

# Expert group joint opinion

Evaluation Procedure: Assessment of Study Field

Higher Education Institution: Riga Medical College of the University of Latvia

Study field: Health Care

Experts:

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## Summary Assessment of the Study Field

### Summary Assessment of the Study Field

Concluding the analysis of the Riga Medical College of the University of Latvia (LU RMC) implemented study field - "Health Care" with 3 study programs corresponding to the Latvian education system, experts did not identify any deficiencies, which cannot be eliminated. Overall, LU RMC pays strict attention and mostly or fully ensures the compliance of legal requirements and shows good management and almost all quality assurance practices.

The major positive aspects of the study field and its programmes are: The study field complies with the main fields of strategic development and meets the needs and the development trends of society. LU RMC has an overall well-organised management structure. The management responds very well to changing demands in the job market. LU RMC has developed a Quality Assurance System oriented to continuous improvement of the relevant Study Programmes. Procedures and regulations cover all relevant dimensions of a quality system. The infrastructure resources and the material and technical provision are modern and sufficient. The support system for students is effective and responsive as well as for students with disabilities.

The directions of the scientific research comply with development aims of the HEI and are relevant to the study field Health care. Scientific research is a part of the study curriculum, and there is a clearly defined relation between the scientific research and the study process. International cooperation in the field of scientific research is ensured by agreements with several HEI in European countries, as well as ERASMUS+ and NORDPLUS networking. There is a well-functioning and efficient mechanism for involving and supporting students in their research activities.

LU RMC has developed a team of academic staff who are passionate, highly qualified and dedicated. There are developed a regulatory system of the requirements for the teaching staff and what is expected of them during the period of employment contract in the scientific research and creation. LU RMC is implementing innovative teaching methods and advances in IT technology in the study process.

Experts have also identified several necessary and recommended improvements related to the few major weaker points and current best practices to consider followed by recommendations. First of all it should be mentioned the cooperation with the University of Latvia - it could be closer and more effective in different levels and areas. This applies especially to the possibilities of sharing LU library resources with LU RMC. It is also necessary to note that there are no state funding study places for 2 study programmes and therefore a small number of students in non state funding study programmes. Even on this issue, closer co-operation with the University of Latvia is possible, especially with regard to the study program "Dispensing optician".

Study programme name Massage and Hydrotherapy should be considered to change to "Massage" because current programme name is misleading potential students, since they can not legally practise Hydrotherapy after graduation and currently there is no qualification of hydrotherapist in Latvia. Most academic staff in the Massage and Hydrotherapy study program have a medical doctor's degree, but the management could also consider involvement of more physiotherapists or massage therapists.

LU RMC has no plagiarism tools used for study quality control utilise plagiarism detection tools for final works and everyday life in the study process so the recommendation is to Utilise plagiarism detection tools for final works and everyday life in the study process.

### 1. Management of the Study Field

#### Analysis

The Riga Medical College of the University of Latvia (LU RMC) is an educational institution under the

supervision of the University of Latvia and the Ministry of Education and Science. The College implements one study field - "Health Care" with 3 study programs corresponding to the Latvian education system. LU RMC provides persons with secondary education and Vocational secondary education and the qualification of Physician Assistant (Paramedic) education for obtaining the first level professional higher education and the fourth level professional qualification in health care.

The goals of the study field are clearly defined in the new LU RMC strategy 2021-2027 and they reflect the needs of the Latvian National Development Plan, the Public Health Guidelines for the period 2021-2027, and the development of human resources and healthcare in the country. LU RMC ensures the development of professional human resources in the health care sector for the whole country, and an educational environment based on the integration of studies and science promotes the development of the health care sector in Latvia (Self-assessment report). LU RMC closely cooperates with employers and is flexible to be able to react to the labour market needs.

LU RMC is working in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Health, as well as starting to collaborate with the Ministry of Defence to develop the many areas where appropriately educated health care professionals are needed (on-site meeting with HEI management).

One of the goals in the development of LU RMC is research. The level of science is not clearly defined. The level and place of science must be specified in accordance with the first-level professional study program. There is a need to focus on the preparation of evidence-based qualifications and evidence-based learning.

The Structure of management of the study field and study programs is shown in the structure diagram (I.2.Annex). It is well-structured.

The highest institution in the college is the College Council under the direction of the Latvian University. The daily work management is provided by the Head of the LU RMC - director with 2 deputies: deputy director of Educational Affairs and deputy director of Scientific Affairs for Study Department and Scientific Department. At the moment both deputy positions are provided by 1 person working with a bigger workload information acquired during the HEI visit.

The study field comprises three study programs, led by program directors (I.2.Annex) Each study program has a study program council that proposes improvements or changes to the study process, e.g. in March 2020 it proposed the safe implementation of the study process in the context of the COVID - 19 pandemic (Annex: The management structure of the field).

However, there is not a completely clear composition and procedure of recruitment and functions of the study programs council. During the site visit some of the academic staff members and students could not provide any information about the study programme Council. Study programme directors only named composition of the council and council's role in LU RMC, but could not name what the council has done for the study programmes. One of the Study directors acknowledged that the meetings had not taken place for more than a year.

Management meetings are held at least twice a month, academic staff meetings (at least once a semester), and electronic means of communication are used for information exchange and timely decision-making. The management meetings address issues related to the organisation of the study process, quality assurance, and proposals submitted by the student council. Issues requiring the involvement of the College Council are prepared and submitted to the College Council. College Council meetings are held once every two months. (Annex: The management structure of the field)

However, a slight lack of an information exchange process between all levels of management was felt in on-site visits with management and staff.

Some very small discrepancies in documents and information on the website: the position of deputy director of scientific affairs, who must lead the Scientific Department is vacant, but this management position does not appear on LU RMC website and in the Latvian version is management schema - the College Council, but in the English version is the Board. Since the College

only provides 1st level professional education, it is not necessary to develop scientific research activities at an advanced level.

The college has a system for the admission of students, the recognition of the study period, professional experience, and the previously acquired formal and non-formal education and evaluation of the achievements and learning outcomes of the students (HEI other annexes: +iepr\_izgl\_prof\_pier\_stud\_rez-nov\_un\_atz.pdf; +studiju\_uzsaksana\_velakos\_studiju\_posmos.pdf) The procedures for admission of students are logical and efficient. However, documents are available only in Latvian.

The system for admission of students with previously acquired formal education and experience corresponds fully to the legal requirements, is logical and efficient, and is supplemented with the necessary legal internal documentation and forms (Annex 1.1.). LU RMC during the site visit also provided examples on how they have acknowledged previously acquired experience or study results.

Also, LU RMC has regulations on the recognition of competences acquired outside formal education or acquired in professional experience at the Riga Medical College of the University of Latvia and regulations on the assessment and recognition of study results achieved in previous education or professional experience at the Riga Medical College of the University of Latvia and specific documents for those specialists - nurses, midwives, physician assistants (paramedics) and nursing assistants, who need to renew professional registration. They also have a specific regulation for procedures for recognition of study courses (Annex 1.1).

LU RMC has set academic integrity principles and developed Regulations on academic integrity (<https://rmkoledza.lu.lv/wp-content/uploads/Akademiskais-godigums.pdf> ) with the aim to strengthen culture in the College academic environment.

LU RMC has an Academic Arbitration Court, which examines the submission of students and academic staff regarding restrictions or violations of academic freedom and rights, disputes of an academic or ethical nature between the officials of the College (Annex-SAR) The decisions of the Academic Arbitration Court are enforced by the Administration. The members of the Court are accountable for their activities to the College Council.

Academic staff and students are well-informed about plagiarism, but the specific plagiarism detection tools are currently not available in College. They prefer to use pedagogical staff experience and free internet resources. There is no cooperation with the Latvian University (from On-site visits).

The information provided by LU RMC publicly on their homepage (<https://rmkoledza.lu.lv/en/about-lu-rmk/>) is available in Latvian and English, and is fully sufficient for attracting potential students, and fully covers the planned target audience of the study programs implemented. The information complies with the information available in the official registers. LU RMC is a well-known and highly recognized higher education institution and visibly promotes recognizability through marketing communication, including on its homepage. The information published in English gives insight into study programs as well as international activities, but for active communication with students and potential students information is in Latvian because the study language is only in Latvian.

## **Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses**

The aims of the study field are clearly defined. The study field complies with the main fields of strategic development and meets the needs and the development trends of society. LU RMC has an

overall well-organised management structure. The management responds very well to changing demands in the job market. Academic staff and students are well-informed about plagiarism, but the specific plagiarism detection tools are currently not available in College

Strengths:

1. Compliance with the development strategy and the main direction of the Latvian National Development Plan, the Public Health Guidelines for the period 2021-2027
2. Overall well-organised management structure
3. Flexibility to changing labour market demand
4. Dedicated staff

Weaknesses:

1. Cooperation with the University of Latvia could be closer and more effective in different levels and areas.
2. There is some lack of clarity about the required level of science and research in the college
3. Absence of plagiarism detection tools
4. Slight internal mis-information between different levels of management

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

### **Analysis**

LU RMC has developed a clear quality assurance policy based on LU RMC strategy and organisational values defined in it, as well as on the requirements of the international standard "Investment in excellence", LU RMC vision and mission implementation. The policy is publicly available at the LU RMC homepage.

LU RMC quality management policy is focused on providing modern quality improvement and excellence-oriented study and research work. LU RMC quality management policy is based on the following basic principles:

Leadership and setting ambitious, realistic goals.

Unity in achieving the goals of the college.

Involvement of stakeholders in the improvement of college services and processes.

Observance of the principles of social responsibility.

A positive cooperation approach.

A fact-based approach to decision making.

Quality procedures comply with regulatory standards, are logical and inclusive of students, teaching staff, graduates, and employers.

It is not clear from the Self-Assessment Report provided by LU RMC and discussions held with programme managers, teachers, students, graduates and employers in the Health Care Study Field that all internal stakeholders involved in the Health Care Study Direction have implemented the policy by making changes in their teaching, learning and assessment approaches.

LU RMC has developed procedures for the development, approval and supervision of study programs which determine the basic principles for the development of study programs – "Development, approval and management of study programs".

The principles of study program development are based on the goals set for them, including the expected learning outcomes. The qualifications to be acquired as a result of the program must be clearly defined and described and attributed to the appropriate level of higher education in the national qualifications framework, as well as to the corresponding level of the ESG qualifications framework. According to the SAR the planned changes in the study program are approved by the Council of LU RMC.

In order to objectively evaluate the effectiveness of study programs, cooperation on a regular basis has been developed with professional associations of the field- Emergency Medicine Association of the Republic of Latvia, the Union of Professional Organisations of Latvian Medical Practitioners, the Latvian Society of Ambulatory Care Physician Assistants, the Opticians Association etc.

According to the information from SAR and discussions with HEI administration, the program development takes place with the participation of students, however, during a meeting with students and graduates, the team of experts were not fully convinced on this point.

Every year reports on all study programs are created, which are published on the website of LU RMC [www.rmkoledza.lu.lv](http://www.rmkoledza.lu.lv)

A process of data collection and processing of results is defined. LU RMC collects and analyses data from student questionnaires after each course and at the end of each year and the last study year about the whole study program as well as from annual teacher and employer surveys. Programme managers and teachers take this feedback into account and students and graduates indicate that some changes to individual courses have been made. However it is not clear from the discussions held with programme managers, teachers, students, graduates and employers in the Health Care Study Field just how much internal stakeholders are involved, so implementation of the procedures seems to have various deficiencies.

Meeting with management, teaching staff and StF and StP directors showed gaps of information exchange. It is not clear in the documents or discussions with students, graduates and employers if they have received feedback on their feedback. The Team feel that additional ways of gaining feedback are needed to allow it to be used in effective management of study programmes.

LU RMC has specified the standards set forth in Part 1 of the ESG. LU RMC during an experts visit recognizes the need for improvement in some standards but it would be better that a more in-depth critical analysis was presented and emphasised in the self-assessment report and in all experts meetings of internal stakeholders.

## **Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses**

LU RMC has developed a Quality Assurance System oriented to continuous improvement of the relevant StPs. Procedures and regulations cover all relevant dimensions of a quality system.

Strengths:

1. Clear and quite simple Quality Assurance System aimed towards continuous improvement.

Weaknesses:

1. Lack of efficacy in the System's implementation.
2. Insufficient exchange of information and results with relevant stakeholders such as students and teachers.

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

### **Analysis**

The financial resources of study programs are the state budget grant, financing of private students (tuition fees), as well as the EU structural funds financing in accordance with concluded agreements on implementation of individual study programs.

The amount of funding from the state budget is calculated and allocated on the basis of an agreement between the college and the Ministry of Education and Science on the number of study places to be funded in the academic year. The state budget grant ensures the coverage of the basic expenses necessary for the implementation of the study program. In 2020, the state budget funding

for the study field was 1,481,500 euros. This funding was available for the Study program of Medicine. The study programs "Massage and hydrotherapy" and "Dispensing Optician" are financed from the resources of private or individual persons (tuition fees) and the college's own income (SAR Annex II 3.1). If we compare study programs, then the highest Annual costs per study place per student in the program "Physician Assistant"- EUR 3962,85EUR, then "Dispensing optician" 1549,49 EUR and "Massage and hydrotherapy" 1460,13 EUR ( Annex II 3.1) Funds for research activities are allocated in the amount of 10% - 17% of the Colleges income received in the previous year. In 2020, 17% of the previous year's own revenue was available to academic staff for research activities, i.e. 38 080 EUR. In accordance with the Law on HEI, each year LU RMK allocates 0,5% of state budget funding and 0,5% of its own income to the student council. In 2020, the budget of the Student Council was 8327 EUR. More students are needed to make paid study places profitable. State-funded study places would also be needed in Study programs "Massage and hydrotherapy" and "Dispensing Optician". The Dispensing Optician's study program works very well with employers and a large proportion of students from this program are paid for by their workplace.

The study field has a very good and renovated infrastructure with modern equipped laboratories. In 2018, an agreement was signed with the University of Latvia as a leading partner and the modernization of the LU RMC study field within the STEM project. During the implementation of the project, four well-equipped simulation laboratories were established: Simulation Laboratory for Children and Women; Emergency medicine, intensive care; Surgery and Traumatology Simulation Laboratory; Internal Medicine and Patient Care Simulation Laboratory.

Theoretical studios are equipped with cameras, audio-video equipment, recording, and broadcasting rooms. Various multifunctional mannequins for resuscitation simulation, childbirth simulation, simulation of paediatric patients, a set for simulation of traumatic tissue and organ damage and polytrauma were purchased in the laboratory. Some laboratories are dedicated to massage and hydrotherapy. One has an underwater massage bath. The infrastructure and equipment for Dispensing Opticians are sufficient, given the small number of students. There is a lot of help from employers.

The College has an on-site library with books in Latvian, English, and other languages, as well as computer workstations and reading rooms. The LU RMC library was accredited in 2021, it has been granted the status of a library of local significance (SAR). The library is a structural unit of the college and operates in accordance with internal regulations. The library provides access to EBSCO databases. The library does not have a direct link to the LU library.

In accordance with Article 39 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the staff involved in the implementation of study programs is elected in professional study subjects, taking into account the practical work experience in health care and the selection criteria defined by the college. In order to ensure the quality of education, specialists of the field with both a doctoral degree and practical experience corresponding to the study course are attracted to work in professional and special study courses (see Table II.5). The selection and election of teaching staff take place in accordance with the regulations (see Annex I.1 "List of the main internal regulatory enactments and regulations of the LU RMC").

The professional competence of the academic staff and teaching staff corresponds to the study programs. The main mechanism for the implementation of this criterion is the selection of appropriate teaching staff on the basis of documents certifying education and further education, using certificates issued by professional associations as proof of professional competence.

The study program plans of the study field "Health care" provides 50% of the study time in health care institutions. LU RMC has bilateral cooperation agreements with many different health care institutions in Riga and other regions.

The Covid19 pandemic has affected teacher staff mobility.

There are English language requirements for academic staff but without a specific level definition. Since most of the latest literature in the Healthcare field is available only in the English language,

the college may consider setting a certain standard for a knowledge of English.

Students can apply for scholarships in state-funded programs, funds for scholarships are marked for the state-funded study place and in 2020 it was 150.82 EUR per student. Students can apply for state-guaranteed studies and student loans. Support for students' practical and theoretical knowledge during Erasmus + and Nord plus is possible with the funding of special projects. Some support can provide LU RMC Student Council for students academic interests or for material support and, for example, a reduction in tuition fees (SAR).

The college has created conditions for students with disabilities to study and such students have already graduated from the study program Massage and Hydrotherapy.

### **Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses**

The financial resources consist of both: state budget funding and own income. RMC has good infrastructure resources and the material and technical provisions required for the implementation of the study field. The college has developed a support system for students.

Strengths:

1. The infrastructure resources and the material and technical provision are modern and sufficient.
2. Own income and project funds are increasing.
3. The support system for students is effective and responsive. The college has created conditions for students with disabilities to study

Weaknesses:

1. No state funding study places for 2 study programmes.
2. A small number of students in non state funding study programmes.
3. Limited library resources without direct collaboration with LU.

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

### **Analysis**

The scientific research at the LU RMC is done within the framework of studies, and it corresponds to the goals of the study field. The academic staff in study field Health Care is involved in important applied research, which is associated with their educational background and professional interests. In the Medicine study program, the staff is involved in the evaluation of the patient care process, nursing education and management, intensive care management, public health issues, psychological and nutritional problems. In the Massage and Hydrotherapy study program, the staff is involved in the research, evaluating the massage effects, and also the occupational health issues of the massage therapists. In the Dispensing Optician study program, the teaching staff is involved in research in the field of optics, physics, refraction and vision issues. The scientific research is relevant to the study field in which the teaching staff members are working, and this complies with the development aims of the HEI. The evaluation of the research is done by research professionals, as well as by the submitting of theses to conferences or congresses in the relevant fields.

Doctoral research is not applicable.

The Scientific Department of LU RMC is responsible for maintenance of the strong connections between the teaching staff, students, and employers, and takes responsibility for development of research topics, supervising of the students, reviewing of the Qualification Papers. Preparation of the Qualification Paper is in the curriculum of all study programs in the Health Care study field. Students may select a topic at will, either at the practical training site, or, to do the research with the theoretical subjects' teachers. Scientific activity of the academic staff members is promoted by



funding the staff from own revenues, and by increasing part of the revenue. Also, academic staff members develop study and teaching materials, which are analysed by industry professionals. The development of educational tools is the outcome that is integrated in the teaching and study process. During the on-site visit and by evaluating the documents, it was not possible to finally clarify the extent of the scientific research that is expected from professional studies' programs.

International cooperation agreements with several HEI in European countries, as well as ERASMUS+ and NORDPLUS networking allows international cooperation in the field of scientific research. Teaching staff members and students participate in various international events and present results of their research activities. During the reporting period, the staff and the students of LU RMC have participated in 40 different events in 21 countries in EU, EU neighbouring countries and Asia: scientific conferences, congresses, symposia, forums. They take the chance to spread the results of their internal scientific projects, to create new joint studies and projects, to present examples of good practice and to participate in international professional contests. To ensure international cooperation in the field of scientific research, relevant financial support is important. The LU RMC supports the international missions through budget funding, but a significant part is also contributed by local and international projects, as well as the LU RMC Student Council, which also financially supports students' scientific activities abroad.

During the site visit of LU RMC, the academic staff members explained that if they want to be elected to a position, they have job tasks, for how much publications they need, how much they must participate in conferences. They take this into account to remain at the position during next elections. Although LU RMC has developed a regulatory document of the requirements for the teaching staff, the provided link was not active <https://rmkoledza.lu.lv/wp-content/uploads/Nolikums-par-akad-un-admin-amatiem.pdf>. The management and the teaching staff explained that their election process is based on the requirements thereof. There was no indicator of requirements for the overall knowledge of English language for the staff members. That may cause problems, since publications and modern literature is created and available mostly in English. Nevertheless, most of the staff members have English or German language proficiency of B2 or higher levels, as seen in Mācībspēku CV. The staff members are very active in acquiring new IT skills and in developing new teaching tools and learning new teaching methods. Each year, they undergo the assessment of the teachers. This happened also last December, when the staff indicated which learning courses they would like to undertake during this year. It is summarised, and considering the college's financial possibilities, the college provides the staff members with the necessary courses. To ensure the expenses, the college plans have a separate budget line (17% of the previous years annual revenue) that is support for participation in conferences or just personal growth courses. Financial resources are also used to motivate teaching staff to engage in research activities, and from 2021 the activity has been included as one of the criteria for the annual performance evaluation of the teaching staff. The full list of scientific research publications and patents is provided in the annex II.4.1.

The research work of students performed at LU RMC allows them to acquire competence and to bring students closer to their professional work environment. The main goal of the research that the student undertakes is to gain the skills of research and to learn how to independently accumulate evidence, to analyse and to present the results of the research. The scientific research in the study field is related to the study process, as the students are offered research topics for the development of the Qualification Paper. The topic in the majority of cases is relevant to their future occupation. The academic staff members attract the students to different projects for research at the University clinics, Emergency Medical Service (NMPD), as well as private institutions, participating in the implementation of the study field also as research bases. This is ensured by cooperation agreements

with several university hospitals in Riga, where students may perform their tasks in the research topic. Students of all study programs are involved in research activities, and present the results of their research and creative activities at various conferences, symposia and Olympiads, according to the SAR. LU RMC organises annual students' scientific-practical conferences together with another college of LU (PSK). Participation in the conference develops students' research and presentation skills and is also beneficial for getting insights into interdisciplinary cooperation. The LU RMC supports the international missions of the students through budget funding, but a significant part is also contributed by local and international projects, as well as the LU RMC Student Council, which financially supports students' scientific activities abroad, too.

LU RMC takes efforts to implement innovative teaching methods; therefore a STEM project was implemented and simulation laboratories established. By using the equipment available in practical medicine, the students perform in situations, which are examples from real clinical situations. New IT technologies enable the students to capture video, to review and analyse the recording and to evaluate the performance of the students, the positive aspects, and the mistakes, which may be corrected, and the performance improved. These methods allow the students to prepare better for a real work environment, to develop and refine action algorithms. During the on-site visit, the students expressed confidence in their newly acquired skills, obtained during their innovative practical simulation classes, and which was found to be very useful later in their practice.

## **Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses**

The directions of the scientific research comply with development aims of the HEI and are relevant to the study field Health care. Scientific research is a part of the study curriculum, and there is a clearly defined relation between the scientific research and the study process. International cooperation in the field of scientific research is ensured by agreements with several HEI in European countries, as well as ERASMUS+ and NORDPLUS networking. HEI developed a regulatory document of the requirements for the teaching staff and what is expected of them during the period of employment contract in the scientific research and creation. There is a well-functioning and efficient mechanism for involving and supporting students in their research activities. HEI is implementing innovative teaching methods and advances in IT technology in the study process.

Strengths:

1. Scientific research is supported by the Science department in finding topics, research bases, and allocating financial resources
2. Spread of the research results takes place at national and international levels, and it is supported in several ways.
3. Innovative teaching methods are implemented in the study process.

Weaknesses:

1. It is not quite clear, to what extent the students' research work should reach, as they are studying for a professional qualification.

## **5. Cooperation and Internationalisation**

### **Analysis**

Currently LU RMC has 56 different agreements with institutions and organisations locally and from abroad. For example students in Latvia have the possibility to go to hospitals, sanatoriums, emergency health care departments, this is topical for massage and medicine programme students. Dispensing optician students have the opportunity to use Latvian university infrastructure during the

study process and undergo practical training at enterprises. There is strong cooperation with industry which supports students during the study process and internships. Regarding partners from abroad, those mainly are other HEI that are open for taking students into mobility or are co-operating in science. Full list of the agreements between LU RMC and other institutions etc. can be found at annex: Sadarbības līgumi 2.pielikums. LU RMC is not only seeking new partners in the higher education area, but also is targeting possible new students. They have agreements with different municipalities in Latvia. In these municipalities they are going to high schools and encouraging students to choose health care (medicine, massage or opticians) as their education after school graduation. Regarding the overall situation in Latvian education when interest in STEM subjects is decreasing this is a very commendable action. During the site visit and in SAR section 5.1. LU RMC have indicated work on a new joint study programme together with P.Stradiņš red cross medical college - Digital Assistant in Health care. LU RMC also is developing new cooperation with the Ministry of Defence and Disaster Medicine Centre; as a result, a conference "Public Safety" was organised. This collaboration potentially can be beneficial for providing additional value to medicine study programmes. One of key points for cultural and knowledge exchange is mobility. LU RMC extensively have been utilising ERASMUS+ and NORDPLUS networks for providing outgoing mobility. This was also supported from the student side during the site visit, for example, students went on clinical internships in Bulgaria, others have mentioned short term visits to Lithuania and Finland in the form of intensive week studies. Student mobility in programmes under this study field can also be checked at annex 5.2. Studējošo mobilitāte. It has to be taken into account that the highest rate of mobility consisted of nurses. Physician assistants, dispensing opticians and massage and hydrotherapy students can also utilise the network created by LU RMC and create an upward trend for mobility. Since all programmes under this study field are professional, these connections are beneficial for improvement of them and contribute to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field and the relevant study programmes.

There are several local mechanisms for attracting teaching staff, the first one includes College alumni. College staff - programme directors, lecturers are talking to and encouraging students to create academic careers while they are students. Then of course there are local advertisements about possible academic staff positions. Even now there are nurses, physician assistants, masseurs who are teaching the next generation of professionals and have graduated LU RMC. LU RMC also has attracted lecturers and specialists from abroad. The biggest network that LU RMC uses is ERASMUS+. Within the Health care study field LU RMC has 47 bilateral cooperation agreements ( SAR 5.2. Section). During the last accreditation period these corporations have been excessively used for incoming academic staff mobility, see annex: Statistikas datu apkopojums par mācībspēku ienākošo un izejošo mobilitāti pārskata periodā.docx. The biggest partners are Finland and Lithuania. During the site visit students also confirmed that they have had some guest lecturers during the study period. Second biggest part of incoming mobility of academic staff members comes from the Nordplus network. We have to take into account that study programmes in College are held only in Latvian, so there might be some language barriers for the students regarding lectures from international academic staff. So it is only reasonable that the biggest part of the exchanges including short term ones are organised as intensive weeks, which have a special curriculum and are based on learning practical skills. The same applies for the incoming student mobility, since there is no possible way to participate in the ordinary study process. All of incoming student mobility is based on learning practical skills during internships. At first, LU RMC, students who want to participate receive a list of practical skills that have to be acquired during the traineeship. Then the college contacts potential internship places that can provide the learning of all manipulations, if the requirements can be met, then the incoming mobility is organised and held on the premises of the organisations that have created agreements with the college. During the site visit both students and academic staff members could name some examples about students from abroad who are

undergoing practice.

All study programmes include practice where students have the possibility to use theoretical knowledge that they have acquired during the study process. For medicine programme students, practice is 20 CP, massage and hydrotherapy 16 CP and dispensing opticians also 16 CP. Each of the programmes have agreements with enterprises where students can undergo the practise. During the practise, students have to document and fill in reports about what they have learned during the traineeship. The main document that is responsible for organisation of traineeships can be located in the LU RMC webpage and is added as an annex: Prakses-nolikums.pdf. During the traineeship all students have to do certain tasks, nevertheless students also have the possibility to go into depth for some specific techniques or manipulations that they find interesting. From the meetings with students and alumni it was clear that LU RMC is well prepared for organising practises. All paperwork for the students is managed by the College and they just have to fill in the reports. Students indicated that they would like to have more traineeships, but due to State Education Standard programmes can not expand practise time, since programmes are only 4-6 semesters. During the COVID-19 pandemic massage programme students were not able to undertake practise in hospitals, but traineeships in medical healthcare and rehabilitation centres were available. Regarding dispensing opticians, employers are very open minded about practise places and provide students with opportunities and medicine programme students are at the front lines of the health care system learning vital skills for saving people on an everyday basis.

## **Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses**

LU RMC has several agreements between different HEI and institutions locally and abroad. This network mostly provides students with mobility options. Since the nurse study programme will go to a Latvian university, LU RMC has to encourage medicine, massage and hydrotherapy and dispensing optician programme students to go on mobilities, otherwise the outgoing mobility will be very low in the next period. There is a common system for traineeship organisations, LU RMC mostly attracts students to traineeships, since the main language of teaching is only Latvian. This cooperation contributes to the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study field and the relevant study programmes.

### **Strengths:**

1. Well organised traineeships, students are very satisfied and praise the possibility to learn all basic skills required before entering the labour market.
2. LU RMC have created intensive practice weeks as short term mobility visits for outgoing and incoming mobility.

### **Weaknesses:**

1. Outgoing mobility rate will drop due to the Nurse study programme being transferred to a Latvian university.
2. None of the study programmes are in English, this deters possible incoming mobility of academic staff and students.

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

### **Analysis**

In the previous period, LU RMK has had several evaluation procedures, the previous accreditation of

the program "Medicine" was implemented in 2013 and was accredited for a full period - 6 years, until 2019. Accreditation extended until December 31, 2022 (amendments to the Law on Higher Education. Transitional Provisions section 48, subsection 2). According to the presented documents, in previous accreditation there were eight recommendations. LU RMK a plan for the implementation of the recommendations and an assessment of the implementation before current accreditation were developed.

During the licensure process of the study program "Massage and Hydrotherapy" started in 2015/2016 academic year, four recommendations were determined, while for the most recent licensed study programme, "Dispensing Optician", there were eight recommendations. Similar to those mentioned above, for these programs LU RMK developed a plan for the implementation of the recommendations and an assessment of the implementation before current accreditation.

According to information provided in SAR, it is visible that the LU RMK has considered the previous assessment visits' recommendations. There were reported answers to all recommendations in Annexes III.

A detailed analysis of each specific recommendation shows that several of them have been fully implemented, but some of them can only be considered as partially implemented and need to be further developed, so implementation of the recommendation should be continued. It refers to the "Improve the foreign language skills of academic staff" the recommendation is marked as fulfilled, noting that 50% of the academic staff have attended the courses, but it would be better to focus on the evaluation of the results to be achieved, for example, to set requirements for achieving a certain level of knowledge. Also, during the visit, the team of experts could not gain confidence in the good English language skills of the staff they met during the visit.

This also refers to the recommendation - "Ensure cooperation with student representatives and increase the role of student representation in decision-making."

According to the information from SAR and other documents, the representation of students in the decision-making is clear, however in meetings with students and graduates, the team of experts were not fully confident about this.

Concerning the recommendation "Increasing the number of budget places in cooperation with ministries", it's usually a never-ending process and implementation of the recommendation continues, this understandably cannot be achieved in a short period of time and should realistically be an ongoing process.

All other recommendations from the year 2013 are fully implemented.

Relating to the recommendation of the licensure process of study program "Massage and Hydrotherapy" recommendations are in ongoing process. For example, the development of the study programme requires the continuation of research activities to achieve the specific objectives of the programme and to explore competences. For this it could be added at this point that it is necessary to develop an evidence-based practice in the field of the specific study program.

Concerning the recommendation from the licensure process of the study programme "Dispensing Optician" most recommendations are and could be more developed with strong collaboration and support of the University of Latvia and labour market. The team of experts felt this mutual support, as well as gaining confidence in the joint purposefulness of LU RMK, LU and the labour market.

## **Conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses**

According to SAR with annexes and information collected during the visit, it was visible that the LU RMK has taken into account the previous assessments visits recommendations, however some recommendations are not fully implemented.

Strengths:

1. LU RMK responded to all recommendations received during the previous assessments procedures

2. LU RMK responses are adequate to recommendations and they provide a good solution. Actions based on recommendation enhance teaching and learning at LU RMK.

Weakness:

1. The established system and rules do not always lead to the achievement of the goal. It is necessary to work on mutual teamwork.

## 7. Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field

- 1 R1 - Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 21 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction whilst implementing their internal quality assurance systems:

**Assessment of compliance:** Partially compliant

There are established policies for quality assurance, but the procedures are not enough developed, academic integrity of the student's work, their final work, nor their assignments can be checked for plagiarism in the College. It would be necessary to consider joining inter-university computerized plagiarism control system which is used in University of Latvia . The collection of information from the various parties involved and the feedback should be formalized and used in accordance with the established internal quality system to ensure the monitoring and periodic review of study programs.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Partially compliant

The College has established policies and procedures to ensure the quality of higher education, but this is only partially implemented. It is necessary to develop a formalized use of the system for collecting information from various stakeholders, as well as the feedback should be formalized and used in accordance with the established internal quality system to ensure the monitoring and periodic review of study programs. Development of the activities of all study program councils is necessary.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

LU RMC have regulations for the development and approval of the study programmes annex: Programmu izstrāde.docx. Currently LU RMC and is also working on creating a joint study programme with Red Cross college.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Partially compliant

No plagiarism tool is used in LU RMC for evaluating qualification work or any assignment quality. Study programmes are created and delivered in accordance with professional standards. Specific evaluation criteria is described in each study course description, but overall evaluation of study results is described in document:

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

“Procedure for evaluation of LU RMC employees and evaluation of its results” and “Regulations on academic and administrative positions at LU RMC” are the main documents for assuring the qualification of the academic staff.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

LU RMC collects and analyses data from surveys conducted among students and alumni. Results are used for improvements of the study process. Employers usually are interviewed to find out their opinion. Feedback from the results is not always provided for the parties involved. Evaluation of academic staff efficiency is based on student survey results.

- 7 1.6. The higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction whilst implementing their quality assurance systems.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Performance of LU RMC can be checked in every year's annual report. Strategic goals and development plans are described in LU RMC strategy.

- 8 R2 - The cooperation with different organisations from Latvia and abroad implemented within the study direction ensures the achievement of the aims of the study direction.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

LU RMC is actively using mobility networks ( ERASMUS and Nordplus). Locally LU RMC is cooperating with institutions, hospitals, and municipalities in providing students with possible practise places and informing secondary school students and society about health care.

- 9 R3 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the development level thereof (if applicable).

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

LU RMC teaching staff in the Health care study field are actively involved in scientific research projects and creative work. II.4.1. annex List of lecturers' publications, patents, artistic innovative works for the reporting period .docx

- 10 R4 - Elimination of the shortcomings and deficiencies identified during the previous assessment of the study direction, if it has been conducted, or the implementation of the provided recommendations.

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

Recommendations are partly implemented, for example:

-for study programme "Massage and Hydrotherapy" - Improve the foreign language skills of academic staff" the recommendation is marked as fulfilled, noting that 50% of the academic staff have attended the courses, but it would be better to focus on the evaluation of the results to be achieved, for example, to set requirements for achieving a certain level of knowledge. Also, during the visit, the team of experts could not gain confidence in the good English language skills of the staff they met during the visit. This also refers to the recommendation.

-for study programme "Massage and Hydrotherapy" - "Ensure cooperation with student representatives and increase the role of student representation in decision-making." According to the information from SAR and other documents, the representation of students in the decision-making is clear, however in meetings with students and graduates, the team of experts were not fully confident about this.

Concerning the recommendation "Increasing the number of budget places in cooperation with ministries", it's usually a never-ending process and implementation of the recommendation continues, this understandably cannot be achieved in a short period of time and should realistically be an ongoing process.

Relating to the recommendation of the licensing process of study programme "Massage and Hydrotherapy" - recommendations are in ongoing process.

## **8. Recommendations for the Study Field**

### **Short-term recommendations**

To start develop closer cooperation with the University of Latvia different levels and areas, especially in the area of common library and possibility to join inter-university computerized plagiarism control system which is used in Latvia University.

### **Long-term recommendations**

In order to ensure the efficacy Quality Assurance System implementation it is necessary to develop the use of the established policies and procedures to ensure the quality of higher education.

Development of the activities of all study program councils is necessary.

To develop internal information exchange between different levels of management of Colleague.

Ensure information and results exchange with relevant stakeholders, such as students and teachers.

To promote the mobility of students and teachers within the ERASMUS and Nordplus networks.

## **II. "Medicine " ASSESSMENT**

### **II. "Medicine " ASSESSMENT**

#### **1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme**



## Analysis

The Physician's Assistant obtains the 1st level professional higher education with the qualification (LKI) level 5. Admission to the programme is ensured for persons who have a secondary education and Vocational secondary education and the qualification of Physician Assistant (Paramedic) education.

Aims and objectives of the study programme comply and seek to obtain the education of a physician's assistant and to develop competences, which would ensure preparation of competent and professional specialists, fostering improvement of efficiency of the national health care programme and the health system.

The physician's assistant ensures preparation of first level professional higher education medical practitioners, a very important job in the health care framework, including professional theoretical and practical knowledge and skills.

The study program "Medicine" consists of three programs with different qualifications - Qualification "Physician Assistant", Qualification "Physician Assistant in Emergency Care" and Qualification "Physician Assistant in Ambulatory Care". On the one hand, these programs provide a good possibility to equalise the levels of education in the professional environment in the field of human resources for health care, but on the other hand, programs allow the possibility to specialise in two fields, which is very necessary in the light of the historical aspects of human resources education in health care and the need to provide a high-quality health care service.

Consequently, the awarded degree and qualifications correspond to the programme's code and title and qualification is in accordance with the current legislation.

The aims, objectives of the study programs are strongly linked with the LU RMK Development strategy priorities and clearly reflect the contents' scope and also professional impact of the programme. Student-centred approach and principles are integrated in the formulation of the study results (learning outcomes) according to the conventional best practises, as well as are visible in the various teaching and assessment methods which allows, helps and encourages students to develop the envisaged respective skills and competences.

## Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

The interrelation of the analysed StP elements - name, degree, professional qualifications, the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, and admission requirements - is strong, which is the result of the awareness of their importance

Strengths:

- 1.The aims, objectives are strongly linked with the LU RMK Development strategy priorities.
- 2.Learning outcomes are formulated in the student-centred approach according to the conventional best practises and are integrated in the various teaching and assessment methods of the study courses.

Weaknesses:

None

## 2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

### Analysis

The descriptions of the study courses, the traineeship, and the final thesis generally comply with the provisions set forth in the regulatory enactments and the needs of health care, the aim of the study program and the qualification to be obtained. Study course descriptions are well prepared, study course descriptions contain all necessary information indicated in the Law of Higher education. From

study course descriptions students can obtain information about what types of knowledge check they will have in the study course, what topics will be discussed and learnt in each lesson. These descriptions are available in Moodle and provide all the necessary information about the study course. Traineeship is organised by LU RMC and is based on mutual agreements with enterprises. Practical training in health care and medical institutions consists of 48% -50% of the study process, based on the tasks and requirements set in the professional standard. The tasks and goals of the practical training, as well as the course of the practical training and the principles of evaluation are defined in the description of the respective study course, they are reflected in the practical training report (practical training documentation) and the practical training supervisor's evaluation

LU RMC have created methodological guidelines on how to record the work (information confirmed from students). Students are encouraged to contact their qualification work supervisor as soon as possible and start work on their final thesis. Study courses, traineeships and possible final theses are conducted in accordance with state legislation

Final theses reflect the choice of the theme associated with the selected qualifications and current developments in the labour market - the qualification "Physician Assistant" themes of physician assistant general practice / performance are more selected and approved, while for the qualification of "Physician assistant in Emergency Care" directly are linked with emergency situations in pre-hospital phase, physician assistant actions / tactics.

LU RMC studies regulations define the criteria, forms and terms of students' knowledge assessment and requirements for achieving study results. Descriptions of the study courses clearly define requirements for the commencement of studies, goals and planned learning outcomes, outline the content necessary for achieving learning outcomes, a study calendar, compulsory and additional literature, and other sources of information, describe organisation and tasks of students' independent work, define criteria for evaluation of learning outcomes and performance evaluation. The criteria, conditions and methods published in the course descriptions are used to assess the results achieved by the students, and are applied consistently. There is a developed principle of summing up positive achievements by summing up the positive study achievements in the study course, which is incorporated in the description of the study course. Student evaluations are formed in summary: the teaching staff evaluates the students' achievements during the whole study course and the evaluations obtained in the mid-term examinations make up on average 50% of the total evaluation, the rest is the evaluation obtained in the exam / test. The final assessment of study courses takes into account all the tasks performed during the semester, additional points obtained, activity, independent work and the quality of presentations. Demonstration of skills and competences in situation simulation tasks. Ability to make decisions and draw conclusions under conditions of heightened tension.

In order to ensure the objectivity of the evaluation and compliance with the achieved results, as well as the requirements of the labour market, the representation of employers' representatives in the qualification examination and individual assessment of the student's knowledge, skills and competencies by the practical training supervisors (potential employers) at the end of each practical training period is organised.

After each course students are required to answer a survey which provides an overall evaluation of assessment methods, organisation of the study process, lecture work and student involvement. To ensure the quality of the study program students are encouraged and reminded to fill in course evaluation surveys, but it is not clear from the information received from students and graduates that they are participating in the questionnaire and how they provide the necessary information

Students are involved in LU RMC council, their opinions have been taken into account for improving the study process at that level, however the Study committee of the program last year did not work properly.

There is a system developed at LU RMC of internal documentation and selection procedures for organisation of mobility. The Head of the Program, together with the Erasmus Coordinator, annually reviews and updates the opportunities for cooperation, as not all partner universities have equivalent programs. This is a weak point in the organisation of mobility, as only a few countries have suitable study programs. However there is a possibility to organise practical training and LU RMC students have completed practical training in the Czech Republic, Greece, Denmark, Bulgaria, Germany, Lithuania, Portugal, where there was possibility to achieve aims and objectives of traineeship of the study program.

Good possibilities for the students are short-term mobility activities which are related to students' participation in intensive course programs. The amount of acquired knowledge is 2 CP / 3 ECTS and is recognized as an optional study course.

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

Overall, descriptions regarding all parts of the Study program are high quality and fully comply with the provisions set forth in the regulatory enactments. Content is in line with learning outcomes and industry needs and trends. Study implementation methods are adequate and feedback from students taken into account although lack of motivation of students in answering surveys may jeopardise the process. Good system regarding mobility processes but there are difficulties to find suitable study programs.

Strengths:

1. Good studies regulations system.
2. Great involvement of employers and regional stakeholders in the programme design and for provisions of traineeships.

Weaknesses:

1. Lack of equivalent study programs for mobility
2. Outgoing mobility is conducted mostly during traineeship.
3. No plagiarism tools are used for study quality control

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

#### **Analysis**

During the site visit LU RMC management informed us that all theoretical lectures are held on site at LU RMC or during the remote study period on MS teams platform. On the premises, students have lecture halls, auditoriums equipped with all necessary equipment for organising lectures, even international ones or one specific lecture hall with interactive board for organising conferences. Students also have access to the library resources: paper books, EBSCO database, periodicals in Latvian such as "Doctus", "Latvijas Ārsts", "European Journal of Emergency medicine" etc. All online resources are available from home as well, students have to verify their identity to databases by writing personalised passwords that are issued by the library. Most of the additional databases, journals are either open access or for trial time. Experts were surprised by the fact that the college can not access Latvian universities (LU) library resources. To save funds and widen the knowledge base LU RMC council should consider opening a dialogue for obtaining access to LU resources. Most of the lecture, practice, methodological materials are available in the Moodle system, which is widely used by students and academic staff members. It would appear that these materials are enough for passing the examination and students there can do tests, upload assignments etc. Unfortunately there is no official mechanism for checking plagiarism in tests, exams, assignments or final theses. Academic staff rely on personal gut feeling about the quality of the thesis. Also some inconsistencies

were indicated regarding plagiarism detection, while higher management said that there have not been any cases of detected plagiarism in the last 2-3 years, academic staff could provide some examples on plagiarism even for final thesis. Meanwhile students stated that LU RMC checks the plagiarism but does not know how it is checked. Practical lessons are organised as much as possible on site taking into account all current epidemiological restrictions. Regarding the practical training LU RMC in recent years with the help of the European Regional Development Fund co-financed project "Modernization and concentration of resources" have purchased a lot of new equipment which is used in the study process. For example physician assistants now have several simulation laboratories : Laboratory of Emergency Medicine, Intensive Care, Surgery and Traumatology; Child and woman health care simulation laboratory; Internal medicine and patient care simulation laboratory. Each of the laboratories contain mannequins, all necessary equipment for simulating injuries, pathologies, emergency and intensive care. In most of the situations students can also train on juvenile simulations not only on adults. Usually practical lessons are organised in small groups where students simulate certain situations that have to be resolved and from the dark room academic staff can monitor and check how well students are working during the assignment. Available literature resources, methodological materials are sufficient to help achieve study course learning outcomes and write qualification work. Practical laboratories are well developed and create prerequisites for gaining knowledge to start traineeships. All infrastructure and material technical base is sufficient to meet the task set by the study programme : provide competitive education that meets the first level of professional higher education, professional standards and international standards.

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

Premises, infrastructure of the college can provide students with the necessary knowledge and skill set to start traineeships and enter the labour market. Programmes are focusing on providing students with real-life experience as much as possible. Unfortunately some of the infrastructure that can be provided by LU is not available to the students.

Strengths:

1. Infrastructure for providing practical lessons has been renewed. Clinical practice laboratories are at high quality to simulate real life situations.
2. Good collaboration with clinical practice places

Weaknesses:

1. Limited library resources without direct collaboration with LU
2. No plagiarism detection tools

## **4. Teaching Staff**

### **Analysis**

Study program "Medicine" in LU RMC has currently 38 lecturers involved in the implementation of the program as well as practice supervisors, who do not hold an employment position in the RMC. The teaching staff is changing due to different reasons: elections of the staff members, retirement, personal reasons. To ensure the quality of the study program, the college maintains the approach that a specific study course is managed by the leading specialist in the field, and this is done by the election of a person who is most suitable for the position. Currently (at the beginning of the academic year 2021/2022), 15 out of 38 teaching staff in the study programme "Medicine" are elected academic staff.

Another strategy of the LU RMC to ensure quality teaching is to grow young specialists in the field and recruit young graduates. Unfortunately, they are not numerous. Therefore, several courses (in internal medicine, intensive care, emergency medicine, surgery, obstetrics, ophthalmology, psychiatry and other clinical disciplines, as well as outpatient settings), are subject to frequent changes of teaching staff.

In accordance with Section 39 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the staff members that are involved in the implementation of the study program in professional study profile subjects have been elected considering the requirements and work tasks approved by the LU RMC Council. Several principles are observed in the selection of teaching staff: professional activity in a certain field (priority is given to practising specialists), research and pedagogical activity, cooperation with leading companies, organisations, activity in professional public organisations. General study courses are led by specialists of the respective field, and the specialty related study courses are led by doctors of that speciality (surgeons, obstetricians-gynaecologists, paediatricians, etc.) and nurses. It is recommended that more physician assistants be involved in the implementation of the study program. If a teacher is accepted without election, then they have to have a minimum of 7-8 years experience in the profession. The teaching staff is young and rapidly acquires necessary skills and knowledge in IT methods, important in delivering the knowledge and testing the learning achievements. This was shown in the Covid-19 pandemic, when a part of the teaching had to move to distant mode.

The teaching staff is actively participating in scientific research and this involvement is visible at both national and international levels by the numbers of published research articles and participation at international conferences in Latvia and abroad. The list of all the events is provided in the annex Teachers research activities.docx. The topics of the research are associated with the field of studies; therefore, the information obtained is used in the study process. The gained scientific research experience is applied in scientific research and guiding the students in the development of scientific and qualification papers in accordance with the latest trends in the European Union, paying attention to both professional aspects and interdisciplinary and inter-institutional research. In addition to scientific research, the academic staff is elaborating teaching methodology and makes suggestions to the management on how to enhance the study process. Each year, International activities are stepped up through participation in ERASMUS+ and 4 NORDPLUS projects, and two-three additional NORDPLUS applications being submitted.

LU RMC implements a well-thought-out personnel selection and generation policy. The elected academic staff works in the advisory and decision-making institutions of the LU RMC, implementing good practice, supporting colleagues and students. The professional competence of the teaching staff corresponds to the specifics and content of the study courses. The main mechanism for ensuring appropriate competence is the selection of teachers based on documents certifying education. Because of close cooperation between the administration and the teaching staff, it is possible to successfully implement the process approach, make decisions quickly and with less administrative resources and ensure quick response to challenges. The teaching staff of the study program, because of successful individual cooperation and in cooperation with the management of the study program and study field, has improved the content of study courses. Teaching done by one teacher in a few subjects allows insight of what is studied and, therefore, there is no duplication of study course content and methods. According to the provided annex II.3.2 indicating the basic information about the teaching staff involvement in the implementation of the study field, it is obvious that the same person may be involved.

## **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

Strengths:

1. The passionate and highly qualified academic staff members who are devoted, young and ambitious.
2. Elections of the teaching staff members contribute to improvement of study courses, because the contract lasts for 6 years and the elected teachers ensure the continuity of the development of study programs.

Weaknesses:

1. The frequent changes in the teaching staff members, and the non-elected status of a certain part of the staff members.

## 5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Medicine "

### Requirements

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Diploma complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued

III.1.14.PIELIKUMS.docx

2. Documents confirming that the higher education institution/ college will provide the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in another study programme or at another higher education institution/ college (a contract with another accredited higher education institution/ college), in case the implementation of the study programme is discontinued.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Annex: file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/Apliecinajums%20 par%20programs%20 realizacija.pdf

3. Document confirming that the higher education institution/ college guarantees to the students a compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the licence of the study programme is revoked due to the actions of the higher education institution/ college (actions or failure to act) and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Annex:

<https://eplatforma.aika.lv/index.php?r=expert%2Fstudy-direction-programs%2Fannex-view&id=1290&spid=2133>

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Annex : doc00300120211004152539.pdf

Certification of the knowledge of the state language.docx

Riga Medical College of the University of Latvia director confirms that academic staff members involved in the study process have a sufficient level in the Latvian language.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Study agreement complies with all necessary legislation requirements. See annex: III.1.13.PIELIKUMS.

- 9 9. The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 56.1, Paragraph two and Section 56.2, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The study program is implemented in Latvian language, therefore, all the study materials are prepared in the state language.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The study program Physician assistant complies with the professional standard, and completion of the study program leads to professional qualification. "Physician assistant in ambulatory care "and"Physician assistant in Emergency Care" professional standard is not yet defined, but competencies correspond to the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 268 "Regulations regarding the Competence of Medical Practitioners and Students Acquiring First or Second Level Professional Higher Medical Education Programs in Medical Practice and the Amount of Theoretical and Practical Knowledge of These Persons"

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

This study programme complies with the State academic education standard and is in accordance with law of Cabinet of ministers No. 141. See annex: ANNEX III.1. 2.

- 13 13. The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 551, Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education (if applicable).

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

- 14 14. Each member of the academic staff has either publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years, including international editions (if they have worked for a shorter period of time, the number of publications shall be in proportion to the work period), or artistic creation achievements (for instance, exhibitions, films, theatre performances, and concert activity), or a five-year practical work experience (except for the experience in the implementation of the study programme) in accordance with the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

II.4.1. annex List of lecturers' publications, patents, artistic innovative works for the reporting period .docx

- 15 R5 - Overall rating

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All applicable requirements are fulfilled and necessary documentation is provided and is in accordance with state legislation.

## **Requirements (R6-R8)**

- 1 R6 - The compliance of the 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 ensuring the achievement of the learning outcomes.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Library resources, laboratories on the premises of the College, financial provision and cooperation with the Health care industry ensures that students can achieve learning outcomes set by study programmes.

- 2 R7 - The compliance of the qualification of the academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments.



**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The qualification of the teaching staff complies with the conditions of the implementation of the study program "Medicine", based on the information on ANNEX III.1. 10..docx and Macibspeku CV.zip

- 3 R8 - The study programme leading to the master or doctoral degree is based on the advances and findings in the relevant field of science or artistic creation.

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

**Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

The study program "Medicine" consists of three programs with different qualifications – Qualification "Physician Assistant", Qualification "Physician Assistant in Emergency Care" and Qualification "Physician Assistant in Ambulatory Care". The aims, objectives of the study programs are strongly linked with the LU RMK Development strategy priorities and clearly reflect the contents` scope and also professional impact of the programme. Overall, descriptions regarding all parts of the study programme are high quality and fully comply with the provisions set forth in the regulatory enactments. Content is in line with learning outcomes and industry needs and trends. Student-centred approach and principles are integrated in the formulation of the study results (learning outcomes) according to the conventional best practises, as well as are visible in the various teaching and assessment methods which allows, helps and encourages students to develop the envisaged respective skills and competences. The tasks and goals of the practical training, as well as the course of the practical training and the principles of evaluation are defined in the description of the respective study course are reflected.

In order to ensure the objectivity of the evaluation and compliance with the achieved results, as well as the requirements of the labour market, the representation of employers' representatives in the qualification examination and individual assessment of the student's knowledge, skills and competencies by the practical training supervisors (potential employers) at the end of each practical training period is organised. Study implementation methods are adequate and feedback from students taken into account although lack of motivation of students in answering surveys may jeopardise the process.

Good possibilities for the students are short-term mobility activities which are related to students' participation in intensive course programmes.

Available literature resources, methodological materials are sufficient to help achieve study programme learning outcomes and write qualification work. Practical laboratories are well developed and create prerequisites for gaining knowledge to start traineeships. All infrastructure and material technical base are sufficient to meet the task set by the study programme: provide competitive education that meets the first level of professional higher education, professional standards and international standards.

Premises, infrastructure of the college can provide students with the necessary knowledge and skill set to start traineeships and enter the labour market. Programmes are focusing on providing students with real-life experience as much as possible.

**Evaluation of the study programme "Medicine "**

Evaluation of the study programme:

Excellent

**6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Medicine "**

## Short-term recommendations

To ensure the work of the Council of the study program.

## Long-term recommendations

To promote the mobility of students and teachers within the ERASMUS and Nordplus networks. There are many corporate agreements with other HEIs in Lithuania, Finland, Bulgaria, etc. that need to be used. The lack of equivalent study programs for mobility is understandable, but some countries do.

To promote academic personal sustainability in the college for the program to prevent long-term staff turnover.

To include in the academic staff specialists who have obtained the qualification of a physician assistant.

## II. "Massage and Hydrotherapy" ASSESSMENT

### II. "Massage and Hydrotherapy" ASSESSMENT

#### 1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

##### Analysis

First level professional higher education study programme Massage and Hydrotherapy (Education classification code 41722) is a full time study programme held only in the Latvian language. Study programme duration is two years ( 4 semesters) and total Latvian CP amount awarded is 80 which equals 120 ECTS. Qualification that can be obtained after graduation - massage therapist. Since there is no qualification for the hydrotherapy part, after graduation students can not legally practise hydrotherapy. That is why the experts team advise LU RMC to change the study programme name to just "Massage", because "Massage and Hydrotherapy" currently is misleading potential students since they can not acquire any degree or qualification in hydrotherapy. The programme syllabus can stay the same because students have the possibility to learn the basics of hydrotherapy which widens knowledge of the students regarding massage techniques. Study programme graduates are demanded in health care enterprises, especially in rehabilitation, it has been mentioned for example in the informative report "On the Implementation of Health Reform Measures in 2019". Study programme aims, objectives, learning outcomes are interrelated. They are based on the professional standard for massage and state legislation. Admission requirements are Secondary or professional Secondary education, all applicants are reviewed in accordance with college admission regulations. Since there is no entrance exam, the study programme is open to all applicants who wish to study massage, this requirement is moderate. Study results after finishing each study course and study programme correspond to 5th level of the Latvian Qualification Framework.

#### Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses

Aims, objectives and study outcomes are well defined, interrelated and achievable. Study programme complies with all necessary state legislation. Qualification awarded complements study programme syllabus regarding classical massage. Students after graduation are prepared for entering the labour market.

Strengths:

1. Students beside massage study courses have the possibility to learn basics about hydrotherapy.

Weaknesses:

1. The study programme name may be misleading potential students.

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

### **Analysis**

Study course descriptions are well prepared, information indicated in them is unambiguous. Study course descriptions contain all the necessary information indicated in the Law of Higher education. From study course descriptions students can obtain information about what type of knowledge they will gain in the study course, what topics will be discussed and learnt in each lesson. These descriptions are available in Moodle and provide all necessary information about the study course. Traineeship is organised by LU RMC and is based on mutual agreements with enterprises. Students have a list of certain tasks and manipulations that they have to learn during the internship and report that. Traineeship is regulated by publicly available documents in the LU RMC website : Prakses nolikums. For creating the final thesis (qualification work) LU RMC have created methodological guidelines on how to write the work ( information confirmed from students). Students are encouraged to contact their qualification work supervisor and start work on the work as soon as possible. Study courses, traineeships and final thesis are conducted in accordance with state legislation. Study programme consists of 80 CP from which 56 CP are dedicated to study courses ( 20 CP for general study courses and 36 CP for specialisation; these courses also include elective part), the rest of CP are allocated to traineeship 16 CP; creating qualification work 8 CP. The allocation of CP is in accordance with law of Cabinet of Ministers No. 141. During the site meeting students and alumni were very satisfied with the level of knowledge and skills that LU RMC provides in the massage and hydrotherapy study programme. The content of the study programme is relevant and complements the goal of the study programme - to prepare specialists, who are medical practitioners and are using different types of massage techniques. For example additional value to the study programme is added with introduction in hydrotherapy. Nevertheless students after graduation can not practise hydrotherapy. But introduction to other techniques is commendable. Study programme tasks and results are based on professional standards. Masseuse are indeed needed health care specialists especially in patients rehabilitation (SAR section III 2.1.). Graduates and students confirmed that they have multiple choices where to work and have the possibility to combine different jobs.

Study processes are regulated by several LU RMC internal documents (Annex 1.1. pielikums.docx). The largest part of actual contact hours is spent on developing students' practical skills. As students during discussions said - "the best way to learn massage is to actually do it by your own hands". They have the possibility to learn and practise techniques on each other and reserve a certain room for training after official lesson time. Staff are working on creating methodological materials for different massage techniques. Students and graduates described available materials as valuable. All equipment and materials- essential oils, creams etc. are available for students. Theoretical knowledge is checked via different tests that consist of open type, multiple choice, fill in the gaps tasks. Based on the study course students have a certain time and amount of times how often they can try to pass the test/exam. The downside for this is that there are no plagiarism detection tools and academic staff members can not be sure that students have not leaked questions. Students are evaluated with marks ranging from 1-10. All mistakes after examination can be discussed with staff members. After learning the basics of theoretical and practical knowledge students during the internship show how they examine patients, how they work with patients, and receive feedback from supervisors in the traineeship place. Students are involved in LU RMC council, their opinions have been taken into account for improving the study process. College has taken into account that the

majority of students have to combine work with full time studies.

After each study course students have the possibility to participate in study course evaluation. There they can express opinions about study course implementation methods, syllabus itself etc. LU RMC could not provide exact statistics on the percentage as to how many students participated in study course evaluation. After finishing studies students receive the "Big survey" which covers whole study programme implementation, students can suggest improvements for study programme with this survey. The study programme director summarises the questionnaire results and decides if changes to the programme should be implemented. During the site visit, the college provided examples of how the study courses have been updated or changed due to student suggestions. Alumni also have received follow-up surveys regarding their position in the labour market, but no feedback has been provided on what has been taken into account from their surveys. During the discussions employers stated that they have not been participating in surveys, but they could not comment as to whether such surveys have been sent out. They confirmed that they have been addressed orally regarding possible suggestions for the programme or what they as employers expect from students.

Students of this study programme have opportunities to participate in outgoing mobility, but since the programme is very short, some of the students do not take advantage of this possibility. One graduate provided insight on how he underwent clinical practice in Bulgaria. One of the reasons why outgoing mobility is quite low is due to the language barrier of the students, that is why they can mainly participate only in traineeships. This is supported also by outgoing mobility statistics. In the last accreditation period only 6 students have gone into mobility during the study period, and 35 went to mobility during traineeships. LU RMC prefers short -term visits so it is easier to recognise the CP from mobility. Students also named examples of how they have gone on ERASMUS+ or Nordplus and stated that there were no issues with recognition of CP.

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

Study programme Massage and Hydrotherapy corresponds to Latvian legislative requirements. Study course descriptions, study methods and final work methodology help to achieve learning outcomes and aims of the study programme. Students are involved in the highest LU RMC decision making body and have opportunities to go on mobility which is used mostly during the traineeship. There are procedures for recognising CP of previous experience or learning outcomes.

Strengths:

1. Biggest focus in the study programme is on practice.
2. Programme has additional value because it also includes a small theoretical and practical part in hydrotherapy.
3. Students have a broad list of potential places where to go into mobility.

Weaknesses.

1. Outgoing mobility is conducted mostly during traineeship.
2. No plagiarism tools are used for study quality control.
3. Limited library resources without direct collaboration with LU.

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

#### **Analysis**

Study program Massage and hydrotherapy has no state-funding study places. In the 2020/2021 academic year, the study fee is set at 1200 EUR per year.

During the site visit LU RMC management informed us that all theoretical lectures are held on site at LU RMC or during the remote study period on MS teams platform. On the premises students have lecture halls, auditoriums equipped with all necessary equipment for organising lectures, even international ones or one specific lecture hall with an interactive board for organising conferences. There are several rooms on the premises with all necessary equipment for learning and training massage techniques. During the site visit we were also introduced to an underwater massage bath, which was bought specially to learn and introduce the basics of hydrotherapy. There is a lack of other opportunities to acquire more extensive and deeper hydrotherapy, according to the description of the hydrotherapy as separate physical medicine technology approved in Latvia. They have agreements with other medical centres where students can learn and gain experience regarding hydrotherapy. In some basic study courses, the teaching staff can use other program laboratories. There are sufficient technical material resources for teaching in the college (ANNEX III.2.12. Information on resources) LU RMC has many partners for students' clinical practice places. The organisation of Clinical practice has specific regulations (ANNEX III.2.1. Regulations and documentation of Practical training in the study programme "Massage and Hydrotherapy") The LU RMC library was accredited in 2021, it has been granted the status of library local significance. The library is a structural unit of the College and operates in accordance with an internal regulation. The library provides access to EBSCO databases. Students and faculty can use open-access databases, for example, PubMed and other electronic resources. The library has not had a direct link to the LU library. The college has developed a support system for students. The program has graduates with vision disabilities.

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

Study program Massage and hydrotherapy has no state-funded study places. The infrastructure resources and the material and technical provision are modern. There are sufficient technical material resources for teaching in the college and this program has many partners for students' clinical practice places. The college has developed a support system for students with disabilities.

Strengths:

1. The infrastructure resources and the material and technical provision are modern and sufficient.
2. Good cooperation with clinical practice places.
3. Support system for students with disabilities.

Weaknesses:

1. Not fully equipped for hydrotherapy teaching except underwater massage
2. No state funded study places for this study programme

## **4. Teaching Staff**

### **Analysis**

In accordance with Section 39 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the staff members that are involved in the implementation of the study program in professional study profile subjects have been elected considering the requirements and work tasks approved by the LU RMC Council. Several principles are observed in the selection of teaching staff: professional activity in a certain field (priority is given to practising specialists), research and pedagogical activity, cooperation with

leading companies, organisations, activity in professional public organisations. Most academic staff in the Massage and Hydrotherapy study program have a medical doctor's degree, but the management could also consider involvement of more physiotherapists or massage therapists.

According to Articles 39 and 40 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, taking into account the need to acquire practical skills and knowledge, a person with higher education without a scientific doctor's degree or without a professional doctor's degree in arts may hold the position of assistant professor, lecturer and assistant in professional study program profile subjects. Also, the potential candidate must have sufficient practical work experience corresponding to the subject to be taught. Lecturers and assistants, who do not have a scientific or academic degree need five years of practical work experience corresponding to the subject to be taught. The compliance of the teaching staff qualification with the conditions for the implementation of the study program "Massage and Hydrotherapy" is provided in the Table III.2.17

Most of the lecturers employed in teaching Massage and Hydrotherapy continue to work in clinics, follow scientific trends and conduct their own research. During the reporting period, lecturers of the Massage and Hydrotherapy study program have participated in both local and global conferences / scientific events with reports, lectures, poster presentations (lecturers' CVs). In this field they often work with college students. The results of the teaching staff scientific activity is provided in the publications' list of the teaching staff in Annex III.2.13. By participating in various conferences and events, the teaching staff gets an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the technologies, to improve their pedagogical and public speaking skills, presentation creation and presentation skills. Information provided in the annex III.2. 9.PIELIKUMS. Mācībspēku CV, proves the proficiency of foreign languages (English and German) at B2-C1 levels of majority of the staff members. This enables the teachers to constantly update their knowledge in the framework of the study program and the delivered courses and use the information in the study process.

At LU RMC, 24 teachers are involved in the Massage and Hydrotherapy programme. This programme tries to attract the best specialists - teachers, as well as scientists. During the study process, the best options for cooperation between lecturers and students are sought, for example, one study course is taught by several lecturers. In order to create a greater connection between study subjects, the study course is read by those working in a hospital environment, rehabilitation centres and self-employed professionals. The practical training is performed at several facilities, enabling the students to practise the technique in the framework of care of different patients, i.e. adults and children. The cooperation between the teaching staff for the improvement of study program courses may be observed in the following example of activities. Every year, teachers of anatomy and physiology offer the students study tours to the Pathology Centre, the laboratory of the Latvian Olympic Unit, as well as to the National Library. In the study course Masseur Organisation, in order to promote faster students' understanding of work organisation in Latvia, the organisation of practical training was started, visiting various massage therapy practice places - private practises, rehabilitation centres, SPA centres, etc.

## **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

The teaching staff members at LU RMC are with high qualification that complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme.

Strengths:

1. Highly qualified, energetic and passionate teaching staff.

Weaknesses:

1. Most academic staff in the Massage and Hydrotherapy study program have a medical doctor's degree, but the management could also consider involvement of more physiotherapists or massage therapists.

## **5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Massage and Hydrotherapy"**

### **Requirements**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Diploma complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued. Annex 2.10. PIELIKUMS

2. Documents confirming that the higher education institution/ college will provide the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in another study programme or at another higher education institution/ college (a contract with another accredited higher education institution/ college), in case the implementation of the study programme is discontinued.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The Annex : Apliecinājums par iespēju turpināt izglītību citā augstskolā\_koledžā.pdf confirms, that students will be able to continue studies in Latvian universities P.Stradiņa college in the same study programme.

3. Document confirming that the higher education institution/ college guarantees to the students a compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the licence of the study programme is revoked due to the actions of the higher education institution/ college (actions or failure to act) and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Annex : apliecinājums par kompensāciju.pdf confirms that Riga Medical College of the University of Latvia will compensate students in case the study programme is not accredited or the licence of study programme is revoked.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Annex : doc00300120211004152539.pdf

Riga Medical College of the University of Latvia director confirms that academic staff members involved in the study process have a sufficient level in the Latvian language.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The Study agreement was shown to experts during the site visit and it complies with all necessary legislation requirements.

- 9 9. The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 56.1, Paragraph two and Section 56.2, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All study course descriptions have been very carefully developed. Examples can be found in annex: III.2.8..docx.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Study programme complies with professional standard (<https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-149.pdf>) all requirements of the standard are covered by different study courses during the study process, precise requirement can be found in annex: III.2.5..docx

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant



This study programme complies with the State academic education standard and is in accordance with law of Cabinet of ministers No. 141. Study programme is 80 CP, 70% of the study programme consists of study courses ,the rest of CP is dedicated for practise and qualification work.

- 13 13. The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 551, Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education (if applicable).

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

- 14 14. Each member of the academic staff has either publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years, including international editions (if they have worked for a shorter period of time, the number of publications shall be in proportion to the work period), or artistic creation achievements (for instance, exhibitions, films, theatre performances, and concert activity), or a five-year practical work experience (except for the experience in the implementation of the study programme) in accordance with the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Each academic staff member involved in the study process has professional experience in the specific field or publications in the last six years. See in annexes: Mācībspēku publikācijas.docx and Studiju virziena macibspeku CV.zip

- 15 R5 - Overall rating

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All applicable requirements are fulfilled and necessary documentation is provided and is in accordance with state legislation.

## Requirements (R6-R8)

- 1 R6 - The compliance of the 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 ensuring the achievement of the learning outcomes.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

LU RMC has good laboratories for learning practical skills with all the necessary equipment for masseurs. They have premises and infrastructure for implementing theoretical knowledge as well. Since hydrotherapy is a small part of the study programme current infrastructure can provide basic knowledge about hydrotherapy to achieve learning outcomes. The on-site library at LU RMC can provide students with all necessary literature to finish their studies and qualification work, but access to LU library would be beneficial.

- 2 R7 - The compliance of the qualification of the academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The qualifications of the academic staff members is provided in annexes: Mācībspēku

publikācijas.docx and Studiju virziena macībspeku CV.zip; and they are in the compliance with the conditions for the implementation of the study program.

- 3 R8 - The study programme leading to the master or doctoral degree is based on the advances and findings in the relevant field of science or artistic creation.

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

First level professional higher education study programme "Massage and Hydrotherapy" is a full-time study programme held only in the Latvian language. Study programme duration is two years (4 semesters) and total Latvian CP amount awarded is 80 which equals 120 ECTS. Study programme Massage and hydrotherapy has no state-funded study places. Qualification that can be obtained after graduation - massage specialist. Since there is no qualification for the hydrotherapy, after graduation students can not legally practise hydrotherapy.

Aims, objectives and study outcomes are well defined, interrelated and achievable. They are based on the professional standard for massage and state legislation.

The largest part of actual contact hours is spent on developing students' practical skills. The infrastructure resources and the material and technical provision are modern. There are sufficient technical material resources for teaching massage in the college but there are limited resources for hydrotherapy training according to the description of the hydrotherapy as separate physical medicine technology approved in Latvia. Hydrotherapy includes a broader field than underwater massage. After learning the basics of theoretical and practical knowledge students during the internship show how they examine patients, how they work with patients, and receive feedback from supervisors in the traineeship place. The program has many partners for students' clinical practice places.

Study course descriptions, study methods and final work methodology help to achieve learning outcomes and aims of the study programme. Students have opportunities to go on mobility which is used mostly during the traineeship. There are procedures for recognising CP of previous experience or learning outcomes. Students after graduation are prepared for entering the labour market.

The teaching staff members at LU RMC hold high qualifications that comply with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme however most academic staff in the Massage and Hydrotherapy study programme have a medical doctor's degree, and there is necessity to consider involvement of more physiotherapists or massage therapists.

All relevant criteria for this study programme is met. It complies with legislation set in Cabinet of ministers No. 141.

Strengths.

1. No specific strengths.

Weaknesses.

1. Study programme name is misleading students about hydrotherapy, since they can not legally practise hydrotherapy after graduation.
2. There are no state-funded study places for this study programme. More students are needed for the study programme to be profitable.
3. Students have a broad list of potential places, for example in Lithuania, Finland, Bulgaria, Sweden where to go into mobility but outgoing mobility is conducted mostly for traineeship.
4. Most academic staff in the Massage and Hydrotherapy study programme have a medical doctor's degree, but the management could also consider involvement of more physiotherapists or massage

therapists.

## **Evaluation of the study programme "Massage and Hydrotherapy"**

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

## **6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Massage and Hydrotherapy"**

### **Short-term recommendations**

Reconsider study programme name Massage and Hydrotherapy change only to massage, because current programme name is misleading potential students, since they can not legally practise Hydrotherapy after graduation.

### **Long-term recommendations**

Long term: Promoting the mobility of students and teachers within the ERASMUS and Nordplus networks There are many corporate agreements with other HEIs in Lithuania, Finland, Bulgaria, etc. that need to be used.

To involve academic staff in the Massage and Hydrotherapy study programme only with medical doctor's degree, but also consider involvement of more physiotherapists or massage therapists and other field specialists.

## **II. "Dispensing optician" ASSESSMENT**

### **II. "Dispensing optician" ASSESSMENT**

#### **1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme**

##### **Analysis**

The study programme obtains a 1st level professional higher education with the qualification (LKI) level 5. Admission to the programme is ensured for persons who have a secondary education or vocational secondary education, which is confirmed by a certificate of general secondary education or a diploma of vocational secondary education.

The study programme for Dispensing Opticians covers two years ( 4 semesters) and total Latvian CP amount awarded is 80 which equals 120 ECTS with the students in attendance for three days each week, the remaining two days being spent in practice. It leads to a diploma in Dispensing Optics. No diplomas have yet been issued since the course began only two years ago and the first full time course has been completed. The learning outcome enables the Dispensing Optician to work in an optical practice, assisting patients by dispensing (choosing lenses and frames, measuring faces to obtain the optimum fit and ordering and checking the spectacles) and also for assembling spectacles by edging uncut lenses to fit into an empty frame.

The program is developed in accordance with the Dispensing Optician profession standard (profession code 325402, fourth level of professional qualification). The goals of the study program are set in accordance with the tasks of the professional activity of a dispensing optician defined in the Professional Standard.

The aims, objectives of the study programs are strongly linked with the LU RMK Development strategy priorities and clearly reflects the contents` scope and also professional impact of the

programme.

## **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

The Dispensing Opticians' course is unique in Latvia. The profession has realised that a properly qualified person is necessary to fulfil the roles mentioned above and supports the course by sending students and donating up-to-date equipment to the department. The students benefit from the knowledge acquired and can apply it in practice.

Admission at present is mainly by selection of personnel from existing optical practises whose employers feel will obtain benefit from the course and prove to be future assets to the practice. As the role of the dispensing optician becomes more widely known it will become known as an excellent career.

Strengths:

1. The "On-the-job" training which the course provides enables the students to learn the theory and apply it immediately in practice to reinforce their understanding of their chosen sphere of work.
2. The qualifications and practical experience of the teaching staff offer real-life education in the study field.
3. Access to the most up-to-date instrumentation for the manufacture and measurement of spectacles.

Weaknesses:

1. The small number of students in this initial course means that the department requires financial support from the College in equipping the two dedicated laboratory spaces until student numbers provide self-sufficiency.

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

### **Analysis**

The descriptions of the study courses, the traineeship, and the final thesis generally comply with the provisions set forth in the regulatory enactments and the needs of health care, the aim of the study program and the qualification to be obtained. Study course descriptions are well prepared, study course descriptions contain all necessary information indicated in the Law of Higher education. From study course descriptions students can obtain information about what types of knowledge check they will have in the study course, what topics will be discussed and learnt in each lesson. Since the study programme for Dispensing Opticians was developed in conjunction with the University of Latvia and leaders from optical practices it is eminently suitable for the subject area.

LU RMC studies regulations define the criteria, forms and terms of students' knowledge assessment and requirements for achieving study results. Descriptions of the study courses clearly define requirements for the commencement of studies, goals and planned learning outcomes, outline the content necessary for achieving learning outcomes, a study calendar, compulsory and additional literature, and other sources of information, describe organisation and tasks of students' independent work, define criteria for evaluation of learning outcomes and performance evaluation. The criteria, conditions and methods published in the course descriptions are used to assess the results achieved by the students, and are applied consistently. In order to ensure the objectivity of the evaluation and compliance with the achieved results, as well as the requirements of the labour market, the representation of employers' representatives in the qualification examination and individual assessment of the student's knowledge, skills and competencies by the practical training supervisors (potential employers) at the end of each practical training period is organised.

At the end of the course students will be required to answer a survey which provides an overall evaluation of assessment methods, organisation of the study process, lecture work and student involvement. This has not yet been applied since this is the first cohort of students to undertake the course in Dispensing Optics but it is intended to be applied upon completion of the first course at the end of this academic year.

All the students undertaking this first course for Dispensing Opticians are in employment and attend their practises for two days each week for the duration of the course. In discussion with the students they were very complimentary about the support provided by their employers.

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

Strengths:

1. The close cooperation between the teachers from the Optometry Course at the University of Latvia and the Principals of optical practices has ensured that the subject material is of up-to-date and practical use and beneficial to the work of dispensing opticians.
2. The enthusiasm of the teachers on the course was very evident in our discussions with them.
3. Access to modern instrumentation for the manufacture and measurement of spectacles.

Weaknesses:

1. The small number of students in this initial course means that the department requires financial support from the College in equipping the two dedicated laboratory spaces until student numbers provide self-sufficiency.

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

#### **Analysis**

The study programme “Dispensing Optician” is financed from the resources of students’ fees and the college's own income (SAR Annex II 3.1). Annual cost per study place per student in the program “Dispensing optician” is 1549,49 EUR. The required minimum number of students per year is 20, then the program could be rentable. For most students of this study program, support is provided by employers and only some are self-financed. The infrastructure and equipment for dispensing opticians are sufficient, given the small number of students. There is a lot of help from employers. They do not have problems with traineeship places, currently, they have at least 10 internship places, that is more than enough. There are adequately equipped laboratories for a small number of students. Laboratory equipment for the organisation of practical work is provided with everything necessary - for the implementation of general, professional, and specialty courses. The organisation of the laboratory work of the study course “Optical Appliances and Spectacle Assembly”, “Ophthalmic and Optical Instruments” and “Contact Lenses” will be provided in the Optometry Laboratories of the University of Latvia, Faculty of Physics, Mathematics and Optometry (UL FMOF) as agreed in a mutual cooperation agreement, which provides for the conditions of lease of premises, use of machinery and equipment and their implementation. Cooperation is facilitated by the involvement of LU FMOF lecturers in the implementation of the study program. The library is a structural unit of the College and operates in accordance with an internal regulation. The library provides access to EBSCO databases. The library has not had a direct link to the LU library.

### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

Strengths:

1. Close collaboration with employers. The qualifications and practical experience of the teaching

staff offer real-life education in the study field.

Access to the most up-to-date instrumentation for the manufacture and measurement of spectacles.

2. Cooperation with LU.

3. Laboratories with specific equipment.

Weaknesses:

1. No state funding study places for this study programs.

#### **4. Teaching Staff**

##### **Analysis**

There has been no turnover of academic staff in the first two years of this newly instituted course in Dispensing Optics.

In accordance with Section 39 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the staff members that are involved in the implementation of the study program in professional study profile subjects have been elected considering the requirements and work tasks approved by the LU RMC Council. Several principles are observed in the selection of teaching staff: professional activity in a certain field (priority is given to practising specialists), research and pedagogical activity, cooperation with leading companies, organisations, activity in professional public organisations. General study courses are led by specialists of the respective field.

LU RMC implements a well-thought-out personnel selection and generation policy.

##### **Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

Strengths:

1. The course is taught by passionate and well-qualified academic staff.

Weaknesses:

None identified in the teaching staff.

#### **5. Assessment of the Compliance of the Study Programme "Dispensing optician"**

##### **Requirements**

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Diploma complies with the procedure by which state-recognised documents of higher education are issued.

Diploma pielikums.docx

2. Documents confirming that the higher education institution/ college will provide the students with the options to continue the acquisition of education in another study programme or at another higher education institution/ college (a contract with another accredited higher education institution/ college), in case the implementation of the study programme is discontinued.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

There is mutual agreement between the University of Latvia and LU RMC, students of the study

programme "Dispensing Optician" may continue their studies in the study programme "Optometry" at the University of Latvia.

- 3 3. Document confirming that the higher education institution/ college guarantees to the students a compensation for losses if the study programme is not accredited or the licence of the study programme is revoked due to the actions of the higher education institution/ college (actions or failure to act) and the student does not wish to continue the studies in another study programme.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Annex : apliecinājums par kompensāciju.pdf confirms that Riga Medical College of the University of Latvia will compensate students in case the study programme is not accredited or the licence of the study programme is revoked.

Apliecinājums.docx

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Annex : doc00300120211004152539.pdf

Riga Medical College of the University of Latvia director confirms that academic staff members involved in the study process have a sufficient level in the Latvian language.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The Study agreement was shown to experts during the site visit and it complies with all necessary legislation requirements.

- 9 9. The descriptions of the study courses and the study materials have been prepared in all languages in which the study programme is implemented, and they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 56.1, Paragraph two and Section 56.2, Paragraph two of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All study course descriptions have been very carefully developed. Examples can be found in annex: III.2.8..docx.

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Study programme complies with professional standard

(<https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-149.pdf>) all requirements of the standard are covered by different study courses during the study process, precise requirement can be found in annex: III.2.5..docx

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

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

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

This study programme complies with the State academic education standard and is in accordance with law of Cabinet of ministers No. 141. Study programme is 80 CP, 70% of the study programme consists of study courses ,the rest of CP is dedicated for practise and qualification work.

- 13 13. The joint study programmes comply with the requirements prescribed in Section 551, Paragraphs one, two, and seven of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education (if applicable).

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant

- 14 14. Each member of the academic staff has either publications published in reviewed editions within the last six years, including international editions (if they have worked for a shorter period of time, the number of publications shall be in proportion to the work period), or artistic creation achievements (for instance, exhibitions, films, theatre performances, and concert activity), or a five-year practical work experience (except for the experience in the implementation of the study programme) in accordance with the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

Each academic staff member involved in the study process has professional experience in the specific field or publications in the last six years. See in annexes: Mācībspēku publikācijas.docx and Studiju virziena macibspeku CV.zip

- 15 R5 - Overall rating



**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

All applicable requirements are fulfilled and necessary documentation is provided and is in accordance with state legislation.

**Requirements (R6-R8)**

- 1 R6 - The compliance of the 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 ensuring the achievement of the learning outcomes.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

LU RMC has two laboratories for teaching practical skills with all the necessary equipment for dispensing opticians. They also have classrooms and infrastructure for implementing theoretical knowledge.

The on-site library at LU RMC can provide students with some literature to finish their studies and qualification work, but access to LU library should be encouraged.

- 2 R7 - The compliance of the qualification of the academic staff members, visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers, and visiting assistants with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the provisions set out in the respective regulatory enactments.

**Assessment of compliance:** Fully compliant

The qualifications of the academic staff members is provided in annexes: Mācībspēku publikācijas.docx and Studiju virziena macibspeku CV.zip; and they are in the compliance with the conditions for the implementation of the study program.

- 3 R8 - The study programme leading to the master or doctoral degree is based on the advances and findings in the relevant field of science or artistic creation.

**Assessment of compliance:** Not relevant**Conclusions by specifying the strengths and weaknesses**

The Dispensing Opticians' course is unique in Latvia. The profession has realised that a properly qualified person is necessary to fulfil the roles mentioned above and supports the course by sending students and donating up-to-date equipment to the department. The students benefit from the knowledge acquired and can apply it in practice. Admission at present is mainly by selection of personnel from existing optical practices whom their employers feel will benefit from the course and prove to be future assets to the practice. As the role of the dispensing optician becomes more widely known it will become known as an excellent career.

Ways should be considered for making the course more widely known to existing unqualified staff in optical practices and in schools for prospective entrants to the profession.

The number of textbooks in the library for dispensing opticians should be increased. A good example of books available in the English language can be viewed at (and obtained from) the bookshop of The Association of British Dispensing Opticians ([www.abdocollege.org.uk](http://www.abdocollege.org.uk))

**Strengths:**

1. The "On-the-job" training which the course provides enables the students to learn the theory and

apply it immediately in practice to reinforce their understanding of their chosen sphere of work.

2. The qualifications and practical experience of the teaching staff offer real-life education in the study field.

3. Access to the most up-to-date instrumentation for the manufacture and measurement of spectacles.

Weaknesses:

1. The small number of students in this initial course means that the department requires financial support from the College in equipping the two dedicated laboratory spaces until student numbers provide self-sufficiency.

### **Evaluation of the study programme "Dispensing optician"**

Evaluation of the study programme:

Excellent

### **6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Dispensing optician"**

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

1. Consider ways of making the course more widely known to existing unqualified staff in optical practices and in schools for prospective entrants to the profession.

2. Increase the number of textbooks in the library for dispensing opticians. A good example of books available in the English language can be viewed at (and obtained from) the bookshop of The Association of British Dispensing Opticians ([www.abdocollege.org.uk](http://www.abdocollege.org.uk))

#### **Long-term recommendations**

Encourage research into topics relevant to the field of Dispensing Optics.

## **III. Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field and the Relevant Study Programmes**

### **III. Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field and the Relevant Study Programmes**

#### **Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field**

| Requirements  | Requirement Evaluation |                     | Comment  |
|---|------------------------|---------------------|--|
| R1 - Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 21 of the Law on Institutions of Higher Education, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study direction whilst implementing their internal quality assurance systems: |                        | Partially compliant | <p>There are established policies for quality assurance, but the procedures are not enough developed, academic integrity of the student's work, their final work, nor their assignments can be checked for plagiarism in the College. It would be necessary to consider joining inter-university computerized plagiarism control system which is used in University of Latvia .</p> <p>The collection of information from the various parties involved and the feedback should be formalized and used in accordance with the established internal quality system to ensure the monitoring and periodic review of study programs.</p> |
| R2 - The cooperation with different organisations from Latvia and abroad implemented within the study direction ensures the achievement of the aims of the study direction.   | Fully compliant        |                     | <p>LU RMC is actively using mobility networks ( ERASMUS and Nordplus). Locally LU RMC is cooperating with institutions, hospitals, and municipalities in providing students with possible practise places and informing secondary school students and society about health care.</p>   |
| R3 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the development level thereof (if applicable).  | Fully compliant        |                     | <p>LU RMC teaching staff in the Health care study field are actively involved in scientific research projects and creative work. II.4.1. annex List of lecturers' publications, patents, artistic innovative works for the reporting period .docx</p>  |

| Requirements  | Requirement Evaluation     | Comment   |
|---|----------------------------|---|
| <p>R4 - Elimination of the shortcomings and deficiencies identified during the previous assessment of the study direction, if it has been conducted, or the implementation of the provided recommendations.</p> | <p>Partially compliant</p> | <p>Recommendations are partly implemented, for example:</p> <p>-for study programme "Massage and Hydrotherapy" - Improve the foreign language skills of academic staff" the recommendation is marked as fulfilled, noting that 50% of the academic staff have attended the courses, but it would be better to focus on the evaluation of the results to be achieved, for example, to set requirements for achieving a certain level of knowledge. Also, during the visit, the team of experts could not gain confidence in the good English language skills of the staff they met during the visit. This also refers to the recommendation.</p> <p>-for study programme "Massage and Hydrotherapy" - "Ensure cooperation with student representatives and increase the role of student representation in decision-making." According to the information from SAR and other documents, the representation of students in the decision-making is clear, however in meetings with students and graduates, the team of experts were not fully confident about this.</p> <p>Concerning the recommendation "Increasing the number of budget places in cooperation with ministries", it's usually a never-ending process and implementation of the recommendation continues, this understandably cannot be achieved in a short period of time and should realistically be an ongoing process.</p> <p>Relating to the recommendation of the licensing process of study programme "Massage and Hydrotherapy" - recommendations are in ongoing process.</p> |

### Assessment of the Requirements for the Relevant Study Programmes of the Study Field

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Study programme</b>           | <b>R5</b>       | <b>R6</b>       | <b>R7</b>       | <b>R8</b>    | <b>Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)</b> |
|------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|---|
| 1          | Medicine (41721)                 | Fully compliant | Fully compliant | Fully compliant | Not relevant | Excellent   |
| 2          | Massage and Hydrotherapy (41722) | Fully compliant | Fully compliant | Fully compliant | Not relevant | Good  |
| 3          | Dispensing optician (41722)      | Fully compliant | Fully compliant | Fully compliant | Not relevant | Excellent   |

### The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts

There was no disagreement in the expert group on the assessments.