

Expert group joint opinion

Evaluation Procedure: Assessment of Study Field

Higher Education Institution: Daugavpils Medical College of University of Daugavpils

Study field: Social Welfare

Experts:

1. Liga Rasnaca (Chair of the Experts Group)
2. Rudi Jacques Maria Roose (Secretary of the Experts Group)
3. Mare Ainsaar
4. Marta Viļuma (Student Union of Latvia)
5. Pēteris Leiškalns (Employers' Confederation of Latvia)

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

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The necessity to establish Daugavpils Medical College of University of Daugavpils (further in text - DU DMC, College, HEI) in the region at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries was also determined by changes in the recruitment of new specialists to specific positions. Latgale was acutely experiencing the shortage of new specialists, with modern knowledge and practical skills. Those who received their education in the capital of the country or abroad very rarely returned to Latgale. However, thanks to its rapid and comprehensive development, DU DMC has adapted to meet the needs of the region in line with labour market development forecasts, and has become not only the largest Latgale Medical College, but also an important and competitive vocational education centre on the Latvian border.

Based on the Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 495 of September 13, 2017 "On the reorganization of Daugavpils Medical College", on March 1, 2018 DMC was reorganized and changed its legal status. Currently, the College operates in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia as Daugavpils University Agency "Daugavpils University Daugavpils Medical College" (accreditation sheet No. 8 of 2 May 2018). Overall DU DMC operates within legislative framework of the Republic of Latvia.

The management of the field of study and the academic staff are largely aware of the strengths and weaknesses, although sometimes critical perspectives are lacking. Overall, DU DMC has established a well-functioning quality assurance system which includes all the necessary preconditions for monitoring and maintenance of good quality of studies. The quality assurance process is rather well established, taking into account view of employers, students and other stakeholders. Employers, lecturers and students are actively participating in the processes but an expert group believes that graduates could be involved more formally in the future. There is also an existing complaint and proposal system in place which is functioning good and students are satisfied with it.

DU DMC provides mostly all of the necessary resources that are needed for students, lecturers and overall provision of the materials, technical provision and literature. The financial resources are mostly dependent on budget places provided for students in DU DMC. Each study year admission are provided only for one of social welfare professions. The choice is provided in line with the needs of employers in labour market. The current resources of DU DMC are used effectively (human, material and financial resources). The innovative health care equipment, technologies and experienced lecturers are involved for best use in preparing social welfare specialists. The two shortcomings that have been identified by the experts group are no financial funding for scientific research and lack of English knowledge of the academic staff and management team.

The DU DMC has established a system for determining and redistributing the financial support from which the main ones are state budget grants and ERASMUS + funding. However, the college provides no funding of scientific research and artistic creation as the budget is limited. DU DMC has all the necessary infrastructure resources, material and technical support for a successful implementation of the study field.

The library provides students with the necessary study literature in Latvian, English, Russian and German languages as well as regularly updates the resources when needed. The DU DMC uses various solutions and platforms within the study process and implementation of the study programs. The budget DU DMC successfully adjusted to the Covid -19 changes and managed to implement various forms of tools for online study provision. Due to Covid -19 remote studies, DU DMC adjusted

to the pandemic situation through use of the Zoom platform for the lecture provision online as well as use of Microsoft Teams. The e-learning environment "Moodle" is used for the administration of the study process. The databases available in the library with the latest industry publications are very rarely used.

The aims and goals of the study field are clearly defined and achievable, the study field and the included study programmes correspond to the strategic development directions of the DU DMC the needs of society and economic development. The study field study programmes "Social Rehabilitation" and "Social Care" are closely linked to the needs of the labor market and focused on the covering of the demand of the specialists in the field Social Welfare by providing of the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies of professional qualifications. The study process organization and the content of the study programmes are demonstrating the good understanding of specific of the Social rehabilitator and Social Care worker profession, supplemented by well developed study courses and organized internship to train the practical skills of students. The close, mostly informal ties are used to improve the learning process. This is understandable for the small number of students and quite constant academic staff for rather long period. The study provision, informative provision, material and technical provision and financial provision comply with specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programmes.

DU DMC tries to find ways of how to provide all the necessary financial support regarding the development of the teaching staff. The most common option how teaching staff develop their skills and broaden up their knowledge is through ERASMUS+ projects and funding. The imbalance between student number and budget funding unpredictability to comply with profitability of the study programmes demonstrating the necessity to start the dialog with responsible institutions about increasing the funding for providing more services, research and more budget places to prepare more specialists in the field for better balancing between study programmes and social welfare field needs.

Highly professional, open and motivated teaching staff involved in the study field study programmes implementation. The academic staff is using opportunities for activities for professional development. The administration promote professional development of qualification and knowledge of teaching staff. Teaching staff has limited opportunities regarding broadening their English language skills and it is of need to be improved in the future.

Overall, the cooperation with HEI in Latvia has legal base (agreements) in cooperation in regional and national level. The cooperation with other HEI (e.g. DU, RTA) academic staff and improvement of funding could help in involvement new academic staff members. The internship possibilities and exchange activities are implemented as well in outgoing and in incoming activities. There are opportunities to improve cooperation with professional organizations and regional actors (for example, using library resources from international sources and closer links with professional trade unions).

The internationalization of study process must be improved (especially teachers' language skills). The College must improve the language skills of the lecturers and students. It can be done through various ways - providing specific courses that improve the language level, participation in international trainings and projects as well as writing articles in English.

Increase of funding regarding scientific research activities has to be found. Although, DU DMC is a College and it does not require scientific research level to be in an advanced level, it is still of importance that the College and its teaching staff is active and motivated to participate in such

projects, activities anyways at least to some extent. Better cooperation with DU staff and administration as well with other HEI`s could be useful for that. For involvement of new staff members and students the further internationalization of the study field and strengthen of financial provision (in area of educational policy) is necessary.

I - Assessment of the Study Field

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1.1 Management of the Study Field

Analysis

Based on the Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 495 of September 13, 2017 "On the reorganization of Daugavpils Medical College", on March 1, 2018 DMC was reorganized and changed its legal status. Currently, the College operates in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia as Daugavpils University Agency "Daugavpils University Daugavpils Medical College" (accreditation sheet No. 8 of 2 May 2018).

1.1.1. As follow from Self-Assessment report (SAR) the mission of DU DMC is to prepare internationally competitive specialists in the field of health and social welfare for Latvian and European labour market by promoting sustainable education in Latgale region and Latvia as a whole. The vision of DU DMC is to be a modern, prestigious and recognizable educational institution in the field of health care and social welfare, offering high quality education.

The aims and objectives of DU Daugavpils Medical College (DU DMC) are formulated accordingly with aims of higher education and "Development Strategy 2015-2020 of DU DMC " (extended until the start of operation of a new approved strategy).

The main aim defined is to develop DU DMC as a modern and competitive vocational education institution in the field of health care and social welfare. The Strategy sets medium-term goals to provide quality education that meets the challenges of the future and is based on the: acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical skills by preparing specialists who are competitive in the international labour market, developing their abilities and motivating lifelong learning; to participate in international, national and sectoral research programmes, promoting, technology transfer and innovation development, raising public awareness of science; to promote the recognition of DU DMC in Latvia and worldwide; to ensure a unified and efficiently functioning organizational structure and to implement quality management system; to develop a modern, environmentally friendly infrastructure, safe and supportive working environment.

The objectives set by DU DMC for study field are: to provide the first level professional higher education required for the health care and social welfare sectors; to provide the second level professional vocational education and methodological assistance required for the health care and social welfare sectors; in cooperation with employers to develop and implement new study and vocational education programmes in line with professional standards and national vocational education standards incorporating relevant competences; to improve the existing study programmes in line with the forecast market changes, improving the technical and methodological base of studies and the intellectual potential of the academic staff and cooperation partners of the College; to ensure the acquisition of theoretical and practical knowledge, skills, abilities and professional attitude in line with the professional standard, labour market requirements and competences of the relevant specialty. (Self-Assessment Report (SAR) p.7)

The aim of study field, in the strategy sets goals and objectives on expert opinion are appropriate, clearly defined and achievable. The study field includes 2 study programmes: Social Rehabilitation and Social Care. The the objectives, tasks and results the both study programmes are aligned with the study field, students acquired theoretical knowledge and practical skills are related to the regulations, tendencies and methods in the field of social welfare. During field visit experts have observed trustful relationship between administration and academic staff. Obviously, trustful relationships can help to deepen the analysis of strengths and weaknesses.

1.1.2. DU DMC in SWOT analysis provided opportunities: ensuring continuity of studies in cooperation with higher education institutions and more active cooperation of the College administration and academic staff with employers, social institutions, associations and specialists are real, but till now, as experts mentioned, cooperation DU DMC with Rezekne Academy of Technology are mostly declarative rather than practical and there are possibilities to develop these links.

About the DU DMC main formulated threats: gradual ageing of academic staff; difference in salary levels between Latvian and European health and social care and education systems in an open labour market; the demographic situation leading to a decrease in the number of graduates from secondary education; changes in health care and social welfare institutions - experts agree, that DU DMC is assessed threats accordingly to the real situation in the field and region.

The critical perspective sometimes are lacking in evaluation of study field strengths and weakness, as noticed during the visit. For example, experts during the visit asked academic staff about possibilities to develop study environment and work conditions, but answer was "nothing, all is perfect". It is not possible in any higher education institution. It is important that academic staff see and are involved in further development of studies. Academic staff can't mentioned any new initiative necessary to start for better quality of study process (study field visit).

1.1.3. DU DMC acts on the basis of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, the Law On Educational Scientific Activity, the Law On Higher Education Institutions, the Regulations of DU DMC and other regulatory enactments.

The main decision-making bodies of DU DMC are: the College Council, the Director and DU decision-making bodies (Constitutional Assembly, Senate).

The highest representative and management institution and decision-making body of DU DMC is the College Council - a collegial management and decision-making body which is elected by secret ballot from amongst: administrative staff - 3 representatives (32%), academic staff - 2 representatives (17%), 2 representatives from students (17%), 2 representatives from general staff (17%) and 2 representatives from employers (17%).

The representatives of the academic staff in the Council are delegated by the Meetings of the representatives of the academic staff. Students` representatives in the Council are delegated by the students' self-government. The activities of the Council shall be governed by the regulations approved by DU.

As provided in SAR, the highest official of DU DMC is the Director. The Director is responsible for the general administrative management of DU DMC, promote the development of the educational establishment and responsible for the implementation of DU DMC strategy, the academic freedom of the academic staff and students, for compliance of DU DMC with Latvian legislation and other regulatory enactments and for the legal, economic and purposeful use of budget fund as well as the property of DU DMC.

In SAR declared, that the main aim of the Health and Social Care Department of DU DMC is to draw

up study programmes relevant to the aims and level of the College, to ensure their implementation and to control the development of specialties within their competence throughout the study process. The Department is managed by the Head of the Department. The main objectives of the Department are: to implement study programs; to organize students' methodological and scientific-research work; to promote students' activities; to carry out scientific research in the fields of medicine and social care; to involve qualified and competent teaching staff with academic and practical work experience in ensuring the study process of the College; being aware of the academic role in the organization and management of the study process and research to ensure an appropriate balance between the centralized management and decentralization of the study process and research with the aim of increasing staff responsibility for the quality of study work and the level of scientific research; to develop the research areas of the College and increase the number of internationally recognized publications, as well as to increase the publicity of research by organizing and participating in international conferences and seminars; to cooperate with other structural units of the College, educational institutions, employers and non-governmental organizations. Experts agree the Health and Social Care Department of DU DMC aims and objectives are in accordance with College strategy and with sufficient awareness. For better possibilities to renew staff and increase involvement in applied research closer cooperation with staff of DU and cooperation with Rezekne Academy of Technology could be useful.

The activities of the Department are coordinated by the Department Council, which consists of no less than 5 persons - the Head of the Department, methodologists and academic staff. The Department Council is entitled to independently solve all matters of professional and academic activity in accordance with the regulations of the College, if they are not referred to the College Council. The Deputy Director for Studies and the Head of the Department are responsible for the practical implementation of the study programs. The main tasks of the Deputy Director for Studies in the implementation of study directions and programs are: -to plan, coordinate and organize the study process; - to monitor the workload of lecturers; - supervise the record-keeping of academic staff; - coordinate the opening of new study programs; - participate in the organization of external and internal quality control.

The academic staff and methodological commission of the study programs is organized under the supervision of the Deputy Director for Studies. The Deputy Director's tasks are: to analyze and make recommendations for the improvement of study courses; coordination between study courses, establishment of interdisciplinary links; to evaluate methodological literature for theoretical studies; to provide methodological assistance to new teaching staff for the acquisition of pedagogical skills; to participate in the development of lecture materials, to approve the themes of the final examinations of study courses, term papers, qualification papers; to analyze the results of final examinations.

Study Direction Council The Director of DU DMC shall approve the composition of the Study Direction Council. The Study Direction Council consists of the Head of study programme, academic staff, students (at least one representative from the 1st level professional higher education programme) and employers' representatives. The functions of the Study Direction Council are: to develop the study programme (s) of the direction; to perform self-assessment and implementation analysis of the study programmes; to analyse students' achievements; to analyse the academic work of the academic staff involved in the study direction; to promote the integration of scientific work in the study programme.

In general, as follow from submitted documents and information during the visit, the cooperation between the administrative and technical staff in the study field was observed, the study field

management system is well organized with the aim of achieving the set goals and effectively managing the study process, providing the long-term development of the study field.

1.1.4. In the DU DMC SAR part 2. Management of Study field 2.1.4. are described that the recognition of study results achieved in previous education is carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations "On Evaluation and Recognition of Competences Acquired outside Formal Education or Acquired in Professional Experience and Study Results Achieved in Previous Education".

The experts confirm that DU DMC students are provided with the opportunity to continue the acquisition of education in another college if the study program is discontinued, the compensation of losses is guaranteed and former students of the relevant study field from other Latvian colleges and higher education institutions start their studies in later stages of studies. For example, a previously acquired program "Social Rehabilitation", later, upon the need, the former student comes to study the program "Social Care".

Experts states that the College has clearly elaborated and issued documents for admission requirements, regulations for admission of students and recognition of the study period, professional experience, previously acquired formal and non-formal education and evaluation of students' achievements and study results.

1.1.5. Depending on the form of study, methods and goals of the study programme, as demonstrated to the experts, the lecturer in DU DMC Social Welfare study field chooses the forms and criteria for assessing students' achievements. At the beginning of the study course, lecturers offer to analyze and assess criteria for assessing work and study achievements. Many of the results require the student not only to demonstrate knowledge, but also to analyze the acquired subject in practice, linking it with everyday life, existing experience and innovations in the field. Seminars and workshops play an important role in ensuring that the assessment covers a wider range of students' knowledge, skills and competences. In practical classes, during individual or group work presentations, students improve their analytical skills by expressing their opinion.

Reflection of results promotes the stabilization of students' acquisition of professional skills, as well as promotes self-knowledge and self-actualization. Therefore, in these cases, the formative assessment of learning outcomes is of special motivating importance in the study process. Within the framework of formative assessment, students understand the mistakes made and improve the acquired competence, because formative assessment provides students with feedback on the extent and quality of the acquired knowledge and what knowledge still needs to be updated.

In addition to formative assessment, lecturers in DU DMC also use summative assessment. Summative assessment is the process of assessing the student's knowledge, proficiency, and performance by comparing what they know with what they should have learned. Summative assessment is formed in the process of posting intermediate examinations. At the end of the study course there is a test with a mark or an exam. The final test is mostly oral, written, demonstrated, and assessed in the form of a test with closed and open questions. Students are acquainted with the criteria, conditions and binding procedures for the assessment of success in the course descriptions of the study programme, as well as at the beginning of the course, where the lecturer defines the goals, knowledge, skills, competences and the process of assessment (<http://dmk.lv/4/>).

These methods and techniques maintain a permanent dialogue between the academic staff, management team and students. Evaluation methods are appropriate but by necessity could be

improved, for example, including students self-assessment methods.

1.1.6. The DU DMC for supporting of academic and professional integrity, for preventing plagiarism is elaborated Code of Ethics as guidelines for the ethical conduct of DU DMC staff and students (SAR 2.1.6.). DU DMC has developed the “Regulations on Academic Integrity”, which provides for the submission of mandatory electronic versions of final theses. Additionally, DU DMC uses the plagiarism detection tool “plag.lv” for examining the final work of fact of directly copied or paraphrased plagiarism.

During the study courses, which envisage the acquisition of scientific or applied research methodology, the lecturers focus the student attention on the observance of the principles of academic integrity in research in a certain field.

Experts express their view that the system is well organized and aimed at detecting the potential plagiarism or other fraudulent use of intellectual property, follows the process of development of students' work and support academic integrity.

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

Overall, DU DMC operates within legislative framework of the Republic of Latvia. The goals of the study field are clearly defined and achievable, the study field and the corresponding study programs correspond to the strategic development directions of the DU DMC the needs of society and economic development. The close, mostly informal ties are used to improve the learning process. This is understandable for the small number of students and quite constant academic staff for rather long period. For involvement of new staff members and students the further internationalization of the study field and strengthen of financial provision (in area of educational policy) is advisable. The management of the field of study and the academic staff are largely aware of the strengths and weaknesses, although sometimes critical perspectives are lacking.

Strengths:

1. Close, trustful relations with employers and graduates;
2. The study field and the relevant study programs comply with the main directions of the strategic development of the higher education institution. The basic knowledge in health care is necessary for social welfare specialists;
3. Modern teaching and medical equipment, using new technologies to obtain information and improve the quality of studies;
4. Student-centered study process (students are in the center of organization of the study process, informal involvement is evident).

Weaknesses:

1. The cooperation with other structures and and academic staff of DU cold be more comprehensive (for example, in preparation new scientific projects);
2. Weak competitiveness of the remuneration level of professionals in the social welfare system with an impact on the motivation of the professionals involved in the field. Insufficient foreign language skills of students and academic staff;
3. Low motivation of foreign students to study, taking into account the economic, political and epidemiological situation in the country.

1.2. Efficiency of the Internal Quality Assurance System

Analysis

1.2.1. The internal quality assurance system of the study field "Social Welfare" is implemented in accordance with the practice introduced by DU DMC (SAR, 2.2.1.).

DU DMC developed internal quality assurance system is realized by the College administration, the study field council, academic staff of the Department of Health Care and Social Welfare in cooperation with academic staff and methodists and related to the strategic planning and implementation of the study process.

Effective and constructive communication of the College administration with students during the semester and the assessment of the content and organization of study programmes by social partners, students and professionals are the main methods of implementation of internal quality mechanisms of the study process.

During the meeting with teaching staff, they pointed out that the academic staff regularly improves and supplements the descriptions of study courses and the content of practical classes with current topics and the latest literature and publications. It is being done according to the suggestions made by the employers or students. Lecturers also monitor their performance and what may be improved. It is being done through filling self - assessment reports. In self- assessment reports, the lecturers analyze their performance, which is also analyzed and submitted to the administration. They have these discussions after every course with students and they can evaluate the course and methods used. They also talk through methodological meetings. These reports are submitted to the Methodological Commission of the DU DMC and are reviewed.

DU DMC has established a system that ensures that after every study course students fill questionnaires, provide their comments and express their opinion of the study course quality, what may be improved or changed in the future. That is the main way the DU DMC monitors the overall quality of the study courses. Regarding employers and graduates, DU DMC sends out the formal questionnaires to them at the end of the study year once in a year. As the management and employers noted during onsite visit - there is the formal part of communication and feedback. DU DMC maintains constant communication with employers on a regular basis regarding necessary improvement, needs of the work market and internship opportunities of the students.

It can be stated that the quality system ensures continuous improvement, development and efficient performance of the study field and the relevant study programmes. As regards to graduates, they are not as actively involved as employers but DU DMC maintains good relationships with them. As possibility for future development, could be advised that by the time graduates can get more involved in the processes of DU DMC as lecturing or helping with internship opportunities for the students.

1.2.2. During the on-site visit expert group identified that DU DMC has developed and maintains a quality assurance system that is well-functioning and monitors the overall quality of the internal quality assurance system in various levels - student, lecturers, employers and graduates. All of these groups are involved within the assurance process. The system includes review of development of the study programmes and includes necessary feedback mechanisms.

It has to be noted that during the visit of experts students noted that they are satisfied with the study process and all the comments made, proposals are taken into consideration by the lecturers as well as management of the DU DMC. Students in the meeting outlined that they have an effective and personal connection with the academic staff which ensures that any sort of feedback is pointed out and implemented within the study process as soon as possible ensuring elimination of any shortcomings within the study process. Overall, students suppose that during the remote study process due to COVID-19 situation the overall quality did not decrease although they did notice the

difficulty of gaining as much practical knowledge because it could be only acquired within the onsite practical tasks done by themselves not taught remotely.

The most common way students give their feedback to the lecturers is when talking after lectures, communicating through Moodle system, providing overall rating of the study course quality after the end of the course, submitting questionnaires that are taken into consideration after every evaluation of the course done by the students. These questionnaires are anonymous.

During the meeting with the management and employers, it was possible to identify that there is a very close connection between both sides as they are updated on the overall situation of the demand of the specialists and the quality, skills necessary for the professionals of social welfare and social rehabilitation. Employers are efficiently and logically involved in the feedback process and also provide internship opportunities for the students of both study programmes which are a part of the mandatory study process. The only thing identified by the employers that has to be done in the future for the case of improvement is preparation of more specialists due to the demand in this field but as it was described by the DU DMC it is something they are consistently working on and cannot change because the state is not providing them with enough budget places and deny their requests but they are still hoping for the best and are not giving up.

During the meeting with the graduates it became clear that they are satisfied with the knowledge they have gained and the skills the DU DMC has provided for them in order they can work as good specialists in the field they have chosen. The majority of the graduates have stayed and are still working in the workplace where they did their internship while studying at DU DMC.

1.2.3. DU DMC has developed a mechanism for student complaints and it is functioning. Students are informed of such opportunities in case of need. As DU DMC pointed out, submission and consideration of students' complaints and proposals is an essential part of the study quality system maintenance.

As it has been pointed out within the SAR p.33., students are entitled to submit complaints and proposals to the DU DMC Director, Deputy Director. Complaints and proposals are accepted orally, in writing and electronically, depending on their importance. Complaints and proposals are accepted individually or collectively, openly (identifying identity) and anonymously. Applications for possible violations of the norms of the "DU DMC Code of Ethics", including actions or behavior outside the DU DMC, if the prestige of the DU DMC is thus affected, may be submitted by DU DMC academic, administrative and general staff and students. The application may be submitted on behalf of the students by the Student Self-Government, which may act as the student's representative during the examination of the complaint.

During the meeting with students, they have never submitted complaints themselves as everything can be negotiated directly with the staff and successfully resolved. In case it is needed they are informed of the process of complaint submission.

According to the SAR p.33., there have been situations of complaints in the past and they have been resolved. One example mentioned has been when a student complained of the assessment of the work that has been examined during his/hers final examination and the student was not satisfied with the grade. It was followed by the complaint that the lecturer has not explained the criteria of evaluation clearly, thus the criteria of evaluation was reviewed and improved so next year it is clear for the students.

1.2.4. According to the SAR p.34, DU DMC has a statistical data collection mechanism in place which is established with a purpose of obtaining the necessary data for the purpose of analysis of the study field and ways for the possible improvement. The obtaining of necessary data about students

admission, numbers, drop-out, main changes and tendencies are collected for each study semester and used for evaluation of efficiency of internal processes and planning purposes.

DU DMC organizes surveys of various types of students, employers and graduates. At the end of each academic year, student surveys on the study process are carried out, their results are discussed at the meetings of the Council of study directions. At the end of each study course, questionnaires are held to assess the quality of the study course. During the surveys that evaluated the overall study quality at DU DMC in the previous study year 2020/21, 68% of the students noted that the study quality is high, 30% of students pointed out that medium quality, and 2% of students believe that DU DMC the quality of the student process is low. During the onsite visit and according to the surveys of quality maintenance of the DU DMC, more than a half of the students would recommend DU DMC as the place of study for others who want to gain knowledge and degree in the study field. In another survey, which evaluated the satisfaction of the teaching staff, 87% of the students are satisfied with the knowledge and qualification of the teaching staff which is a good indicator.

The regularly collected and compiled statistical information are used for improving of study field.

1.2.5. The information published on the website of the higher education institution / college about the study programmes in the study field corresponds to the information available in the official registers (VIIS and E-platform), provides applicants and students with important information that is published in all languages of implementation of the study programme.

In the web page of the DU DMC (<https://dmk.lv/4/>) are provided the main regulatory documents and the necessary information about college, Social Welfare study programmes, knowledge and skills will be obtain studying in specialties of "Social care" and "Social rehabilitation" are explained. The description of knowledge and skills are too detailed and difficult to grasp, so could be defined in more concentrated form. Quality policy documents are not easy to trace among other documents.

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

Overall, DU DMC has established a well-functioning quality assurance system which includes all the necessary preconditions for monitoring and maintenance of good quality of studies. Employers, lecturers and students are actively participating in the processes but an expert group believes that graduates could be involved more formally in the future. There is also an existing complaint and proposal system in place which is functioning good and students are satisfied with it. The statistical data are regularly collected, compiled and used for improving of study field.

Strengths:

1. Strong and active communication between employers, students and lecturers that helps to gain immediate feedback and implement the necessary improvements;
2. Students are satisfied with the study quality maintenance and evaluates it as high;
3. There is an effective complaint and proposal system in place that helps for the quality assurance process realizing regular work on improvement of study courses and training materials;
4. Close interaction of involved actors (staff, administration, employers and graduates).

Weaknesses:

1. Lack of more formal graduate involvement in quality assurance processes;
2. Quality policy is not easy to find in DU DMC web page.

Assessment of the requirement [1]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

DU DMC works according Law on Higher Education institutions. There is continuous improvement of cooperation between administration, academic staff and students. There is an existing Internal Quality Assurance in place and it is effectively working in order to develop and improve the study field.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The quality procedures are as necessary according normative acts and provision of study quality and provides necessary competence for students. There are procedures of place including questionnaires and analysis of student answers for the purpose of assuring that quality is maintained within the institution.

- 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

There is mechanism of supervision of performance. The information of employers are gather systematically, but mostly in informal way. The system of evaluation of study quality was described during experts visit.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The criteria and procedures for evaluation of students' results are developed and performed according normative acts. They are published in web page <https://dmk.lv/4/>.

- 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

Regular interaction between administration and academic staff, regular evaluation of results. Students, employers are engaged through quality assurance processes (statistic is monitored) with the help of surveys while interaction with graduates take place in more informal background as events of the DU DMC.

- 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

Satisfaction of students with the study program, achievements of students and efficiency of the

academic staff is conducted through inner quality procedures while with graduates it is being done directly and in an informal way. Expert group believes it is understandable due to small number of the graduates. In statistical system made by Ministry of education some data are available only after longer period.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The strategy for the development of DU DMC promote staff professional development and to develop and implement various motivation and support mechanisms (e.g. promotion of scientific activities, exchange of experience within ERASMUS + programmes, transfer of best practices).

1.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Field

Analysis

1.3.1. The DU DMC, as experts found, has established an effectively functioning system for determining and redistributing the financial support. As clarified by the DU DMC during onsite visit and according to SAR p. 36, the main financial support of the institution is state budget grants. There are also other financial supports available as the European Union provided ERASMUS+ project funding as a result of DU DMC activities.

The financial resources are mostly dependent on budget places provided for students in DU DMC. Each study year admission are provided only for one of social welfare professions. The choice is provided in line with the needs of employers in labour market. The two shortcomings that have been identified by the experts group are no financial funding for scientific research and lack of English knowledge of the academic staff and management team.

The financial resources of DU DMC are used in accordance with the priorities and needs of the college as well as followed by procedure established by the regulatory enactments to which the budget is approved. The cost per student in the time period between 2018 and 2020 was EUR 3 874 and in 2021 it was EUR 4 150. In the time period of 2018 till 2021 every study year there have been a certain number of state budget places that have been provided from the state budget. In the programme "Social welfare" there have been 10 state funded budget places from 2018 till 2020 but in 2021, there have been 7 according to the SAR p.37. In the programme "Social rehabilitation" there have been 10 state funded budget places in 2018 and 2019, while in 2020 there have been none but in 2021 again 10. When asked during the onsite visit why the amount of state funded budget places is not higher, DU DMC identified that the state has denied for years their request for more study places for the purpose of the demand of the study field and needs by the employers for more specialists. The state received funding overall in the study field of "Social welfare" in the time frame of 2018-2021 also has been identified by the DU DMC. In the programme "Social care", the funding has decreased. From 2018 till 2021 state funding was hesitant and make difficult for DU MC to plan their work.

Regarding the funding of applied or scientific research of the DU DMC, there are no additional funds from the state budget for this. The DU DMC tries to implement various activities within the existing budget that they have as the budget is limited. College is trying to involve students in various creative activities that are a part of the education process as well as cooperation with employers in the development and improvement of study programmes and provision of internships. Expert group supposes that there shall be an additional funding for scientific and applied research for the purpose of the lecturers and overall development of the DU DMC. The expert group also notes that as this is

a higher education institution that concentrates on professional study programmes with a focus on preparation of the demanding specialists in the field and the development of their practical skills for the labor market needs, makes sense to start the dialogue with the field responsible Ministry about review of budget for the allocation of additional funds for research purposes.

1.3.2. DU DMC has all the necessary infrastructure resources, material and technical support for a successful implementation of the study field Social welfare. They have been identified within the SAR pp. 38.-40. The main components of infrastructure are study buildings with modernized auditoriums, specialized study rooms with modern equipment, educated, experienced teaching staff and a library with all the necessary reading materials that are needed for the study process.

The DU DMC coordinates its activities in two main buildings where auditoriums, library, study rooms are located. Both of these buildings are located in Daugavpils in a few minutes walking distance from each other. Both buildings have heating supplies, water, and energy. The study rooms of the DU DMC are arranged according to the structure of professional study courses with various forms of modernized and needed equipment for the purpose to gain practical skills on site of the premises.

Overall, there are more than 40 study rooms and auditoriums. There is an accessible computer room that has 12 computers for student use, 3 halls. An important part of the practical skill acquiring process is the modernized equipment: 1. Patient care process simulation center which includes procedure and manipulation rooms; 2. Therapeutic massage training center which is used in study courses as "Basics of Therapeutic Massage" and "Medical Rehabilitation"; 3. Innovative technology laboratory for research and innovation implementation in the study process; 4. Emergency Medical Assistance Simulation Center.

The equipment provided for the studies includes interactive whiteboards, projectors, graph drafters, special equipment for organizing practical work according to the study course. An example can be dolls of babies in the actual size of a newborn in the course that provides knowledge of care taking of babies, how to feed them, and how to take care of them in the hospital. All of these resources are made available for the students and the teaching staff for an everyday use of the study process. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions and remote learning before, it was a struggle for the students to gain such practical knowledge as the access to the study rooms, materials were limited and students feel as they lacked gaining these practical skills but it could not be influenced by the DU DMC what regards the restrictions imposed by the state and the government.

1.3.3. The DU DMC has developed a system for the improvement and purchase of methodological and informative provision. According to the SAR p.41, the DU DMC, in cooperation with the employees of the Study Department and the Deputy Director of education, discusses the purchase of the necessary literature and printed publications. The library provides students with the necessary study literature in Latvian, English, Russian and German languages as well as regularly updates the resources when needed and informs everyone involved about news using the e-environment, introduces the latest technologies, develops information search and use skills, supports and facilitates the study process. Every student of DU DMC can make reservations of the books that are needed and also extend the use of the books electronically in an e-platform of the library.

Since 2006, the Library has been using the integrated information system ALISE (Advanced Library Information Service). Students in the library have access to the college computers as well as Wi-Fi internet. For any help there is a librarian that consults in situations when needed. The library also provides students with an opportunity to use the printer for study purposes. Altogether, the library

has 5 computers and 2 printers.

Library resources and databases are available for the students. In case the library of the DU DMC does not have some books or literature necessary for the students or the teaching staff, it is possible for them to use other libraries as well. They have been provided with the access to Latgale Central Library or Daugavpils University Library.

During the remote study process, students were still provided with the opportunity to receive books from the library. Most of the students during onsite visit admitted that during remote studies they preferred to use databases as it was easier for the study process. All the necessary access has been provided to them. Also international databases with scientific publications available in Library, but are rarely used (students in onsite visit). In the website of the DU DMC there is a separate section created "Library" which provides general information regarding the use of library and the rules that have to be followed. The webpage can be accessed here: <http://www.dmk.lv/13/>

1.3.4. It can be stated by experts that the information and communication technology solutions used to ensure the study process are appropriate and effective. The DU DMC uses various solutions and platforms within the study process and implementation of the study programmes. The databases available in the library with the latest industry publications, but not actively used. Due to Covid -19 remote studies, DU DMC adjusted to the pandemic situation through use of the Zoom platform for the lecture provision online as well as use of Microsoft Teams.

According to the information obtained during the onsite visit, experts clarified that the DU DMC uses URSE (University Relations and Science Education program). In the school management system "Mykoob" was used in the academic year 2020/2021 in order to ensure the electronic recording, monitoring, functionality and information flow of the study process. The e-learning environment "Moodle" is used for the administration of the study process and lists all of the lectures, courses and provides access to all of the teaching and methodological materials and information circulation. According to the SAR p. 43, DU DMC teaching staff also uses Kahoot platform for various questionnaires, surveys of the topic that they are teaching to evaluate how students have understood the topic of studies and monitor the overall knowledge level of the students. This activity also helps to identify the strengths and weaknesses as well as provide the overall feedback. In case teaching staff wants to communicate amongst each other and organize group work activities, they use the Jamboard platform. For operative flow of information between the College administration, students and teaching staff, Whatsapp groups and chats are used.

1.3.5. DU DMC has defined and implemented a procedure for attraction of qualified teaching staff of the study field and study programmes. The college also follows the outlined procedure and takes into account all the necessary preconditions and requirements of the chosen teaching staff. Persons are elected to academic posts through public and open competition. Competitions for academic positions are announced publicly on the College website available here - www.dmk.lv According to the information gathered during onsite visit of experts at DU DMC and SAR p.43, candidates for academic posts shall be elected and appointed by the College Council. The academic staff has to ensure the implementation of the study programme in accordance with the study programme and the job responsibilities provided for in the job descriptions.

1.3.6. Regarding the needs of the teaching staff for their professional development, DU DMC is getting involved and providing various sorts of measures that are in their financial capacity in order to provide it. In order to ensure the professional development of the academic staff, all representatives of the DU DMC academic teaching staff are given the opportunity to participate in various international and national level conferences, seminars and training if they see it as

necessary. They also participate in Erasmus+ projects. For both students and teaching staff the most common choice for various projects and activities abroad are Lithuania and Poland as they have good collaboration but it is not limited to that. During onsite visits, the expert group tried to clarify the question of lecturers' opportunities to develop their language skills. The DU DMC teaching staff during the meeting stated that the DU DMC provides them with an opportunity to improve their English and German language skills. Although, the experts group identified that from all participants only a few of the staff and management were capable of expressing themselves in English. It has to be noted that the programmes in the study field are implemented in Latvian only but for various purposes such as international training, conferences, exchange projects, it is advisable for the staff and management to learn English for their own benefit and to extend their opportunities in the future.

According to the SAR p.44., lecturers regularly improve their professional qualifications by attending the various offered education courses for their professional improvement. As identified by the teaching staff during the onsite visit, these courses are usually in the field of psychology but not only. There are a few examples mentioned of some people from teaching staff who have participated in some training, seminars or conferences as First Aid training, Basics of Communication Psychology, Digital skills for the learning process and Basics of pedagogical activity.

1.3.7. There is no information within the SAR provided regarding the workload and distribution of it for the teaching staff. During the onsite visit, an experts group asked the teaching staff their workload and balance between academic, research and possible administrative activities and the teaching staff stated that it is well balanced and they do not experience overload of work tasks. Large part of them are highly qualified professionals of their field who do not get involved as much in scientific research because of various reasons including lack of funding for it and their work in parallel to teaching in the social welfare field. They noted that even though sometimes it is not exactly easy, but it is not also impossible to combine both of their main duties.

1.3.8. There are various kinds of supporting activities of students in place at DU DMC. One of many supports for students are the availability to use the student hostel very near from the college in case of need to have a place at Daugavpils. Currently, this hostel provides around 50 places for refugees from Ukraine.

The college director and lecturers are a great support of students regarding their employment and finding internship opportunities. Students describe the teaching staff and director as very open and happy to help at any point when needed. The library is also always accessible for anyone. When asked, students have never have any problems regarding library resources and communication with the librarian who is also described as always helpful of understanding databases and finding books at the library.

In regard of psychological support, students met at the visit, mentioned that they have never used such service but they know that such opportunity is in place. What regards support of foreign students and service of an interpreter, none of the students have ever needed it as all of the students interviewed and met were locals and had fluent Latvian language which is the implementation language of the studies at the DU DMC.

Currently, DU DMC is working on the adaption process of the college in regard to the people with special needs applying and implementing all the necessary measures to improve and make the study process accessible to people of special needs who would like to study at the college.

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

To summarize, DU DMC provides mostly all of the necessary resources that are needed for students, lecturers and overall provision of the funding, materials, technical provision and literature. The financial resources are mostly dependent on budget places provided for students in DU DMC.

DU DMC has all the necessary infrastructure, resources, material and technical support for a successful implementation of the study field. The library provides students with the necessary study literature and regularly updates the resources when needed. The DU DMC uses various solutions and platforms within the study process and implementation of the study programs. DU DMC uses the Zoom platform for the lecture provision online as well as use of Microsoft Teams. The e-learning environment "Moodle" is used for the administration of the study process.

The two shortcomings that have been identified by the experts group are no financial funding for scientific research and lack of English knowledge of the academic staff and management team. The college provides no funding of scientific research and artistic creation as the budget is limited.

DU DMC tries to find ways of how to provide all the necessary financial support regarding the development of the teaching staff. The most common option how teaching staff develop their skills and broaden up their knowledge is through ERASMUS+ projects and funding. Teaching staff has limited opportunities regarding broadening their English language skills and it is of need to be improved in the future. The Covid-19 situation demanded additional efforts from academic staff.

Strengths:

1. Effective adaptation of using of technical innovations to provide studies remotely. Implementation of Zoom, Microsoft Teams in the study process;
2. Use of Moodle for communication between students and lecturers, material provision and grade provision for students;
3. Advanced technologies that give a great practical benefit for the study process for the students and improvement of their knowledge.

Weaknesses:

1. No planned financial funding for applied research;
2. Low interest of use of available data bases with newest publications of industry;
3. Lack of English knowledge of the academic staff and few of the members of the management team.
4. Poorly predictable state budget and insufficient funding per student;

1.4. Scientific Research and Artistic Creation

Analysis

1.4.1. Research is not only one of the few objectives set by the College in their Development Strategy Plan 2021-2027 (p.12) but also one of the main strategic priorities (p.9). Considering the need for a strong link between first level professional higher education study programmes and skills needed in the labor market / industry it is a strategically important for a college such as DU DMC to focus their research on topics that are of relevance in the labor market or partners from the industry. This is a good foundation for strengthening a collaboration with the industry and also creating more practical knowledge in the field of social welfare.

The College has developed a clear vision on the importance of implementing topical research into the study process (SAF p.48), also stressing the existing interdisciplinary nature of the social welfare research field. This is also intertwined with the theoretical knowledge that students must gain during the study and research process. However, evidence of the practical implementation is lacking in the

SAR, moreover the on-site visit provided the experts with some information regarding low interest of the students in the research activities.

The amount of activity on the participation in scientific conferences, number of research papers and other scientific activities of academic staff and students of the study field “Social Welfare” (in Annex14 and Annex15; forums are also included) is slightly reducing overtime – in academic year 2018/2019 academic staff and students took part in nine such activities (conferences/forums or research papers). In comparison, during two academic years 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 academic staff and students participated in seven conferences/forums/wrote research papers. However it is important to note that students participate in international conferences including in ones held by other higher education institutions (e.g. RSU Red Cross Medical College). Although it should be pointed out that it is not quite clear how many students have participated in the scientific activities, but in 2021 there was at least one student research conference that included 3 participants from the study field “Social Welfare” (Annex14). Overall the reduction of the scientific activities over time might be related to no additional funding for research activities reported by the College (SAR p.37), therefore this might create a discrepancy between the priorities set in the Development Strategy Plan 2021-2027 and ensuring practical steps (such as sufficient funding) for reaching development goals stated in SAR (p.8).

1.4.2. The college states in the SAR (p.37) that agreements are in place to share research infrastructure with other higher education institutions in the Latgale region. This is essential for lowering the costs of research and facilitating the results of research done by these institutions.

The College states that regular improvements of the integration of the research in study process is in place (SAR p.30), e.g. a possibility for students to get involved in the process of implementing surveys, analyzing data etc. However, more evidence of how the scientific (applied) research is intertwined with the study process (for example, how the understanding of the research process is achieved through study process, writing papers, analyzing existing research in the field) that is not fully on a voluntary basis.

1.4.3. The College has cooperation agreements with institutions to provide a place for student internships. The development strategy of the College sets the goal of cooperation with employers in the improvement of study programmes and the study process. By promoting staff exchange, the College plans to adjust qualitatively study programmes to the current requirements of the labour market, which would promote employment opportunities for graduates. The College organizes informative motivational events with the aim to attract adults to studies, providing information about educational opportunities, applying individual training plans. In the field of improving the quality of higher education, the College actively cooperates with existing employers.

1.4.4. The SAR states that at the end of each study year, the academic staff of the study field “Social Welfare” submit to the Study Direction Council a report on achievements in scientific and creative work, work projects, participation in scientific seminars and conferences, as well as on publications. The involvement of academic staff in scientific and applied research is justified by the need to identify and implement innovations in the direction in their individual scientific and applied research, as well as in the implementation of this research together with students.

Participation in international, national and sectoral research programmes is listed among the main development goals of the College. The aim of the scientific research in the fields of medicine and social care is one of the priorities of the College, including increasing the number of international projects. The self report mentions, that “Cooperation in scientific and applied research is carried out with universities (Utena University of Applied Sciences, Ankara University, Meghrabyan Medical

Institute, Adana University, Nisa Higher Medical School, etc.)”, however, this cooperation seems to have mainly teaching, and experience exchange nature. This might be the relevant level for a primary teaching oriented College.

Main research related activities of the teaching staff are related to participation in different conferences. All together, limited evidence about international scientific projects and activities was found. Teaching staff also have numerous publications in different conference proceedings, but not in independent scientific entities. Only two lectures have been published internationally. The only exception is one lecturer who has four independent Russian language publications from the period 2012-2013.

Academic staff has actively participated in numerous international ERASMUS+ projects, but only one evidence about non- Erasmus project was found (2020).

1.4.5. The SAR mentions that integration and involvement of students in the field are constantly promoted as an essential precondition for the development of professional competences and skills. Students are encouraged to participate in exchange programmes, to apply for and participate in local projects and conferences together with DU DMC teaching staff, and to publish joint scientific articles in conference proceedings.

During the onsite visit, experts asked the management, lecturers and students how they are involved in scientific research and/or any artistic creation process that is an important part of the study process. Expert group was informed by the Department that they have started to pay specific attention during the pandemic to the student scientific research process. They gave opportunities in this way to students to get more involved within the study process because of the student-centered approach that DU DMC pays attention to and takes into serious consideration. In this way they help students to develop skills of critical thinking and evaluation of scientific text, ensure their willingness to continue updating their knowledge of the relevant topics, and skill to use electronic resources.

As stated by the college, students also developed the necessity of self-improvement during the process of applied research that the DU DMC highly values. It can be summed up that in the eyes of the DU DMC, it develops mechanisms to promote involvement of students in applied research, although an expert group found out that students are not considered to be very active in the processes. As it was cleared out by the lecturers and the staff, students are more active in preparing short news posts and reports of certain information and/or data. It can be stated that the DU DMC truly works on the mechanism and collaboration between academic staff and students on scientific research but it is limited to short-term and small projects.

Possibly, it is enough for the level of college studies as students are more interested in professional skill gaining and the majority of them are working already during the first year of their studies and not much interested in the scientific processes. It has to be noted that none of the students could give examples or mention any research activities they are, have been part of or mention a course mate who has done any. It raises a concern of the activity and involvement of students in this activity as the number of college students is rather small and limited to 10 students per course. It can be concluded that the system is partly efficient and well-functioning. It is advised that students get involved more actively and also to long-term and more serious scientific work.

1.4.6. The SAR refers to the fact that the necessary material and technical base has been created to help translate knowledge into practice for working with different groups of clients (equipment/devices for adaptation to home conditions, aids for safety, aids for maintaining/developing communication and communication skills, etc.) in different cases.

During the visit the panel could indeed experience that special attention is paid to learning how to implement technical and digital solutions in working with different client groups. There is also a clear close collaboration with the practice field. But could be made more clear how research data drives these innovations.

Client-oriented and value-oriented approach in social care and welfare is a core value and the understanding of its importance is ever growing, especially so in the recent years (e.g. see a 2022 article on client-oriented care and services here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/20534345211070652>) , therefore it is crucial to ensure an integrated approach of these aspects and development of these core values early in the study process. The college states that the study field “Social Welfare” is directed towards using their material and technical base on implementing innovations in order to teach more practical knowledge on how to work with different client groups and different circumstances.

One of the components of the client-oriented approach is efficient use of technical and digital solutions, therefore, keeping in mind that the technical provision of the study direction is sufficient and the college states that a special attention is paid to teach students how to use them, it can be concluded as a well enough basis on innovative solutions being used in the study process.

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

The College has developed a clear vision on the importance of implementing topical research into the study process, about necessity to involve the students and teaching staff into the applied research activities. Regardless of the positive attitude about applied research activities stated by the college, resources and activities are limited, the science is not a priority, or not even part of everyday activities of the present academic staff. More emphasis in the more recent years (perhaps, related to the Covid-19 pandemic) on collaboration between students and academic staff has been stated by the DU DMC, however, these projects are short-term and small in scale.

The efficient use of technical and digital solutions, therefore, keeping in mind that the technical provision of the study field is important aspect of student-centered (as client-centered) approach is implemented successfully.

A collaborative nature between the study field “Social Welfare” and the industry is beneficial for the study process and could be more used in the means of applied research (research for resolving the issues that the industry has identified). There is room for improvement in showcasing the students how applied science is beneficial in the processes of problem-solving in the industry.

Strengths:

1. Stated focus on the importance of research activities (both - academic staff and student) and a clear goal to strengthen scientific research in the study process;
2. A system to identify niche/local needs for research in collaboration with the industry identifying the needs of the industry via annual questionnaires;
3. Identified specific research topics for students in the field of Social Welfare;
4. Good focus on the collaboration between academic staff and students in carrying out research projects;
5. Study process is based on a client-oriented approach that is implemented through the use of innovative digital and technical solutions especially in provision background in health care issues for social welfare specialists.

Weaknesses:

1. Low activity of students in applied research (moreover no additional funds for research activities

for students);

2. A lack of practical steps to involve more students and/or involve students more deeply in the applied research processes;
3. Missing active research projects for academic staff;
4. Number of internationally recognized publications and participation in scientific projects;
5. Collaboration between academic staff and students in carrying out applied research projects is usually short-term and via small projects.

Assessment of the requirement [2]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Positive attitude toward scientific activities from administration and staff, but a lack of practical steps to involve more students and/or involve students more deeply in the scientific and applied research processes.

1.5. Cooperation and Internationalisation

Analysis

1.5.1. The DU DMC in SAR states and experts agree that the College has cooperation agreements with institutions from Latvia to provide a place for student internships. The development strategy of the College sets the goal of cooperation with employers in the improvement of study programmes and the study process. By promoting staff exchange, the College plans to adjust qualitatively study programmes to the current requirements of the labor market, which would promote employment opportunities for graduates. The College puts forward cooperation with companies (employers, internships) as one of the main areas of ensuring a quality study process. There are opportunities to improve cooperation with professional organizations and regional actors (for example, RTA or DU, using library resources from international sources and closer links with professional organizations in field and trade unions)

In the Development Plan of the study field (Annex 5) under the strategic development area of labor market and economic development only a need to introduce new professions is mentioned, leaving out as it seems the strong link that a professional higher education studies must have with the industry in more practical way – through strengthening internships and development of skills needed in the field after graduation.

In order to strengthen cooperation with the industry, an annual practice of the College is in place to carry out a survey that includes gathering responses from employers, social partners and external experts on how to improve the study courses relevant for the industry. This is crucial for getting feedback not only on the content of study courses, but also to identify the needs of the industry regarding the skills of students who are the next employees in the industry. However, according to SAR (p.53) and Annex 16, the College has numerous agreements with other institutions (in Latvia and abroad) regarding study and traineeship mobility as well as with institutions for students to have their internships at. Of course the Covid-19 pandemic limited the possibility to have a physical mobility, therefore it was halted for this period of time. Students can choose to have their internships at these (local) institutions, however to enhance gains from this internship process a suggestion to the college is to follow closely on students not having an internship in an institution they might already be working at. Overall there is a standardized form of a traineeship agreement.

1.5.2. The College internationalization plan, which is included as a separate section in the College overall development strategy 2016-2020 (SAR, see p.21), provides: to improve the international visibility of the College by increasing the number of student and staff mobility and participation in international projects, conferences, ensuring language learning; to increase the geographical range of international partners: educational institutions, clinics, social care institutions, etc., non-EU countries and cross-border countries. The College provides all full-time students studying in first-level professional higher education study programmes (Nursing, Treatment, Social Rehabilitation, Social Care) and the College staff with the opportunity to participate in international mobility by providing information support, communication with partners, mobility preparation, problem solving and dissemination of best practices, etc.

Till now more active cooperation has taken place with Polish and Lithuanian HEI (visit conversations). The College development strategy envisages long-term and sustainable international cooperation with related colleges, universities and institutions. The goals of international cooperation are to improve the quality of studies and to ensure the study results of College students in accordance with the changing requirements of the international labour market. The possibilities of ERASMUS+ program are used for organising of exchange visits.

1.5.3. The modernization of the College study programme is implemented taking into account the international dimension by adapting the study programmes for local and foreign students, by implementing activities that promote students' intercultural skills and understanding of internationality, as well as research and development activities.

The College regularly introduces innovations, improves the content of study programmes, looks for new ways of teaching and learning, and uses innovative study methods and tools that attract local and foreign students. We cooperate with partner institutions participating in the Erasmus + programme, following the recommendations and national priorities of the Latvian Ministry of Education and Science.

The outgoing and incoming mobility with several EU HEI are implemented during accreditation period (Germany, Italy, Poland and Lithuania) (Attachement Nr.17). Understandably, during Covid-19 activity decreased slightly.

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

Overall, the cooperation with higher education institutions, colleges, employers, employers' organisations, municipalities, non-governmental organisations in Latvia has stable and legal base (agreements) in cooperation on regional and national level. There are opportunities to improve cooperation with professional organizations and regional actors (for example, using library resources from international sources and closer links with professional organizations in field and trade unions). The internship possibilities and exchange activities with Lithuania, Poland and Germany (ERASMUS) are implemented as well in outgoing and in incoming activities.

Strengths:

1. Good experience participating in ERASMUS+ program;
2. Exchange of academic staff and students (Lithuania, Poland, Germany);
3. Focus towards international cooperation in the College internationalization plan, which is included as a separate section in the College overall development strategy.

Weaknesses:

1. The cooperation with Rezekne TA and academic staff of DU have space for development (for example, the use of international databases);
2. Low level of English language skills for student and partly staff;
3. Little information on cooperation with professional organizations and trade unions.

Assessment of the requirement [3]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

DU DMC cooperates with Utena College abroad, DU, Rezekne Academy of Technologies and other Colleges and Universities that ensures that the cooperation among foreign and Latvian organizations with DU DMC takes place. The cooperation with professional organizations and trade unions of the field can be strengthened.

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

Analysis

1.6.1. In the previous accreditation corresponding study field and study programs received 14 recommendations. Nine of recommendations are already implemented, while others are still being implemented. Some recommendations are not possible to implement without support of policy actors of the field. The recommendation "To improve the foreign language skills of teaching staff and students, to attract international visiting lecturers. English language skills of teaching staff and students need to be improved to increase competitiveness and promote international cooperation" are still relevant. The staff have worked to implement internationalization of studies (ERASMUS exchange is going on successfully). Participation in international scientific and applied projects has not yet been implemented.

The SAR refers to several elements the college addressed (see also Annex 18). The involvement of teaching staff in EU and Latvian-funded continuing education courses increases the qualification and professionalism of lecturers. The methodological materials created by teachers are of high quality, the methods are modern, the forms of work are diverse. Active use of new technologies optimizes and improves the study process. The library's additional opportunities helped to digitize the study process.

Improvement and supplementation of study courses, as well as transformation of programmes into modular ones, contribute to increasing the quality of study programmes. Thus, strengthening the link between educators, students and graduates improves the circulation of information and the efficiency of the study process.

During studies, student drop-out was minimized, as the prestige of specialists in the social welfare sector in society was increased. Information in the diploma and the structure of admission negotiations have been improved. These activities also reduce drop-out ATDs in du DMK.

Lifelong learning has been promoted among both students and educators (among the most popular courses are foreign language, leadership, Alexandra technique, etc.c). In the context of lifelong learning, further studies of graduates were ensured both in DU DMK and other educational institutions. But DU DMC refers to several recommendations that need more funding. This may be also the case for Cooperation in the development of research projects at national and European level

should be encouraged.

The internationalisation dimension of studies and research should be continued to strengthen. The separation of social programmes from other study programmes must be reduced by improving the system of modules, expanding the international exchange of students and teaching staff). The recommendation Nr.9 have been implemented, but further work have to be done. It have added in the text that DU DMC started implementing these.

Few recommendations are not possible to implement without support of policy actors of the field. The most challenging recommendation to implement is the recommendation No.1 (Annex 18 "Overview of the Implementation of the Provided Recommendations in the Direction "Social Welfare" of Daugavpils University Agency "Daugavpils University Daugavpils Medical College") because for it to be implemented, an additional public funding from the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Education and Science or the Daugavpils Municipality is needed. Although the DU DMC is annually submitting a request to these public institutions, the recommendation has not been implemented. It is possible that the DU DMC must cooperate with the industry for stronger lobbying for additional funding and try to find other ways to do so, besides a formal request.

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

Overall, DU DMC has established a well-functioning quality assurance system which includes implementation of recommendations of previous accreditation. For example, all the necessary preconditions for monitoring and maintenance of good quality of studies are provided. Employers, lecturers and students are actively participating in the processes but an expert group believes that graduates could be involved more. There is also an existing complaint and proposal system in place. Few recommendations are not possible to implement without support of policy actors of the field. The most challenging recommendation to implement is the recommendation No.1 (Annex 18 "Overview of the Implementation of the Provided Recommendations in the Direction "Social Welfare" of Daugavpils University Agency "Daugavpils University Daugavpils Medical College") because for it to be implemented, an additional public funding from the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Education and Science or the Daugavpils Municipality is needed. Although the DU DMC is annually submitting a request to these public institutions, the recommendation has not been implemented. It is possible that the DU DMC must cooperate with the industry for stronger lobbying for additional funding and try to find other ways to do so, besides a formal request.

Strengths:

- 1.Strong and active communication between employers, students and lecturers that helps to gain immediate feedback and implement the necessary improvements;
2. Mutual trust between students, staff and employers;
3. Overall, students are satisfied with the study quality maintenance and evaluates it as high;
4. There is an effective complaint and proposal system in place that helps for the quality assurance process.

Weaknesses:

1. Insufficient progress in study process internationalization partly due to the language skills of students and partly teachers;
2. Lack of critical perspective in mutual relationship between employers and academic staff.

Assessment of the requirement [4]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

Most of recommendations are implemented, only few are partly implemented (for. = ex., internalization of studies).

1.7. Recommendations for the Study Field

Short-term recommendations

Restructure the Study quality assurance policy documents for better availability on DU DMC web page.
To develop a mechanism for more involvement of graduates in the quality assurance processes through surveys, questionnaires or any other kind of feedback mechanisms as it is a crucial and substantial part of quality assurance.
Develop an action plan to improve English language skills for teaching staff and students.
Evaluate the possibility to increase of funding regarding applied research activities of students and staff to keep the staff and students active and motivated to participate in projects, including the grow of number of publications and participation in international projects.
To diversify the professional experiences gained through internships, ensure that the students have their internship in institutions they don't already work at.
Evaluate the benefits of closer cooperation in applied research and scientific work with DU and Rezekne Academy of Technologies, for example, in succession of further education of graduates, in preparation of scientific projects and renewal of academic staff composition.

Long-term recommendations

Include clear tasks regarding sustaining and strengthening ties with the industry and labor market in the development plan of the study field.
Develop and incorporate in the planning documents of the college a strategy on balancing two opposite goals: internationalization and localization of the college.
The internationalisation dimension of studies and research must be strengthened. The separation of social programmes from other study programmes must be reduced by improving the system of modules, expanding the international exchange of students and teaching staff).
For involvement of new staff members and students the further internationalization of the study field and strengthen of financial provision (in area of educational policy) is necessary. The financial provision of Social Welfare study field must be improved making more predictable state budget places and increasing funding per student, the improvement of remuneration level of teachers and professionals in labour market. For this objective advisable to start the dialog of the further cooperation with employers, field professional organizations and decision makers in Ministry of Welfare.
Find the solution to strengthen the collaboration between academic staff and students in carrying out applied research projects and practical steps to involve students in the applied research processes.

Educate and motivate the students to use the available data bases with newest publications of industry.

II - "Social Rehabilitation" ASSESSMENT

II - "Social Rehabilitation" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The study programme "Social Rehabilitation" is implemented within the framework of the study field "Social Welfare" (Accreditation Sheet No. 89 of the Study Field "Social Welfare", Decision No. 78-A of the Study Accreditation Commission of 11 April 2018) and provides for the studies and training of professionals in social rehabilitation for people in specific situations to help to increase their quality of life and well-being.

2.1.2. The objectives and tasks of the first level vocational higher education programme "Social Rehabilitation" (41762), as well as the study results obtained during studies correspond to the fourth level of the EQF (Cabinet Regulation No. 322 "Regulations regarding the Classification of Education of Latvia"), which is the level of first level professional higher education studies. The objectives, tasks and results to be achieved are mutually agreed and ensure that the graduates of the study field study programme "Social Rehabilitation" implemented by DU DMC have acquired understanding, knowledge, skills and competences, which are based on the professional standard, the most important concepts, theories and regularities of the social field, will be able to assess the impact of their activities on society and will be motivated for personal and professional growth.

The content of the study programme "Social Rehabilitation" is aligned with the objectives, tasks and results to be achieved, that is, to prepare academically educated and professionally qualified specialists necessary for the Latvian society, state and local government, as well as nongovernmental sector organisations with focus on social rehabilitation of different client groups.

2.1.3. Since the previous assessment of the study field, no changes in the study programme's parameters have been made (the name, the code, the qualification "Social Rehabilitator" have not changed).

2.1.4. The need for social welfare specialists in the labour market is also determined by demographic challenges (ageing population, decrease in birth rate and share of working age population, migration), because the expected labour shortage in the medium term, high rates of poverty and social exclusion in Latgale region and limited state and local government financial resources are the factors that determine the need to plan a social service system that would be focused on the social and maximise economic potential and his integration into society and the labour market. Analysis of the number of specialists in the field of social welfare is carried out by Daugavpils city municipality institution "Social Service" and participates in the study planning process.

The both professions - Social care worker and Social rehabilitator are close to each other. Last tendencies in the society, more profound challenges and rapid changes in the daily lives of various social groups (teenagers, adults, family and work situations, pandemic, stress and societal pressures) that break out of the rhythm of life, especially vulnerable members of society, and require Social rehabilitation specialist help to return to a normal life. That is the factor to the growing

demand of the specialists in Social rehabilitation.

As provided in Annex (21.annex_Statistics_SOCIAL Rehabilitation.docx) there was 20 students (12 of them graduated) in study year 2015/2016 and after the time period actualized in the academic year 2020/2021 there are matriculated 16 students in the study programme "Social rehabilitation", that indicating an increased interest to the study programme.

During the visit the employers representatives confirmed the a demand of specialist in profession, work places offers and free vacancies are available in the labor market for Social rehabilitators.

2.1.5. Not applicable.

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

The study programme "Social Rehabilitation" is being implemented in accordance with the level of education and the national regulation and is fully compliant with the study field. It corresponds to the aims of study field general aims. The objectives and tasks of the study programme , as well as the study results obtained during studies correspond to the fourth level of the EQF. There have no made significant changes in programme parameters from previous period. The study programme and specialists are on demand in labor market.

Strengths:

1. Strong social justification based on the demographic challenges for the study programme;
2. Growing interest to the profession;
3. Good understanding of specific of the Social rehabilitator profession.

Weaknesses:

1. Economic justification for the study programme is skewed towards general social work and not targeted on social rehabilitation.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. The objectives and tasks of the first level vocational higher education programme "Social Rehabilitation"(classification code 41762, study duration 80 CP, 2 years, implementation language Latvian), as well as the study results obtained during studies correspond to the fourth level of the EQF (Cabinet Regulation No. 322 "Regulations regarding the Clasification of Education of Latvia") and comply to Cabinet regulation Nr.141, which is the level of first level professional higher education studies: total amount of study courses - 56 CP, from wich general education courses -20 CP, specialised study courses - 36 CP; internship - 16 CP; qualification paper - 8 CP; 30% of study courses will be practically implemented (Annex 22.2). The study programme is organized in form of study modules, that complies with Law on Higher Education of Latvia p.56.2.

The study programme content includes Module of Entrepreneurship Professional Competences - 6 CP. Civil protection study course requirements are placed in Health Care Module as study corse First aid and civil protection - 1 CP, but environmental protection, as provided during interviews, splitted between some courses (Annex 24.2).

The study programme and its content is designed in accordance with Social Rehabilitators

professional standard, compliance with Profession standard of Social rehabilitator amended in 26 August 2015 <https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/ps0134.pdf> provided (Annex 23.2).

The objectives, tasks and results to be achieved are mutually agreed and ensure that the graduates of the study field study programme "Social Rehabilitation" implemented by DU DMK have acquired understanding, knowledge, skills and competences, which are based on the professional standard, the most important concepts, theories and regularities of the social field, will be able to assess the impact of their activities on society and will be motivated for personal and professional growth.

The content of the study programme "Social Rehabilitation" is aligned with the objectives, tasks and results to be achieved, that is, to prepare academically educated and professionally qualified specialists necessary for the Latvian society, state and local government, as well as non-governmental sector organisations. The SAR shows that feedback with employers shows high-quality training of graduates and the appropriateness of the necessary understanding, knowledge, skills and competences.

The content of the study programme is relevant and contemporary, although a more critical approach how in methods to revision of the topics covered in separate study courses is advised, for example study course "Personality psychology" strays away from contemporary psychology and is based more heavily in the classical Early-to-Mid 20th Century theories, although the study course's aim is to provide students with theoretical AND practical skills implying that the theory is complementary for the students readiness to implement that theory in practice nowadays. Suggestion is to review the content of this study course and to supplement with the criticism of these theories and with actual new ones have developed over the years. The study programme plan (Annex 24.2) shows that most of study courses are one CP. It could fragmentize study process.

Practical skills (e.g. study course "Profession of social worker"), needed in the industry of social rehabilitation are intertwined with more theoretical basis (e.g. study course "Gerontology"). Also the approach to combine different modules serves as a good foundation for a more comprehensive education.

2.2.2. Not applicable.

2.2.3. The study methods are modern, especially those used for acquisition of practical skills. Including seminars in the study process is important, however a lot of the seminar descriptions in the study programme seem unvarying – discussions between students on the given topic and analysis of it. Therefore there is a place for more diversity in the format of seminars, some good examples set by the study course "Inter-professional teamwork".

Including seminars in the study process is important, however a lot of the seminar descriptions in the study programme seem unvarying – discussions between students on the given topic and analysis of it. Therefore there is a place for more diversity in the format of seminars, some good examples set by the study course "Inter-professional teamwork".

Students and graduates are satisfied with study methods but pandemic influence acquisition of practical skills (visit materials).

2.2.4. The internship in study programme in total of 16 CP organized in 2nd semester (6CP) and 4th semester (10 CP) and regulated with Intership regulation rules of College (Annex 27). The internship is organized mostly in close cooperation with regional employers and students are welcomed. If

needed the College helps the students to find the internship places.

Internships in the DU DMK "Social Rehabilitation" (16 CP) are a link between studies and industry, therefore it is of great importance that the college has agreements with institutions from the industry. In order to be more in sync with topical research, introducing students to open science.

After graduation the students mostly work in Latgale region. The possibility to expand the closer collaboration with employers in other regions could be recommended.

2.2.5. Not applicable.

2.2.6. The topics of qualification papers are topical for contemporary situations in institutions and working with individual clients outside institutions. For example, Social rehabilitation and integration for people with hearing impairments; Social rehabilitation for the homeless; Social rehabilitation and integration of former prisoners into society after release from prisons; Social rehabilitation opportunities for children with hearing impairments; Work with people with visual impairments; Provision of social rehabilitation for alcohol addicts;

Social rehabilitation opportunities for victims of domestic violence (SAR, StudyProgram "Social Rehabilitation" (41762), p.3.2.6).

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

The content of the first level vocational higher education programme "Social Rehabilitation" (41762) is relevant and contemporary, although a more critical approach to revision of the topics covered in separate study courses is advised. The objectives and tasks of the study programme, as well as the study results obtained during studies correspond to the fourth level of the EQF. The study programme content meets the needs of the industry, consists study courses such as stress and conflict management, psychology, health care, first aid, communication skills with different client groups, provide practical skills needed in the industry of social rehabilitation are intertwined with theoretical basis.

The internship is organized according with needs of regional employers and college students are welcomed. Students and graduates are satisfied with study methods but pandemic influence acquisition of practical skills. The students qualification papers are topical, but the newest scientific publications are rarely used.

Strengths:

1. The module system approach serves as a good foundation for a comprehensive study process;
2. The study methods are appropriate for study programmes content;
3. The internship is organized according with needs of regional employers.

Weaknesses:

1. Lack of diversity in the practical part of some study courses;
2. The study programme consists of rather fragmented study courses with 1 CP volume, that could be combined (for example, different psychologies);
3. Civil protection 1 CP, Environmental protection not clearly defined.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Not applicable

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. The available resources that are accessible including books in the library, materials onsite in the DU DMC as mentioned in elaborate in the description of resources of the study field , technical equipment and established training centers and technologies that students can access and hands on experience comply with the necessary tools and conditions for the implementation of the study programme “Social Rehabilitation”. The financial provision is also in place and according to the needs of the amount of the students. As during the onsite meeting students indicated - all of the resources, materials needed are always accessible and for their everyday use.

Students have access to modern technologies and it gives them the practical knowledge needed for their internships which are a fundamental part of the study programme of “Social Rehabilitation”. The library provides students with the access to literature and information when needed for any papers that have to be written or information that has to be gathered. The availability of educational literature is fully ensured, but the latest scientific literature is limited, what does not interfere with the study process. Every year the DU DMC updates their methodological material base and improves the study courses of the programme.

It has to be noted that specifically for the use of the study programme of “Social Rehabilitation” the DU DMC has managed to establish a rehabilitation room that is for use by twelve students.

All of the tools of equipment is the same as indicated in the analysis of study field 1.3. Resources part and no other specific tools are used in this study programme.

2.3.2. Not applicable.

2.3.3. The funding available for the study programme is limited to the funding that comes from the state budget funding grants, paid services, DU DMC revenue and Erasmus+ mobility projects as it is the same for the all study field of “Social Welfare”.

In the study programme “Social Rehabilitation”, as provided in SAR, in the time period of 2018 - 2021, the budget has been consistent for two years; in 2018-2019 it did not change and stayed defined to EUR 38 749. In 2020, in this programme there was no funding received and in 2021 it was a bit higher than previously - EUR 41 499. The minimum number of students in the study programme to ensure the profitability of the study programme is 10-15 students.

As stated by the College, they receive funding from the state which has been the same - limited to 10 students. It is the minimum that is needed for the study programme ensuring the profitability which of course would be ideally to change and increase in the future for the benefit of the DU DMC. Of course, it depends on the Ministry of Education in this situation which is rather complicated to change. As an example of financial distribution of resources according to SAR p. 72, can be mentioned academic year 2019/2020 in which the DU DMC received state funding from the state in the amount of EUR 38 749. It was equal to cover costs for 10 students for whom each the costs were EUR 3 874. The expenditure where the state funding went was goods and services that have to be provided for the students, subsidies, grants and rewards.

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

Students have access to modern technologies and it gives them the practical knowledge needed for their internships which are a fundamental part of the study programme of “Social Rehabilitation”.

The study provision, informative provision, material and technical provision and financial provision comply with specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme. All the resources are easily accessible to students for practical activities. The funding for the study programme "Social Rehabilitation" is dependent on the state budget and is tied to a certain number of students (10 in this case), is limited and borders with the minimal necessary funding for the programme to stay somewhat viable.

Strengths:

1. Modernized equipment for practical skill development for students.

Weaknesses:

1. Viability of the study programme "Social Rehabilitation" is dependent on the limited budget from the state that is tied to the stagnant number of students which is low (10 students places are by the state).

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Studies are provided with the appropriate premises, with the necessary equipment, software and financial resources. The number of budget study places are limited.

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1. The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses. All essential fields of study are covered by active and motivated teaching staff. The staff is mainly oriented on international exchange of skills and teaching experiences and much less on scientific research. Survey of graduates show highly rated qualification of teachers (see annex Nr. 10).

2.4.2. The higher College purposefully takes measures so that changes in the composition of the teaching staff do not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the study programme and the compliance of the study programme with the requirements specified in regulatory enactments. The College administration provide preconditions for professional training (meeting with staff members).

The SAR states that during the reporting period, the composition of the academic staff was constantly improving (see Annex Nr.12). Teaching staff members have necessary experience. Most of them - 10 academic staff have been working in the College for 10 and more years, 4 academic staff have worked in the College from 5 to 10 years, but 5 academic staff have started working in the College during the last three years. The SAR shows that during the reporting period the academic staff involved in the programmes are focused on their professional development and continuous improvement and development of the quality of the courses taught. Nine from 19 teaching staff members are elected.

19 teachers are working with 25 students in current period.

2.4.3. Not applicable.

2.4.4. As provided in SAR, each teaching staff member in the study programme implementation according CV has necessary experience (involvement in professional practice) in the study field and the study programme taught courses (see Annex Nr.12).

Academic staff have actively participated in numerous international ERASMUS projects, but only one evidence about non- Erasmus project was found (2020.- projekts "Ilgtspējīgas un saliedētas Latvijas sabiedrības attīstība: risinājumi demogrāfijas un migrācijas izaicinājumiem" (Development of sustainable and cooperative society in Latvia; solutions to demographic and migration challenges).

Main research related activities of the teaching staff are related to participation in different conferences. Teaching staff also have numerous publications in different conference proceedings, but limited publications in independent scientific entities.

Implementation of the study programme regarding teaching staff is organized in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

2.4.5. A mechanism for mutual cooperation of the teaching staff in the implementation of the study programme has been established, it ensures the achievement of the aims of the study programme and the interconnection of study courses within the study programme.

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

The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme. All members of the teaching staff are active and motivated. The SAR states that during the reporting period, the composition of the academic staff was constantly improving. Each staff member has necessary qualification (mostly professional experience in field of social welfare). A mechanism for mutual cooperation of the teaching staff in the implementation of the study programme has been established, it ensures the achievement of the aims of the study programme and the interconnection of study courses within the study programme.

Strengths:

1. Motivated and "close to students" academic staff;
2. Open and educated teaching staff that helps with knowledge gaining;
3. High satisfaction rate of students with their teachers;
4. High rate of graduates satisfaction with study quality;
5. Active international cooperation and many ERASMUS projects;
6. Close link with occupational activities outside the College (knowledge of life).

Weaknesses:

1. Limited experience of scientific research and relevant collaboration projects.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualification of the academic staff and visiting professors, visiting associate professors, visiting docents, visiting lecturers and visiting assistants are fully compliant with the conditions

for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set out in the respective regulatory enactments. It is implemented in accordance with the Law of the Higher Education.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study programme "Social Rehabilitation" complies with the Professional Higher Education Standard (Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of March 20, 2001 No. 141 "Regulations on the State Standard of the First Level Professional Higher Education"). The assessment is based on the Annex 22.2 "Compliance Of the Study Programme "Social Rehabilitation" With the State Education Standard Of Daugavpils University Agency "Daugavpils University Daugavpils Medical College"". This includes complying with the mandatory amount of credit points dedicated to general study courses, internships and qualification paper. Also a module on entrepreneurship professional competences is included as it is required by the regulations No.141. Compliance of the study programme with the Professional Higher Education Standard is described in the Annex 22.2

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard of Social Rehabilitator, amended on 26 August 2015, is described in Annex 23.2 (Sociālā rehabilitētāja profesijas standarts, 2015).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study courses descriptions and the study materials are prepared in Latvian and comply with the requirements set forth in Section 561, Paragraph two and Section 562, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The sample of diploma provided by the DU DMK (in the annex 20 "Annex 20 SR.doc") is missing two first pages of the diploma according to the standard set in the Annex 2 "Diploma of first-level professional higher education" of the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of April 16 2013, No.202 "Procedures for Issuing Documents Certifying National Recognized Higher Education". The rest of the provided pages of the diploma are compliant with the Annex 7 "Diploma Annexes" of the before-mentioned Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of April 16 2013, No.202.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The qualification of the academic staff is compliant with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set out in the respective regulatory enactments, but limited experience of scientific research and relevant collaboration projects is available.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The teaching staff members are proficient in the official language

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of study agreement Annex Nr.9 (example of Standard study Agreement) complies with mandatory provisions

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The college has an agreement (Annex 7.2. "Cooperation Agreement Nr 5.8/8 in case of study termination of studies") with Agency of the University of Latvia – P. Stradins Medical College of the University of Latvia, however the agreement states that the LU PSK students can continue their studies in DU DMC, but not the other way around. Although in the study agreement (with

students) it is stated that in a case like this, studies will be continued in LU PSK.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The college has provided a document signed by the college's director (Annex 8, "PROOF [of the guarantee for a compensation]") as a confirmation that the students are guaranteed compensation for losses to students if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme license is revoked due to actions of the college.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

The college has an agreement (Annex 7.2. "Cooperation Agreement Nr 5.8/8 in case of study termination of studies") with Agency of the University of Latvia – P. Stradins Medical College of the University of Latvia, however the agreement states that the LU PSK students can continue their studies in DU DMC, but not the other way around. Although in the study agreement (with students) it is stated that in a case like this, studies will be continued in LU PSK.

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

The study programme "Social Rehabilitation" is being implemented in accordance with the level of education and the national regulation and is fully compliant with the study field.

The content of the study programme as a whole and the content and provision of individual study courses are organized to ensure the acquisition of necessary knowledge, skills and competencies of Social rehabilitator qualification and are regularly evaluated. The study process is well supplemented by organized internship to train the practical skills of students.

The study provision, informative provision, material and technical provision and financial provision comply with specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme.

Highly professional, open and motivated teaching staff involved. The academic staff is using opportunities for activities for professional development. The administration promote professional development of qualification and knowledge of teaching staff.

The study programme "Social Rehabilitation" is closely linked to the needs of the labor market and focused on the covering of the demand of the specialists in the field.

Strengths:

1. The study programme content meets the needs of the industry, consists study courses such as stress and conflict management, psychology, health care, first aid, communication skills with different client groups, provide practical skills needed in the industry of social rehabilitation are intertwined with theoretical basis;
2. Staff is competent and motivated; close, trustful relations with students and employers;
3. Good modern equipment, strong background of medical knowledge and skills appropriate for social rehabilitators.

Weaknesses:

1. Lack of participation in international applied and scientific projects;
2. Requirements of Civil protection course and Environmental protection course splited between study modules not clearly stated;
3. The agreement with LU Stradins Medical College must be bilateral in any case;
4. The sample of diploma can be specified.

Evaluation of the study programme "Social Rehabilitation"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Social Rehabilitation"

Short-term recommendations

The study courses are too fragmented. At least part of study courses (1CP) could be transformed by combining courses and making more integrated program.

To improve Diploma according "Diploma of first-level professional higher education" of the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of April 16 2013, No.202

To supplement and diversify the practical side of the theory study courses (incorporating more approaches of the seminars - e.g. role-play as a learning strategy).

Revise the economic justification for the study programme, that is skewed towards social work and not social rehabilitation. It need to be linked with development of profession of social rehabilitators.

To review the modules for better transparency of requirements regarding the Civil protection course and Environmental protection course;

To revise the possibilities and close the related agreements of providing students with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution/ college if the implementation of the study programmes is terminated.

Long-term recommendations

To promote cooperation in national and international level with other Higher education institutions for involvement in applied and scientific projects

To improve teaching staff qualification by involvement in applied and scientific research projects .

To involve students in development of applied and scientific projects

II - "Social Care" ASSESSMENT

II - "Social Care" ASSESSMENT

2.1. Indicators Describing the Study Programme

Analysis

2.1.1. The study programme "Social Care" and its overall tasks and goals are compliant with the study field "Social Welfare". Social care is a major part of an overall social welfare, and social care worker (professional qualification awarded when the study programme is successfully completed) are a part of the social welfare system (usually employed in the social care institutions), providing the necessary services in the field of social welfare of clients (SAR p.21).

According to DU DMC, the study programme "Social Care" is implemented within the framework of the study field "Social Welfare" (Accreditation Page No. 89 of the Study Direction "Social Welfare", Decision No. 78-A of the Study Accreditation Commission of 11 April 2018) (SAR p.79).

2.1.2. The study programme is coherent with its name, degree, qualifications, aims, objectives and admission requirements and is compliant with the level of first level professional higher education of the qualification framework (Cabinet Regulation No. 322 "Regulations regarding the Classification of Education of Latvia").

The duration of 2 years (80 credit points) in full time is reasonable and within the framework of the according study level.

The objectives, tasks and results of the study field study programme "Social Care" implemented by DU DMC have acquired understanding, knowledge, skills and competences, are related to the professional standard and necessity of social care and the social field in general, admission rules are regulated and adequate.

The content of the study programme "Social Care" is aligned with the objectives, tasks and results to be achieved, that is, to prepare academically educated and professionally qualified specialists able to comprehensively and deeply analyse social processes from different social work perspectives, are competitive in the labour market as employees, as well as in the administration and management of the non-governmental and private sector, are actively involved in the implementation of social projects (SAR).

2.1.3. Since the previous assessment of the study field, no changes in the study programme's parameters have been made (the name, the code, the qualification "social care worker" have not changed).

2.1.4. Analysis of the number of specialists in the field of social welfare is carried out by Daugavpils city municipality institution "Social Service" demonstrated a growing demand of Social care worker specialists. Last tendencies in the society, the aging of population, changes in the quality of life impose the preconditions for Social care workers' constant work with different age groups, people and children with disabilities and health problems, organizing their integration into society. That is the factor to the growing demand of the specialists in Social care.

Although there is great justification of the study programme "Social Care" because of the growing need in the field for specialists with a certain set of skills, values and communication capabilities, the number of matriculated students is declining over time (Annex 15 "Statistics on students in the reporting period"). This might be correlated to the low prestige and low wages in the field that even the growing need (and therefore certainty of employment possibilities) cannot influence.

2.1.5. Not applicable

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

The study programme "Social Care" and its overall tasks and goals are compliant with the study field "Social Welfare". The formal requirements for the name, degree, and professional qualification to be acquired are met by the study programme. The study programme is well embedded in the study field and the economic and social justification is substantial, however the decreasing number of students might jeopardize the study programme if not enough students show interest in the field and are matriculated in the programme. The number of matriculated students is declining over time due to prestige (rather low) in society and remuneration level despite labour market demand for social care specialists.

Strengths:

1. The study programme is closely linked to the needs of the labor market;
2. Potential and growing demand on specialists in the profession;
3. Deep understanding of the specific of profession is reflected in the study programme.

Weaknesses:

1. Small and even declining number of students in the study programme.

2.2. The Content of Studies and Implementation Thereof

Analysis

2.2.1. The objectives, tasks and results to be achieved are mutually agreed and ensure that the graduates of the study programme "Social Care" of the study field implemented by DU DMK have acquired understanding, knowledge, skills and competences based on the professional standard, the most important concepts, theories and regularities of the social field, will be able to evaluate the impact of their activities on society and will be motivated for personal and professional growth. Study programme tasks are partly mixed by tasks of social worker, less focus on social care specific.

The objectives and tasks of the first level vocational higher education programme "Social Rehabilitation"(classification code 41764, study duration 80 CP, 2 years, implementation language Latvian), as well as the study results obtained during studies correspond to the Cabinet regulation Nr.141 "Regulations on the State Standard of the First Level Professional Higher Education": total amount of study courses - 56 CP, from which general education courses - 20 CP, specialised study courses - 36 CP; internship - 16 CP; qualification paper - 8 CP; 30% of study courses will be practically implemented (Annex 22.1, 24.1). The study programme is organized in form of study modules, that complies with Law on Higher Education of Latvia p.56.2.

The study programme content includes Module of Entrepreneurship Professional Competences - 7 CP. Civil protection study course requirements are placed in Humanities and Natural Sciences Module as study course First aid and civil protection - 1 CP, the environmental protection - in Social Sciences Module as study course Social ecology and environmental protection - 1 CP (Annex 24.1).

The study programme and its content is designed in accordance with Social care worker professional standard, compliance with Profession standard of Social care worker amended in 14 December 2011 <https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/ps0132.pdf> provided (Annex 23.1).

As provided during the interview the content of the study programme Social Care is additionally aligned with the objectives, tasks and results to be achieved according the project of the Professional standard of Social Care worker (agreed 15.12. 2021., in tripartite meeting protocol Nr.7)

<https://registri.visc.gov.lv/profizglitiba/dokumenti/standarti/2017/PS-198.pdf>. Students of the Social Care programme acquire in depth theoretical knowledge and research methods in the field of social welfare, as well as the necessary skills in the application of knowledge, acquire competence in the field of social care. The SAR shows that feedback with employers shows high-quality training of graduates and the appropriateness of the necessary understanding, knowledge, skills and competences.

Mapping of study programme courses according study results reflect some fragmentation of study process due to study courses with only one CP. The obtained competences also are divided in 6 parts what makes difficult to see social care specialists as integrated, with holistic understanding of main purpose of profession.

The demands set in Professional Standard (newest edition 15th December 2021) are taken into account, but some generalization of knowledge and skills could be made for better integration of competence.

2.2.2. Not applicable

2.2.3. The study courses, methods and forms of their implementation are adapted to the requirements of the local labour market with a focus on the socio-economic aspects of Latgale region. The student centered study process intends to implement mutual learning and independent learning of students. Creating of more extensive study courses (more than one CP) could allow a wider range of self-directed learning methods. Teaching methods of practical skills and especially necessary health care elements are provided in high quality due to progressive equipment available in DU DMC. Internship is organized according students best interests and demands of employers.

2.2.4. Regional employers are satisfied with cooperation with DU DMC and welcome each trainee from study programme Social Care. Internship is organized in good level (visit materials). The internship in study programme in total of 16 CP organized in 2nd semester (6CP) and 4th semester (10 CP) and regulated with Intership regulation rules of College (Annex 27). Students write a practice diary, but not a practice report. The practice report can help students evaluate their skills and knowledge gained in practice (visit materials).

The internship is organized mostly in close cooperation with regional employers rarely in other regions and students are welcomed. If needed the College helps the students to find the internship places.

2.2.5. Not applicable

2.2.6. The topics of students graduate papers' are topical, for example, Innovations in working with old and single people as social carers; Social care and integration of children with hearing impairments into society; Risks of work of a social carer and their prevention of working with the elderly in home care; Peculiarities of social care for persons with schizophrenia SAR, StudyProgram "Social Care" (41764), p.3.2.6). In the same time using in papers the latest information sources (from scientific journals and data bases available in DU DMC) could be added value to the results.

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

The objectives and tasks of the first level professional higher education programme "Social Care"(41764), as well as the study results obtained during studies correspond to the fourth level of the EQF and the level of first level professional higher education studies. The objectives, tasks and results to be achieved are mutually agreed and ensure that the graduates of the study programme

"Social Care" of the study field implemented by DU DMK have acquired understanding, knowledge, skills and competences. The content of the study programme as a whole and the content and provision of individual study courses are regularly evaluated. This allows to improve the organization of the study process and solves issues related to the development planning of the programme.

The organization of internship is well established, but cooperation is mostly with employers in region, rarely in other regions. The student centered study process demand is implemented in interaction with students, but the promotion of independent studies is less successful.

Strengths:

1. The content of study programme, study courses are interconnected, corresponds to aim and objectives of study field Social Welfare;
2. The close cooperation with employers in organization of internship.

Weaknesses:

1. Study programme tasks are partly mixed by tasks of social worker, less focus on social care specific;
2. Students' independent work using the latest knowledge of science and practice could be higher.

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

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Not applicable

2.3. Resources and Provision of the Study Programme

Analysis

2.3.1. The available resources that are accessible including books in the library, materials onsite in the DU DMC as mentioned in elaborate in the description of resources of the study field, technical equipment and established training centers and technologies that students can access and hands on experience with comply with the necessary tools and conditions for the implementation of the study programme "Social care". The financial provision is also in place and according to the needs of the amount of the students. As during the onsite meeting students indicated - all of the resources, materials needed are always accessible and for their everyday use.

Students have access to modern technologies and it gives them the practical knowledge needed for their internships which are a fundamental part of the study programme of "Social Care". The library provides students with the access to literature and information when needed for any papers that have to be written or information that has to be gathered. Students rarely use available data DU data bases available in library of DU DMC (visit conversations). Every year the DU DMC updates their methodological material base and improves the study courses of the programme.

All of the tools of equipment is the same as indicated in the analysis of study field 1.3. Resources part and no other specific tools are used in this study programme.

2.3.2. Not applicable.

2.3.3. The funding available for the study programme is limited to the funding that comes from the state budget funding grants, paid services, DU DMC revenue and Erasmus+ mobility projects as it is

the same for the all study field of “Social welfare”.

In the study programme “Social care” the costs per student in 2018-2020 amounted to EUR 3 874, but in 2021 EUR 4 150. In the time period of 2018-2020, the DU DMC provided students with 10 budget places from state funding but in 2021 it was only 7. The state funding received was also smaller in 2021 compared to previous years. If in the time 2018 -2020 it was EUR 38 749 then in 2021 it was significantly smaller - EUR 29 049. If we follow the information that DU DMC has provided in SAR p.89, we see that the minimum number of students in the study programme to ensure the profitability of the study programme is 10-15 students. Probably, it would be worth to start the dialog with responsible institution about increasing the funding for providing more services.

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

The study provision, informative provision, material and technical provision and financial provision comply with specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme. All the resources are easily accessible to students for practical activities. The only concern is the decrease of the number of students in 2021. The funding in the future from the state in order to provide more budget places and prepare more specialists is unpredictable and not well balanced with study programme needs.

Strengths:

1. Modernized equipment for practical skill development for students.

Weaknesses:

1. Imbalance between student number and budget funding to comply with profitability of the study programme requirement.

Assessment of the requirement [6]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Informative provision, material and technical provision and financial provision with the conditions for the implementation of the study programme and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes

2.4. Teaching Staff

Analysis

2.4.1.The qualification of the academic staff involved in the implementation of the first level professional

higher education programme “Social Care” complies with the requirements of the Law on Higher Education Institutions. 16 academic staff are involved in the implementation of this programme.

One academic staff has a doctoral degree in Comparative law (Dr.iur.), 1 – has a scientific degree of

a doctor of Pedagogy (Dr. paed.), 2- are applicants for a scientific degree (doctoral), 1- is studying for a doctorate, 1- has a Master's degree in Social Work, 2 - have a Master's degree in Pedagogy, 1 - has a Master's degree in Computer Science; 2- have a Master's degree in Public Administration, 1- has a Master's degree in Philology, 1- is studying in the Master's study programme "Epidemiology and Medical Statistics" at the University of Latvia, 2- have professional higher education and a profession of a social worker and extensive work experience in the field of social work.

The qualification of the academic staff involved in the implementation of the study programme corresponds to the achievement of the results of the study programme, as well as the realization of the goals and tasks of the College. The qualification of the teaching staff members involved in the implementation of the study programme complies with the requirements for the implementation of the study programme and the requirements set forth in the regulatory enactments, and it enables the achievement of the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme and the relevant study courses.

Survey of graduates show highly rated qualification of teachers (see annex Nr. 10). All academic staff members have necessary professional experience and language skills.

2.4.2. The College purposefully takes measures so that changes in the composition of the teaching staff do not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the study programme and the compliance of the study programme with the requirements specified in regulatory enactments. The College administration provide preconditions for professional training (meeting with staff members).

As provided to the experts, DU DMC works on motivating and supporting the teaching staff to take the initiative and contribute to the excellence and international competitiveness of the College, to participate on activities, conferences, projects and seminars, provide the personal career development. Throughout the year, regular meetings are held with staff by the College administration to discuss and analyse the achievement of individual development objectives with feedback analysis.

2.4.3. Not applicable.

2.4.4. Each staff member according CV has necessary experience (involvement in professional practice) (see Annex Nr.12). to comply with regulatory enactments. All essential fields of study are covered by active and motivated teaching staff. The staff is mainly oriented on international exchange of skills and teaching experiences and much less on scientific research.

Academic staff have actively participated in numerous international ERASMUS+ projects, but only one evidence about non-Erasmus project was found (2020.- projekts "Ilgtspējīgas un saliedētas Latvijas sabiedrības attīstība: risinājumi demogrāfijas un migrācijas izaicinājumiem" (Development of sustainable and cooperative society in Latvia; solutions to demographic and migration challenges)).

Main research related activities of the teaching staff are related to participation in different conferences. Teaching staff also have numerous publications in different conference proceedings, but not in independent scientific entities. The only exception is one of the lecturers who has four independent Russian language publications from the period 2012-2013.

2.4.5. As mentioned in SAR and proofed during the visit the cooperation between lecturers in implementing modules in the programme "Social Care" is well organized, highly valued, as it is a cooperation form between theorists, practitioners and employers.

At the time of submission of the SAR the relation between teaching staff and students is – 10 students and 16 lecturers, but the lecturers are involved in the implementation of other study programmes in the field and in DU DMC and adequate for study programme.

Expert stated, that the mechanism for mutual cooperation of the teaching staff in the implementation of the study programme has been established, it ensures the achievement of the aims of the study programme and the interconnection of study courses within the study programme.

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

The qualification of the academic staff involved in the implementation of the first level professional higher education programme "Social Care" complies with the requirements of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

The College purposefully takes measures so that changes in the composition of the teaching staff do not negatively affect the quality of the implementation of the study programme and the compliance of the study programme with the requirements specified in regulatory enactments. The College administration provides preconditions for professional training (meeting with staff members). Each staff member according to CV has necessary experience (involvement in professional practice) or involvement in research. The College provides preconditions for cooperation between teachers in exchange of scientific knowledge and practical skills.

Strengths:

1. The qualification of teaching staff meets requirements of study program. They are experienced, motivated, enthusiasts of their field;
2. Open and educated teaching staff with deep professional involvement in the field that helps with knowledge gaining.

Weaknesses:

1. Lack of participation in International network, projects, partly compensated by participation in the ERASMUS+ program.

Assessment of the requirement [7]

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Study program "Social Care" is provided with the help of 16 lecturers (on the 1st semester). Two persons from all the staff have PhD or relevant qualification, three are currently PhD students, 7 have Master's degrees (from different academic fields), one is studying in the Master's study programme, two have professional higher education and a profession of a social worker and extensive work experience in the field of social.

Many persons from the teaching staff participate actively in professional work outside the College as sworn advocate, head of the association "Red Cross", social worker of Augšdaugava region, health promotion specialist, of Daugavpils City Education Department, as practising psychologists, an orphan's court specialist, or at the Children's Health Centre, as a physician assistant). This practical experience adds knowledge about practical Social work and care and is highly appreciated.

2.5. Assessment of the Compliance

Requirements

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study programme "Social Care" complies with the Professional Higher Education Standard (Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of March 20, 2001 No. 141 "Regulations on the State Standard of the First Level Professional Higher Education"). The assessment is based on the Annex 22.1 "Compliance Of the Study Programme "Social Carer" With the State Education Standard Of Daugavpils University Agency "Daugavpils University Daugavpils Medical College"". Compliance of the study program with the Professional Higher Education Standard are described in the Annex 22.1.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Compliance of the qualification to be acquired upon completion of the study programme with the professional standard or the requirements for professional qualification is described in Annex 23.1

programme with the professional standard of Social Care Worker, agreed on 14 December 2011 and with the project of professional standard, amended on 15 December 2021, is described in Annex 23.1 (Sociālā aprūpētāja profesijas standarts, 2011, 2021).

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The study courses descriptions and the study materials are prepared in Latvian and comply with the requirements set forth in Section 561, Paragraph two and Section 562, Paragraph two of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The sample of diploma provided by the DU DMK (in the Annex 27 "27_ANNEX_Sample_Of_The_Diploma_Study_Programme_Social_Care") is compliant to the standard set in the Annex 2 "Diploma of first-level professional higher education" of the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of April 16 2013, No.202 "Procedures for Issuing Documents Certifying National Recognized Higher Education".

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Not applicable

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The teaching staff members are proficient in the official language

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

Based on the sample provided by the DU DMC (Annex 32 "Study Agreement Sample", the agreement complies with the mandatory provisions to be included in the study agreement (Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of January 23, 2007 No. 70 "Mandatory Provisions to be Included in the Study Agreement").

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

A college has an agreement (Annex 7.1. The annex 7.1. "Cooperation Agreement Nr 5.8/8 in case of study termination of studies) with Agency of the University of Latvia – P. Stradins Medical College of the University of Latvia, however the agreement states that the LU PSK students can continue their studies in DU DMC, not the other way around. Although in the study agreement (with students) it is stated that in a case like this, studies will be continued in LU PSK.

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

Assessment of compliance: Fully compliant

The college has provided a signed document by the director (Annex 8, "PROOF [of the guarantee for a compensation]") as a confirmation that the students are guaranteed compensation for losses to students if the study programme is not accredited or the study programme license is revoked due to actions of the college.

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

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

Assessment of compliance: Not relevant

Assessment of the requirement [8]

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

Assessment of compliance: Partially compliant

A college has an agreement (Annex 7.1. The annex 7.1. "Cooperation Agreement Nr 5.8/8 in case of study termination of studies) with Agency of the University of Latvia – P. Stradins Medical College of the University of Latvia, however the agreement states that the LU PSK students can continue their studies in DU DMC, not the other way around. Although in the study agreement (with students) it is stated that in a case like this, studies will be continued in LU PSK.

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

The study programme "Social Care" is being implemented in accordance with the level of education and the national regulation and is fully compliant with the study field.

The content of the study programme as a whole and the content and provision of individual study courses are organized to ensure the acquisition of necessary knowledge, skills and competencies of Social care worker qualification and are regularly evaluated. The study process is well supplemented by organized internship to train the practical skills of students.

The study provision, informative provision, material and technical provision and financial provision comply with specific features and the conditions for the implementation of the study programme.

Highly professional teaching staff involved, many persons from the teaching staff participate actively in professional work outside the College. This practical experience add knowledge about practical Social work and care and is highly appreciated.

The academic staff is involved in activities for professional development. The administration promote professional development of qualification and knowledge of teachers.

The study programme "Social Care" is closely linked to the needs of the labor market and focused on the covering of the demand of the specialists in the field.

Strengths:

1. Deep understanding of the specific of profession is reflected in the study programme;
2. Teaching staff is competent and motivated;
3. Close, trustful relations with students and employers;
4. Modernized equipment for practical skill development for students, strong background of medical

knowledge and skills appropriate for social care worker.

Weaknesses:

1. Lack of participation in international applied and scientific projects;
2. The agreement with LU Stradins Medical College about continuing the studies must be bilateral in any case;
3. Imbalance between student number and budget funding to comply with profitability of the study programme requirement.

Evaluation of the study programme "Social Care"

Evaluation of the study programme:

Good

2.6. Recommendations for the Study Programme "Social Care"

Short-term recommendations

For better students' independent work and use of the latest knowledge of science and practice necessary to integrate part of study courses in larger units (at least 2CP).

For the purposes of bettering the study programme and identifying any possible flaws of the study programme, in the internship surveys aggregate the data by the study programme, not college or study field.

Promote participation of academic staff in international and national level professional and scientific networks by planning next steps. To elaborate plan how to improve teachers' English language skills for better international cooperation in applied and scientific projects.

To revise the possibilities and close the related agreements of providing students with opportunities to continue their education in another study programme or another higher education institution/ college if the implementation of the study programmes is terminated.

Long-term recommendations

Increase the international collaboration (especially of the academic staff) by increasing the involvement in more international networks (international conferences outside of Latvia), projects and overall knowledge sharing, even beyond Erasmus+ programme.

Together with the local municipality and the industry develop a plan to increase the number of students in the programme to reach a sufficient economic justification of the programme in the aspect of sufficient number of students.

To cooperate with responsible institutions, professional organizations and other influential political actors for better financial provision of the study programme.

Promote involvement of students in development of applied and scientific projects

III - Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field and the Relevant Study Programmes

III - Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field and the Relevant Study

Programmes

Assessment of the Requirements for the Study Field

Requirements	Requirement Evaluation		Comment
R1 - Pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 2.1 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions, the higher education institution/ college shall ensure continuous improvement, development, and efficient performance of the study field whilst implementing its internal quality assurance system:	Fully compliant		DU DMC works according Law on Higher Education institutions. There is continuous improvement of cooperation between administration, academic staff and students. There is an existing Internal Quality Assurance in place and it is effectively working in order to develop and improve the study field.
R2 - Compliance of scientific research and artistic creation with the level of development of scientific research and artistic creation (if applicable)		Partially compliant	Positive attitude toward scientific activities from administration and staff, but a lack of practical steps to involve more students and/or involve students more deeply in the scientific and applied research processes.
R3 - The cooperation implemented within the study field with various Latvian and foreign organizations ensures the achievement of the aims of the study field.		Partially compliant	DU DMC cooperates with Utena College abroad, DU, Rezekne Academy of Technologies and other Colleges and Universities that ensures that the cooperation among foreign and Latvian organizations with DU DMC takes place. The cooperation with professional organizations and trade unions of the field can be strengthen.
R4 - Elimination of deficiencies and shortcomings identified in the previous assessment of the study field, if any, or implementation of the recommendations provided.		Partially compliant	Most of recommendations are implemented, only few are partly implemented (for. = ex., internalization of studies).

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

No.	Study programme	R5	R6	R7	R8	Evaluation of the study programme (excellent, good, average, poor)
1	Social Rehabilitation (41762)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Good
2	Social Care (41764)	Not relevant	Fully compliant	Fully compliant	Partially compliant	Good

The Dissenting Opinions of the Experts

There are not dissent in opinions of experts