level, scientific activities are coordinated by a scientific research specialist of the Administration Department. Strategic decisions on scientific research activities are passed by the College Director and the College Council.

The College does not receive state funding for scientific research activities. Scientific activities of

the College academic staff are partially financed within the basic salary framework. Within the constraints of the available financial resources of the College budget, the College is planning to organize an internal research project/grant competition aiming to boost research activities at the College in accordance with the College development strategy, to promote scientific activities of academic staff within the specified scientific research directions and to encourage student participation in scientific research projects.

Research activities are annually monitored by summarizing the results of scientific research actions of departments, the Study Department, scientific research specialist and academic staff (in January and July). The outcomes of such monitoring actions are reviewed at the College Council meetings. Mid-term results are analyzed at regular administration meetings with the College Director.

In the future, the College intends to engage academic staff in research actions on a wider scope, including international research activities.

It is a positive trend that academic staff and students/graduates collaborate on joint research projects, the outcomes of which are joint research presentations at international conferences and abstracts published in conference proceedings. Some examples of such cooperation are the following:

- *Ilze Stāmere, Velga Gūtmane "USING OF THE ESSENTIAL OILS IN THE PROPHYLAXIS OF HUMAN HEALTH" , 2014*
- *Signe Dreimane, Juris Firsts "LAICĪGA BRONHIĀLĀS ASTMAS ATKLĀŠANA BĒRNU VECUMĀ UN POTENCIĀLO RISKĀ FAKTORU ATPAZĪŠANA" ("TIMELY DETECTION OF BRONCHIAL ASTHMA IN CHILDREN AND IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL RISK FACTORS", Eng.), 2016*
- *Sandra Eglīte, Ruta Kidika "ZEMESTAUKU IZMANTOŠANAS IESPĒJAS MEDICĪNĀ" ("USE OF HADRIANI IN MEDICINE", Eng.), 2016*
- *Lauma Granateka, Ineta Robiņa "KARAVĪRU BIEŽĀKĀS VESELĪBAS PROBLĒMAS MILITĀRO MĀCĪBU LAIKĀ" ("THE MOST COMMON HEALTH PROBLEMS OF SOLDIERS DURING MILITARY TRAINING", Eng.), 2016*
- *Maira Heidingere, Inta Miķele "TONSILEKTOMIJAS UN ADENOTOMIJAS PACIENTU APRŪPE PERIOPERATĪVAJĀ PERIODĀ" ("PERIOPERATIVE CARE OF TONSILECTOMY AND ADENOTOMY PATIENTS", Eng.), 2018*
- *Nora Baķe, Ritvars Ziedonis "INSULTS UN IEDZĪVOTĀJU INFORMĒTĪBA PAR TĀ RISKĀ FAKTORIEM" ("STROKE AND PUBLIC AWARENESS OF ITS RISK FACTORS", Eng.), 2018*
- *Jeļena Matvejeva of Euroaptieka Farmācija (Riga), Alīna Kriviņa University of LU RFMC "BETA GLUCANS AS BASIS FOR IMMUNE MODULATING PREPARATIONS", 2019*
- *Kaspars Liepiņš, Inta Miķele "AMBULATORO PACIENTU LĪDZESTĪBAS INDEKSS NOZĪMĒTĀS ANTIBAKTERIĀLĀS TERAPIJAS LAIKĀ" ("OUTPATIENT PATIENT COMPLIANCE INDEX DURING PRESCRIBED ANTIBACTERIAL THERAPY", Eng.), 2020*
- *Aina Sisojeva, Maira Vīksna "MEDIKAMENTOZĀ APRŪPE TIEŠAJĀ PĒCOPERĀCIJAS PERIODĀ PĒC CEĻA LOCĪTAVAS ENDOPROTĒZES" ("MEDICAL TREATMENT IN THE IMMEDIATE POSTOPERATIVE PERIOD AFTER ENDOPROTHESIS OF THE KNEE JOINT", Eng.), 2021*

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

The connection between scientific research actions and the study process is ensured by the College directions for scientific research and themes of research papers of academic staff and students.

The connection between research and the study process is characterized by research activities of academic staff, which forms preconditions for the enhancement and renewal of the contents of study courses and for the development of students' research skills. One of the most powerful examples of the increasing role of research in the study process and improvement of students' research competences is the practical course "Foundation of Research", which is now included in the study direction. The aim of this course is to develop students' applied research skills, to teach them how to formulate research themes by working on the themes of their theses and to encourage students to embark on theoretical and practical parts of their thesis research.

In cooperation with employers and professional associations, students are provided with an opportunity to engage in research that is important and useful for a specified sector of health care. By being members of State Examination Commissions, employers evaluate the quality of the study process and research outputs of the College on the yearly basis.

An important role in building the bridge between studies and research is played by departments, which review all themes of theses that are subsequently submitted for approval to the College Director. The approved topics are made public and are available at the Study Department.

Every year the College organizes an international scientific conference at the College or participates in the organization of the section "Interdisciplinary Research at Medical Colleges" of the annual LU international scientific conference, where students and academic staff present the scientific research outcomes of their joint work and publish research in the College Papers or LU un LU Medical College Books of Abstracts. For example, the College students and academic staff presented and published 7 research abstracts in 2021, 4 abstracts in 2020, 9 abstracts in 2019 and 5 abstracts in 2018 at the LU conference "Interdisciplinary Research at Medical Colleges". The abstract titles confirm the topicality of research and study course contents in the specified areas of medical sciences, for example, "Medication with Increased Toxicological Risk in Pharmaceutical Care" (Sanda Putniņa, Ruta Kidika), "Stroke and Public Awareness of its Risk Factors" (Nora Baķe, Ritvars Ziedonis), "Midwifery Support for Parents in Case of Child Perinatal Mortality" (Elīna Salna, Ineta Robiņa), "Outpatient Equivalence Index during Prescribed Antibacterial Therapy" (Kaspars Liepiņš, Inta Miķele), "EMS Staff Awareness about Patient Safety System at the EMS Service" (Kintija Venskoviča, Ritvars Ziedonis).

To promote academic staff and student scientific engagement, to facilitate the acquisition of research skills through experience, to promote creativity and research in solving topical issues in health care and to enhance the quality of public life, the College is planning to organize an internal research project/grant competition and develop internal regulations on the competition in scientific research projects.

One of the key objectives of medical education is to develop not only medical knowledge, but also medical skills and competences of students so that they could apply them in specified contexts and continuously improve the already acquired knowledge. By flexibly responding to trends in health care, the study direction programs continue to be relevant to the current needs of the market. This is achieved by introducing new study courses to the framework of the study direction or by integrating new themes into the existing content of study courses, such as patient safety, E-health, environmental education and hygiene, home care. Scientific research activities and the study process are interconnected in multiple ways. Research activities comply with the study aims and

results. The scientific activities carried out by lecturers are closely related to the College scientific directions and College departments and are in line with scientific interests of lecturers and research priorities set by employers. Research activities are an important source for enhancing the contents of study courses, development of students' research skills and scientific interests.

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

International research cooperation is accurately characterized by joint meetings of the College and foreign partners at international conferences, when the research outcomes and topicality of research projects of academic staff and students within the scope national health care area is compared and assessed across countries. For example, in 2016, at the international conference "Patient and Medical Personnel Wellness" organized by the College, colleagues from Kaunas College presented research on topics still relevant today, such as "Activity of the Community Nurse in Preventive Healthcare of Breast Cancer" (Rasa Juozapaviciene) and "Intensive Care Nursing Activities in Ensuring Safety of Patients" (Vilma Rasteniene). In 2015, College partners from Denmark, Bulgaria, Lithuania and Estonia shared their professional experiences at the international conference "Different Aspects of Health Care Practice in Medicine and Pharmacology". Pharmacy lecturers from the Medical College of the University of Plovdiv delivered their research outcomes in the presentation "Good Pharmacy Practice - Care for the Community" (Anna Mihaylova, Bozhidarka Hadzhieva, Petya Koleva, Medical University Plovdiv, Medical College).

Every year the College academic staff attend international conferences organized by partners in the capacity of attendees and presenters. There are examples of good practice in joint research projects with foreign partners in the Baltic States. In 2018-2019, M.Juhna, head of the College study program in midwifery, and I.Miķele, head of the Department of Health Care (now the College Director), participated in a joint research project with Kaunas College entitled "Motivation and Physical Activity Types: Comparative Analysis", which covered the Baltic States and Finland. The international cooperation experience of the College has also been used in students' research, for example, in papers, such as "Comparison of Antenatal and Postnatal Health Care in Finland and Latvia" (Ance Rozīte-Kalniņa, supervisor Ineta Robiņa, 2017).

In cooperation with *Euroaptieka*, Ltd., the College has launched a pharmacy research project "Customer flow in pharmacy and efficiency of pharmacist assistant services as an indicator of the pharmaceutical care quality", which is envisaged to transform into an area of international research collaboration implemented with partners from

Tallinn Health College and Kaunas College.

Since 2019, when the College joined the University of Latvia, the opportunities to pursue and develop international research actions of high quality in cooperation with foreign partners have significantly expanded.

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

Research activities of academic staff focus on applied research, and their priority research directions relate to their study courses. Research and artistic output actions are topical to health care. Research areas are in line with the aims of the College development plan, the study direction and the contents of study programs. Engagement of the academic staff in scientific research activities ensures continuous improvement of study programs and compliance with the latest scientific trends, obtains feedback from employers and professional associations on the pursued applied research and promotes scientific research cooperation with colleges of other countries.

Job descriptions of academic positions include the mandatory requirement of conducting scientific research and participating in conferences that are internal and external to the College. Another requirement is submission of a report on own methodological and research activities, publications or other scientific activities, including those that yield innovation, to the College Council at least every three years (job descriptions of the lecturer and assistant professor positions are available in the Personnel Department).

During the reporting period, the College academic staff and guest lecturers worked with students in research areas relevant to student specialization and presented research outcomes at international scientific conferences and international week events, published papers and abstracts in scientific paper publications and abstract collections. Most members of the academic staff supervised/reviewed students' theses.

The College academic staff share their research outcomes and professional experience as specialty experts by delivering lectures to Latvian and international audiences, giving interviews on the radio, TV and to press media. All lecturers supplement and update teaching and methodological resources for their study courses and create new teaching and methodological materials, including those for the College E-environment, to be used by the lecturer and student.

The artistic output of the College academic staff is available to both students and colleagues and is accessible in the library and on the Internet.

The College organized 8 international scientific conferences for academic staff and students and organized the following sections of scientific conferences over the period of 2013 - 2021:

- October 2013: Video conference on pharmacy issues in cooperation with Tallinn Health Care College, participants from Estonia, Lithuania, Portugal
- 28-29 April 2014: "Profilakse un Cilvēka Dzīves Kvalitāte"/"Propylaxis and Quality of Human Life" (Lithuania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Denmark, Latvia)
- 12 May 2015: "Veselības Aprūpes Prakses Dažādie Aspekti Ārstniecībā un Farmācijā"/"Different Aspects of Health Care Practice in Medicine and Pharmacology"
- 24 - 25 May 2016: "Pacientu un Medicīniskā Personāla Labjūte"/"Patient and Medical Personnel Wellness" (Lithuania, Denmark, Latvia)
- 22 February 2018: Section "Starpdisciplinārie Pētījumi Medicīnas Koledžās"/"Interdisciplinary Research at Medical Colleges" of the 76th International Scientific Conference of the University of Latvia (in cooperation with LU RMK and LU PSC)
- 14 February 2019: Section "Starpdisciplinārie Pētījumi Medicīnas Koledžās"/"Interdisciplinary Research at Medical Colleges" of the 77th International Scientific Conference of the University of Latvia (in cooperation with LU RMK and LU PSC)
- 20 February 2020: Section "Starpdisciplinārie Pētījumi Medicīnas Koledžās"/"Interdisciplinary Research at Medical Colleges" of the 78th International Scientific Conference of the University of Latvia (in cooperation with LU RMK and LU PSC)
- 22 April 2021: Section "Starpdisciplinārie Pētījumi Medicīnas Koledžās"/"Interdisciplinary Research at Medical Colleges" of the 79th International Scientific Conference of the University of Latvia (in cooperation with LU RMK and LU).

Academic staff delivered topical research presentations at the following conferences:

- "Prophylaxis from Multifunctional Point of View", Juris Firsts, assistant professor, 2014
- "Polifarmācijas Jautājums Latvijas Farmācijas Speciālistu Farmaceitiskās Aprūpes Darbībā"/"Polypharmacy Issue in Pharmaceutical Care Provision of Latvian Pharmaceutical Specialists", Marius Šlisers, guest lecturer, 2015
- "Biežāk Risināmās Situācijas Farmaceitiskās Aprūpes Ietvaros Aptiekās Saistībā ar Kontracepcijas Līdzekļu Lietošanu"/"Most Common Situations in Pharmaceutical Care in Pharmacies in Relation to the Use of Contraceptives", Ligita Kukule, lecturer, 2015
- "Pacientu ar Hroniskām Saslimšanām Menedžments Ģimenes Ārsta Praksē"/"Management of Chronic Illness Patients in Family Doctor's Practice", Ritvars Ziedonis, lecturer, 2015
- "Māsu Kompetence Pacientu Drošības Jautājumos"/"Nursing Competence in Patient Safety", Inta Miķele, lecturer, 2015

- "Gadījumu Vadība - Atbalsta Sniegšanas un Pārvaldes Veids Veselības Aprūpē"/"Case Management: A Way of Providing and Managing Support in Health Care", Agija Pāža, lecturer, 2015
- "Nonoperative Management of Blunt Liver and Spleen Injury", Solvita Stabiņa, guest lecturer, 2016
- "Sleep Disorders in Traumatology Patients", Santa Miķele, lecturer, 2016
- "Atopic Dermatitis Incidence During Skin Biopsy and Other Acute and Chronic Dermatitis", Tatjana Karpovska (coauthor), lecturer, 2016
- "Izdegšanas Sindroms Vecmāšu Praksē"/"Burnout Syndrome in Midwifery Practice", Dina Ceple, Dace Rihtere, guest lecturer, Ineta Robiņa, assistant professor, 2019
- "Sarežģījumi Recepšu Medikamentu Izsniegšanā Atvērtā Tipa Aptiekās"/"Difficulties in Dispensing Prescription Drugs in Open Pharmacies", Ruta Kidika, lecturer (together with Kitija Bērziņa, College graduate), 2021

The research of academic staff and students conducted in 2013 - 2021 was published in 7 publications of Riga First Medical College - *Raksti (Rīgas Pirmās Medicīnas Koledžas Raksti /Papers of Riga First Medical College, Eng)* and *Tēžu krājums (Book of Abstracts, Eng)*:

- "Profilakse un Cilvēka Dzīves Kvalitāte"/"Propylaxis and Quality of Human Life", *Rīgas Pirmās Medicīnas Koledžas Raksti*, 2014
- "Veselības Aprūpes Prakses Dažādie Aspekti Ārstniecībā un Farmācijā"/"Different Aspects of Health Care Practice in Medicine and Pharmacology", special edition of the *Book of Abstracts of International Scientific Conference of Riga First Medical College*, 2015
- "Pacientu un Medicīniskā Personāla Labjūte"/"Patient and Medical Personnel Wellness", *Rīgas Pirmās Medicīnas Koledžas Raksti*, 2018
- Section "Interdisciplinary Research at Medical Colleges" of the 76th International Scientific Conference of the University of Latvia, Book of Abstracts, 2018
- Section "Interdisciplinary Research at Medical Colleges" of the 77th International Scientific Conference of the University of Latvia, Book of Abstracts, 2019
- Section "Interdisciplinary Research at Medical Colleges" of the 78th International Scientific Conference of the University of Latvia, Book of Abstracts, 2020.
- Section "Interdisciplinary Research at Medical Colleges" of the 79th International Scientific Conference of the University of Latvia, Book of Abstracts, 2021.

Relevant publications of lecturers in the following collections:

- "The Significance of Coexisting Risk Factors for Intrauterine Fetal Growth Restriction in Monochorionic and Dichorionic Twin Pregnancy", abstract, Krista

Mieze, guest lecturer, 2015

- "Atmiņa kā Profesionālo Spēju un Prasmju Formēšanās Faktors"/"Memory as a Professional Cognition and Skill Formation Factor", abstract, Juris Firsts, assistant professor, Ineta Robiņa, lecturer, Velga Bunne, lecturer, 2015
- "Patient and Medical Personnel Wellness", Inese Bunga, assistant professor, Ludis Pēks, guest lecturer, 2018
- "Psiholoģiskā Kompetence Darbā ar Studentiem"/"Psychological Competence in Working with Students", Valentīna Švalbe, guest lecturer, 2018
- "Izdegšanas Sindroms Vecmāšu Praksē"/"Burnout Syndrome in Midwife Practice", abstract, Dina Ceple, Dace Rihtere, guest lecturer, Ineta Robiņa, assistant professor, 2019.

External scientific research publications of the College academic staff

Several College lecturers presented their individual research or the research conducted in a research team at other Latvian medical colleges, universities, professional associations and international events.

Examples of research papers presented at other colleges and professional associations in Latvia:

- **Juris Firsts, assistant professor, Ineta Robiņa, lecturer, Velga Bunne, lecturer.** Presentation and abstract "Memory as a Component of Cognitive Ability Module", International Scientific Conference SOCIETY. INTEGRATION. EDUCATION. Rezekne Academy of Technologies, 22-23 May 2015
- **Tamāra Kļaveniece,** Presentation "Application of Transfusion Technology in Clinical Practice", IV Congress of Latvian Nurses, Midwives and Physician Assistants, 2017
- **Artūrs Praškilēvics, guest lecturer.** Presentation "Carminatives in Pharmaceutical Care", Scientific Conference of LU P. Stradiņš Medical College, 2017
- **Santa Miķele,** Presentation and abstract "Most Frequent Complications after Knee Replacement Surgery and Relation with Preexisting Comorbidities", Scientific Student Conference of the LU Riga Medical College "Make Health Happen", 2 April 2019

Abroad:

- **Annijs Līce, guest lecturer.** Publication of Līce A., Krivichs O., Vjaters E., Voika O. "Contrast Enhancement and Washout Patterns for Differentiation of Malignancy Degree in Small Renal Tumors", EPOS, ECR 2018/C-3172, 2018
- **Inga Priede, guest lecturer.** Coauthor of 2018 poster "International Study on Age, Aging and Workability: Validation of Study Questionnaires". Authors: N.Karpova, I. Priede, V.Folkmanis, L. Tzivian. International Scientific Conference on Medicine of the University of Latvia, 23 February 2018; European Congress of Epidemiology, Lyon, France, 4-6 July 2018
- **Krista Mieze, guest lecturer.** Presentation and abstract. K.Bruna, J.Zaharova,

E.Rancans "Characteristics of First Time Hospitalized Patients with Psychotic Spectrum Disorder in Capital City Region of Latvia", DGPPN (German Association for Psychiatry, Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics) Congress, Copenhagen, 9 September 2019

- **Krista Mieze, guest lecturer.** Presentation and abstract "Self-reported Suicidal Attempts and Associated Sociodemographic Factors in the General Population in Latvia", ECNP (European College of Neuropsychopharmacology) Congress, University of Oxford, 30 May - 5 June 2019
- **Krista Mieze, guest lecturer.** Presentation and abstract "Prevalence and Socio-demographic Characteristics of Self-reported Mild Types of Suicidal Behavior in the General Population in Latvia", ECNP (European College of Neuropsychopharmacology) Congress, Copenhagen, 9 September 2019

Clinical research:

2018 -2019	I. Priede, guest lecturer. TEXT-TKR 64179375THR2001, thrombotic prophylaxis after knee replacement surgery, clinical trial in phase II, research nurse
2018 -2019	I.Priede, guest lecturer. BAYER AG: BAY 1213790/17664 (FOXTROT), thrombotic prophylaxis after knee replacement surgery, phase II clinical trial, research nurse/site coordinator

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

While the general aim of the first-level professional higher education is to implement the in-depth acquisition of knowledge in a specific field, the main focus of such education is on professional training expressed in knowledge, skills and competences. Some important learning outcomes of study programs include the students' ability to yield creative and research-based solutions.

The involvement of students in research projects during the implementation of the study program is ensured by the requirement to produce course papers and a thesis.

Students are involved in scientific research in order to acquire new and useful knowledge, professional skills, competences and to form a connection between knowledge and practice. The themes of students' research and creative activities are considered topical in the health care sector. Student research provides ideas for the

development of the study direction and the content of the study program for the future. Student research themes are available in the electronic format via the following links:

- https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Kvalifikacijas-darbu-temati_AP.pdf (themes of theses in the study program "Medicine" with the qualification of the physician assistant)
- https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Kvalifikacijas-darbu-temati_vecmates-1.pdf (themes of theses in the study program "Medicine" with the qualification of the midwife)
- https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Kvalifikacijas-darbu-temati_masas.pdf (themes of theses in the study program "Nursing" with the qualification of the nurse)
- https://www.rmkl.lv/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Kvalifikacijas-darbu-temati_FA.pdf (themes of theses in the study program "Pharmacy" with the qualification of the pharmacist assistant).

Important support for students' scientific activity is provided by the study course "Foundation of Research" included in all study programs. The College library provides assistance to student research undertakings by offering various online resources and databases for studies and research actions. The list of online resources and databases available to LU RFMC students is published on the College website in the section "Library" (<https://www.rmkl.lv/lv/studentiem/biblioteka/>).

In 2013 - 2021, the College organized 8 international scientific conferences and sessions of scientific conferences for academic staff and students (see Self-evaluation section 2.4.4).

Table 12

Conferences (organized by the College)	Number of students Presenting their research at the Conference (M – midwives, PhA - physician assistants N - nurses, PA-pharmacist assistants)
2013	9 (all PA)
2014	12 (M-2, PhA-2, M-2, PA-6)
2015	3 (M-1, PA-2)
2016	13 (PhA-3, N-2, M-1, PA-7)
2018	5 (PA-3, PhA-2)
2019	8 (PhA-1, M-2, PA-2, N-3)
2020	4 (PA-2, PhA-2)
2021	8 (PhA-2, N-4, PA-1, M-1)

Research-based theses and compiled publications (in College *Papers*) and abstracts (in *Books of Abstracts*) are available in the College library. In 2013 - 2021, the research carried out by the College academic staff and students was published in 7 publications of the College - *Papers* and *Books of Abstracts* (see section 2.4.4.)

Table 13

College Papers Abstract Collections	Number of students with published papers and abstracts (M – midwives, PhA - physician assistants N - nurses, PA-pharmacist assistants)
2014	6 (M-1, PhA-2, N-1, PA-2)
2015	4 (PhA-2, PA-2)
2018	10 (PA-4, PhA-5, N-1)
2019	8 (PhA-1, M-2, PA-2, N-3)
2020	4 (PA-2, PhA-2)
2021	7 (PhA-1, N-4, PA-1, M-1)

The best student papers and abstracts are selected for conferences and publications. All study programs of the study direction are represented at conferences and in publications as much as possible. For example, on 14 February 2019, the following papers were presented by future nurses, midwives, pharmacist assistants and physician assistants in the session "Interdisciplinary Research at Medical Colleges" of the 77th International Scientific Conference of the University of Latvia:

- **Elīna Salna, midwife**, *VECMĀTES ATBALSTS VECĀKIEM BĒRNA PERINATĀLĀS MIRSTĪBAS GADĪJUMĀ / MIDWIFERY SUPPORT FOR PARENTS IN CASE OF CHILD PERINATAL MORTALITY*, scientific supervisor - Robiņa
- **Anna Rijkure-Avrameca, midwife**, *VECMĀŠU IZGLĪTĪBA UN TĀLĀKĀS PROFESIONĀLĀS GAITAS 20.GS. 50.-90. GADOS / MIDWIFE EDUCATION AND FURTHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN 1950-1990ies*, scientific supervisor - I.Robiņa
- **Evija Pētersone, pharmacist assistant**, *POLIFARMĀCIJA APTIEKAS PRAKSĒ / POLYPHARMACEUTICS IN PHARMACY PRACTICE*, scientific supervisor - R.Kidika
- **Evita Lause-Daģe, Anastasija Pašina, nurse**, *PACIENTU APMIERINĀTĪBA AR VESELĪBAS APRŪPI X SLIMNĪCĀ / PATIENT SATISFACTION WITH HEALTH CARE IN X HOSPITAL*, scientific supervisor - M.Vīksna
- **Gerda Jankovska, nurse**, *PACIENTU APRŪPE PĒC CEĻU LOCĪTAVAS ENDOPROTEZĒŠANAS OPERĀCIJAS / PATIENT CARE AFTER KNEE REPLACEMENT SURGERY*, scientific supervisor - I.Robiņa
- **Maira Heidingere, nurse**, *TONSILEKTOMIJAS UN ADENOTOMIJAS PACIENTU APRŪPE PERIOPERATĪVAJĀ PERIODĀ / PERIOPERATIVE CARE OF TONSILECTOMY AND ADENOTOMY PATIENTS*, scientific supervisor - I.Miķele
- **Sanda Putniņa, pharmacist assistant**, *PAAUGSTINĀTA TOKSIKOLOĢISKĀ RISKĀ MEDIKAMENTI FARMACEITISKAJĀ APRŪPĒ / MEDICATION WITH INCREASED TOXICOLOGICAL RISK IN PHARMACEUTICAL CARE*, scientific supervisor - R.Kidika
- **Nora Baķe, physician assistant**, *INSULTS UN IEDZĪVOTĀJU INFORMĒTĪBA PAR TĀ RISKĀ FAKTORIEM / STROKE AND PUBLIC AWARENESS OF ITS RISK FACTORS*, scientific supervisor - R.Ziedonis.

Examples of external student scientific publications

- Papers presented at the Conference of Pharmacists' Society of Latvia in 2020
- **Andris Āboliņš**, student of the LU RFMC Pharmacist Assistant Study Program, paper "Pharmaceutical Care For Contact Lens Users with Dry Eye Syndrome"/"Farmaceitiskā Aprūpe Kontaktlēcu Lietotājiem Sausā Acs Sindroma Gadījumā"
- **Mudīte Gaile**, student of the LU RFMC Pharmacist Assistant Study Program, paper "Pharmaceutical Care for Reducing Colic in Infants"/"Farmaceitiskā Aprūpe Zīdaiņu Koliku Mazināšanā"
- 7th Scientific Research Conference "Research in the Study Process" dedicated to Florence Nightingale, organized by RSU Red Cross Medical College and held on 16 May 2019, and the International Scientific Conference "Quality of Health Care and Social Welfare. EDUCATION AND PRACTICE" organized by the LU P. Stradiņš Medical College and held on 20 May 2019. **Karīna Karalkina**, student in the LU RFMC Midwifery Study Program, delivered the presentation "Use of Bergamot (Citrus Bergamia) Essential Oil during the Postpartum Period".
- 6th International Scientific Conference "CURRENT ISSUES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTH CARE EDUCATION: PRESENT AND FUTURE" organized by LU RFMC on 14-15 November 2019 and held at the Latvian National Library and LU RFMC. **Jelena Matvejeva**, student in the LU RFMC Pharmacist Assistant Study Program, delivered the presentation "BETA GLUCANS AS BASIS FOR IMMUNE MODULATING PREPARATIONS"
- 9th Student Research Conference "Research in the Study Process", organized by RSU Red Cross Medical College and held on 13 May 2021. **Raminta Kiseļova**, graduate of LU RFMC, delivered her research outcomes in the form of a presentation and published abstract in English on the Zoom platform; research title "Pelvic Floor Muscle Training Method Usage after Childbirth" (scientific supervisor Ineta Robiņa).

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

To attract students, the College uses a wide range of marketing tools of modern communication, which promote the College as a modern educational institution that provides excellent quality education. The College provides quality content in digital media. Specifically, the website has recently been updated; the College actively engages in communication with potential students on social media platforms, including some experimentation with new formats of interaction on social media that might interest young people. Advertising campaigns are mostly carried out in digital media following the evaluation of effectiveness of the selected advertising channels.

Relations have already been established with secondary schools throughout Latvia for the long-term cooperation. Secondary school students are offered opportunities to directly contact the College. The College organizes open days, excursions, and other events to which secondary school students are invited.

The College participates in the health care events (exhibition "School", etc.), deploys a database and e-mail marketing.

The College conducts mapping of a new type of a study program within the process of the study program management and facilitates the possibility of implementing a student-centered approach. When mapping study programs, the analysis of the program content, mainly the learning outcomes of the program, is performed. The mapping of study programs boosts resource sharing activities, facilitates the development of joint study programs and reduces duplication of study program contents. The results of the study program mapping are the obtained maps and observations that are intended for the analysis and assessment of the quality of study program and for the subsequent improvement of study programs.

The College Development Strategy defines the concept of the College IT infrastructure development, which supports the improvement of existing information systems and the development of new e-solutions aiming to enhance the overall quality of studies and promote administrative efficiency.

College students and lecturers have the access to a well-developed IT infrastructure. The implemented IT systems need to be improved and new E-solutions need to be developed to ensure closer system integration for the development of new e-services and a more user-friendly interface.

In order to ensure the development of a student-friendly E-environment in the College and the provision of new e-services for students, the current E-environment needs to be enhanced by acquiring internationally recognized solutions.

The application and development of innovation processes has been significantly influenced and accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Since the spring of 2020, the study process organizers and teaching staff have successfully adapted the study process to the new digital reality, for example, the examination procedure in the online mode or application of other digital options for the attainment of study aims.

The College has already planned and started to enhance the electronic admission system by reducing the administrative burden, automating manual operations, improving the user interface, adding functionality, etc. It is important to ensure a modern internal information exchange system for solving administrative issues, to speed up the flow of information and decision-making, and to ensure the circulation of electronic documents within the College.

The College is planning to switch to electronic storage of the student's file in accordance with the regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers. Assessing the innovative solutions that have been implemented to sustain the study process, it can be

concluded that developing and managing such solutions is a continuous process of growth led by the College Administration and the heads of relevant structural units.

2.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation

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

Cooperation partners in Latvia

Latvian cooperation partners are listed in Annex 15.

LU RFMC cooperation with the University of Latvia

LU RFMC is planning to continue close cooperation with the University of Latvia in the areas of sharing of material and library resources and in consolidation of intellectual resources in the next medium-term plan. In cooperation with the University of Latvia, the College has already improved the management structure of the College and study process, and used the LU professional development opportunities for enhancing competences of its academic staff. Another important factor is the opportunity offered to College graduates by the University of Latvia to pursue their education further in the second level professional higher education programs at the University of Latvia, which ensures the continuity of education. Other opportunities offered by LU that have not yet been deployed include the information systems LUIS and LAIS.

LU RFMC cooperation with LU RMC, LU PSC and other Latvian medical colleges

The College collaborates with its partners in scientific research activities (annual LU scientific conferences "Interdisciplinary Research at Medical Colleges") and joint working groups on the development of new professional standards (together with the RSU Red Cross Medical College and Pharmacists' Society of Latvia on the standards for pharmacist assistants) and by participating in international student competitions. Cooperation with all Latvian colleges takes place within the framework of actions of the Association of Latvian Colleges when discussing and deciding on issues important for the development of college education.

Cooperation with professional associations

LU RFMC actively cooperates with employer professional associations, such as Latvian Nurses Association, Emergency Medicine Association of the Republic of Latvia, Latvian Society of Outpatient Physician Assistants, Latvian Association of Rural Family Doctors, Latvian Midwives Association, Pharmacists' Society of Latvia, etc. Professional associations play an important role in the evaluation of the quality of study program contents, analysis of the results of qualification examinations and LU RFMC strategic development.

Cooperation with employers

In order to provide students with internships in the first level professional higher education programs "Medicine", "Nursing" and "Pharmacy", in the professional education program "Dentistry", cooperation has been established with more than 200 student internship providers, cooperation agreements have been concluded. Not only do employers offer internships to students, they also provide a constant support and cooperate with the College on issues of renewal and enhancement of the study process, study program contents, research activities and material base. The key College partners are the following:

- "Traumatology and Orthopedics Hospital", State Ltd.

- "Riga Maternity Hospital", Ltd.

- "Pauls Stradiņš Clinical University Hospital", State Ltd.

- "Riga First Hospital", Riga municipal Ltd.

- "Rīgas Second Hospital", Riga municipal Ltd.

- "Children's Clinical University Hospital", State Ltd.

- JSC "Latvian Maritime Medical Center"

- Emergency Medical Service

- "Riga East University Hospital", Ltd., hospitals "Bīķernieki Hospital", "Latvian Oncology Center", "Gaīlezers"

- "Vidzeme Hospital", Ltd., and other district, regional and city hospitals

-
- Branch "Ezerkrasti" of the National Social Care Centre "Rīga"
-
- Major Latvian dental clinics
-
- Major Latvian dental technical laboratories
-
- JSC "Grindeks"
-
- "Solar Pharmacy Administration", Ltd./SIA "Saules aptieku pārvalde"
-
- JSC "Riga Pharmaceutical Factory" /AS "Rīgas farmaceitiskā fabrika"
-
- JSC "Sentor Farm Pharmacies" (Meness Pharmacy network) /A/S "Sentor Farm aptiekas" (Mēness aptieku tīkls)
-
- "BENU Pharmacy Latvia", Ltd. /SIA "BENU Aptieka Latvija"
-
- "Europharmacy", Ltd. /SIA "Euroaptieka"
 - "Latvia Pharmacies", Ltd. /SIA "Latvijas Aptieka"
 - "Jelgava Pharmacies", Ltd. /SIA "Jelgavas aptieka"
-
- "A Pharmacy", Ltd. /SIA "A Aptiekas", etc.
 - Family doctor's practices

The College has the following goals for cooperation with employers:

- To obtain an insight into the situation on the labor market, to identify the demand for specialists, to determine new quality requirements and professional perspectives for health care professionals, growth opportunities.
- To determine employers' opinion about the compliance of the contents of study programs with the requirements of employers.
- To involve employers in the assessment of the quality of learning outcomes by including them in the qualification exam commission.
- To promote active participation of employers in the improvement of the contents of study programs and the development of research activities of students and

lecturers.

- To receive employers' commissions for applied research.

Cooperation with educational organizations

The college is an active member of the Association of Latvian Colleges. The College Director is a member of LAEL (Latvian Association of Education Leaders). The College is planning to continue participation in associations and engage in activities organized by these associations, including cooperation in reviewing and analyzing strategic documents on the development of education and in delegating recommendations to relevant institutions. Proposals for amendments to the Law on Higher Education Institutions and Law on Professional Education have been reviewed. There have been held negotiations with the Tripartite Cooperation Sub-council of Vocational Education and Employment, Saeima Education, Culture and Science Commission, Ministers of Education and Science, and the Ministry of Education and Science.

Cooperation with other partners

The College has been cooperating with Pauls Stradiņš Museum of the History of Medicine. For example, in 2018, the Museum provided an opportunity for medical practitioners and students to view a valuable and interesting exposition "100 Moments in Latvian Health" on the College premises. On 17 May 2019, in collaboration with the Museum, the College organized a series of two lectures for students "Demonstration of Motherhood, Essence of Women in Contemporary Art, including in Expressions of Latvian Modern Art (Helena Heinrihsone, Ieva Jurjāne, Mētra Saberova, Silja Pogule). The author of the lectures and presentations was the Latvian painter Rasa Jansone.

The College's aims for cooperation with employers and professional associations are the following:

- to find out the situation in the labor market, the demand for specialists, new quality requirements and professional prospects for health care workers, growth opportunities;
- to find out the employers' opinions about the compliance of the contents of study programs with the requirements of employers;
- to involve employers in the evaluation of the quality of learning outcomes by including them in the qualification examination commissions;
- to promote the active participation of employers in the improvement of the contents of study programs, renewal of study technical and material facilities, development of research activities of students and lecturers.
- To receive specific orders for applied research from employers.

Examples of cooperation outcomes for the attainment of aims of the study direction:

- College students are 100% provided with internships, which often become their jobs;

- in cooperation with employers and professional associations, there has been created a pharmacy training model for training of pharmacist assistants (BENU Pharmacy Latvia (BENU Aptieka Latvia, LV));
- in cooperation with Latvian clinics, Riga Maternity Hospital, EMS, etc., there has been created a modern, innovative practical training model that simulates the human / patient care cycle from birth to the end of life (for training of midwives, physician assistants, nurses);
- a training model similar to the ambulance vehicle has been created (in cooperation with the Emergency Medical Service, Latvian Emergency Medicine Association);
- work in qualification examination commissions, quality assessment of learning outcomes;
- themes of students' theses are coordinated with employers;
- participation in conferences of professional associations (presentations of student and teaching staff research at conferences of the Latvian Pharmacists' Society, etc.);
- preparation and implementation of further education programs demanded by employers and supported by professional associations expand every year (Topicalities of Antenatal Care in the Practice of Midwives and Nurses (24 hours); Activities of Outpatient Physician Assistants (611 hours), Nurses' (general care nurses) Specialization in Psychiatry and Narcology (480 hours), etc.)

The College's aims for cooperation with universities and colleges are the following:

- joint organization of scientific conferences, mutual participation in conferences;
- joint working groups working on updating professional standards;
- cooperation for the development of competences of the academic and general staff in a specified field and pedagogy;
- joint activity in the Association of Latvian Colleges, etc.

Examples of cooperation outcomes for the attainment of aims of the study direction:

- joint organizational activities, participation and publication of abstracts pertaining to the section of the annual international scientific conference of the University of Latvia "Interdisciplinary Research at Medical Colleges";
- joint work in the development and updating of professional standards (Pharmacist Assistant PS with RSU Red Cross Medical College; Physician Assistant PS with LU Riga Medical College);
- courses "Higher Education Didactics: Modern Theory and Practice" (160 hours) organized for teaching staff by the Faculty of Pedagogy and Art of the University of Latvia;
- participation and presentations delivered at the conference of the Latvian Association of Colleges dedicated to students' scientific research outputs and innovative solutions on October 23, 2020, publications in the book of abstracts.

2.5.2. Provide the assessment as to how the cooperation with different institutions from

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

Cooperation with Latvian universities and colleges and international cooperation is the foundation for successful development of the study direction.

LU RFMC successfully implements cooperation with foreign universities within the framework of both the Erasmus+ and Nordplus programs. The existing cooperation and internationalization policy is in line with the aims of the study direction and the development plan and can be assessed as good in general. Over the period of 2013-2020, cooperation with foreign partners proceeded in various directions within the Erasmus+ and Nordplus programs (student and staff mobility, project organization visits) and in accordance with bilateral cooperation agreements, memoranda and agreements. The most active cooperation in recent years has been with the following partners:

- Tallinn Health Care College, Estonia
- Utena College, Lithuania
- Klaipeda State University of Applied Sciences, Lithuania
- Kauno Kolegija/University of Applied Sciences, Lithuania
- Palacky University Olomouc, Czech Republic
- Plovdiv Medical University, Bulgaria
- Aarhus School of Dentistry, Denmark
- Nordic Midwives Association (Arcada University of Applied Sciences)
- Oberstufenzentrum Elbe-Ester STR, Germany
- Savo Vocational College, Finland
- Jeanne Antide Vocational School, France
- Pharmacon, Danish College of Pharmacy Practice

During the reporting period, there was cooperation and communication on various issues and directions binding on the College with a total of 50 international institutions. Negotiations with several partners still continue on possible cooperation in the next planning period from 2021 to 2027. Some new cooperation agreements have been concluded with Brno University of Veterinary and Pharmaceutical Sciences in the Czech Republic and B Braun Melsungen Training Center in Germany with which the College is planning to expand cooperation to include training of academic staff and students.

Since 2008 and within the framework of the Nordplus Nordejordemodern program, LU RFMC has been participating in the international project with Nordic States, Baltic States and Northern Autonomous Communities, coordinated by the Nordic Midwifery Education Association. Nordejordemodern consists of 15 partners, 11 of which are educational institutions, 3 are public hospitals, including those in Copenhagen, Denmark, Oslo and Bergen, Norway, Reykjavik, Iceland, Helsingfors and Vas, Finland, Lund and Borås, Sweden, Tartu, Estonia, and Kaunas, Lithuania. Nordejordemodern aims to provide student and academic staff mobility exchanges, curriculum

enhancement actions for the development of programs in midwifery and joint research projects.

The annual number of mobility participants is stable and the College has sufficient capacity to increase the number of mobility participants.

Foreign partners are attracted at international conferences and by communication with coordinators of various foreign education and health care institutions in the e-environment. The organization of mobility during the mobility period is arranged on the Internet.

The following criteria are taken into account when selecting foreign partner institutions:

- Compatibility of the contents of the institutions' study programs
- Opportunity to provide internships for students (in foreign clinics) and experience or teaching visits for academic staff in accordance with the academic calendar
- Expected benefits
- Previous experience of cooperation
- Potential risks (significant cultural differences, etc.).

Objectives of cooperation with foreign partners:

- Comparison and mutual improvement of the contents of study programs
- Research and participation in international scientific conferences
- Student and staff mobility in Erasmus+, Nordplus, etc. projects
- Exchange of academic staff in related study programs, promoting the internationalization and international recognition of the College study programs.

Every semester, the College organizes informative events for students and academic staff about the Erasmus+ and Nordplus exchange programs. The feedback provided by students and academic staff has shown positive evaluation of the programs. The application for participation in a mobility program can be received by each student or lecturer individually from the mobility project manager or can be downloaded from the College website. After applications have been collected, candidates are interviewed (in November and March). During the interview, the candidate's knowledge of a foreign language, motivation to participate in the mobility program and students' social activity and achievements are evaluated. The application is accompanied by an application letter, which is considered during the interview.

Table 14

Student outgoing mobility (number of students) in 2013 - 2020

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	20	22	15	8	13	13	13	1
PA	5	8	4	1	-	-	3	-
N	3	3	2	2	5	6	4	3
M	8	4	5	2	4	3	3	-
PhA	4	7	4	3	4	4	3	-

Table 15

Staff/academic staff outgoing mobility (number of staff/academic staff) in 2013 - 2019

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
	11	11	7	7	11	15	17
PA	4	4	2	2	4	2	1
N	3	3	2	2	4	7	1
M	1	1	-	-	-	-	1
PhA	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Prof. Edu.	3	3	2	2	3	6	11
Adm.	-	-	1	1	-	-	1

More information on international cooperation is available in Section 2.4.3 and in Annex 14 "List of Cooperation Agreements. Foreign Cooperation partners", Annex 17 "Statistical Data on Student Mobility" and Annex 18 "Statistical Data on Incoming and Outgoing Mobility of Academic Staff in the Reporting Period".

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

The College regularly informs partner universities about the Erasmus+ and Nordplus exchange mobility opportunities of the study direction "Health Care". Every year the College representatives attend annual events of Latvian professional and international associations with the aim of establishing new contacts and attracting guest lecturers to the study direction programs.

The College has a good previous experience in attracting foreign students and guest lecturers, however, there are still untapped opportunities to be used for expanding and developing this process further in all study programs. Such actions are included in the LU RFMC Strategy for 2021-2027. Since 2020, difficulties in implementation of academic staff mobility have been caused by Covid-19 restrictions.

In the reporting period 2013-2020, the largest number of guest lecturers who had delivered theoretical lectures and practical classes within the Erasmus+ mobility program was from Kaunas College, Klaipeda College, Utena College, Aarhus University, etc. For example, a lecture for midwives, nurses and physician assistants on health care practice at Klaipeda University Hospital was read by the guest lecturer Irina Zeleniene. In 2014 - 2017, practical classes and lectures in dentistry were delivered by Aarhus University lecturers Mitzie Abilgaard, Anette Svanholm and Birgit Kimen. Other guest lecturers included Daiva Maciuliene, Rasa Tamuliene, Ausra Adomeniene, Vaiva Vaiksnoriene, etc., from Kaunas College. Tallinn Health Care College was represented by Liliana Ruben, head of a department, Birgit Anteploon, etc.

During their 2017 visit to the College, Klaus Kurek, the international coordinator of the Oberstufenzentrum Elbe-Elster STR (Germany), and Andrea Koppen, the supervisor of student internships, shared their experiences with nursing students and lecturers on internships and collaboration in the methodological resource co-development.

By participating in the Skype conference on 5 December 2019, the College commenced cooperation with partner organizations from Lithuania, Estonia, Sweden, Norway and Finland within the framework of the "ENNHANCE Nordplus" project.

The criteria for the selection of foreign cooperation partners and the aims of such cooperation are provided in Section 2.5.2.

The current development of cooperation and internationalization is consistent with the aims of the study direction and the development plan and can be assessed as generally appropriate. Such cooperation is being planned to expand in 2021-2027.

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

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

Assessment of the implementation of the experts' recommendations from the previous accreditation of the study direction is provided in Annex 19.

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

(Not applicable)

Annexes

I - Information on the Higher Education Institution/ College		
Information on the implementation of the study field in the branches of the higher education institution/ college (if applicable)		
List of the governing regulatory enactments and regulations of the higher education institution/ college	ANNEX 1. List of the main internal normative acts and regulations.pdf	1.PIELIKUMS_ Saraksts ar galvenajiem normatīvajiem aktiem.pdf
The management structure of the higher education institution/ college	ANNEX 2. LU RFMC management structure.pdf	2.PIELIKUMS_LU R1MK pārvaldības struktūra.pdf
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.1. Management of the Study Field		
Plan for the development of the study field (if applicable)	ANNEX 3. Development Plan of the LU RFMC Study Direction "Health Care" for 6 years.pdf	3.PIELIKUMS. LU R1MK studiju virziena "Veselības aprūpe" attīstības plāns 6 gadiem.pdf
The management structure of the study field	ANNEX 4. Management Structure of the Study Direction "Health Care".pdf	4.PIELIKUMS_Studiju virziena pārvaldības struktūra.pdf
A document certifying that the higher education institution or college will provide students with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution/ college (agreement with another accredited higher education institution or college) if the implementation of the study programme is terminated.	ANNEX 5. Opportunity to continue studies.pdf	5.PIELIKUMS_Par iespēju turpināt studijas.pdf
A document certifying that the higher education institution or college guarantees compensation for losses to students if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme license is revoked due to actions (actions or omissions) of the higher education institution or college and the student does not wish to continue studies in another study programme.	ANNEX 6. Student guarantee on loss compensation.pdf	6.PIELIKUMS_Par zaudējumu kompensāciju.pdf
Standard sample of study agreement	ANNEX 7. Sample of the Study Agreement.pdf	7.PIELIKUMS_Studiju līguma paraugi.pdf
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System		
Analysis of the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers	ANNEX 8. Analysis of the results of surveys of students, graduates and employers.pdf	8.PIELIKUMS. Studējošo, absolventu un darba devēju aptauju rezultātu analīze.pdf
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field		
Basic information on the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study field	Annex 9.Basic information about the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study direction.xlsx	9.PIELIKUMS_Pamatinformācija par studiju virziena īstenošanā iesaistītajiem mācītājiem.xlsx
Biographies of the teaching staff members (Curriculum Vitae in Europass format)	ANNEX 10. Academic staff CV .pdf	10.PIELIKUMS_Mācītājspēku CV .pdf
A statement signed by the rector, director, head of the study programme or field that the knowledge of the state language of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programmes within the study field complies with the regulations on the state language knowledge and state language proficiency test for professional and official duties.	ANNEX 11. Knowledge of the state language of the teaching staff.pdf	11.PIELIKUMS_Apliecinājums par mācītājspēku valsts valodas zināšanām.pdf
A statement of the higher education institution/ college on the respective foreign language skills of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study programme at least at B2 level according to the European Language Proficiency Assessment levels (level distribution is available on the website www.europass.lv, if the study programme or part thereof is implemented)	ANNEX 12. The study field Health Care in a foreign language.pdf	12.PIELIKUMS_Par svešvalodu studiju procesa realizācijā.pdf
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation		
Summary of quantitative data on scientific and/ or applied research and / or artistic creation activities corresponding to the study field in the reporting period.	ANNEX 13. Summary of the quantitative data on scientific applied research activities carried out within the framework of the study direction.pdf	13. PIELIKUMS Kvantitatīvo datu apkopojums par studiju virzienam atbilstošām zinātniskās aktivitātēm pārskata periodā.pdf
List of the publications, patents, and artistic creations of the teaching staff over the reporting period.	ANNEX 14. List of publications, patents, works of artistic creation of the teaching staff for the reporting period_Physician assistant.pdf	14.PIELIKUMS_Mācītājspēku publikāciju, patentu, mākslinieciskās jaunrades darbu saraksts par pārskata periodu.pdf
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation		
List of cooperation agreements, including the agreements for providing internship	Annex 15. Cooperation partners.pdf	15.PIELIKUMS_Sadarbības partneru saraksts.pdf
Statistical data on the teaching staff and the students from abroad	ANNEX 16. About foreign students and lecturers.pdf	16.PIELIKUMS_Par ārvalstu studējošajiem un mācītājiem.pdf
Statistical data on the incoming and outgoing mobility of students (by specifying the study programmes)	ANNEX 17. Statistics on incoming and outgoing student mobility.pdf	17.PIELIKUMS. Statistiskās dati par studējošo ienākšo un izejošo mobilitāti.pdf
Statistical data on the incoming and outgoing mobility of the teaching staff	ANNEX 18. Statistical data on incoming and outgoing mobility of the teaching staff during the reporting period.pdf	18.PIELIKUMS. Statistiskās dati par mācītājspēku ienākšo un izejošo mobilitāti.pdf
II - Description of the Study Field - 2.6. Implementation of the Recommendations Received During the Previous Assessment Procedures		
Report on the implementation of the recommendations received both in the previous accreditation and in the licensing and/ or change assessment procedures and/ or the procedures for the inclusion of the study programme on the accreditation form of the study field.	ANNEX 19. List of implemented recommendations.pdf	19.PIELIKUMS_Rekomendāciju izpildes pārskats.pdf
An application for the evaluation of the study field signed with a secure electronic signature	ANNEX 20. Application.pdf	20.PIELIKUMS_iesniegums.edoc
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	ANNEX 22. Diploma sample and Diploma Supplement_Pharmacist assistant.pdf	22.PIELIKUMS_Diploma paraugs_vecmāte_LV.doc
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (Table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	ANNEX 42. Statistical data on students_Physician assistant.pdf	
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard		
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)	ANNEX 44. Compliance of the study program with the Profession Standard_Physician assistant .pdf	
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)	ANNEX 35_Compliance of the study program with the sector-specific regulatory framework_Midwife.pdf	
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme		18.PIELIKUMS_Kartēšana_Vecmāte.xlsx
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)		47.PIELIKUMS_Studiju programmas plāns_Ārsta palīgs.pdf
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	ANNEX 48_STUDY COURSES_Physician assistant.docx	48.PIELIKUMS_Studiju kursi_Ārsta palīgs.pdf
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)		
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		

Other annexes

Name of document	Document
21.PIELIKUMS SVID ANALĪZE.pdf	21.PIELIKUMS SVID ANALĪZE.pdf
ANNEX 21. SWOT ANALYSIS.pdf	ANNEX 21. SWOT ANALYSIS.pdf
55.PIELIKUMS Koledžas mācībspēku kvalifikācijas pilnveide. Piemēri..pdf	55.PIELIKUMS Koledžas mācībspēku kvalifikācijas pilnveide. Piemēri..pdf
ANNEX 55. Enhancing the qualification of the College teaching staff. .pdf	ANNEX 55. Enhancing the qualification of the College teaching staff. .pdf
54.PIELIKUMS. Studiju programmas Māsas studiju vietas izmaksas.pdf	54.PIELIKUMS. Studiju programmas Māsas studiju vietas izmaksas.pdf
ANNEX 54.State budget expenditure per student of the study program "Nursing" (nurse) in 2020.pdf	ANNEX 54.State budget expenditure per student of the study program "Nursing" (nurse) in 2020.pdf
1. Additional information after visit _ 04.04.2022._Lv only	AIC atbilde.docx
1.pielikums-20220404164631.pdf	1.pielikums-20220404164631.pdf
2. pielikums-20220404164709.pdf	2. pielikums-20220404164709.pdf
3. pielikums-20220404164816.pdf	3. pielikums-20220404164816.pdf
4. pielikums-20220404164906.pdf	4. pielikums-20220404164906.pdf
5. pielikums-20220404164950.pdf	5. pielikums-20220404164950.pdf
6.pielikums.pdf	6.pielikums.pdf
8.pielikums-20220404165144.pdf	8.pielikums-20220404165144.pdf
7.pielikums-20220404165112.pdf	7.pielikums-20220404165112.pdf

Pharmacy (41725)

Study field	<i>Health Care</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Pharmacy</i>
Education classification code	<i>41725</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>First level professional higher education study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Kārlis</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Mačāns</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>karlis.macans@medskola.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Mg.pharm.</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>67376911</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>Within two years and six months to train highly qualified and competitive health care professionals, specifically, pharmacist assistants, who are in demand on the Latvian labour market and who have a solid foundation for lifelong learning in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Latvia, standard of the nursing profession and European Union directives.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. To ensure the implementation of the study process in accordance with the requirements of the education standard, Latvian regulatory enactments, European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015).</i> <i>2. To provide conditions and opportunities to obtain the first level professional higher education in accordance with the standard of the pharmacist assistant profession and the requirements of employers.</i> <i>3. To promote the acquisition of necessary theoretical knowledge, practical and professional skills of the nursing profession, thus, promoting students' competitiveness in the changing socio-economic conditions and in the labor market.</i> <i>4. To ensure the high quality of studies by attracting qualified teaching staff and using modern methodological, scientific, material and technical provision in the study process.</i> <i>5. To develop students' abilities to conduct scientific analysis and to solve problems independently; to promote student engagement in solving practical and scientific problems.</i> <i>6. To promote students' understanding of career development and encourage their further professional development and further education; to create motivation for raising their qualification level.</i> <i>7. To promote cooperation with other Latvian and foreign higher education institutions, including students' international mobility, participation in international programs and projects.</i> <i>8. To establish cooperation with employers in pharmaceutical care.</i>

Results of the study programme	<p>Knowledge</p> <p>1. The graduate explains the structure of the human body, physiological and biochemical processes taking place in it, the difference between a normally and pathologically functioning organism and the principles of therapy and prevention.</p> <p>2. The graduate is familiar with the chemical aspects of medications, indications and contraindications, side effects and interactions of medications, as well as the principles of storage and disposal.</p> <p>3. The graduate describes the basic principles of pharmacy organization and legal aspects of professional activity, including the principles of personal data protection and confidentiality.</p> <p>Skills</p> <p>4. The graduate evaluates and uses the principles of ethical communication in the pharmacy with customers, colleagues and other healthcare professionals.</p> <p>5. The graduate uses information technology to work with evidence-based information, perform express diagnostics and provide first aid.</p> <p>6. The graduate is able to prepare medicines according to a doctor's specific prescription or a written request of a medical institution.</p> <p>7. The graduate promotes a healthy lifestyle and disease prevention consistent with the latest scientific advances and respecting the interests of customers and explains the principles of equality and its importance to customers.</p> <p>Competence</p> <p>8. The graduate is able to advise pharmacy customers under the supervision of a pharmacist and dispense prescription and over-the-counter drugs and other pharmacy goods providing all the necessary information about them.</p> <p>9. The graduate participates in ordering, receipt, inspection and placement of goods and complies with regulatory enactments on the accounting, storage and circulation of goods.</p>
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	Final State Examination: qualification examination (practical part of the qualification examination and the defense of the thesis).

Study programme forms

Full time studies - 2 years, 6 months - latvian

Study type and form	Full time studies
Duration in full years	2
Duration in month	6
Language	latvian
Amount (CP)	100
Admission requirements (in English)	Secondary or secondary vocational education

Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	—
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	<i>Pharmacist assistant</i>

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Agency of the University of Latvia "Riga First Medical College of the University of Latvia"	RĪGA	TOMSONA IELA 37, VIDZEMES PRIEKŠPILSĒTA, RĪGA, LV-1013

3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

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

Table 16

No changes have been made in the indicators of the study program since the issuance of the previous accreditation sheet of the study direction (the study direction "Health Care" is accredited by decision No.5 passed at the meeting of the study accreditation commission on 17 May 2013).

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

All study program indicators are relevant to the study direction "Health Care". The duration of the study program implementation is optimal for achieving the intended learning outcomes and acquiring professional competences and ensures that a qualified specialist required in health care enters the labor market after two and a half years of training.

In line with the name of the study program and upon graduation from LU RFMC, students of this study program are awarded the qualification of the pharmacist assistant. Specialists are trained in compliance with the legislation of the Republic of Latvia, the needs of the Latvian labor market, professional standards and European Union directives. The learning outcomes of the study program have been developed in compliance with the Profession Standard of the Republic of Latvia and professional standards of professional associations (Pharmacists' Society of Latvia and employer organizations).

Admission to full-time study programs is transparent, open and competitive based on the results of centralized examinations recorded in the secondary education certificate: grades of centralized examinations in Latvian and a foreign language, average of examination parts in percentage in the CE certificate, average of all centralized examination parts taken by the applicant. The applicant must also present a certificate in chemistry or provide a statement certifying the inclusion of chemistry into the subject "Natural Science" that was acquired at the secondary education level.

In addition, the mapping of study courses has been performed to achieve the learning outcomes of the study program (see Annex 27). The mapping of the study program conducted in accordance with the professional standard "Pharmacist Assistant" (professional qualification level 4) has allowed to carry out in-depth analysis and facilitate certain substantive corrections, for example, clarifications of intended learning outcomes of study courses.

The code of the study program corresponds to the levels of the Latvian education classification structure in accordance with Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 322 of 13/06/2017 "Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia".

Annex 56 (available only in Latvian; information in English is provided on request) - Comparison and significance of the study program "Pharmacy" with the qualification of the pharmacist assistant

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

Dace Ķikute, President of the Pharmacists' Society of Latvia (hereinafter - PSL), points out to the shortage of pharmaceutical specialists in Latvia and to the generational gap problem affecting the quality of pharmaceutical care.[1]

On 13 March 2020, the PSL register contained the registration of 1,378 active pharmacist assistants. As for active pharmacists, such were 1,666.[2] Upon conducted simple mathematical calculations, it turns out that there is 0.8 pharmacist assistants per one pharmacist in Latvia. According to the information obtained by PSL on other countries in the EU and the world, a typical situation is to have at least two (and quite often four or more) pharmacist assistants per one pharmacist. The PSL administration concludes that such data indicate that there is obviously a shortage of pharmacist assistants (college graduates) in Latvia.[3]

"The interest in 'importing' pharmacists from other countries, in our opinion, is a threat to the already low value of the profession and will further distort the labor market," emphasizes the PSL administration. PSL also informs that 36% of the registered pharmacist assistants are over 60 years of age, 28% are between 51 and 60 years of age, whereas only about 10% are under the age of 30. Therefore, pharmacist assistants are generally getting older. This is especially noticeable outside Riga.[4]

Economic forecasts indicate that until 2030 there will still be a demand for the middle level health care professionals in the Latvian labor market, including the demand for pharmacist assistants trained by LU RFMC.

[1] MIC Administration "PSL Annual Conference on Pharmaceutical Care in Latvia at Present and in the Future" (2018). // available at:

<https://farmacija-mic.lv/lfb-gada-konference-par-farmaceitiskas-aprupes-tagadni-un-nakotni-latvija/>

[2] Pharmacists' Society of Latvia "Registered Pharmacy Assistants" (13/03/2020). // available at:

[https://www.farmaceitubiedriba.lv/uploads/files/publatsk_asist\(4\)_10.pdf](https://www.farmaceitubiedriba.lv/uploads/files/publatsk_asist(4)_10.pdf)

[3] Pharmacists' Society of Latvia "PSL Informs the Health Minister on Important Pharmacy Issues" (2016). // available at:

<https://www.farmaceitubiedriba.lv/lv/lfb-iepazistina-veselibas-ministri-ar-farmaceitiem-svarīgiem-jautājumiem>

[4] *ibid.*

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

LU RFMC implements a full-time face-to-face study program “Pharmacy” with the qualification of the pharmacist assistant providing state scholarships covering the tuition fees of the study program and offering paid studies for those wishing to pay the tuition fees using financial support of legal and natural persons.

The number of state scholarships covering the tuition fees and the number of specialists to be trained in the study program “Pharmacy” with the qualification of the pharmacist assistant in each financial year is determined by the agreement between the LU Riga First Medical College and the Ministry of Education and Science (with the University of Latvia since 1 July 2019). Over the reporting period (2013-2020), the College used to receive 97 state scholarships covering the tuition fees each year. The College regularly fulfills the agreement on using the scholarship and the number of specialists to be trained.

Matriculation

At the beginning of each financial year and upon the receipt of the approved number of scholarships covering the tuition fees, the Study Department estimates the number of students for the financial year and submits the proposal on the number of students to be matriculated to the College Council.

Based on the signed cooperation agreements with pharmacy networks and considering the College resources, matriculation takes place twice a year for the financial resources of legal or natural persons.

The College approach to candidate selection and the experience of raising motivation of first year students allow to forecast the student dropout rate and determine the optimal number of students for matriculation. Students who drop out are asked to fill in a questionnaire about the reasons for dropping out of the study program. The most frequently mentioned dropout reason was difficulty combining personal life and work with studies, which leads to academic debts. Over the recent 5 years, there has been a tendency for the age of students to increase. In the study program in the last 5 years there is a tendency to increase the age of students. At least 30% of students already have some previous education or incomplete education, and a large proportion of students have families.

Furthermore, to monitor the dropout rate of first year students, the College takes various actions, such as organization of Information Days on site of the College, travelling to secondary schools and introducing the study program and learning outcomes at the end of each academic year and at the end of the 2,5-year long training program. First year students are encouraged to participate in meetings with

the industry professionals at the annual career education event “Meeting with a Star”, when students have the opportunity to ask questions to directors of pharmacies, D. Kikute who is the president of Latvian Society of Pharmacists, etc. The necessary support for students (for solving psycho-emotional issues related to the study process and everyday life) is provided by the Study Department, the head of the study program and other relevant staff of the College.

Number of trained specialists

During the reporting period from 2013 to 2020, LU RFMC trained 297 pharmacist assistants using state funds and 224 pharmacist assistants using financial resources of legal and natural persons.

The state monitoring data of 2020 on the employment of the graduates of the year 2017 confirmed the high employment rate of the College graduates in the areas of their specialty - 93.5%.

The combined experience of the College Department of Medicine and Pharmacy and the implementation of the study program "Pharmacy" allow to predict the increase in the number of students in the program in line with the market demands.

Statistical data on the students and graduates of this program are provided in Annex 23.

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

3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

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

The College and study program management regularly meets with representatives of the pharmaceutical industry to update the content of the study program in accordance with the latest

trends, for example, with the financial support of partners students of the course “Pharmaceutical Care” have the opportunity to acquire patient consultation skills in the environment that is similar to real work environment in the Pharmacy simulation model properly equipped and supplied with a variety of pharmaceutical products corresponding to a real open type pharmacy, which is why students have the opportunity to acquire the skills of patient service and consultation by being in an environment adapted to pharmaceutical care contexts.

In accordance with recommendations of employers, some changes were introduced into the study program during the reporting period. First, the amount of credit points was reduced for the following courses: “Botany” (from 3 CP to 2 CP), “Pharmacognosy” (from 4 CP to 3 CP), “Information Technologies in Pharmacy” (from 2 CP to 1 CP) and “Pharmaceutical Care” (from 7 CP to 6 CP). Second, the study courses “Nutritional Supplements” (1 CP) and “Introduction to Culturology” (1 CP) were taken out from the program and were redirected to the first year internship. Third, new topical study courses were introduced - “Civil Defense” (1 CP) and “E-health” (2 CP).

The aim of the study program and the contents of study courses are in compliance with the profession standard of the pharmacist assistant and meet the needs of the labor market. The contents of study courses are developed considering the aims of study courses, their tasks and learning outcomes. Importantly, the contents of the study course has been developed in line with the current profession standard of the pharmacist assistant (Annex 25). In 2020-2021, the development of the new profession standard of the pharmacist assistant has been coordinated by the Pharmacists' Society of Latvia, while its management by the RSU Red Cross Medical College, whose working group includes LU RFMC lecturers.

The research conducted by academic staff and students is based on the developments in pharmaceutical care, focuses on the enhancement of pharmaceutical care and health maintenance, and effectively contributes to the development and enhancement of the study program and study courses. When conducting research, study courses are enriched with the most recent discoveries in pharmaceutical care. The academic staff participate in scientific conferences and practical seminars and write textbooks and methodological resources.

New study courses are developed taking into account the recommendations of employers and current developments in pharmaceutical care. One of the indicators of the quality assurance of the study program is cooperation with potential employers whose recommendations on the development and enhancement of the study program and study courses are considered.

The pharmaceutical industry receives pharmacist assistants who join pharmaceutical care teams and sometimes holding certain leadership positions. The content of study courses is reviewed at least once a year, but usually before each semester. Lecturers supplement the content of the course with the latest information in accordance with the economic development processes and tendencies. The academic staff of LU RFMC are leading professionals in their field, who represent a good example for students wishing to acquire the pharmacist assistant profession.

The mapping of study courses has been completed (see Annex 27).

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

The criterion is not applicable.

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

Students are evaluated in all study courses via the assessment types outlined in course descriptions. Final assessments cover theoretical knowledge and practical skills and include independent work and the final course exam or test. While implementing the study program, various modern study methods are used, such as lectures, seminars, situational tasks, independent work and presentations. Classes are delivered by both the elected academic staff of the College and invited specialists practicing in the field and holding relevant education, such as pharmacists, physicians, biologists, chemists, representatives of humanities and social sciences (lawyers, philosophers, philologists, psychologists).

In order to facilitate the acquisition of the content of study courses, practical classes are limited to 8-12 students for both specialization subjects ("Medication Preparation", "Pharmaceutical Care", "Pharmacology", "Chemistry") and medical study courses ("Anatomy and Physiology", "Clinical Pathology"). The study process includes seminars, group work, independent work, in which students, among other activities, draft summaries of systematically completed studies and meta-analyzes on a specific topic or present their research outcomes. Teaching methods are adapted and supplemented consistent with the decisions of the department meeting. Due to the epidemiological situation, digital technologies are widely used.

Due to the limitations of the Covid 19 pandemic, lectures and classes are organized using online tools such as Skype, Google Meet, Whatsapp and Zoom. Assessment of learning outcomes is typically conducted in Google Forms. During the transition period to the launch of the updated version of Moodle, additional study materials offered by teachers are stored in Google Drive. One aspect of organization of remote studies, which is due to COVID-19 restrictions, requires students to turn on the camera for online lectures and classes and log in using their first and last name. For online written examinations, there is a limited access time and a requirement to use a second camera so that the student's desk and activity monitor are visible.

At the end of their studies students prove their practical knowledge in the qualification internship exam and in cooperation with a thesis supervisor narrow down the thesis theme, develop and defend their theses, which are the ultimate representation of students' knowledge, skills and competences in pharmaceutical care.

3.2.4. If the study programme envisages an internship, describe the internship opportunities offered to students, provision and work organization, including whether the

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

To provide employers with pharmacist assistants, students acquire both theoretical knowledge and practical skills consistent with the profession standard. In order for a specialist to be ready for the labor market after graduating from the College, all students complete 3 internships at a pharmacy during their studies. See ANNEX 30 and ANNEX 53.

The College provides students of all study programs of the study direction, including pharmacist assistants, with 100% internships, offering the opportunity to complete internships closer to the place of residence or in a network of pharmacies of the student's choice. The College closely cooperates with all major pharmacy networks in Latvia, providing high quality of internship:

- "Sentor Farm aptiekas" ("Sentor Farm Pharmacies", Eng.) (Mēness aptieku tīkls (Moon Pharmacy network, Eng.))
- "BENU Aptieka Latvija" ("BENU Pharmacy Latvia", Eng.), Ltd.
- "Euroaptieka" ("Europharmacy", Eng.), Ltd.
- "Latvijas Aptieka" ("Latvian Pharmacy", Eng.), Ltd.
- "Saules aptieku pārvalde" ("Saulė Pharmacy Administration", Eng.), Ltd.
- "A Aptiekas" ("A Pharmacy", Eng.), Ltd. and others

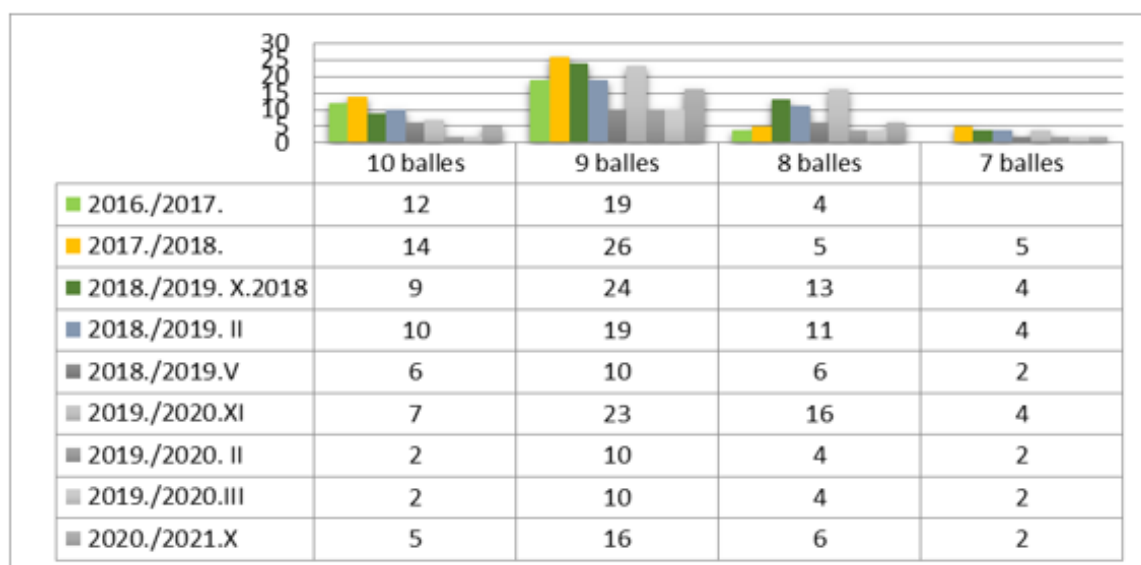
3.2.5. Evaluation and description of the promotion opportunities and the promotion process provided to the students of the doctoral study programme (if applicable).

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

A component of the final state examination, which is a qualification examination, is the defense of the thesis, which students develop in consultation with the head of the study program and the supervisor of the thesis. The choice of the thesis theme is affected by current events in the field, experience gained in internship and knowledge, skills and cognitions received in theoretical classes. During the reporting period, there was a tendency for students to choose thesis themes pertaining to pharmaceutical care, pharmacognosy, pharmacology and practical pharmacy, such as "Pharmaceutical Care in Case of Lactose Intolerance", "Pharmaceutical Care in Case of Migraine", "Cryotherapy in Pharmaceutical Care and Dermatology", etc. After the second

semester, students are given the task of collecting medicinal plants (to prepare herbarium and crude plants). This practice sometimes influences the choice of thesis themes, for example, "Natural Products for Menopausal Women," "Apitherapy and Bee Venom in Medicine," "Carminatives in Pharmaceutical Care", "Biologically Active Substances in Cannabis Plants", "Possibilities of Using Phallus Impudicus L in Medicine", etc. Research in pharmacology has been developed on the following themes: "Effects of Sugar Substitutes on the Human Body", "Adjuvants and Non-pharmacological Treatment for Pain Therapy", "Nutrition and Food Supplements during Pregnancy", "Polypharmacy in Pharmacy Practice", "Caffeine and its Effects on the Body", etc. Within the practical pharmacy direction, students researched various pharmacoeconomic and legal issues, such as "E-prescription in Customer and Professional Assessment", "Prescription Errors and their Impact on Pharmaceutical Care", "Patient Cooperation in Drug Therapy", "Circulation of Reference Drugs in Pharmacy", "Consumption of Iodine Preparations in Pharmacy "X", "Impact of the Quality of Pharmacist Consultations on the Promotion of Patient Cooperation", etc.

After each pre-defense and final defense of theses, there is organized a meeting of the teaching staff of the department to analyze students' research papers, their contents, format, presentation and assessment, to make proposals for improvements and to submit them to the Study Program Council. The final state examination commission consists of representatives of the industry, who provide their assessment and recommendations for the selection of thesis themes and for the enhancement of the quality of research.



10 balles - 10 points

Fig.7. Results of the final state examination - thesis defense

Every year the Final State Examination Commission, filling in the examination protocol, assesses the topicality of the thesis, the diversity of perspectives included in the thesis and the interconnection between the thesis and practical work experience. The College encourages graduates to present the outcomes of their thesis research at meetings of professional associations and at conferences.

High assessment results of theses and their defense are rooted in the College system of managing the thesis development process, which limits the number of theses that lecturers can supervise and introduces the mid-term check of progress results, which is organized as pre-defense of the theoretical part of the thesis in front of the assessment commission, which is when students defend their theoretical findings and outline their empirical/research plan. Such mid-term check

helps to promptly identify problem areas in thesis writing and to reduce plagiarism risks.

3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

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

The study base of the LU RFMC program “Pharmacy” with the professional qualification of a pharmacist assistant, which includes relevant structural units (departments, groups of lecturers, etc.) and the necessary support staff, complies with the conditions for the implementation of the study program. The information and methodological base, databases and literature available in the library also comply with the conditions for the implementation of the study program. The financial base and the costs of the study program correspond to the needs of the study program and the conditions of study program implementation. The material and technical base and its availability to students and teaching staff ensure the implementation of the study program consistent with its specifications.

The content of the study program is founded in the standard of the physician assistant’s profession. The process of the program implementation ensures the deployment of various modern teaching and learning methods, such as lectures, seminars, case studies, independent work and presentations. The development of the study program is planned and directed in accordance with the demand of the labor market and the College common development vision, taking into account the specifics of the study program. The qualifications of the teaching staff implementing the study program help to achieve the learning outcomes consistent with high quality standards, which is the result of a significant number of teaching staff pursuing their careers in the relevant field. Consequently, their expertise shapes the up-to-date contents of study courses enriched with practical information gained from real-life cases. Ultimately, this creates the learning environment that is similar to the daily work environment.

The study process is ensured with a methodological base corresponding to the professional aims of the study program, its content and expected learning outcomes and study materials, which are regularly updated and supplemented. Students enjoy the opportunity to use study resources created by their instructors in the e-environment. Computers and multimedia resources, the wireless Internet, computer classroom, library and reading room, study and methodological materials (hard covers

and electronic format; CDs, DVDs) are used in the study process. The resources published in the e-environment, on the one hand, and the use of information and communication technologies for consultations, on the other hand, facilitate the acquisition of specific study topics outside the College context.

The College library offers students of this program books in practical pharmacology, chemistry, homeopathy, herbal manuals, etc. The library collection is supplemented with the latest book editions and medical periodicals. Students have access to theses, scientific research and methodological materials, other published papers, open-access electronic resources (e-books, e-journals, databases in pharmacy and chemistry, drug registers, e-resources in evidence-based medicine, health care, medical statistics and LNL digital resources)[1].

To attain the aim of the study program “Pharmacy” and to implement selected teaching methods, the College has properly equipped lecture rooms and training rooms with proper equipment and other material resources most of which have been purchased using the STEM and ERDF funds as well as College own revenues.[2]

The initial stage of the study program is marked by general education courses, which take place in specially equipped lecture room and training rooms. These rooms are equipped with multimedia equipment (laptops, interactive whiteboards, projectors for displaying lecture and seminar materials and showing demonstrations, video conferencing systems for participation in conferences, seminars, training sessions). Computer equipment makes it possible to quickly obtain information from the Internet sources and visualize study materials and consequently encourage proper actions, thus, ensuring the implementation of the selected teaching method. The provision of IT infrastructure at LU RFMC is described in more detail in criterion 2.3.2. of Section 3 of Chapter II. Training rooms offer various material resources for the development of necessary professional skills and for completing case studies. Library resources are described in criterion 2.3.3 in Section 3 in Chapter II.

Material and technical provision for the study program “Pharmacy” with the qualification of a pharmacist assistant ANNEX 52.

[1] LU RFMC students can access online resources and databases on the College website in the section “Library” (available at:
<https://www.rmkl.lv/lv/studentiem/biblioteka/>)

[2] The list of equipment for specific classrooms is published on the College website in the section “Study Environment” (available at:
<https://www.rmkl.lv/lv/par-koledzu/macibu-vide/>)

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

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

The financial base and the costs of the study program correspond to the needs of the study program and the conditions of study program implementation. The financial resources of the study direction consist of the state budget funds and own revenues. The available financial resources ensure the implementation of the study program and the attainment of learning outcomes.

Distribution of the state funding in the study program "Pharmacy" (pharmacist assistant) by years: in **2017** - EUR 376951; **2018** - EUR 393247; **2019** - EUR 412465; **2020** - EUR 416013.

Table 17

State budget expenditure per student of the study program "Pharmacy" (pharmacist assistant) in 2020

Number of study places financed by the state budget	97
Types of expenses	EUR
Salary per 1 student per year	1459,24
Compulsory employer's state social insurance contributions	351,53
Payment for services – management of the building, infrastructure development	365,38
Modernization of teaching equipment, purchase of teaching materials and equipment	138,69
Acquisition of fixed assets	70,06
Total study expenses per student per year	2384,90

The interconnection of the study programs included in the study direction ensures that a large portion of the material and technical provision purchased by the College (teaching equipment, practical manipulation rooms, mock-ups, simulation mannequins, digital boards, etc.) is deployed not only in one but in several study programs.

Table 17.1.

Minimum number of students in the study program to ensure the profitability of the study program

Study program	Minimum number of students
Study program "Medicine" (physician assistant), Latvian language, full-time, face-to-face	99
Study program "Medicine" (midwife), Latvian language, full time, face-to-face	64
Study program "Pharmacy" (pharmacy assistant), Latvian language, full time, face-to-face	93

3.4. Teaching Staff

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

The qualifications of the teaching staff implementing the study program help to effectively achieve the learning outcomes, as the majority of the teaching staff also practice in their specialty and therefore can provide students with up-to-date and practical information related to the course, which creates the study context as close to the everyday work environment as possible. The fact that the qualifications of the teaching staff are relevant to learning outcomes is confirmed by the quantitative and qualitative indicators of the midterm and final assessment outcomes, as well as the feedback of students, graduates and employers. In general, the qualifications of the teaching staff of the study program can be assessed as corresponding to both the conditions for the implementation of the program and the requirements of regulatory enactments. Examples of how lecturers improve their qualifications include the following:

- 1) Antra Ziemele, MPharm.

Table 18

11 May 2015	Seminar on the Impact of Different Product Strategies on Drug Users. Insight into the Types of Drug Registration. Original or Generics, Pharmacologist's Justification. Biological and Biologically Similar Medications ("Farmācijas akadēmija", Ltd.)
13 October 2015	Seminar on Oral Diseases and Hygiene ("Farmācijas akadēmija", Ltd.)
11 November 2015	Seminar on the Role of Omega-3 Fatty Acids in Children's Health and Growth ("BENU Aptieka Latvija", Ltd.)
9 December 2015	Seminar on Vitamins and Minerals in Children's Diet ("BENU Aptieka Latvija", Ltd.)
13 January 2016	Courses. Lower Respiratory Tract Diseases I ("Farmācijas akadēmija", Ltd.)
27 January 2016	Courses. Lower Respiratory Tract Diseases II ("Farmācijas akadēmija", Ltd.)
2 September 2016 - 17 May 2017	The study course "Pharmacy Drug Technology" of the 2nd level professional higher education program "Pharmacy" of the continuing education program (RSU Faculty of Continuing Education)
19 May 2017	Seminar on Stress, Burnout, Depression: Pharmacist's Opportunities and Pharmacist's Role in the Care of such Patients (Latvian Society of Pharmacists)
15 December 2017	Seminar on Chronic Fatigue and Possibilities to Overcome it (Latvian Pharmaceutical Trade Union)
20 March 2018	Seminar on Generic or Innovative Medicines: Opportunities for Pharmacists in Pharmaceutical Care ("BENU Aptieka Latvija", Ltd.)
11 October 2018	Seminar on Women's Well-being Formula at Different Ages. (Ewopharma AG)
14 November 2018	Seminar. Vitamin D: To Use or Not to Use? ("BENU Aptieka Latvija", Ltd.)
8 February 2019	Seminar on Specific and Symptomatic Treatment of Viral Cases. Proper Use of Appropriate Drugs, Drug Interaction, Risks of Side Effects and Ways to Prevent them. Pharmaceutical Care for Patients with Viral Infections. (Latvian Pharmaceutical Trade Union)
2019	University didactic courses. (LU)

2) Alīna Kriviņa, M.Sc.Sal.

1. "Medikamentozās Terapijas Pamatprincipi Onkoloģijā"/"Basic Principles of Drug Therapy in Oncology" (Eiropas sociālā fonda projekts, "Ārstniecības un Ārstniecības Atbalsta Personāla Kvalifikācijas Uzlabošanai"/European Social Fund project, "Improvement of Qualifications of Medical Staff and Medical Support Staff"), 1-8 August 2020.
2. "Farmācijas akadēmija", Ltd., provided lectures for pharmaceutical specialists in further education "Pašārstēšanās Iespējas Saaukstēšanas Gadījumā"/"Possibilities of Self-treatment in Case of Cold", 20 September 2018.
3. "Farmācijas akadēmija", Ltd., provided lectures for pharmaceutical specialists in further education "Alerģiju Daudzpusīgas Izpausmes"/"Various Manifestations of Allergies", 24 May 2018.
4. Interdisciplinary Conference of Latvian Society of Physicians "Bērna Veselība"/"Child Health", 26 November 2016.
5. Interdisciplinary Conference of Latvian Society of Physicians "Svarīgākās Novitātes Pasaules Medicīnā"/"The Most Important Novelties in Global Medicine", 19 March 2016.

The elected academic staff and guest lecturers are involved in the implementation of the aim of the study program, which is to train a health care professional with the qualification of the pharmacist assistant.

- Total number of teaching staff: 18 educators per 3.53 academic staff rate
- Academic staff: 1 senior lecturer, 7 lecturers
- Guest lecturers: 10

Annex 28 provides information on the teaching staff involved in the study program "Pharmacy" (41725) awarding the qualification of the pharmacist assistant. Information on the education of the teaching staff is provided in Annex 9 "Basic information on the teaching staff involved in the study direction".

Information on the professional development of academic staff is registered in the College Personnel Department. For more information, see criterion 2.3.6 in Chapter II "Resources and Provision of the Study Direction".

3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.

In 2013 and 2019, the College organized the elections of the academic staff through a competition, which led to the six-year change in the basic composition of the academic staff. In addition to the elected teaching staff, the program recruits recognized medical practitioners as guest lecturers, who, by being practitioners in their areas of specialization, are able to enrich the content of study courses with real-life medical cases, thus, creating a study context that is similar to the real-life professional environment of a physician assistant. Changes in the composition of the teaching staff most often pertain to invited guest lecturers. This provides the College with an opportunity either to replace a lecturer from the elected group of the teaching staff in the relevant thematic cycle/study course or to ensure the implementation of a highly specific study course.

In the reporting period from 2013 to 2020, there were positive changes, as guest lecturers who are practitioners in the fields related to their study courses had been attracted to the study program. Only a relatively small number of the teaching staff terminated their employment. During this period, new lecturers who have specialization in pharmaceutical technologies and who are certified pharmacists joined the program - Antra Ziemele, MPharm and Kārlis Mačāns, MPharm. In 2019, the program was joined by lecturers of pharmacology - Dr. Konstantin Pavlov and clinical pharmacist Anda Lapina, MClinPharm. The course "Pharmaceutical Care" is taught by a certified pharmacist Ligita Kukule, MPharm, and by a certified pharmacist and the pharmacy manager Inese Sniedze, MPharm. Since 2019, the study course "Foundation of Psychology" has been taught by the clinical psychologist Ivars Koškins, Psy.M., who has both pedagogical experience in working with young people at educational institutions and experience in the clinical environment, counseling clients. Pharmacology and Clinical Pharmacology courses are taught by the clinical pharmacist Alīna Kriviņa, M.Sc.Sal., and the pharmacist Jānis Osītis, MPharm. The study course "Practical Pharmacy" is delivered by Andrejs Kaņapuhins, manager of P. Stradiņš CUH closed pharmacy.

By attracting new lecturers, the study program creates more opportunities for the acquisition of new information and enhances the overall quality of the studies.

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

3.4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).

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

The core of the study program "Pharmacy" (41725) with the qualification of a pharmacist assistant is represented by lecturers of specialty courses, such as R.Kidika, L.Kukule, J.Osītis, K.Mačāns, A.Kanapuhins, etc., and by lecturers of general education courses, such as V.Bunne, S.Melberga, I.Robiņa, J.Pavlovskis-Šneiders, etc.

The teaching staff of the program participate in general meetings of all the teaching staff of the College, which are organized 3 times a year: at the beginning of the academic year, at the end of the first semester and at the end of the second semester. The teaching staff are informed on the level of attainment of study aims and learning outcomes in the previous academic period, receive information about the planned activities and set expenses for the new academic year.

The head of the study program K.Mačāns discusses further development and implementation of the study program at meetings of the department (design/renewal of the study environment, current developments in the study field, updating study course contents and study course interconnection, ensuring academic succession). Mid-term results of students' progress are discussed at least twice a year (as of November 1 and April 1), which allows to identify problems in the implementation of the study program and determine the set of measures to be taken to handle difficulties, which leads to the decrease in the number of student dropping-out of the study program, especially in the first year of studies. The department organizes and leads working groups of its teaching staff for mapping learning outcomes. Each department also performs the analysis of class observations of its teaching staff.

The teaching staff collaborate on the development of the final assessment of study courses, practical part of the final state examination and the evaluation of its course. Every year new thesis topics are suggested in line with the research directions of the College and research areas of the teaching staff.

To attain the aim of the study program, which is to train health care practitioners with the qualification of a pharmacist assistant, the College employs the elected academic staff and guest lecturers. Some further information on the teaching staff of the study program is provided below:

- Total number of the teaching staff: 18 instructors at the rate of 3.53 academic staff.

- Academic staff - 1 assistant professor and 7 lecturers.
- Guest lecturers - 10
- Number of students in the program as of 01/10/2020 - 180
- The ratio of students to the teaching staff of the study program: 10 students: 1 member of the teaching staff
- The ratio of students to the overall number of academic staff: 22,5 students: 1 member of the teaching staff

Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	ANNEX 22. Diploma, diploma supplement sample_Pharmacist assistant.pdf	22.PIELIKUMS_Diploms un diploma pielikums_Farmaceita asistents.pdf
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	ANNEX 23. Statistical data on students in the study program_Pharmacy.pdf	23.PIELIKUMS_Statistikas dati par studējošajiem_Farmaceita asistents.pdf
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard	ANNEX 24. Compliance of the study program with the National Education Standart_Pharmacist assistant.docx (1).pdf	24.PIELIKUMS_Studiju programmas atbilstība valsts izglītības standartam_Farmaceita asistents.docx.pdf
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)	ANNEX 25. Compliance of the study program with the Profession Standard_Pharmacist assitant.pdf	25.PIELIKUMS_Atbalstība profesijas standartam_Farmaceita asistents .pdf
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)	ANNEX 26. Compliance with the sector-specific regulatory framework_Pharmacist assitant.pdf	26.PIELIKUMS_Atbalstība specifiskajam normatīvajam regulējumam_Farmaceita asistents.pdf
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	ANNEX 27. Mapping of study courses_Pharmacist assistant.pdf	27.PIELIKUMS_Farmaceita asistents_ kartēšana.pdf
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	ANNEX 28. Curriculum of the study program Pharmacy .pdf	28.PIELIKUMS_Studiju programmas plāns_Farmaceita asistents .pdf
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	ANNEX 29. DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY COURSE_Pharmacist assistant.pdf	29.PIELIKUMS_Studiju kursu apraksti_Farmācija .pdf
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)	ANNEX 30. Description of the organization of students' internships_Pharmacist assistant.pdf	30.PIELIKUMS_Studējošo prakses organizācijas apraksts_Nolikums par praksi_Farmaceita asistents.pdf
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		

Medicine (41721)

Study field	<i>Health Care</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Medicine</i>
Education classification code	<i>41721</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>First level professional higher education study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Maira</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Vīksna</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>maira.viksna@medskola.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Mg.paed.</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>29745025</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>Within three years to train highly qualified and competitive health care professionals in the field of midwifery that are in demand on the Latvian labour market and that have a solid foundation for lifelong learning in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Latvia, standard of the midwife profession and European Union directives.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. To ensure the implementation of the study process in accordance with the requirements of the education standard, Latvian regulatory enactments, European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015).</i> <i>2. To provide conditions and opportunities to obtain the first level professional higher education in accordance with the standard of the midwife profession and the requirements of employers.</i> <i>3. To promote the acquisition of necessary theoretical knowledge, practical and professional skills of the midwife profession, thus, promoting students' competitiveness in the changing socio-economic conditions and in the labor market.</i> <i>4. To ensure the high quality of studies by attracting qualified teaching staff and using modern methodological, scientific, material and technical provision in the study process.</i> <i>5. To develop students' abilities to conduct scientific analysis and to solve problems independently; to promote student engagement in solving practical and scientific problems.</i> <i>6. To promote the involvement of students in further professional development and further education; to create motivation for raising their qualification level.</i> <i>7. To promote cooperation with other Latvian and foreign higher education institutions.</i> <i>8. To establish cooperation with health care employers.</i>

Results of the study programme	<p>Knowledge</p> <p>1. To memorize and enumerate the anatomy, embryology, genetics, functional and pathological physiology, medical biochemistry and genetics, as well as philosophy, psychology and languages of a healthy woman and a newborn.</p> <p>2. To explain and imitate the management of physiological pregnancy, physiological childbirth and postpartum care, neonatology, gynecology, basics of clinical care, emergency medical aid, examination methods and technologies in accordance with the competence of the midwife.</p> <p>Skills</p> <p>3. To select, argue and purposefully apply examination methods and technologies appropriate for a specific situation, perform necessary laboratory, instrumental and specific examinations, evaluate results, prepare clients for diagnostic procedures, examinations and surgeries, use specific information and medical technologies to perform activities, identify, evaluate and use evidence-based information that is essential for health care and professional development.</p> <p>4. To apply pre-, clinical and post-clinical care to a woman and her newborn and to document the patient care process in accordance with the medical and record keeping procedures of medical institutions.</p> <p>5. To assess, ensure and develop a safe work environment in compliance with labor protection requirements.</p> <p>6. To educate women about the promotion and maintenance of reproductive health as well as the antenatal, childbirth and postpartum period.</p> <p>7. To apply the organization and management of midwifery, legal aspects of midwifery, business principles and research methods.</p> <p>Competence</p> <p>8. To carry out general, antenatal and postnatal care for women, manage physiological childbirth, newborn care and plan their activities by setting priorities.</p> <p>9. To implement and promote positive communication in care work in cooperation with individuals, families and other health and social care professionals and institutions.</p>
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	Final State Examination: qualification examination (practical part of the qualification examination and the defense of the thesis).

Study programme forms

Full time studies - 3 years - latvian

Study type and form	Full time studies
Duration in full years	3
Duration in month	0
Language	latvian
Amount (CP)	120
Admission requirements (in English)	Secondary or secondary vocational education

Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	—
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	<i>Midwife</i>

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Agency of the University of Latvia "Riga First Medical College of the University of Latvia"	RĪGA	TOMSONA IELA 37, VIDZEMES PRIEKŠPILSĒTA, RĪGA, LV-1013

3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

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

Table 19

No changes have been made in the indicators of the study program since the issuance of the previous accreditation sheet of the study direction (the study direction "Health Care" is accredited by decision No.5 passed at the meeting of the study accreditation commission on 17 May 2013).

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

All indicators of the study program are relevant to the study direction "Health Care". The duration of the implementation of the study program is optimal for achieving the expected learning outcomes and acquiring professional competences, which ensures that a qualified health care specialist enters the labor market after completing education in three years.

Upon the graduation from this study program, the graduate obtains the qualification of the midwife, which is consistent with name of the study program. Specialists are trained in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Latvia, the needs of the Latvian labor market, professional standards and European Union directives. The expected learning outcomes of the study program have been developed in compliance with the Profession Standard of the Republic of Latvia.

Admission to full-time study programs is transparent, open and competitive based on the results of centralized examinations recorded in the secondary education certificate: centralized examination in Latvian, centralized examination in a foreign language, and the average grade of all centralized examinations taken by the

applicant.

The interconnection between the name of the study program, awarded degree and qualification, aims, tasks and learning outcomes of the professional qualification as well as admission conditions was properly evaluated at the study program development stage and is now annually reviewed and improved in close cooperation with professional partners, such as Latvian Midwives Association, Clinic "Elite" of the Association of Health Care Medical Centers, Children's Clinical University Hospital, Riga Maternity Hospital and maternity departments of hospitals across Latvia, such as Pauls Stradiņš Clinical University Hospital, Sigulda Hospital, Daugavpils Regional Hospital, Jurmala Hospital, Vidzeme Hospital, Jekabpils Regional Hospital, Ogres Regional Hospital, North Kurzeme Regional Hospital and Liepaja Regional Hospital.

The interconnection of the study program indicators complies with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No.846 of 10 October 2006 "On Requirements, Criteria and Procedures for Admission to Study Programs".

The mapping of study courses of the study program has been produced in accordance with the Midwife Profession Standard, profession code 2222 02 (see Annex 36). The mapping has allowed for the in-depth analysis of study courses and has facilitated the corrections of specific aspects of contents of study courses, leading to more accurate specification of the expected learning outcomes.

The code of the study program corresponds to the levels of the Latvian education classification structure in accordance with Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 322 of 13/06/2017 "Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia".

Annex 57 (available only in Latvian; information in English is provided on request) - Comparison and significance of the study program "Medicine" with the qualification of the midwife

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

The availability of midwives is a key factor in ensuring the safety and continuous health care for pregnant women. However, the number of midwives in Latvia lags far behind the average indicators of the EU countries. In 2017, there were 2.3 midwives per 10,000 population in Latvia. According to the estimates of the State Audit Office auditors (taking into account the recommendations of the World Bank), to ensure the safety and continuous health care for pregnant women, Latvia additionally needs about 295 midwives. Thus, there are 295 fewer midwives in Latvia than on average in the EU. In 2017, the provision of midwives in Latvia was 22.8 midwives per 100,000 inhabitants, whereas in the EU, this number was 37.9.^[1]

The number of required midwives can also be calculated by taking into account the number of births per midwife. In Latvia, there were an average of 51 births per midwife in 2017. According to the Birthrate Plus® midwifery staff planning tool developed and approved by the Royal College

of Midwives in the UK, which is recognized by the UK as an appropriate workforce planning tool, on average a midwife is expected to attend 29.5 births per year, but this number can range from 27.3 to 31.52 births per midwife depending on birth changes or complex births that may affect staffing levels. The auditors applied the British Birthrate Plus® instrument to the Latvian context and concluded that 727 midwives are needed in Latvia to ensure the safety and continuous care of a pregnant woman at the level of 21,422 births, which amounts to the shortage of about 282 midwives.[2]

Several WHO resolutions and progress reports emphasize the need for educated, valued and well-paid nurses and midwives to enhance the health care system and its sustainability.[3] Currently the number of midwives in the over-65 age group is significantly higher than in the 25-40 age group.[4]

Economic forecasts indicate that until 2030 there will still be a demand for the middle level health care professionals in the Latvian labor market, including the demand for midwives trained by LU RFMC.

[1] State Audit Office of the Republic of Latvia “Human Resource in Health Care” (2019). // available at: <https://static.lsm.lv/documents/oy.pdf>

[2] Ibid.

[3] CM “On the Conceptual Report “On Future Development of the Nursing Profession”” (2019). // available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/310369-par-konceptualo-zinojumu-par-masas-profesijas-turpmako-attistibu>

[4] State Audit Office of the Republic of Latvia “Human Resource in Health Care” (2019). // available at: <https://static.lsm.lv/documents/oy.pdf>

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

LU RFMC implements a full-time face-to-face study program “Medicine” with the qualification of the midwife. The number of state scholarships covering the tuition fees and the number of specialists to be trained in the study program “Medicine” with the qualification of the midwife in each financial year is determined by the agreement between the LU Riga First Medical College and the Ministry of Education and Science (with the University of Latvia since 1 July 2019). During the reporting period (2013 - 2020), 67 state scholarships covering the tuition fees were allocated every year. The College regularly fulfills the requirements of the agreement on filling of study places and the number of specialists to be trained.

Matriculation

At the beginning of each financial year and upon the receipt of the approved number of state scholarships covering the tuition fees, the Study Department estimates the number of students for the financial year and submits the proposal on the number of

students to be matriculated to the College Council.

The College approach to candidate selection and the experience of raising motivation of first year students allow to forecast the student dropout rate and determine the optimal number of students for matriculation. Students who drop out are asked to fill in a questionnaire about the reasons for dropping out of the study program. One of such reported reasons is inability to take responsibility for another person's life despite the study process, social sciences and health sciences subjects being interesting. Furthermore, to monitor the dropout rate of first year students, the College takes various actions, such as organization of Information Days on site of the College, travelling to secondary schools and introducing the study program and learning outcomes at the end of each academic year and at the end of the 3-year training program. First year students are encouraged to participate in meetings with the relevant health care medical practitioners. The program has introduced a new study course "Introduction to Midwifery Studies". Students are provided with necessary support by the Study Department, the head of the study program and other relevant College staff.

Number of trained specialists

During the reporting period (2013-2020), LU RFMC trained 144 midwives using state funds. The state monitoring data of 2020 on the employment of the graduates of the year 2017 confirmed the high employment rate of the College graduates in the areas of their specialty - 93.5%.

Statistical data on the students and graduates of the study program are in Annex 32.

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

3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

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

One pillar of the foundation of the quality assurance of the study program “Medicine” awarding the professional qualification of the midwife is cooperation with potential employers and representatives of the Latvian Midwives Association implemented by organizing meetings and discussing the latest developments and demands on the labor market and by receiving recommendations on the revision and enhancement of study courses. Consequently, the study course Professional Technical Skills was expanded by patient safety themes, whereas the study course Pregnancy, Childbirth and Postnatal Period was supplemented with the latest fetal monitoring methods used in maternity care, such as STAN, which was introduced to Latvian hospitals relatively recently.

Considering the rapidly developing E-medicine system, the content of the study course Foundation of Business (5 CP) has been revised, and in order to increase students' information technology competence, the amount of credit points of the study course Foundation of Business was reduced by 1 CP and in 2019 the 1 CP course Information Technologies was introduced, which since then has facilitated students' work on their theses. The course Information Technologies provides lectures and practical classes on various topics, including the acquisition of *SmartMedical* software, which helps students use e-administration solutions when registering patients, storing data, making payments and creating reports in the E-health system.

The study course Introduction to Midwifery Studies is annually updated in line with the latest innovations in the midwife profession and its professional areas in Latvia.

The content of the study course Hygiene, Preventive Medicine, Health Education has been updated to implement the provisions of Paragraph 42 of Section 2 of the Environment Protection Law; there is a proposal to change the name of the course to Environmental Education and Hygiene (1 CP).

The content of the study course Disaster Medicine and Civil Protection, Emergency Aid (2 CP) has been updated in compliance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No.716 of 5 December 2017 “Minimum Requirements for the Content of the Mandatory Course in Civil Protection and the Content of Training of Employees in Civil Protection” and MES letter No. 4-6e/2018/35 of 8 January 2018 on the Introduction of a Civil Protection Course in the amount of 1 CP from 1 January 2019 in the following way: the study course has been divided into 3 separate parts - Disaster Medicine (1 CP), Civil Protection (1 CP), and Emergency Medical Aid (1 CP).

For the total amount of the study program not to exceed 120 CP, the decision was made to exclude the elective course Culturology (1 CP) from the study program and to integrate its content into the study courses Ethics (1 CP) and Foundation of Sociology and Social Medicine (1 CP).

Patient safety and occupational safety issues are integrated into the content of the study course Professional Technical Skills.

The content of study courses is developed considering the aim of a specific study course, learning outcomes and the active profession standard (ANNEX 34). The profession standard is currently being revisited by the work group approved by the board of the Latvian Midwives Association.

The aims of study courses correspond to the aims of the study program and are in compliance with the profession standard, legislation of the Republic of Latvia, market needs and the EU directives.

The research conducted by students under the supervision of the academic staff yields a significant contribution to the development of the health care field and the enhancement of patient care, health maintenance as well as the development of the study program and the enhancement of study courses. When conducting research, study courses are enriched with the most recent discoveries in the respective field of health care. The academic staff participate in scientific conferences and practical seminars and prepare methodological resources. New study courses are developed taking into account the recommendations of employers and current developments in the respective medical field. One of the indicators of the quality assurance of the study program is cooperation with potential employers implemented by communicating about the current developments and demands on the market, by considering their recommendations on the development and enhancement of the study program and study courses and by adjusting the study environment to a realistic symbiosis with the facilities of clinical simulations.

The health care sector receives employees who are able to integrate into health care teams, taking some leadership positions. The contents of study courses are reviewed at least once a year but usually prior to the beginning of each semester. The teaching staff can update the contents of their study courses in accordance with national developments and trends at any time without any constraints. The LU RFMC academic staff are leading professionals in their fields, who serve as an example for students acquiring the profession.

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

The criterion is not applicable.

3.2.3. Assessment of the study programme including the study course/ module implementation methods by indicating what the methods are, and how they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study courses and the aims of the study

programme. In the case of a joint study programme, or in case the study programme is implemented in a foreign language or in the form of distance learning, describe in detail the methods used to deliver such a study programme. Provide an explanation of how the student-centred principles are taken into account in the implementation of the study process.

The assessment of the final examination of a study course makes up no more than 50% of the final mark of the study course. Students' performance in all study courses is evaluated. Final marks include the assessment of theoretical and practical knowledge as well as independent work. The expected learning outcomes are clearly defined. Problem-solving skills are developed in practice.

The expected learning outcomes are reflected in the study course programs. The study course programs have been improved by identifying the knowledge, skills and competences required for obtaining credit points and by determining the types of examination consistent with the expected learning outcomes. Students acquire problem-solving skills in practical classes and internships outside the College

During studies, students are exposed to various teaching methods, such as lectures, which allow to pass on information to as many students as possible, work groups, independent work, and discussions, for example, about clinical situations.

Due to the limitations of the Covid 19 pandemic, lectures and classes are organized using online tools such as Skype, Google Meet, Whatsapp and Zoom. Assessment of learning outcomes is most often carried out using Google Forms. During the transition period until launching the updated version of Moodle, Google Drive is used to accumulate additional training resources offered by the teaching staff. Due to the restrictions set by COVID 19, when organizing the study process remotely, students are required to turn on the camera for online lectures and classes and to log in using their first and last name. As for online written tests, there are time constraints imposed on such assignments and students are required to use a second camera to show their desks and screens to monitor their activities.

At the beginning of each academic year, the head of the Midwifery Study Program meets with students to discuss the experience of the previous academic year in relation to the study plan, study courses and their implementation. The main findings are taken into account when implementing the study plan. The College Administration believes that the free flow of information is the most important precondition for effective and successful cooperation with students.

Students are encouraged to directly contribute to the improvement of the study process by communicating with the College staff, especially first year students, who go through the process of adaptation to the new learning environment during the initial months of studies.

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

After the first year of studies, students, studying midwifery, work as interns (in the amount of 4 CP) in maternity care wards and clinics with maternity care, delivery and gynecology departments. Internship has specific tasks to be completed in line with the acquired study courses and in compliance with the requirements specified in the profession standard and the mapping of the study program. The main tasks of internship focus on the development of communication skills with patients of different age groups and on the knowledge of personal hygiene, application of preventive measures against intrahospital infection. These tasks highlight the importance of problem identification, planning and provision of appropriate care for patients with different degrees of self-care deficiency as well as satisfying patients' basic physiological needs.

At the beginning of the second semester, second year students specializing in midwifery work as interns (in the amount of 5 CP) in a health care institution. The results and tasks of the internship are determined in accordance with the acquired study courses, the requirements specified in the profession standard and the mapping of the study program. According to the tasks of this internship, students are to follow the work organization procedure at the health care institution, to provide patients with comfort and hygiene, to assess and document the condition of the pregnant woman, to observe and care for the pregnant woman, to assess fetal examination techniques, to perform manipulations in compliance with the standard, to observe and examine the pregnant woman before delivery, to prepare the pregnant woman for the childbirth, to perform physiological delivery under supervision of a midwife, to perform postpartum examination of birth canals, to assist in pathological delivery, to prepare the pregnant woman for the caesarean section, to assess the condition of the woman in the postpartum period, to perform primary care for the newborn, to educate the woman in the postpartum period on breastfeeding and the newborn care and to participate in the neonatal resuscitation activities.

At the end of the first semester, third year students, studying midwifery, work as interns (in the amount of 8 CP) in a health care institution. Students' internship tasks are consistent with the practical midwife skills required by the profession Standard. For example, interns evaluate and document the patient's condition, organize the flow of pregnant women, examine and document the condition of the pregnant woman, educate and prepare the pregnant woman for childbirth, perform the care of the woman in labour and assess the labour process, perform and manage physiological labour and deliver the newborn, provide care for the newborn in the delivery room, participate in the medical doctor and midwife's hospital rounds, evaluate the condition of the woman in the postpartum period, perform vaccination of the newborn, educate the woman in the postpartum period on breastfeeding and newborn care.

The College provides students with various types of internships in medical institutions. Prior to the internship, students have to take a test to verify the theoretical foundation of their practical skills, which is evidence for their readiness to perform internship tasks. After the internship, the

College organizes the internship examination, which includes the summary of the internship experience and results, analysis of the acquired new skills and conclusions for further professional actions.

The tasks of internships in the midwifery program are interconnected with the learning outcomes of the study program, which is visually reflected in Table 20.

Table 20

Interconnection between the internship tasks and the learning outcomes of the study program

Learning outcomes	Internship tasks
Is able to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and competences required for carrying out professional activities when satisfying the basic physiological needs of patients.	Apply the acquired knowledge and skills in patient care, ensuring that the basic physiological needs of patients in the health care institution are met.
Assessment of safe environment and principles of maintenance in patient care, ensuring infection control.	Apply the knowledge of personal hygiene and prevention of intrahospital infection. Know the importance of asepsis and antiseptics and apply this knowledge in practice.
Organize and manage physiological deliveries and provide care after them.	Document all the performed medical and care manipulations, examinations, objective observations and dynamics of health condition assessments. Perform female prenatal observation, examination, care. Adopt a physiological delivery under the supervision of a midwife. Perform postpartum inspection of birth canals.
Refer patients to a specialist physician after detecting risk factors or possible pathologies in pregnant women, women giving birth, women in the postpartum period and newborns.	Prepare the woman giving birth for the caesarean section, assisting in pathological delivery.
Participate in medical treatment, improve own competences.	Perform diagnostic and medical manipulations.
Work in a team, provide physiological pregnancy care.	Improve communication skills in team work. Join medical doctors and midwives in their hospital rounds.
Provide care of the newborn.	Conduct the newborn care in the delivery room
Carry out preventive and educational work, participate in the development of the health care system, understanding its importance in solving demographic problems.	Educate pregnant women, preparing them for the childbirth. Educate women in the postpartum period about breastfeeding and childcare.

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

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

The thesis is a component of the final state examination. Second year students are taught the study course “Foundation of Research” so that by their third year of studies they will have identified the thesis theme and will have selected research tools and so that when being on site of their internship placement they can start their research, including surveys, analysis of documents, etc.

The topics of students' final theses are revisited annually in consultation with guest lecturers, lecturers and practicing medical care professionals who suggest thesis topics. The list of thesis topics facilitates the choice of thesis themes and ensures that the selected thesis topic is consistent with the skills and interests acquired during internship. The opportunity to conduct research that is important to a potential employer, Latvian Midwives Association and an educational institution motivates students and creates a sense of satisfaction with the acquired knowledge, the applicability of which can be assessed in practice. The suggested topics are broad and comprehensive. With the help of their thesis supervisors, students can make adjustments to their thesis themes, for example, by narrowing down the theme of a thesis. Students can ask study course lecturers and their possible future colleagues to become their thesis supervisors, which promotes productive work on the thesis.

The thesis outcomes point to the fact that the knowledge developed while writing the thesis has ensured the attainment of the set aims. Students' work on their theses promotes the development of research skills, whereas the thesis defense improves the public speaking skills, such as presentation and argumentation skills, as well as the ability to defend own position, to provide recommendations and to substantiate the results of own research work.

Over the period of 2008 - 2021, 215 theses were defended in the study program “Medicine” awarding the qualification of a midwife. All themes were topical for the labour market and the health care sector. Thesis themes, which were developed as a result of collaborative efforts of students and academic staff, could be grouped into the following blocks:

Postpartum care:

- Postpartum care in Latvia
- Midwife's role in postpartum care
- Postpartum care at home

Public health:

- Pregnant women's awareness about natural methods of childbirth analgesia
- Pregnant women's awareness about complications after the caesarean section
- Awareness of women of the Latgale region about risk factors for cervical cancer

Breastfeeding:

- Comparison of breastfeeding and breast milk substitute nutrition
- Impact of mother's eating habits on children's lactation

- Vegetarianism during pregnancy and lactation and its effect on the birth weight of the newborn
- Practical breastfeeding support available in the maternity ward

Delivery care:

- Physiological delivery after medical insemination
- Delivery with epidural anesthesia
- Breathing and exercises during delivery
- Changing birthing positions in the pushing stage of labor

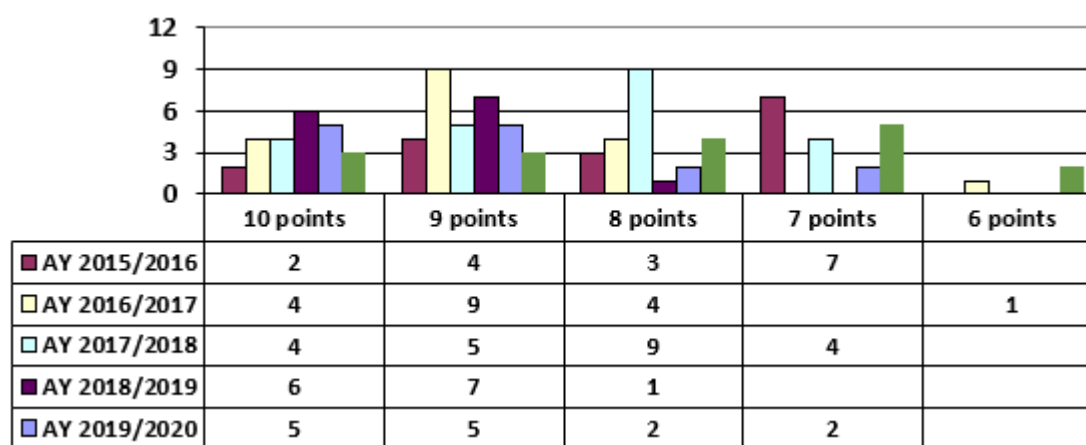


Fig. 8. Results of the final state examination - thesis defense

Every year the Final State Examination Commission, filling in the examination protocol, assesses the topicality of the thesis, the diversity of perspectives included in the thesis and the interconnection between the thesis and practical work experience. The College encourages graduates to present the outcomes of their thesis research at meetings of professional associations and at conferences.

High assessment results of theses and their defense are rooted in the College system of managing the thesis development process, which limits the number of theses that lecturers can supervise and introduces the mid-term check of progress results, which is organized as pre-defense of the theoretical part of the thesis in front of the assessment commission, which is when students defend their theoretical findings and outline their empirical/research plan. Such mid-term check helps to promptly identify problem areas in thesis writing and to reduce plagiarism risks.

3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

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

The study base of the LU RFMC program “Medicine” with the professional qualification of the

midwife, which includes relevant structural units (departments, groups of lecturers, etc.) and the necessary support staff, complies with the conditions of implementation of the study program. The informational and methodological provision, databases and the literature available at the library comply with the conditions of implementation of the study program. The material and technical provision and its availability to students and teaching staff comply with the specifications and implementation of the study program.

The contents of the study program has been developed on the foundation of the profession standards. Contemporary and diverse study methods are used in the process of the program implementation: lectures, seminars, situational tasks, independent work and presentations. The development of the study program is planned and directed in accordance with the demand of the labor market and in the context of the vision of the common development of the College, taking into account the specifics of the study program. The qualification of the teaching staff involved in the implementation of the study program helps to attain the learning outcomes consistent with high quality because a large number of the teaching staff also work in their specialty and therefore, within their study courses, can provide students with up-to-date and practical information that is as close as possible to the daily work environment.

Studies are ensured with the methodological provision and study materials that correspond to the professional aims, contents and learning outcomes of the study program and that are regularly updated and supplemented. Students have the opportunity to use study resources created by their teaching staff in the e-environment. Computers and multimedia resources, the wireless Internet, computer classroom, library and reading room, study and methodological materials (hard covers and electronic format; CDs, DVDs) are used in the study process. The resources published in the e-environment as well as the use of information and communication technologies in consultations enable the acquisition of specific study themes independently of the College context.

The College's library offers midwifery students books, medical periodicals, systematic open-access electronic resources (e-books, e-journals, obstetrics and gynecology databases) on obstetric physiology, gynecological pathologies, diagnostics and treatment principles, and offers resources on evidence-based medicine, health care, medical statistics, and digital resources of the Latvian National Library (LNL) [1]. Students have access to theses, scientific research and methodological materials, and other published papers. The library contains books containing the latest scientific information and compilations of fact-based research from the following influential and world-renowned publishing houses: Williams OBSTETRICS, Wiley-Blackwell, Taylor & Francis, and others. The library collection has been supplemented by the recent book editions, such as "Obstetrics" (Rezeberga, D.), "Gynecology" (Vīberga, I.) and "Clinical Anatomy for Medical Students" (Rūmanss, G.M., Kažoka, Dz., Pilmane, M.).

The studies in the midwifery program differ from the study processes of other specialties and from the teaching methods applied in other programs. The aim of the applied teaching methods in this program is to promote work adaptation under the conditions of the increased psychological and physical workload. To be able to save the lives of a mother and her child, many actions in midwifery practice need to be standardized, and appropriate methods need to be selected. To attain the aim of the study program and to implement the selected teaching methods, the College has equipped lecture halls and training rooms with proper equipment and other material resources most of which have been purchased using the STEM and ERDF funds as well as College's own revenues [2].

During the reporting period, the College implemented the project of the ERDF action program "Infrastructure and Services", and specifically the action of "Modernization of Higher Education Institutions' Premises and Equipment to Improve the Quality of Study Programs, Including the

Provision of Opportunities to Acquire Educational Programs for Persons with Functional Disabilities". The outcome was highly successful, which was confirmed by the conclusions of the project supervisory institutions, and by the following material and technical benefits gained by the College: 8 renovated specialized training rooms for midwifery studies, the acquired childbirth simulation manikin *NOELLE* (mother + child) and a baby manikin, the newborn manikin *LAERDAL*, etc.

The outcome of the implementation of the STEM project of 2018 - 2020 was the set-up of a modern training room "Newborn Intensive Care Unit", which is functionally connected to the delivery room and neonatal resuscitation. The aim of the unit is to immerse students in a life-like situation, when it is necessary to show how to deliver a baby, and if necessary, to immediately place the newborn on a special modern resuscitation table to apply resuscitation measures. This table and the manikin are connected to a simulator whose indicators can be adjusted to a specific clinical situation by a lecturer so that students can be trained how to act under such conditions.

In 2020, a new manikin was installed within the STEM project - a delivery stimulator for the acquisition of gynecological and delivery skills.

At the initial stage of the study program, students complete general education courses, which take place in specially equipped lecture rooms and training rooms. These rooms are equipped with multimedia equipment (laptops, interactive whiteboards, projectors for displaying lecture materials, illustrating seminar topics and showing presentations, participating in conferences, seminars and training via the video conference system). Computer equipment makes it possible to quickly obtain information from the Internet sources, see visualization of the study materials available in those resources and conduct necessary actions with them in order to ensure the implementation of the selected teaching method. The provision of the IT infrastructure at LU RFMC is described in more detail in criterion 2.3.2 in Section 3 of Chapter II. Training rooms contain various material resources for training and host situational tasks. The library resources are described in criterion 2.3.3 in Section 3 of Chapter II.

Material and technical provision for the study program "Medicine" with the qualification of the midwife is available in Annex 40.

[1] LU RFMC students can access online resources and databases on the College website in the section "Library" (available at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/lv/studentiem/biblioteka/>)

[2] The list of equipment for specific classrooms is published on the College website in the section "Study Environment" (available at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/lv/par-koledzu/macibu-vide/>)

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

3.3.3. Indicate data on the available funding for the corresponding study programme, its funding sources and their use for the development of the study programme. Provide information on the costs per one student within this study programme, indicating the items included in the cost calculation and the percentage distribution of funding between the specified items. The minimum number of students in the study programme in order to

ensure the profitability of the study programme (indicating separately the information on each language, type and form of the study programme implementation).

The financial provision and the costs of the study program are aligned with the needs of the study program and the conditions of study program implementation. The financial resources of the study direction include the state budget funds and own revenues. The available financial resources ensure the implementation of the study program and the attainment of learning outcomes

Distribution of the state funding in the study program **“Medicine” (midwife)** by years: in **2017** - EUR 260368; **2018** - EUR 271624; **2019** - EUR 284898 ; **2020** - EUR 287349.

Table 21

State budget expenditure per student of the study program “Medicine” (midwife) in 2020

Number of study places financed by the state budget	67
Types of expenses	EUR
Salary per 1 student per year	1669,06
Compulsory employer's state social insurance contributions	402,07
Payment for services – management of the building, infrastructure development	417,92
Modernization of teaching equipment, purchase of teaching materials and equipment	158,63
Acquisition of fixed assets	80,13
Total study expenses per student per year	2727,81

The interconnection of the study programs included in the study direction ensures that a substantial portion of the material and technical provision purchased at the College (teaching equipment, practical manipulation rooms, mock-ups, simulation mannequins, whiteboards, etc.) is successfully used not only in one but in several study programs.

Table 21.1.

Minimum number of students in the study program to ensure the profitability of the study program

Study program	Minimum number of students
Study program "Medicine" (physician assistant), Latvian language, full-time, face-to-face	99
Study program "Medicine" (midwife), Latvian language, full time, face-to-face	64
Study program "Pharmacy" (pharmacy assistant), Latvian language, full time, face-to-face	93

3.4. Teaching Staff

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

Of the teaching staff involved in the study program, 14 are midwives and 6 are practicing gynecologists. The expertise of these professionals allows students to gain comprehensive knowledge of the profession. The basic composition of the elected academic staff of the study program was formed through elections in 2013 and subsequently in the elections of 2019 for the period of 6 years until 2025. In 2019, many educators working in the study program completed studies in the further professional development program "Higher Education Didactics: Contemporary Theories and Practice". All teaching staff participate in professional seminars and training courses. Experience exchange events for the academic staff are regularly organized by the College. Academic staff are also encouraged to participate in such events at other institutions in Latvia and in international mobility programs. The College promotes close cooperation with the Latvian Midwives Association and other medical and health care professional associations.

The elected academic staff and guest lecturers are involved in the implementation of the aim of the study program, which is to train a medical practitioner with the qualification of the midwife.

- Total number of teaching staff: 32 educators per 4,97 academic staff rate.
- Academic staff: 2 senior lecturers, 8 lecturers
- Guest lecturers: 22.

Annex 37 provides information on the teaching staff involved in the study program "Medicine" (41721) awarding the qualification of the midwife. Information on the education of the teaching staff is provided in Annex 9 "Basic information on the teaching staff involved in the study direction".

The fact that the qualification of the teaching staff is directly related to learning outcomes is confirmed by midterm and final quantitative and qualitative study indicators as well as the feedback of students, graduates and employers.

Qualifications of the teaching staff, such as academic staff and guest lecturers

teaching in the study program comply with the conditions of the study program implementation and the requirements of regulatory enactments.

The teaching staff regularly update the content of study courses, taking into account the requirements and current developments on the labor market.

For more information, see criterion 2.3.6 in the section “Resources and Provision of the Study Direction” of Chapter II.

3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.

In 2013 and 2019, the College organized the elections of the academic staff through a competition, which led to the six-year change in the basic composition of the academic staff. In addition to the elected teaching staff, the program recruits recognized medical practitioners as guest lecturers, who, by being practitioners in their areas of specialization, are able to enrich the content of study courses with real-life medical cases, thus, creating a study context that is similar to the real-life professional environment of a midwife. Changes in the composition of the teaching staff most often pertain to invited guest lecturers. This provides the College with an opportunity either to replace a lecturer from the elected group of the teaching staff in the relevant thematic cycle/study course or to ensure the implementation of a highly specific study course.

For example, the study program recruits the practicing midwife and psychologist Laila Laganovska who reads the study courses “Pregnancy, Childbirth and Postpartum Period”, while the gynecologist and obstetrician Olga Boka delivers the study course “Obstetrics”.

By attracting new lecturers, the study program creates more opportunities for the acquisition of new information and enhances the overall quality of the studies.

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

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

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

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

The core of the study program "Medicine" (41721) with the qualification of a midwife is represented by lecturers of specialty courses, such as S.Bukolovska, L.Losa, N.Vidnere, A.Vigule, M.Šimanska, L.Laganovska, and by lecturers of general education courses, such as I.Miķele, V.Bunne, S.Melberga, J.Pavlovkis-Schneider.

The teaching staff of the program participate in general meetings of all the teaching staff of the College, which are organized 3 times a year: at the beginning of the academic year, at the end of the 1st semester and at the end of the 2nd semester. The teaching staff are informed on the level of attainment of study aims and learning outcomes in the previous academic period, receive information about the planned activities and set expenses for the new academic year.

The methodological head of the program M.Viksna and the teaching staff of the study program discuss further development and implementation of the study program at the methodological meetings of the study program (design/renewal of the study environment, current developments in the study field, updating study course contents and study course interconnection, ensuring academic succession). Mid-term results of students' progress are discussed at least twice a year (as of November 1 and April 1), which allows to identify problems in the implementation of the study program and determine the set of measures to be taken to handle difficulties, which leads to the decrease in the number of student dropping-out of the study program, especially in the first year of studies. The department organizes and leads lecturer working groups for mapping of learning outcomes. Additionally, departments analyze the outcomes of class observations.

The teaching staff collaborate on the development of the final assessment of study courses, practical part of the final state examination and the evaluation of its course. Every year the teaching staff jointly propose new thesis topics in line with the research directions of the College and research areas of the teaching staff.

To attain the aim of the study program, which is to train medical practitioners with the qualification of a midwife, the College employs the elected academic staff and guest lecturers. Some further information on the teaching staff of the study program

sis provided below.

- Total number of the teaching staff: 32 instructors at the rate of 4.97 academic staff.
- Academic staff - 2 assistant professors and 8 lecturers.
- Guest lecturers - 22
- Number of students in the program as of 01/10/2020 - 66
- The ratio of students to the teaching staff of the study program: 2 students: 1 member of the teaching staff
- The ratio of students to the overall number of academic staff: 6 students: 1 member of the teaching staff

Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	ANNEX 31. Diploma , diploma supplement sample _Midwife.pdf	31.PIELIKUMS_ Diploms un diploma pielikums _Vecmāte.pdf
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	ANNEX 32. Statistical data_midwife.pdf	32.PIELIKUMS_Statistikas dati par studējošajiem_Vecmāte .pdf
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard	ANNEX 33. Compliance of the study program with National Education Standard_Midwife.pdf	33.PIELIKUMS_Studiju programmas atbilstība valsts izglītības standartam_Vecmāte.pdf
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)	ANNEX 34. Compliance of the study program with the Profession Standard_Midwife.pdf	34.PIELIKUMS_Atbalstība profesijas standartam_Vecmāte .pdf
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)	ANNEX 35.Compliance of the study program with the sector-specific regulatory framework_Midwife.pdf	35.PIELIKUMS_Studiju programmas atbilstība nozares specifiskajam normatīvajam regulējumam_Vecmāte .pdf
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	ANNEX 36. Mapping of the study courses_Midwife .pdf	36.PIELIKUMS_Studiju kursu kartēšana_Vecmāte .pdf
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	ANNEX 37.Curriculum of the study program "Medicine" (41721) with the qualification of the midwife.pdf	37.PIELIKUMS_Studiju programmas plāns_Vecmāte.pdf
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	ANNEX 38.DESRIPTION OF THE STUDY COURSE_Midwife .pdf	38.pielikums_Studiju kursu apraksti_Vecmāte.pdf
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)	ANNEX 39. Description of the organization of students' internships_Midwife.pdf	39.PIELIKUMS_Studējošo prakses organizācijas apraksts_Nolikums par praksi_Vecmātes.pdf
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		

Medicine (41721)

Study field	<i>Health Care</i>
ProcedureStudyProgram.Name	<i>Medicine</i>
Education classification code	<i>41721</i>
Type of the study programme	<i>First level professional higher education study programme</i>
Name of the study programme director	<i>Inese</i>
Surname of the study programme director	<i>Indrāne</i>
E-mail of the study programme director	<i>medskola@medskola.lv</i>
Title of the study programme director	<i>Mg.sc.sal.</i>
Phone of the study programme director	<i>29466504</i>
Goal of the study programme	<i>Within three years to train highly qualified and competitive health care professionals - physician assistants - that are in demand on the Latvian labour market and that have a solid foundation for lifelong learning in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Latvia, standard of the physician assistant profession and European Union directives.</i>
Tasks of the study programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. To ensure the implementation of the study process in accordance with the requirements of the education standard, Latvian regulatory enactments, European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015).</i> <i>2. To provide conditions and opportunities to obtain the first level professional higher education in accordance with the standard of the physician assistant profession and the requirements of employers.</i> <i>3. To promote the acquisition of necessary theoretical knowledge, practical and professional skills of the physician assistant profession, thus, promoting students' competitiveness in the changing socio-economic conditions and in the labor market.</i> <i>4. To ensure the high quality of studies by attracting qualified teaching staff and using modern methodological, scientific, material and technical provision in the study process.</i> <i>5. To develop students' abilities to conduct scientific analysis and to solve problems independently; to promote student engagement in solving practical and scientific problems.</i> <i>6. To promote the involvement of students in further professional development and further education; to create motivation for raising their qualification level.</i> <i>7. To promote cooperation with other Latvian and foreign higher education institutions.</i> <i>8. To establish cooperation with health care employers.</i>

Results of the study programme	<p><i>Knowledge</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. The graduate defines the body structure, functions and mental condition of a healthy and sick person of both sexes and all ages, the most common diseases of the human body, the etiology, pathogenesis, clinical condition, diagnostics and differential diagnostics of pathological conditions.</i> <i>2. The graduate is familiar with the provision of treatment and prevention in the care of patients of all ages at all levels of care and is familiar with the active substances of drugs, indications and contraindications, side effects and interactions.</i> <i>3. The graduate describes the basic principles of the organization and economics of the health care system, ethical and legal aspects of professional activity, the place and role of the physician assistant in primary, secondary and tertiary medical care and its development.</i> <p><i>Skills</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>4. The graduate evaluates and uses the evidence-based information required for health care and professional development and draws up medical documentation in the outpatient, pre-hospital and hospital stages, following the procedure for filling in medical documentation forms.</i> <i>5. The graduate evaluates the situation by motive, provides emergency medical aid to patients of all ages and sexes in situations when there is a threat to health or life, prescribes medication to the patient, incl. highly effective medications.</i> <i>6. The graduate performs necessary clinical procedures, such as electrical defibrillation, cardioversion, external cardiostimulation, performs transport immobilization for injured patients and delivers childbirth independently in the pre-hospital stage.</i> <i>7. The graduate evaluates, maintains, develops a safe work environment and takes the necessary anti-epidemic measures in cases of detection of infectious diseases.</i> <p><i>Competence</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>8. The graduate provides emergency medical aid to the sick and injured in life-threatening, critical situations, epidemiologically dangerous situations in accordance with algorithms, guidelines and recommendations, manages the provision of emergency medical aid in emergency situations in cooperation with emergency services, performs medical assistance dispatcher functions in the EMS service and pronounces the death of a patient.</i> <i>9. In cooperation with the doctor, the graduate provides patients with examination, diagnostics and appropriate treatment at primary health care institutions and ensures the performance of preventive measures.</i>
Final examination upon the completion of the study programme	Final State Examination: qualification examination (practical part of the qualification examination and the defense of the thesis).

Study programme forms

Full time studies - 3 years - latvian

Study type and form	<i>Full time studies</i>
Duration in full years	<i>3</i>
Duration in month	<i>0</i>
Language	<i>latvian</i>
Amount (CP)	<i>120</i>
Admission requirements (in English)	<i>Secondary or secondary vocational education</i>
Degree to be acquired or professional qualification, or degree to be acquired and professional qualification (in english)	—
Qualification to be obtained (in english)	<i>Physician assistant</i>

Places of implementation

Place name	City	Address
Agency of the University of Latvia "Riga First Medical College of the University of Latvia"	RĪGA	TOMSONA IELA 37, VIDZEMES PRIEKŠPILSĒTA, RĪGA, LV-1013

3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

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

Table 22

No changes have been made in the indicators of the study program since the issuance of the previous accreditation sheet of the study direction (the study direction "Health Care" is accredited by decision No.5 passed at the meeting of the study accreditation commission on 17 May 2013).

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

All indicators of the study program are relevant to the study direction "Health Care". The duration of the implementation of the study program is optimal for achieving the expected learning outcomes and acquiring professional competences, which ensures that a qualified health care specialist enters the labor market after completing education in three years.

Students completing their studies in the program "Medicine" are awarded the qualification of the physician assistant. The qualification corresponds to the name of the study program. Specialists are trained in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Latvia, the needs of the Latvian labor market, professional standards and European Union directives. The expected learning outcomes of the study program have been developed in compliance with the Profession Standard of the Republic of Latvia.

The interconnection between the name of the study program, awarded degree and qualification, aims and tasks of the professional qualification as well as admission conditions was properly evaluated at the study program development stage in cooperation with the Latvian Association of Emergency Medical Assistance as well as professionals of leading Latvian clinics. The mapping of the study courses of the study program has been produced in order to attain learning outcomes (see Annex 46). The mapping has been produced in accordance with the Profession Standard of the Physician Assistant (professional qualification level 4) and has allowed for the in-depth

analysis of study courses. It has also facilitated the corrections of specific aspects of contents of study courses, leading to more accurate specification of the expected learning outcomes.

LU RFMC provides specialist training in the study program “Physician Assistant”, which is a regulated health care profession whose qualification requirements determine accredited study programs and, in cases specified by law, professional certification regulations. In Latvia, the demand for the first level professional higher education study program “Medicine” with the qualification of the physician assistant has been sustained by the growing need for qualified and professionally trained physician assistants working in the Emergency Medical Service and Outpatient Service and for physician assistants capable of independently providing emergency medical aid for the sick and injured patients in health and life critical situations, delivering outpatient services, managing patient care while maintaining leadership, conducting clinical procedures, educating patients and their family members, educating care team members and the public, participating in treatment and continuously enhancing their knowledge and skills.

The interconnection of the study program indicators complies with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No.846 of 10 October 2006 “On Requirements, Criteria and Procedures for Admission to Study Programs”.

The code of the study program corresponds to the levels of the Latvian education classification structure in accordance with Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 322 of 13/06/2017 “Regulations on the Classification of Education in Latvia”.

Annex 58 (available only in Latvian; information in English is provided on request) - Comparison and significance of the study program “Medicine” with the qualification of the physician assistant

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

The difference between Latvia and neighboring countries is that in Latvia, in addition to the nursing profession, there is also a profession of the physician assistant, which in certain cases can replace both a nurse (for example, in family doctor’s practice, inpatient department) and a physician (for example, in emergency medical care, henceforth - EMC). The number of physician assistants per 10 000 population is on average 11, which is a significant increase of 47% compared to 2007. The increase in the number of physician assistants is a positive trend, which partially makes up for the insufficient provision of nurses and physicians in the health care system.[\[1\]](#)

The auditing report of SAO, which summarized the data of the register of medical practitioners and medical support persons, established that as of 01/01/2017 there were 2 621 physician assistants in the country, including 1700 certified physician assistants or 134.4 physician assistants per 100 000 population. Physician assistants are mainly employed in the EMS service, inpatient wards and primary health care. The number of physician assistants is not comparable to the EU average due to differences in the distribution and qualifications of health care professionals.[\[2\]](#)

It can be concluded that the number of physician assistants in Latvia continues to be

insufficient. The conceptual report of the Ministry of Health “On the Reform of the Health Care System” emphasizes that in order to ensure the employment of the optimal number of medical personnel in the EMS service within the range of standard working hours, including the generational change, 100 additional physician assistants are required annually and the overall number of physician assistants should increase by 724. In order to replace the residents of other specialties employed in EMS teams, in 2017 the EMS service would have needed an additional 200 physician assistants. [3]

According to the publicly available information of the EMS Service, in 2018, an average of 3267 employees and 15 civil servants were employed in the 3452.25 positions of the EMS Service. The average age of an employee was 42.78 years. [4] Consequently, training of new professional physician assistants and their entry into the labor market are essential.

Economic forecasts show that in 2030 there will still be a demand for medium-level health care professionals, including physician assistants trained by LU RFMC, on the Latvian labour market.

[1] State Audit Office of the Republic of Latvia (2019). “Human Resources in Health Care” // available at: <https://static.lsm.lv/documents/oy.pdf>

[2] Ibid.

[3] Conceptual report of the Ministry of Health (2017). “On the Reform of the Health Care System” // available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/292718-par-konceptualo-zinojumu-par-veselibas-aprupes-sistemas-reformu>

[4] Public report of the EMS service in 2018 // available at: http://www.nmpd.gov.lv/nmpd/NMPD/gada_publicais_parskats/?page=0&doc=1998

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

LU RFMC implements a full-time face-to-face study program “Medicine” with the qualification of the physician assistant. The number of state scholarships covering the tuition fees and the number of specialists to be trained in the study program “Medicine” with the qualification of the physician assistant in each financial year is determined by the agreement between the LU Riga First Medical College and the Ministry of Education and Science (with the University of Latvia since 1 July 2019).

As for the reporting period (2013 - 2020), from 2013 to 2017 the College received 131 state scholarships covering the tuition fees every year, whereas in 2018, the total number of such scholarships (355 state scholarships covering the tuition fees) was redistributed so that the College could be included in solving a topical problem in the health care sector – the problem of nurse training. As a result, the College received 104 state scholarships covering the tuition fees for the program “Medicine” with the

qualification of the physician assistant every year from 2018 to 2020. The College regularly fulfills the requirements of the agreement on the filling of study places and the number of specialists to be trained.

Matriculation

At the beginning of each financial year and upon the receipt of the approved number of state scholarships covering the tuition fees, the Study Department estimates the number of students for the financial year and submits the proposal on the number of students to be matriculated to the College Council.

The College approach to candidate selection and the experience of raising motivation of first year students allow to forecast the student dropout rate and determine the optimal number of students for matriculation. Students who drop out are asked to fill in a questionnaire about the reasons for dropping out of the study program. One of such reported reasons is inability to take responsibility for another person's life despite the study process being interesting. Other reasons included social reasons, health problems, etc. Furthermore, to monitor the dropout rate of first year students, the College takes various actions, such as organization of Information Days on site of the College, travelling to secondary schools and introducing the study program and learning outcomes at the end of each academic year and at the end of the 3-year training program. First year students are encouraged to participate in meetings with the relevant health care medical practitioners. The program has introduced a new study course "Introduction to Specialty". Students are provided with necessary support (psycho-emotional support, support for solving study-related issues and daily problems) by the Study Department, the head of the study program and other relevant College staff.

Number of trained specialists

During the reporting period (2013-2020), LU RFMC trained 236 physician assistants on state funds and 29 physician assistants on the financial means of natural and legal persons.

The state monitoring data of 2020 on the employment of the graduates of the year 2017 confirmed the high employment rate of the College graduates in the areas of their specialty - 93.5%.

Statistical data on the students and graduates of this study program are available in Annex 42.

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

3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

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

One of the foundations of the quality assurance of the study program "Medicine" with the professional qualification of a physician assistant is cooperation with potential employers. When organizing meetings and discussing latest developments on the labor market with representatives of employers, the College receives recommendations on the revision and enhancement of the contents of study courses.

The College is a member of a working group developing the profession standard of the physician assistant, which consists of industry specialists.

During the reporting period (2013-2020) the following revisions of the study program were performed to keep abreast of the labor market tendencies:

- The study courses "Psychology" and "Communication" were reviewed and subsequently were merged into one study course "Communication Psychology", emphasizing communication issues in the daily work of a physician assistant (recommendation of the EMS training center).
- A new study course "Introduction to Specialty" (1 CP) was introduced to ensure the regular supplementation of the course with the latest discoveries and trends in the physician assistant profession in Latvia.
- A new study course "E - health" (1 CP) was introduced into the study program.
- A new study course "Patient Safety" (1 CP) was introduced into the study program to comply with the professional standard of the physician assistant and the latest guidelines in health care.
- The content of the study course "Pharmacology" was revised in accordance with the set aims of the study program, and consequently the amount of credit points was reduced from 4 CP to 3 CP.
- The implementation period of the study course "Professional Technical Skills" (5 CP) was revised to ensure that students would have acquired all necessary knowledge, skills and competences in medical manipulations in the 3rd semester prior to their 2nd year internship (in the 4th semester) at the Emergency Medical Service.
- The amount of the study course "Therapeutic Propaedeutics" was increased from 1.5 CP to 2 CP and that of "Therapy" from 5 CP to 6 CP to ensure in-depth

acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences consistent with the profession standard of the physician assistant and therapy guidelines.

- An examination was introduced into the study course “Intensive Care and Toxicology” as a final assessment to boost students' knowledge, skills and competences that are essential for work at EMS.
- The content of the study course “Outpatient Assistance” (2 CP) was reviewed, and subsequently, the amount of credit points of this course was reduced to 1 CP and a new course “Organization of EMS Work” (1 CP) was introduced.
- The study course “Disaster Medicine and Civil Defense” (1 CP) was subject to substantial amendments which emphasized civil protection in compliance with the new guidelines and regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers (“Civil Defense” 1 CP).
- The study course “Hygiene” (1 CP) was revisited and was subsequently renamed into “Environmental Education and Hygiene” (1 CP) following the inclusion of new themes on environmental protection into its content.
- The study course “Emergency Medical Aid” (5 CP) was supplemented with practical classes in the EMS vehicle model.
- The standardized number of contact hours per 1 CP is the following: general education and elective study courses are allocated 20 contact hours per 1 CP, whereas specialization courses are assigned 24 contact hours per 1 CP.

The content of the study courses is developed in accordance with the aims of the study course and the study program, learning outcomes in accordance with the current professional standard (see Annex 44). A new professional standard for the Physician Assistant was developed in 2020, and in 2021 it is in the process of coordination and approval.

The content of study courses is developed considering the aim of a specific study course, learning outcomes and the profession standard. The descriptions of study courses are updated in line with the development trends of the industry, labor market and scientific trends. The aims of study courses correspond to the aims of the study program and are in compliance with the profession standard, legislation of the Republic of Latvia, market needs and EU directives.

The research conducted by academic staff and students is based on the developments in the health care sciences, focuses on the enhancement of patient care and health maintenance, and effectively contributes to the development and enhancement of the study program and study courses. When conducting research, study courses are enriched with the most recent discoveries in the respective field of health care. The academic staff participate in scientific conferences and practical seminars.

New study courses are developed taking into account the recommendations of employers and current developments in the respective medical field. One of the indicators of the quality assurance of the study program is cooperation with potential employers whose recommendations on the development and

enhancement of the study program and study courses are considered. The content of study courses is reviewed at least once a year, but usually before each semester.

The health care sector receives employees who are able to integrate into health care teams and who sometimes hold some leadership positions. The LU RFMC academic staff are leading professionals in their fields, who serve as an example for students acquiring the profession.

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

The criterion is not applicable.

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

Various teaching methods are used in the study process, such as interactive lectures, practical interactive classes, seminars, independent work, realistic work simulations, role play, discussions, for example, about clinical situations. Students develop their problem-solving skills, etc. Medical technologies, simulations, mockups, etc., are used in the study process in well-equipped training rooms.

Due to the limitations of the Covid 19 pandemic, lectures and classes are organized using online tools such as Skype, Google Meet, Whatsapp and Zoom. Assessment of learning outcomes is typically conducted in Google Forms. During the transition period to the launch of the updated version of Moodle, additional study materials offered by teachers are stored in Google Drive. One aspect of organization of remote studies, which is due to COVID-19 restrictions, requires students to turn on the camera for online lectures and classes and log in using their first and last name. For online written examinations, there is a limited access time and a requirement to use a

second camera so that the student's desk and activity monitor are visible.

At the beginning of each academic year, the head of the study program meets with students to discuss the experience of the previous academic year in relation to the study plan, study courses and their implementation. The main outcomes are taken into account when implementing the study plan. Students are encouraged to directly contribute to the improvement of the study process by communicating with the College staff, especially first year students, who go through the process of adaptation to the new learning environment during the initial months of studies.

In classes, students engage in discussions with the teaching staff and fellow students. Students' problem-solving skills are practically developed. Among teaching strategies used by lecturers are those centered on problem-solving skills. Additional learning resources are freely available to students. The LU RFMC e-environment contains instructions on additional sources of information for studying specific issues and on materials on self-directed learning, for example, guidelines on various diseases, etc.

Both formative and summative assessments are used to assess students' academic progress. Formative assessment takes place regularly, for example, during contact hours, when asking students control questions and when discussing students' independent work. Summative assessment is a written (paper or electronic) or oral test or exam taking place at the end of a course. Students are assessed throughout the study course and the final marks of the course are formed by their theoretical knowledge, practical knowledge and independent work. The expected learning outcomes are clearly presented. Problem-solving skills are developed. At the end of the study process, students prove their practical knowledge in the final state examination - in the practical and theoretical part of the qualification exam. Students select a thesis theme and develop it under the guidance of their supervisor. When defending their theses, students demonstrate their knowledge, skills and competences on issues of pre-hospitalization/ emergency care, pharmacotherapy, clinical procedures, patients and education of the public.

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

After the completion of the first year, students of the physician assistant specialty work in hospitals with different care departments. In their second year, students work at the Emergency Medical Service, in the third year - at the Emergency Medical Service and in GP practices. At all

stages of the internship, the College coordinates and approves experienced internship supervisors on internship sites and internship methodological supervisors representing the College. Students' internship tasks correspond to the practical skills required by the profession standard of the physician assistant, for example, students assess and document the patient's condition, provide emergency medical aid to the sick and injured in life-threatening and critical situations, etc. The aims of the study program comply with the profession standard, which is why the tasks of internship are fully in line with the learning outcomes to be achieved. The College provides students with internships at medical institutions and the Emergency Medical Service both in Riga and in the regions of Latvia. After internship is completed, the outcomes of internship are assessed. Components of this assessment include the summary of internship, the analysis of new skills, the quality of conclusions for further studies. See Annex 49 and Annex 51.

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

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

The thesis is a component of the final state examination. Second year students are taught the study course “Foundation of Research” so that by their third year of studies they will have identified the thesis theme and will have selected research tools and so that when being on site of their internship placement they can start their research, including surveys, analysis of documents, etc.

The themes of students' theses are annually revisited in cooperation with potential employers, such as Emergency Medical Services, GP practices and outpatient services. When conducting research at the Emergency Medical Service, it is possible to use pre-hospitalization EMS statistics/to conduct a survey or interview among EMS staff. The Emergency Medical Service provides statistical information for research. This information is available in the EMS databases and includes topical issues in the area of emergence medical service. During the academic year 2020/2021, the Emergency Medical Service sent 31 themes recommended for theses. Some of them (for quantitative research) are provided below:

1. Polytrauma patient care at the pre-hospitalization stage (possible directions: comparisons by regional centers - time, comparison by brigade profiles, comparison by age groups, manipulations, analgesia, immobilization, evaluation of neurological status of brain injury according to GCS)
2. Prenatal stage of childbirth (2017 - 2019: numbers by years, call motive, age groups, performed manipulations, used medications, team profile, place of

delivery)

3. Trauma at the pre-hospitalization stage (2017 - 2019: numbers by years, call motive, age groups, performed manipulations, used medications, team profile, place of delivery)
4. Survival of patients with ACS with ST elevations and cardiac arrest with ACS with STE in the background (2017 - 2019: numbers by years, call motive, age groups, performed manipulations, used medications, team profile, place of delivery)
5. Results of cardiopulmonary resuscitation: comparison by years and team profiles (2017 - 2019: numbers by years, call motive, age groups, performed manipulations, used medications, team profile, place of delivery).

The list of thesis topics facilitates the choice of thesis themes and ensures that the selected thesis topic is consistent with the skills and interests acquired during internship. The opportunity to conduct research that is important to a potential employer motivates students and creates a sense of satisfaction with the acquired knowledge, the applicability of which can be assessed in practice. The suggested topics are broad and comprehensive. With the help of their thesis supervisors, students can make adjustments to their thesis themes, for example, by narrowing down the theme of a thesis. Students can ask study course lecturers and their possible future colleagues to become their thesis supervisors, which promotes productive work on the thesis and ensures some contributions to the profession and the specific field of health care. In addition, it is possible to attract research consultants supervising the process of writing of the research paper.

The thesis outcomes point to the fact that the knowledge developed while writing the thesis has ensured the attainment of the set aims. Students' work on their theses promotes the development of students' research skills, whereas the thesis defense improves the public speaking skills, such as presentation and argumentation skills, as well as the ability to defend own position, to provide recommendations and to substantiate the results of own research work.

Over the reporting period (2013-2021), 241 theses were defended in the study program "Medicine" awarding the qualification of a physician assistant. All themes were topical for the labour market and the health care sector. Thesis themes, which were developed as a result of collaborative efforts of students and academic staff, could be grouped into the following blocks:

Emergency medical aid, for example:

- Providing open airway support in patients with severe brain injury via endotracheal intubation in the EMS phase
- Efficacy of cardiopulmonary resuscitation depending on the implementation of resuscitation measures in the first aid phase
- Immobilization and analgesia of the thigh in the phase of emergency medical aid.

Public health, for example:

- The role of public awareness in EMS contact with cerebral stroke
- Awareness of the population about the prevalence of hepatitis A and prevention measures in Talsi and Olaine counties
- Patients' knowledge of chronic back pain and ways to reduce it.

Primary health care, for example:

- Proper nutrition balancing for diabetics
- Main etiological factors of cardiovascular diseases
- Iron deficiency anemia and its treatment.

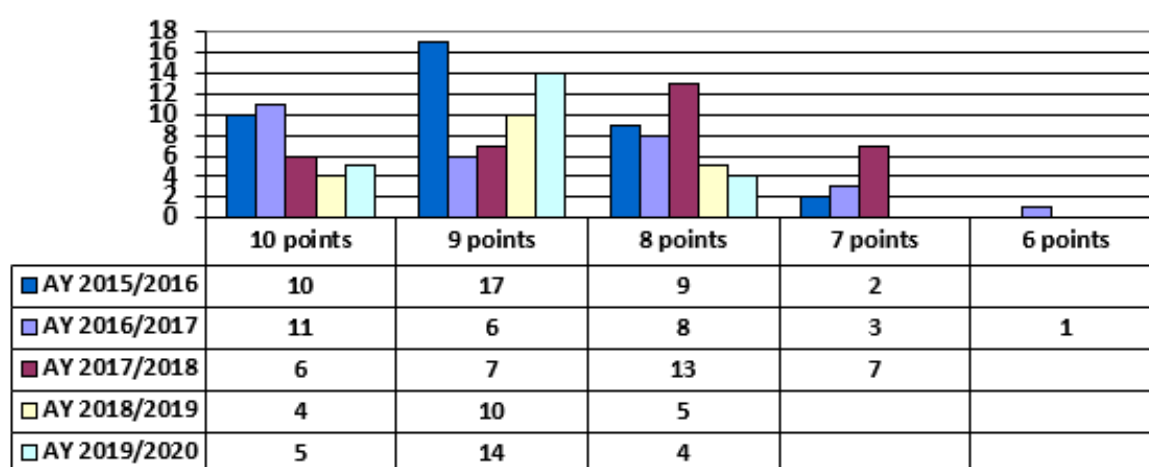


Fig. 9. Results of the final state examination - thesis defense

Every year the Final State Examination Commission, filling in the examination protocol, assesses the topicality of the thesis, the diversity of perspectives included in the thesis and the interconnection between the thesis and practical work experience. The College encourages graduates to present the outcomes of their thesis research at meetings of professional associations and at conferences.

High assessment results of theses and their defense are rooted in the College system of managing the thesis development process, which limits the number of theses that lecturers can supervise and introduces the mid-term check of progress results, which is organized as pre-defense of the theoretical part of the thesis in front of the assessment commission, which is when students defend their theoretical findings and outline their empirical/research plan. Such mid-term check helps to promptly identify problem areas in thesis writing and to reduce plagiarism risks.

3.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

3.3.1. Assessment of the compliance of the resources and provision (study provision, scientific support (if applicable), informative provision (including libraries), material and

technical provision, and financial provision) with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved by providing the respective examples.

The study base of the LU RFMC program “Medicine” with the professional qualification of a physician assistant, which includes relevant structural units (departments, groups of lecturers, etc.) and the necessary support staff, complies with the conditions for the implementation of the study program. The information and methodological base, databases and literature available in the library also comply with the conditions for the implementation of the study program. The material and technical base and its availability to students and teaching staff ensure the implementation of the study program consistent with its specifications.

The content of the study program is founded in the standard of the physician assistant’s profession. The process of the program implementation ensures the deployment of various modern teaching and learning methods, such as lectures, seminars, case studies, independent work and presentations. The development of the study program is planned and directed in accordance with the demand of the labor market and the College common development vision, taking into account the specifics of the study program. The qualifications of the teaching staff implementing the study program help to achieve the learning outcomes consistent with high quality standards, which is the result of a significant number of teaching staff pursuing their medical careers externally to the College environment. Consequently, their expertise shapes the up-to-date contents of study courses enriched with practical information gained from real-life cases. Ultimately, this creates the learning environment that is similar to the daily work environment.

Studies are provided with a methodological base corresponding to the professional aims of the study program, its content and expected learning outcomes and study materials, which are regularly updated and supplemented. Students enjoy the opportunity to use study resources created by their instructors in the e-environment. Computers and multimedia resources, the wireless Internet, computer classroom, library and reading room, study and methodological materials (hard covers and electronic format; CDs, DVDs) are used in the study process. The resources published in the e-environment, on the one hand, and the use of information and communication technologies for consultations, on the other hand, facilitate the acquisition of specific study topics outside the College context.

The College library offers students of the physician assistant program books on emergency medical aid, rehabilitation, surgery, disaster medicine, etc., theses, scientific research and methodological materials as well as medical periodicals. During the reporting period, the library fund was supplemented with the latest book editions in Latvian and English, for example, “Hand Surgery: Tricks of the Trade. 1st edition ” (Handbook of Hand Surgical Methods), “Surgical Handicraft. 1st edition”, “

Biomechanics in Clinic and Research: An Interactive Teaching and Learning Course. 1st edition" (Clinical Aspects of Biomechanics), "Emergency Surgery Course (ESC®) Manual: The Official ESTES/AAST Guide. 1st edition", "Traumatology and Orthopedics" (A.Jumtiņš, R.Jakušonoka, H.I.Jodzēviča, etc.), "Pediatric Surgery for Primary Care Specialists" (A. Pētersons), "Clinical Anatomy for Medical Students" (G.M.Rūmanss, Dz.Kažoka, M.Pilmane), "Handbook of Clinical Analyses" (B.Bandere, D.Gavars, E.Gulbis, I.Grīviņa, D. Jupatova, A.Krišāne, M.Medvedeva, S.Petersone, T.Piekusa, I.Plūme, S.Šelkova, R.Treimane). Students have access to systematized electronic open-access resources (e-books, e-journals, databases in disaster medicine, first aid, emergency medical aid, rehabilitation, physical therapy, resources in evidence-based medicine, health care, medical statistics, and digital resources of LNL)[1].

To attain the aims of the study program "Medicine" and to enable the usage of the selected teaching methods, the College has equipped lecture rooms and training rooms with necessary equipment and other material resources most of which were purchased on STEM, ERDF and College own funds [2]. When implementing the STEM project, in 2019, the College was the first education institution in Latvia to have an EMS vehicle model installed, which since then has been used to develop students' skills of emergency medical aid algorithms and other practical skills.

The initial stage of the study program is marked by general education courses, which take place in specially equipped lecture room and training rooms. These rooms are equipped with multimedia equipment (laptops, interactive whiteboards, projectors for displaying lecture and seminar materials and showing demonstrations, video conferencing systems for participation in conferences, seminars, training sessions). Computer equipment makes it possible to quickly obtain information from the Internet sources and visualize study materials and consequently encourage proper actions, thus, ensuring the implementation of the selected teaching method. The provision of IT infrastructure at LU RFMC is described in more detail in criterion 2.3.2 in Section 3 of Chapter II. Training rooms contain various material resources for training. Various situational tasks are completed in such training rooms. Library resources are described in criterion 2.3.3 in Section 3 of Chapter II.

Material and technical provision for the study program "Medicine" with the qualification of a physician assistant is available in Annex 50.

[1] LU RFMC students can access online resources and databases on the College website in the section "Library" (available at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/lv/studentiem/biblioteka/>)

[2] The equipment of rooms is published on the College website in the section "Learning Environment" (available at: <https://www.rmkl.lv/lv/par-koledzu/macibu-vide/>)

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

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

The financial base and the costs of the study program correspond to the needs of the study program and the conditions of study program implementation. The financial resources of the study direction encompass the state budget funds and own revenues. The available financial resources ensure the implementation of the study program and the attainment of learning outcomes.

Distribution of the state funding in the study program "Medicine" (physician assistant) by years: in **2017** - EUR 404153; **2018** - EUR 421626; **2019** - EUR 442230; **2020** - EUR 446035.

Table 23

State budget expenditure per student of the study program "Medicine" (physician assistant) in 2020

Number of study places financed by the state budget	104
Types of expenses	EUR
Salary per 1 student per year	1669.73
Compulsory employer's state social insurance contributions	402.24
Payment for services – management of the building, infrastructure development	418.08
Modernization of teaching equipment, purchase of teaching materials and equipment	158.70
Acquisition of fixed assets	80.16
Total study expenses per student per year	2728.91

The interconnection of the study programs included in the study direction ensures that a substantial portion of the material and technical provision purchased at the College (teaching equipment, practical manipulation rooms, mock-ups, simulation mannequins, whiteboards, etc.) is successfully used not only in one but in several study programs.

Table 23.1.

Minimum number of students in the study program to ensure the profitability of the study program

Study program	Minimum number of students
Study program "Medicine" (physician assistant), Latvian language, full-time, face-to-face	99
Study program "Medicine" (midwife), Latvian language, full time, face-to-face	64
Study program "Pharmacy" (pharmacy assistant), Latvian language, full time, face-to-face	93

3.4. Teaching Staff

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

Most of the teaching staff implementing the study program are practicing health care professionals, including clinic doctors, surgeons, family doctors, psychiatrists, EMS team medical practitioners, etc. The expertise of these professionals allows students to gain comprehensive knowledge of the profession. The basic composition of the elected academic staff of the study program was formed through elections in 2013 and subsequently in the elections of 2019 for the period of 6 years until 2025. In 2019, many educators working in the study program completed studies in the further professional development program "Higher Education Didactics: Contemporary Theories and Practice". All teaching staff participate in professional seminars and training courses. Experience exchange events for the academic staff are regularly organized by the College. Academic staff are also encouraged to participate in such events at other institutions in Latvia and in international mobility programs. The College promotes close cooperation with the EMS, Association of Emergency Medicine, Latvian Society of Physicians (in continuing education programs), Latvian Society of Outpatient Medical Assistants and other professional medical and health care associations.

The elected academic staff and guest lecturers participate in the implementation of the aim of the study program, which is to train a medical practitioner with the qualification of the physician assistant.

- Total number of teaching staff: 30 educators per 6.71 academic staff rate
- Academic staff: 2 senior lecturers, 9 lecturers
- Guest lecturers: 19

Annex 47 provides information on the teaching staff involved in the study program "Medicine" (41721) awarding the qualification of the physician assistant. Information on the education of the teaching staff is provided in Annex 9 "Basic information on the teaching staff involved in the study direction".

The fact that the qualification of the teaching staff is directly related to learning outcomes is confirmed by the quantitative and qualitative indicators of the midterm and final assessment, as well as the feedback of students, graduates and employers.

Qualifications of the teaching staff such as academic staff and guest lecturers teaching in the study program comply with the conditions of the study program implementation and the requirements of regulatory enactments.

The teaching staff regularly update the content of study courses, taking into account the requirements and current developments on the labor market.

Information on the professional development of academic staff is registered in the College Personnel Department.

For more information, see criterion 2.3.6 of section "Resources and Provision of the Study Direction" in Chapter II.

3.4.2. Analysis and assessment of the changes to the composition of the teaching staff over the reporting period and their impact on the study quality.

In 2013 and 2019, the College organized the elections of the academic staff through a competition, which led to the six-year change in the basic composition of the academic staff. In addition to the elected teaching staff, the program recruits recognized medical practitioners as guest lecturers, who, by being practitioners in their areas of specialization, are able to enrich the content of study courses with real-life medical cases, thus, creating a study context that is similar to the real-life professional environment of a physician assistant. Changes in the composition of the teaching staff most often pertain to invited guest lecturers. This provides the College with an opportunity either to replace a lecturer from the elected group of the teaching staff in the relevant thematic cycle/study course or to ensure the implementation of a highly specific study course.

Several new guest lecturers have been recruited to teach in the program, for example, R. Kovaļenko, surgeon of "RAKUS" Ltds., teaches a study course on surgery, dr. J. Kolbergs, physician of the Anesthesiology and Intensive Care Clinic of the Children's Clinical University Hospital, teaches a course on intensive care and toxicology, I. Ortveina, chief nurse of the Hospital of Traumatology and Orthopaedics and Vice President of the Latvian Nurses Association, teaches a course on patient safety, T Talents, pharmacist and Chairman of the Board of the Health Care Development Association, teaches a course on E-prescriptions, L.Ķevere, certified psychiatrist and head of the Children's Psychiatry Clinic of the Children's Clinical University Hospital, teaches a course on psychiatry, E.Kauseniece, infectologist, teaches a course on

infectious diseases. The mentioned lecturers are medical practitioners or practicing specialists in their field of medicine, who, in addition to pedagogical engagements, work in health care clinics, EMS service, family doctor practices. As a result of such experience, they are able to improve the quality of their courses by incorporating information on innovations in their areas of medical specialization. By attracting new lecturers, the study program creates more opportunities for the acquisition of new information and enhances the overall quality of the studies.

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

3.4.4. Information on the participation of the academic staff, involved in the implementation of the doctoral study programme, in scientific projects as project managers or prime contractors/ subproject managers/ leading researchers by specifying the name of the relevant project, as well as the source and the amount of the funding. Provide information on the reporting period (if applicable).

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

The core of the study program “Medicine” (41721) with the qualification of a physician assistant is represented by lecturers of specialty courses, such as J.Kolbergs, R.Ziedonis, A.Vasiļonoks, E.Gelderīna, T.Kļaveniece, G.Lipska, and by lecturers of general education courses, such as V.Bunne, I.Miķele, I.Indrāne, I.Robiņa, etc.

The teaching staff of the program participate in general meetings of all the teaching

staff of the College, which are organized 3 times a year: at the beginning of the academic year, at the end of the first semester and at the end of the second semester. The teaching staff are informed on the level of attainment of study aims and learning outcomes in the previous academic period, receive information about the planned activities and set expenses for the new academic year.

The acting head of the Medicine and Pharmacy Department I.Indrâne and the teaching staff of the department discuss further development and implementation of the study program at the methodological meeting of the department (design/renewal of the study environment, current developments in the study field, updating study course contents and study course interconnection, ensuring academic succession). Mid-term results of students' progress are discussed at least twice a year (as of November 1 and April 1), which allows to identify problems in the implementation of the study program and determine the set of measures to be taken to handle difficulties, which leads to the decrease in the number of student dropping-out of the study program, especially in the first year of studies.

The department organizes and leads working groups of teaching staff for mapping learning outcomes. Each department also performs the analysis of class observations of teaching staff.

The teaching staff collaborate on the development of final assessment assignments of study courses, practical part of the final state examination and the evaluation of its course. Every year teaching staff jointly propose new thesis topics in line with the research directions of the College and research areas of teaching staff.

To attain the aim of the study program, which is to train medical practitioners with the qualification of a physician assistant, the College employs the elected academic staff and guest lecturers. Some further information on the teaching staff of the study program is provided below.

- Total number of the teaching staff: 30 instructors at the rate of 6.71 academic staff.
- Academic staff - 2 assistant professors and 9 lecturers.
- Guest lecturers - 19
- Number of students in the program as of 01/10/2020 - 143
- The ratio of students to the teaching staff of the study program: 4.8 students: 1 member of the teaching staff
- The ratio of students to the overall number of academic staff: 13 students: 1 member of the teaching staff

Annexes

III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme		
Sample of the diploma and its supplement to be issued for completing the study programme	ANNEX 41. Diploma, diploma supplement sample_Physician assistant.pdf	41.Pielikums Diploms un diploma pielikums _Ārsta palīgs.pdf
For academic study programmes - Opinion of the Council of Higher Education in accordance with Section 55, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		
Compliance of the joint study programme with the provisions of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (table) (if applicable)		
Statistics on the students in the reporting period	ANNEX 42. Statistical data on students_Physician assistant.pdf	42.PIELIKUMS_Statistikas dati par studējošajiem_Ārsta palīgs (1).pdf
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof		
Compliance with the study programme with the State Education Standard	ANNEX 43. Compliance of the study program with the National Education Standard_Physician assistant (2).docx.pdf	43.PIELIKUMS_Studiju programmas atbilstība valsts izglītības standartam_Ārsta palīgs.pdf
Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification (if applicable)	ANNEX 44. Compliance of the study program with the Profession Standard_Physician assistant .pdf	44.PIELIKUMS_Studiju programmas atbilstība profesijas standartam_Ārsta palīgs.pdf
Compliance of the study programme with the specific regulatory framework applicable to the relevant field (if applicable)	ANNEX 45. Compliance of the study program with sector-specific regulatory framework_Physician assistant.pdf	45.PIELIKUMS_Studiju programmas atbilstība nozares specifiskajam normatīvajam regulējumam_Ārsta palīgs .pdf
Mapping of the study courses/ modules for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the study programme	ANNEX 46. Mapping of study courses_physician assistant .pdf	46.PIELIKUMS_Ārsta palīgi_kartēšana.pdf
The curriculum of the study programme (for each type and form of the implementation of the study programme)	ANNEX 47. Curriculum of the study program Medicine (41721) with the qualification of the physician assistant .pdf	47.PIELIKUMS_Studiju programmas plāns_Ārsta palīgs .pdf
Descriptions of the study courses/ modules	ANNEX 48_STUDY COURSES_Physician assistant.pdf	48.PIELIKUMS _Studiju kursi _Ārsta palīgs.pdf
Description of the organisation of the internship of the students (if applicable)	ANNEX 49. Description of the organization of students' internships_Physician assistant.pdf	49.PIELIKUMS _Studējošo prakses organizācijas apraksts_Nolikums par praksi_Ārsta palīgi.pdf
III - Description of the Study Programme - 3.4. Teaching Staff		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the doctoral study programme includes not less than five doctors, of which at least three are experts approved by the Latvian Council of Science in the branch or sub-branch of science in which the study programme intends to award a scientific degree (if applicable)		
Confirmation that the academic staff of the academic study programme complies with the requirements specified in Section 55, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (if applicable)		