

Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences



Assessment Report

for the Application of Riga Stradins University, Latvia, for the Accreditation of the Study Program “Medicine”

according to the “European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area“ in consideration of “Basic Medical Education WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement”

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1 Basic Information

1.1 Overview study program

University	Riga Stradins University, Latvia	
Title of the study program	"Medicine"	
Degree awarded	Medical Doctor (MD)	
Language of studies	English	
Period of education	12 semester or 6 years	
Credit Points (CP) according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)	360	
Workload	In total hours	9.600
	Contact hours	4.601
	Practice hours	900
	Self-study hours	4.099
Implemented in (year)	1950	
Number of available places per year	624 (2024/2025 academic year)	
Number of enrolled students	3.884 (as of October 1 2024)	
Number of graduates	468 graduates (2023/2024 academic year)	

1.2 Expert Group

The following experts were appointed by the Accreditation Commission of AHPGS:

- Leopold Beham, Technical University of Munich, Germany
- Prof. Dr. Stephanie Herbstreit, MME, Essen University Hospital, Germany
- Dr. Christian Schirlo, MME, University of Lucerne, Switzerland
- Prof. Dr. Marjo Wijnen-Meijer, Dresden University of Technology, Germany

The curricula vitae of the experts and a written declaration of independence are available. Representatives from the head office of AHPGS accompanied the expert

group.

1.3 Procedure

The Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences (hereinafter AHPGS) was commissioned by Riga Stradins University (hereinafter the University) to accredit the study program “Medicine” (Medical Doctor (MD)).

The procedure is carried out according to the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” in consideration of the “Basic Medical Education WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement” (BME Standards 2020), established by the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME).

The expert group met on November 24, 2025, for preliminary talks prior to the on-site visit. They discussed the submitted application documents and the results of the written evaluation as well as questions that had been raised. Furthermore, they prepared the plan of the on-site visit at the University.

The on-site-visit was carried out on December 1-2, 2025, according to the previously agreed schedule. Representatives from the head office of AHPGS accompanied the expert group.

In the course of the on-site visit, experts conducted discussions with the University management, representatives of the Faculty of Medicine, representatives of the International Department, Study Quality Department, Centre for Educational Growth and Academic Affairs Department, and the teaching staff of the program “Medicine” as well as with students currently studying in the program and alumni. Furthermore, they inspected the learning premises, such as the Medical Education Technology Centre, the Riga East University Hospital, and the lecture halls of the University. Moreover, experts had the opportunity to see the equipment and the capacity of the laboratories. In the course of the on-site visit, the University submitted the following additional documents at the request of the experts:

- Annual Report 2023/2024
- Description of the Study Program “Medicine”
- Drop-Out Data
- Process Description 34

The documents submitted by the University, the experts’ feedback to the documents, the observations made during the on-site visit, and the results of discussions with the representatives of the University and the Faculty of Medicine serve as the basis for the statements made in the report.

The expert report is structured according to the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area“ in consideration of the “Basic Medical Education WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement”. The study program will be described and analyzed in a comprehensive manner below. After the announcement of the accreditation decision, the report including the decision will be published.

2 Overview

2.1 Profile of the University

Riga Stradins University (RSU) is a state-founded higher education and research institution operating under the supervision of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia. Since its founding in 1950, RSU has been closely integrated into the national healthcare system and is the most important higher education institution in the health sector in Latvia, ensuring the development of necessary competences and making a significant contribution to the economy of Latvia, such as training healthcare professionals and forming a significant part of higher education exports. Since 1998, RSU has also become a key institution in advancing the field of social sciences in Latvia.

Riga Stradins University currently has five faculties: Pharmacy, Medicine, Social Sciences, Health and Sports Sciences and Dentistry. Additionally, the RSU houses the Department of Doctoral Studies, with doctoral study programs in health care and social sciences, and the Department of Residency. RSU offers 35 undergraduate and 31 postgraduate study programs.

Over the past five years, the number of students at Riga Stradins University (RSU) has grown from 8.238 in the academic year 2016/2017 to 12.474 in 2024/2025. Among Latvian higher education institutions, RSU has a leading role in attracting international students. Their share of the total student body has risen significantly—from 5,2% in 2010/2011 to 27% in 2024/2025. In the academic year 2024/2025, RSU enrolled 3.105 international students from 87 countries worldwide. Most of them come from Germany and the Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Norway, and Finland), representing 18% and 59%, respectively, while students from other countries each account for less than 5%.

2.2 Profile of the Program

The main objective of the medical education study program offered at the Faculty of Medicine of Riga Stradins University (RSU) is to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for the qualification of a medical doctor and to

prepare students for independent professional activities and further postgraduate training. The study program requires the obtainment of 360 credit points (CP) according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). One CP corresponds to 26,6 hours of student workload.

The total workload of the program constitutes 9,600 hours, of which 4,601 are contact hours, 900 are training (practice) hours, and 4,099 are hours of independent study. It is a full-time study program with a regular duration of six years (12 semesters). The program curriculum consists of 65 modules, of which 60 are obligatory and five are elective. The program curriculum consists of a structured sequence of courses covering basic, pre-clinical, clinical, and social science subjects. Each student also completes elective studies that allow for individual specialization within the medical field.

Admission requirements for the program include a completed secondary education and sufficient grades in Biology, Chemistry, and English (and optionally Mathematics or Physics) as specified in the RSU Admission Regulations. Applicants must submit the required documents and participate in a competitive selection process. Students are informed about the tuition fees in advance. RSU determines tuition fees separately for Latvian and international students, and this information is published annually on the University's website. Admission takes place once per year during the summer semester intake for Latvian students, and twice per year, in August and February, for international students.

Upon completion of the study program, students are awarded the professional qualification "Medical Doctor (MD)". The study program Medicine was implemented in 1950, but the last international accreditation was received in 2024. There are a total of 624 study places; of these 210 are state funded and 40 full fee study places for local students (Latvian track) and 374 are full fee study places for international students (English track).

3 Evaluation

3.1 Mission & Strategy

ESG 1.1: Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.

WFME 1.1: The institution has a public statement that sets out its values, priorities, and goals.

Summary

Riga Stradins University (RSU) is a state-founded higher education and research institution operating under the supervision of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia. Its mission is to train highly qualified healthcare and social science professionals for the European and global community and to ensure that the knowledge, skills, and competencies acquired during studies meet the highest requirements of the European Union and form a solid basis for lifelong learning. The University defines itself as a student-centered, research-driven institution with a strong focus on healthcare, social sciences, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

The mission statement is embedded in the RSU Development Strategy 2022–2027, which serves as the central strategic framework for institutional planning and quality assurance. The strategy outlines four main priorities:

- (1) advancing high-quality education through innovation and international collaboration;
- (2) strengthening research excellence and interdisciplinary work;
- (3) fostering engagement with healthcare institutions, employers, and policymakers to ensure societal impact; and
- (4) supporting a diverse and inclusive academic environment that encourages lifelong learning. These priorities are operationalized through annual objectives and performance indicators at the faculty, departmental, and individual staff levels.

RSU's quality management system is based on the international ISO 9001 standard (Annex 14). Certification under this standard confirms the systematic and consistent application of a quality assurance policy covering higher education, lifelong learning, and research. The quality policy is aligned with the institutional mission and strategy and is publicly available on the University website. It emphasizes a student-centered

approach, partnership, quality improvement, and the integration of research and practice-based education.

According to RSU, its mission and values are reflected in daily operations and management processes. Annual reviews between staff and supervisors link individual objectives to the University's strategic goals. Updates to the strategic plan are communicated across the institution, and progress is evaluated through regular quality audits and reporting mechanisms. The mission's societal role is emphasized through RSU's active participation in public health initiatives, partnerships with hospitals and clinics, and contributions to policy development.

The institution-wide quality management system is coordinated by the Quality Management Office, which operates under the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs. Faculties, including the Faculty of Medicine, are responsible for implementing the QA principles within their respective programs. Quality management at the faculty level includes regular evaluation of study courses, analysis of feedback from students and teaching staff, and documentation of follow-up measures.

According to RSU, the preparation and implementation of the QA policy involved broad participation from internal stakeholders. Members of the academic community, administrative staff, and student representatives contributed to the formulation and ongoing revision of the quality management framework. The RSU Students' Association participates actively in quality discussions through institutional councils and committees. External stakeholders – such as representatives of hospitals, professional associations, employers, and graduates – are regularly consulted in the development of study programs and in the review of quality assurance procedures. The strategy is approved by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education and Science, confirming its alignment with national regulatory standards and the higher education policy of Latvia.

RSU's commitment to diversity, equality, and inclusion is formalized through institutional documents such as the Basic Principles of Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion and the Gender Equality Action Plan (linked in the self-evaluation report (SER)). These frameworks establish mechanisms to promote equity and inclusion in academic and administrative processes. The University also supports students with functional limitations through dedicated accessibility policies, guidelines, and support services.

Academic ethics and integrity are promoted through training modules developed by the Center for Educational Growth. These modules address academic ethics, gender-based violence prevention, and respectful communication. An Ethics Committee and

a formal whistleblowing system are in place to handle ethical complaints, ensuring confidentiality and protection for all involved parties.

The mission statement is publicly available in both Latvian and English and is disseminated through the RSU website and strategic communication channels. Its integration into the institution's management, quality assurance, and strategic planning processes ensures coherence between institutional goals, educational practices, and community engagement.

Judgement

Riga Stradins University has a clearly articulated and publicly available mission statement that defines its core values, priorities, and institutional goals, according to the experts. The mission is embedded in the RSU Development Strategy 2022–2027 and functions as a central reference framework for institutional planning, management, and quality assurance processes. The mission is publicly disseminated in Latvian and English and is systematically integrated into the University's governance and operational structures. The University management describes on site that the proportion of international students is very high at RSU, and therefore internationalization is an integral part of the University's strategy.

RSU has established a formal quality assurance policy that is aligned with its mission and strategic objectives and forms an integral part of institutional management. The quality assurance policy is publicly available and implemented through a structured quality management system based on ISO 9001. Responsibilities and processes for quality assurance are clearly defined at both institutional and faculty levels, supported by regular internal audits, reporting mechanisms, and documented follow-up measures.

Internal stakeholders, including academic staff, administrative staff, and students, are actively involved in the development, implementation, and continuous review of the quality assurance framework through established institutional structures. External stakeholders, such as healthcare institutions, employers, professional bodies, and graduates, are regularly consulted in the development of study programs and in quality-related processes, ensuring relevance to societal and professional needs.

The ambitious goals clearly formulated in the “RSU Development Strategy 2022-2027” have already been partially implemented, or initial steps have been taken toward this goal. In the expert's opinion, the conditions for implementation are promising.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

3.2 Curriculum and Learning Outcomes

ESG 1.2: Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programs. The programs should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a program should be clearly specified and communicated, and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and consequently to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

WFME 2.1: The institution has defined the learning outcomes that students should have achieved by graduation, as well as the intended learning outcomes for each part of the course.

WFME 2.2: The institution has documented the overall organisation of the curriculum, including the principles underlying the curriculum model employed and the relationships among the component disciplines.

WFME 2.3: a) The institution can justify inclusion in the curriculum of the content needed to prepare students for their role as competent junior doctors and for their subsequent further training.

b) Content in at least three principal domains is described: basic biomedical sciences, clinical sciences and skills, and relevant behavioural and social sciences.

WFME 2.4: The institution employs a range of educational methods and experiences to ensure that students achieve the intended outcomes of the curriculum.

Summary

The "Medicine" study program at RSU is a six-year full-time program leading to the qualification of Medical Doctor (MD). The program comprises 360 ECTS credits. The workload of 9,600 hours is divided into 4,601 contact hours, 900 practice hours, and 4,099 hours of self-study. Graduates of the program have the opportunity to either enter into the residency or continue in a doctoral program.

The program is organized according to the requirements of the national regulatory framework, including Cabinet Regulations No. 305 (13 June 2023) "Regulations on the National Standard for Professional Higher Education", No. 617 (24 September 2024) "Provisions on the Competence of Medical Practitioners and Medical Students in Medical Education Programmes", the Law on Regulated Professions and the

Recognition of Professional Qualifications, and the Occupational Standard for Medical Doctor.

The learning outcomes of the study program “Medicine” are explicitly formulated and include twelve statements that cover the competencies expected from graduates. These outcomes describe that students demonstrate profound knowledge and understanding of the human body and its functions, can recognize deviations from normality, explain disease mechanisms, and make prognoses about disease progression and outcomes. Graduates can plan and organize patient care, select appropriate treatment methods, work collaboratively in interdisciplinary settings, and communicate ethically and legally with patients and colleagues. They are expected to apply evidence-based treatment methods, use modern diagnostic and therapeutic tools, and continuously develop their competencies through self-directed learning and the use of simulation-based education. Furthermore, graduates are required to integrate knowledge from different fields of medicine, apply it in research, and contribute to the development of new diagnostic or therapeutic methods.

According to the SER, the learning outcomes were developed in cooperation between the program director, members of the Faculty Council, the Centre for Educational Growth, and student representatives. Heads of courses adapted their course content to the occupational standard for medical doctors and are responsible for ensuring that their courses contribute to the program’s overall aims. Before the start of each academic year, the content of all study courses is updated in line with the latest scientific developments and literature.

The program’s aim is to provide students with the knowledge, skills, competencies, and ethical attitudes required for the profession of a medical doctor and for science-based, modern healthcare practice. The learning outcomes are structured so that knowledge, skills, and competencies are aligned across courses and form a coherent system that corresponds to the professional standard and legal regulations.

The program is structured to provide a sequential and integrated learning experience. The curriculum includes basic biomedical sciences, clinical sciences, and behavioral and social sciences. The logical order of study courses ensures that knowledge is progressively developed and applied to clinical practice. The study plan can be found in Annex 2.

The six-year study program is structured into four phases of study. Years 1 and 2 focus on the basic subjects. Basic medical disciplines are introduced to provide a general theoretical foundation for understanding the human body and its normal functions. The curriculum covers several disciplines from different fields of science (anatomy,

histology, embryology, molecular biology, physiology, medical chemistry, and biochemistry), as well as the humanities (philosophy, psychology, and languages).

In Year 3, preclinical subjects are taught. Medical disciplines related to pathological conditions and processes are introduced alongside the fundamentals of clinical practice. The aim is to develop an in-depth understanding of the human body under pathological conditions and to build skills for examining these abnormalities. The curriculum includes subjects that broaden the perspective on diagnosis and disease investigation, such as pathology, radiology, pharmacology, introduction to clinical medicine, genetics, basics of clinical care, basics of rehabilitation, clinical microbiology, and general surgery.

In Years 4 and 5, clinical disciplines are acquired. Clinical disciplines are introduced during this phase of study, which primarily takes place in medical institutions within real clinical settings. This stage focuses on developing both theoretical knowledge and practical skills related to patient care across nearly all fields of medicine. Practical skills are further enhanced through simulation-based training at the RSU Medical Education Technology Centre (METC).

Year 6 is a clinical-practical study year consisting of three placement rotation cycles in medical institutions, covering internal diseases, invasive medicine, and an elective discipline. This stage prepares students for general medical practice under the supervision of qualified specialists and supports informed decision-making when choosing a suitable medical specialty for residency. At the conclusion of the program, students must defend their research work and pass the national examination.

From the fourth year onward, the focus of the curriculum shifts to clinical sciences. Students complete courses in *Internal Medicine, Surgery, Pediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Neurology, Psychiatry*, and other clinical disciplines. Clinical placements are an essential component of the curriculum. Each student is required to complete six weeks of clinical practice in internal medicine and six weeks in surgery. Clinical placements are conducted in hospitals and healthcare institutions with which RSU has formal agreements. Placement sites are selected based on compliance with University standards and are regularly reviewed by the Faculty's Clinical Placement Coordinator. Students provide feedback on their clinical placements, which is discussed with the hospitals to identify and implement improvements.

According to RSU, the key aspect of clinical placement is the fair and balanced distribution of students across clinical sites and study course locations. This ensures that multiple students are not assigned to the same internship supervisor at the same time. The goal is to provide each student with an individualized, full-time training

experience during their internship (SER 2.3.4)

The curriculum also includes study courses in behavioral and social sciences, such as *Bioethics and Medical Sociology*, which provide students with an understanding of the social and ethical dimensions of healthcare, including how social stratification, gender, class, ethnicity, and age influence health outcomes and healthcare access. These courses are placed in the early years of study to foster the development of ethical awareness and professional values from the beginning of the program.

A course in *Digital Health and Health Data Basics* introduces students to the generation, storage, and use of digital health data. This course addresses the increasing role of digitalization in healthcare and prepares students to work with health information systems and technologies.

According to national regulations, a minimum of 30 credit points must be completed in humanities, and RSU includes courses such as *History of Medicine and Life Sciences* and *Medical Terminology in English and Latin* to meet this requirement. In addition, students are required to complete elective clinical placements, where they may choose a clinical field of personal interest, often as preparation for residency training.

The study process in the Medicine program combines lectures, seminars, laboratory work, clinical practice, and independent study. Teachers use explanatory and demonstrative methods in lectures and laboratory work, where students observe and then perform tasks independently. Independent work allows students to explore new information and develop problem-solving approaches. Group learning and discussions are used to enhance cooperation skills and critical thinking.

Educational methods are selected based on the content of the study courses and are described in detail in course descriptions. These descriptions are developed and approved at departmental meetings and made available in the RSU e-studies system. This ensures a unified methodological approach and transparency in teaching. The use of situational tasks, simulation-based learning, and work with standardized patients is emphasized, particularly in clinical courses. These methods allow students to practice clinical judgement and communication in realistic conditions.

Students also conduct research under the supervision of faculty members. Research courses such as *Introduction to Research, Research Methodology and Epidemiology*, and *Biostatistics* provide the necessary theoretical background. Each student must prepare and defend a scientific paper before graduation. The topics are aligned with RSU's research priorities and are reviewed by departmental committees.

The curriculum content is determined by the program director in cooperation with

course heads and approved by the Faculty and Dean's Councils. The process of curriculum management includes continuous monitoring and periodic revisions. The program uses a learning outcome mapping system integrated into RSU's information infrastructure. This system allows for detailed tracking of course content, outcomes, and assessment methods to ensure alignment with the overall program objectives and external standards.

Before each academic year, course supervisors review and update the course materials to reflect advances in medical science. Coordination between departments helps prevent content overlap, and student feedback is considered when revising the curriculum. The Faculty of Medicine maintains close communication with clinical partners to ensure that the curriculum meets current healthcare needs and supports student employability.

The e-studies system supports the organization and transparency of the study process. Course descriptions, learning outcomes, and assessment criteria are placed on this platform and are accessible to students before the start of each semester. This ensures that students are informed about the structure, requirements, and expectations of each course in advance.

Judgement

The study program "Medicine" at Riga Stradins University is clearly structured, formally approved, and aligned with the relevant national regulatory framework and occupational standards for medical doctors. The qualification awarded ("Medical Doctor", MD), the program duration, workload, and progression opportunities are explicitly defined and transparently communicated. The program corresponds to the appropriate level of the national qualifications' framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

The institution has clearly defined intended learning outcomes at both program and course levels. The twelve program-level learning outcomes comprehensively describe the knowledge, skills, competencies, and professional attitudes expected of graduates upon completion of the program. These outcomes are aligned with the occupational standard for medical doctors and were developed through a structured process involving academic leadership, educational support units, and student representatives. Responsibility for aligning course content with the overall program outcomes is clearly assigned to course heads.

The experts inquire about the differences between the Latvian and English track of the study program. According to the University, the teaching is organized separately, but

the content of the two tracks is identical. The experts suggest to organize a few courses together to improve the exchange between the two student groups.

The overall organization of the curriculum is well documented and based on clearly articulated educational principles. The curriculum follows a sequential, phase-based structure that supports progressive learning, integration of knowledge, and increasing clinical exposure. The spiral curriculum is visible, and the practical parts are taught in the simulation center. According to the university, the students start with nursing tasks and continue to specialties with the progression of the study program. The relationships between basic biomedical sciences, preclinical subjects, and clinical disciplines are explicitly defined and coherently organized across the six years of study. The principles underlying the curriculum model and the interrelationships among its components are transparent.

In talks with the University, it became clear that outpatient care is not yet the focus of the curriculum. The University intends to incorporate regularly outpatient care with patient encounters in the near future, which the experts welcome and recommend.

The inclusion of curriculum content is justified by the stated aim of preparing graduates for their role as competent doctors and for further postgraduate training. The curriculum covers all required principal domains, including basic biomedical sciences, clinical sciences and skills, and relevant behavioral and social sciences. The progressive shift from theoretical foundations to extensive clinical practice, including supervised placements and simulation-based training, demonstrates coherence with professional expectations.

The organization and content of clinical placements are further discussed on site. The curriculum includes substantial and progressively structured clinical placements, particularly in the later phases of the study program. From the fourth year onwards, students are systematically exposed to real clinical environments, culminating in a full clinical-practical sixth year consisting of supervised placement rotations in internal medicine, in surgical diseases, and in an elective discipline according to the study plan. Mandatory clinical placements in internal medicine and surgical diseases are clearly defined in terms of duration and learning context. According to the University, meetings between preclinical staff and clinical staff are currently organized in a rather informal way. The exchange is lively, but experts nevertheless recommend institutionalizing it in order to introduce a certain degree of regularity.

Clinical placements are conducted in hospitals and healthcare institutions with which RSU has formal cooperation agreements. Placement sites are selected according to institutional standards and are subject to regular review. After visiting the Riga East

University Hospital and the associated newly created intensive care unit and daily care surgery, the experts recommend integrating the premises as a possible elective clinical placement. The prerequisites for this are already in place. The organization of placements aims at a balanced distribution of students across clinical sites and supervisors, supporting individualized learning experiences. Student feedback on clinical placements is collected and discussed with clinical partners, contributing to ongoing quality enhancement of the practical training component. The experts further recommend using the facilities and possibilities of different study programs at the University or at the hospital to integrate interprofessional learning experiences (learning with each other, about each other or from each other).

The experts inquire about the practical placements for international students. According to the University and the students on site, many international students decide to complete the clinical placement in their home countries. However, students are generally free to decide for themselves where they want to complete the clinical placements as long as the criteria for clinical partners defined by the University are fulfilled. Students greatly appreciate this flexibility. The RSU is responsible for the content of the practical placements, and communication with practice partners is very close. According to the University, some courses like military medicine can only be completed at the University in Riga and not with other practice partners due to the content of the course. The state examination is also held at the RSU.

The program employs a broad range of educational methods and learning experiences to support achievement of the intended learning outcomes. These include lectures, seminars, laboratory work, clinical placements, simulation-based education, work with standardized patients, independent study, group learning, and research activities. Educational methods are systematically documented in course descriptions, approved at the departmental level, and made transparently available to students through the e-studies system. The alignment of teaching methods with course content and learning outcomes supports effective learning and skills development.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

3.3 Student-centered Learning, Teaching and Assessment

ESG 1.3: Institutions should ensure that the programs are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.

WFME 3.1: Assessment policy and system

- a) The institution has a policy that describes its assessment practices.
- b) It has a centralised system for ensuring that the policy is realised through multiple, coordinated assessments that are aligned with its curriculum outcomes.
- c) The policy is shared with all stakeholders.

WFME 3.2: Assessment in support of learning

- a) The institution has in place a system of assessment that regularly offers students actionable feedback that identifies their strengths and weaknesses, and helps them to consolidate their learning.
- b) These formative assessments are tied to educational interventions that ensure that all students have the opportunity to achieve their potential.

WFME 3.3: Assessment in support of decision-making

- a) The institution has in place a system of assessment that informs decisions on progression and graduation.
- b) These summative assessments are appropriate to measuring course outcomes.
- c) Assessments are well-designed, producing reliable and valid scores.

WFME 3.4: Quality control

- a) The institution has mechanisms in place to assure the quality of its assessments.
- b) Assessment data are used to improve the performance of academic staff, courses, and the institution.

Summary

The study program “Medicine“ at Riga Stradins University is implemented according to the principles of student-centered learning. Teaching and assessment methods are designed to ensure that students are active participants in the study process and that learning outcomes are achieved in line with national and institutional requirements.

According to RSU, the study process is organized to respect the diversity of students and their learning needs. Before starting a course, lecturers assess students’ prior knowledge and adjust teaching methods accordingly. Depending on the content, instruction may include lectures, seminars, laboratory work, clinical practice, and independent study. In theoretical subjects, explanatory and discussion-based methods are used; in clinical and practical courses, bedside teaching, simulations, and case-

based learning are applied.

Academic staff are encouraged to combine traditional and modern pedagogical approaches. The *Centre for Educational Growth* provides training for teachers on innovative and evidence-based methods, active learning, and feedback techniques. Digital tools and the e-studies system support blended and remote learning, ensuring access to study materials and communication between teachers and students (SER 1.3.1).

The study process promotes increasing student independence. As students progress through the six-year program, they assume more responsibility for their own learning. Teachers provide guidance in setting learning goals, monitoring progress, and developing self-assessment skills. Respectful interaction and constructive communication between students and staff are integral to RSU's academic culture. The *Centre for Educational Growth* also offers e-courses on respectful communication and prevention of discrimination and conflict in academic settings.

Student feedback is regularly collected at the end of courses and semesters. Lecturers and program directors analyze feedback to improve content, methods, and materials. Adjustments are made annually based on the analysis of results and discussions in departmental meetings.

RSU maintains formal procedures for handling complaints, proposals, and appeals as described. Students may submit complaints to the *Student Services Department*, the *Student Union*, or the *Quality Assurance and Internal Audit Department*. All submissions are registered and processed, and students are informed about outcomes in writing. An annual summary of all complaints and proposals is included in the Report on the Quality Management System. Information about these procedures is available to students in Latvian and English through the RSU website and the student portal.

Assessment is governed by the *Academic Regulations I* and follows the principles of fairness, consistency, and transparency. According to RSU regulations, all study courses must be completed with an examination. Each study course defines assessment methods and criteria in its description, which are made available to students in advance in the e-studies system. Assessments are both formative and summative, providing feedback and measuring achievement of learning outcomes.

The University applies a cumulative assessment policy, meaning that a final grade is composed of several evaluation components conducted during the semester allowing testing in which the student's knowledge, skills and abilities are assessed based on the results of his work during the academic year or semester. Examinations may include written, oral, or practical components, as well as the Objective Structured

Clinical Examination (OSCE). The distribution of cognitive levels in assessments generally follows a 40-40-20 ratio: knowledge recall, application/comprehension, and higher-order analytical skills. More than one examiner is involved whenever possible to ensure objectivity, and state examinations are conducted by committees that include representatives of the professional field. RSU follows the principle of a 48h gap between two exams (SER 3.1.2).

Students who miss classes or examinations for justified reasons may request an individual study plan or an alternative assessment date according to *Academic Regulations I*. Appeals regarding assessments follow the same procedure as other complaints.

According to the SER, quality assurance in assessment is managed at multiple levels at RSU. At the course level, the course supervisor is primarily responsible for planning and implementing assessment methods, ensuring that they align with the intended learning outcomes. Meanwhile, the head of the academic department, reviews the assessment results together with a team of specialists within the department. Course descriptions are systematically reviewed by the department to ensure that learning outcomes and assessment methods are clearly and accurately detailed (SER 3.4.2).

Assessment results and student feedback are analyzed regularly to improve teaching and learning. The outcomes of examinations and surveys are discussed in faculty meetings, and necessary changes are introduced in teaching or assessment practices. Academic staff participate in training on assessment design and feedback provision. The 10-point grading scale defined in Cabinet Regulation No. 305 of 13 June 2023 is used throughout RSU to ensure comparability and transparency.

According to the University, they ensure that teaching and assessment in the “Medicine” program are student-centered, transparent, and consistent with institutional regulations. Continuous feedback, teacher training, and systematic monitoring contribute to maintaining the quality and fairness of the study process.

Judgement

The “Medicine” program at RSU is delivered in a manner that promotes student-centered learning and encourages students to take an active role in the learning process. A broad range of teaching methods, including lectures, seminars, laboratory work, clinical practice, simulation-based learning, and case-based approaches, is employed to address different learning needs and to support progressive student independence. Digital tools and the e-studies system further support active engagement, communication, and access to learning materials. The experts particularly commend the teaching at the simulation center.

Discussions on site clearly demonstrate the importance of the *Centre for Educational Growth* for the quality of teaching at RSU. Teaching staff is encouraged to regularly participate in further training in teaching methods or to develop new teaching formats themselves with the support of the centre.

The institution has a formally defined assessment policy regulated by the Academic Regulations I. Assessment principles, methods, and criteria are documented at course level and communicated to students in advance through the e-studies system. A centralized regulatory framework ensures consistency across courses, while cumulative assessment and multiple assessment formats are aligned with curriculum outcomes. The assessment policy is accessible to students and staff, and its implementation is supported through institutional regulations and faculty oversight.

The assessment system includes both formative and summative components and provides students with regular feedback on their performance during the semester. Students describe an open atmosphere with regard to feedback on assessments. Cumulative assessment and continuous evaluation allow students to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Feedback from assessments is complemented by guidance from teaching staff, and educational support structures are available to assist students in achieving their learning outcomes.

Assessment results are systematically used to inform decisions on progression and graduation. Summative assessments, including written, oral, practical examinations and OSCEs, are aligned with course learning outcomes and national requirements. The use of multiple assessment components, involvement of more than one examiner where possible, and participation of external professional representatives in state examinations support the reliability and validity of assessment decisions.

According to the experts, the institution has established mechanisms for quality assurance of assessments at course, departmental, and faculty levels. Assessment methods and outcomes are reviewed by course supervisors and departmental teams, and course descriptions are systematically checked for alignment between learning outcomes and assessment methods. Assessment results and student feedback are analyzed in faculty meetings and used to inform improvements in teaching and assessment practices. Staff development activities further support quality enhancement in assessment design and feedback provision.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

3.4 Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

ESG 1.4: Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student “life cycle”, e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.

WFME 4.1: The institution has a publicly available policy that sets out the aims, principles, criteria, and processes for the selection and admission of students.

Summary

Admission to the “Medicine” study program at Riga Stradiņš University is organized according to the *RSU Admission Procedure* and the *Academic Regulations I (Annex 11)*. RSU ensures the admission of students in alignment with its aims, the recognition of qualifications, and the completion of studies procedures, including when students are mobile both within the framework of the higher education system and between educational systems. The “RSU Admission Procedure” (Annex 11) describes the procedure for the submission of documents, the deadlines thereof, the procedure of the competition, the procedure for contesting, appeals and decisions related to admission, as well as the procedure for signing the study contract and matriculation, and define the rights and obligations of the applicant and RSU (SER 1.4.1).

Admission requirements for the study program “Medicine” are a completed secondary education, attested by the diploma and a transcript of grades, and compulsory subjects acquired at the secondary school, which are English, Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics (optional). The grades obtained in these subjects will be considered in the admission process. Both Latvian and international applicants follow the same academic requirements, although international applicants must additionally provide proof of English language proficiency. For international students, there are two intakes every year – in summer (August) and in winter (February), while for Latvian students, there is only intake in summer.

The *Admissions Commission* is responsible for implementing and monitoring the admission process. The commission verifies applicants’ compliance with formal criteria, organizes competition-based admission, and decides on enrollment. All decisions can be appealed according to the *Administrative Procedure Law* and the internal regulations of RSU.

The University maintains close cooperation with secondary schools in Latvia and abroad. Information about study opportunities is disseminated through educational fairs, online meetings, and direct communication with schools. RSU also provides counseling for prospective students and supports international applicants through the

International Admissions Office.

Progression through the study program is regulated by the *Academic Regulations I* and *II*. These documents define the conditions for enrollment in subsequent semesters, requirements for academic progress, and procedures for repeating courses. Students must successfully complete the courses of each semester before proceeding to the next stage of studies. Academic progress is evaluated through cumulative assessments and final examinations, and results are recorded in the University's information system.

Students whose performance does not meet the required standards may receive academic counseling or, where necessary, repeat individual courses. The University provides support through academic advisors, the *Student Services Department*, and the *Centre for Educational Growth*. Students are informed about available counseling, support measures, and the procedures for improving academic results.

Individual study plans may be granted to students with valid reasons, such as illness, parental leave, or participation in scientific or sports events. Applications for an individual plan are reviewed by the Dean's Office and approved in accordance with regulations. Students with functional limitations receive additional support based on the *RSU Guidelines for Support for Students with Functional Disabilities*.

The recognition of prior learning and professional experience follows the *RSU Recognition of Learning Outcomes Procedure (Annex 15)*, approved by the Senate. Students may apply for recognition of study results acquired at other accredited higher education institutions in Latvia or abroad. Recognition is based on the comparison of course content, volume, and learning outcomes. The decision is made by the program director and approved by the Faculty Council. Recognized courses are recorded in the academic transcript and exempt the student from retaking equivalent study units. All procedures are documented and available to students in both languages.

Upon completion of all program requirements, students receive the professional qualification of Medical Doctor (MD). The final assessment includes the defense of a scientific paper and the state examination in Medicine. The state examination is conducted by a committee appointed by the Rector, including representatives from the Faculty of Medicine and healthcare institutions. The criteria and structure of the examination are defined in *Academic Regulations II*. The results are documented in official minutes and entered into the national education register. The responsibility for the examination lies with the respective University.

Graduates receive a diploma and diploma supplement. The diploma supplement is issued in English and describes the content, level, and results of studies, as well as

the qualification obtained. The recognition of the degree abroad is supported by RSU's compliance with national and European qualification frameworks.

Judgement

RSU has available regulations covering all phases of the student life cycle, including admission, progression, recognition of prior learning, and certification. These processes are regulated through institutional documents such as the RSU Admission Procedure and the Academic Regulations I and II, which specify responsibilities, criteria, procedures, timelines, and appeal mechanisms.

With regard to admission, the institution has established transparent and objective criteria for entry into the Medicine program. Admission requirements, selection criteria, procedures for application and enrollment, and applicants' rights and obligations are defined and publicly accessible. On site, the students describe the admission process as well-organized and clear.

Equal academic requirements apply to domestic and international applicants, with additional language proficiency requirements for international students. The admission process is implemented and monitored by the Admissions Commission, and formal appeal procedures are in place.

Progression through the program is governed by published academic regulations that define requirements for academic performance, course completion, repetition, and advancement to subsequent stages of study. Mechanisms for academic counseling, support measures, and individual study plans are in place to address diverse student needs. Recognition of prior learning and qualifications is regulated through a formal procedure based on comparison of learning outcomes, workload, and content, and decisions are transparently documented and communicated to students.

Certification procedures include the completion of all curricular requirements, defense of a scientific paper, and a state examination conducted by an appointed committee. Upon successful completion, graduates receive a diploma and an English-language diploma supplement that accurately documents the qualification and learning achievements and supports recognition within national and European qualification frameworks.

Overall, the institution demonstrates a coherent, transparent, and consistently implemented regulatory framework governing the full student life cycle.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

3.5 Academic Staff

ESG 1.5: Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff.

WFME 5.1: The institution has the number and range of qualified academic staff required to put the institution's curriculum into practice, given the number of students and style of teaching and learning.

WFME 5.2: The institution has specified and communicated its expectations for the performance and conduct of academic staff.

WFME 5.3: The institution implements a stated policy on the continuing professional development of its academic staff.

Summary

The "Medicine" study program is implemented by an academic staff whose qualifications, number, and professional experience correspond to the scope and objectives of the program. The University ensures that the recruitment, evaluation, and development of academic staff are regulated, transparent, and aligned with national legislation and RSU's internal policies.

The program is delivered by elected and acting academic staff holding the positions of professor, associate professor, assistant professor (docent), lecturer, and assistant, as well as invited academic staff holding the position of tutor. The total number of academic staff in the program is 184. The percentage of elected professorial teaching is 42%. The requirements for these positions are defined in national legislation and in RSU's internal regulatory documents. The SER describes that academic staff possess the professional and scientific competence necessary for implementing the study program, and that the program involves both RSU academic staff and practitioners working in clinical institutions. Clinical study courses are taught by certified medical doctors employed at healthcare institutions that serve as clinical training bases for RSU.

All staff teaching in the "Medicine" program must meet the minimum qualification requirements for their positions and be approved according to RSU's internal procedures. The University ensures that staff have the scientific or professional qualifications required for the study subjects they teach. The SER also indicates that the academic and scientific qualifications of lecturers comply with the requirements of the *Cabinet Regulation No. 305 of 13 June 2023 "Regulations on the National Standard for Professional Higher Education."*

According to the RSU, academic staff are selected through procedures defined in internal regulations and the Law on Higher Education Institutions. Recruitment and appointment are based on professional qualifications, academic competence, and experience. For clinical courses, teaching staff must also hold a valid medical practitioner's certificate. Cooperation agreements are concluded between RSU and clinical institutions, defining the responsibilities of teaching staff and ensuring the quality of clinical teaching.

The RSU describes that they provide opportunities for academic staff to improve their professional and pedagogical competence. Academic staff participate in training organized by the *Centre for Educational Growth*, which focuses on modern teaching and learning methods, assessment, and digital learning tools. These activities are available to all teaching staff and are aimed at maintaining high-quality teaching and continuous improvement of academic performance (SER 5.3.1).

In addition to internal training, staff also engage in research, professional development, and participation in conferences. RSU encourages the use of research results in teaching and supports the integration of scientific and clinical experience into study courses. These activities help ensure that teaching content remains up to date and reflect developments in medicine and healthcare.

The performance of academic staff is evaluated according to RSU's quality assurance procedures. The SER indicates that evaluation includes teaching quality, professional activity, and contribution to the study process. Student feedback is one of the sources used to improve teaching and course content.

The workload of academic staff is 24 hours per week and includes lectures, seminars, laboratory work, clinical teaching, research, and other academic duties. The distribution of workload is planned by departments to ensure that teaching obligations correspond to staff capacity and program needs.

The University highlights that academic staff are guided by the principles of academic integrity, professional ethics, and respectful communication. RSU provides e-learning courses and internal guidelines on ethical behavior, respectful communication, and prevention of discrimination. The University maintains an Ethics Committee to oversee adherence to ethical standards and address related matters when necessary.

Judgement

Riga Stradins University ensures that the study program "Medicine" is delivered by a sufficient number and appropriate range of qualified academic staff whose competencies correspond to the scope, objectives, and teaching methods of the

program. The experts find the number of human resources allocated to the program to be suitable to carry out its functions. The teaching staff is well qualified and in possession of academic and technical credentials and experience adequate to their tasks. The University informs its employees about opportunities for personal and professional development transparently, and actively encourages their participation in workshops, training courses and conferences intended to improve their abilities, which is confirmed during the talks with the staff on site.

The involvement of elected academic staff across all academic ranks, combined with invited tutors and certified medical practitioners from clinical training bases, supports the effective implementation of the curriculum in both theoretical and clinical settings. The proportion of professorial teaching and the overall staffing level are adequate in relation to student numbers and the program's structure.

New teaching staff is thoroughly briefed about the study programs and their teaching responsibilities before they start teaching. Overall, the teaching and academic staff at the RSU show a very high level of commitment and potential for the execution as well as further development of the study program they are responsible for. The experts conclude that there is a strong corporate identity and positive group dynamics among the university and the faculty administration.

With regard to recruitment and competence assurance, the University applies regulated, and fair procedures for the selection and appointment of academic staff, in line with national legislation and internal regulations. Minimum qualification requirements are clearly defined for all academic positions, and additional professional certification is required for clinical teaching staff. These arrangements ensure that teaching staff possess the necessary scientific, professional, and pedagogical competence to deliver the program.

Concerning expectations for performance and conduct, RSU has specified and communicated standards related to academic integrity, professional ethics, and respectful communication. Academic staff are guided by internal regulations, ethical guidelines, and institutional values, supported by training modules and oversight by an Ethics Committee. Performance evaluation processes include teaching quality, professional activity, and contribution to the study program, with student feedback used as one source for improvement.

The institution implements a stated policy on the continuing professional development of academic staff. Teaching staff have access to regular pedagogical training, particularly through the Centre for Educational Growth, focusing on modern teaching methods, assessment practices, and digital learning tools. Engagement in research,

and professional activities is encouraged and supports the integration of current scientific and clinical developments into teaching. These measures demonstrate a systematic approach to maintaining and enhancing staff competence.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

3.6 Learning Resources and Student Support

ESG 1.6: Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided.

WFME 6.1: The institution has sufficient physical facilities to ensure that the curriculum is delivered adequately.

WFME 6.2: The institution has appropriate and sufficient resources to ensure that students receive the required clinical training.

WFME 6.3: The institution provides adequate access to virtual and physical information resources to support the institution's mission and curriculum.

WFME 4.2: The institution provides students with accessible and confidential academic, social, psychological, and financial support services, as well as career guidance.

Summary

The "Medicine" program provides modern facilities, clinical bases, information systems, and support structures ensuring that both students and academic staff have access to the necessary conditions for effective study.

Teaching takes place in RSU's main buildings in Riga and in healthcare institutions that serve as clinical bases. The SER states that RSU provides lecture halls, laboratories, simulation rooms, and other facilities corresponding to the requirements of medical education.

The Laboratory of Clinical Microbiology provides study and research environment for students in the study course medical microbiology and immunology. The DNA laboratory gives students the possibility to extract DNA from various samples in the study course molecular and cell biology. The study process in course physiology is

organized with practical work in Laboratory of Physiology. In the third study year, Laboratory of Hygiene and Occupational Diseases give practical classes for students in study course environmental medicine. The Scientific Laboratory of Molecular Genetics provides students with the opportunity to develop scientific research for the final thesis defense in the sixth year of studies. All laboratories are fully equipped according to modern technical needs in order to fully and accurately implement the content needs and tasks of the study program. Clinical training is organized in hospitals and specialized clinics with which RSU has cooperation agreements. These institutions provide opportunities for students to acquire practical experience under supervision.

The *Medical Education Technology Centre* (METC) supports simulation-based learning and the acquisition of practical skills before clinical placements. Laboratories for biomedical and preclinical subjects are equipped with microscopes, reagents, and instruments suitable for anatomy, physiology, and related fields. The SER describes that the technical base is regularly upgraded and maintained to meet the requirements of the study program.

The RSU Library provides printed and electronic materials, access to databases, and e-books that correspond to the needs of the program. Students can use international databases such as ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, PubMed, and ClinicalKey. Study materials, lecture slides, and supplementary readings are made available through the e-studies platform, which ensures constant access to up-to-date content. The library offers both physical and digital services, accessible on-site and remotely.

According to the SER, the e-studies platform is RSU's main digital platform for communication between students and staff. It includes course descriptions, learning outcomes, assessment criteria, and allows submission of assignments and feedback. The platform ensures transparency and consistency of information. The *Information Technology Department* maintains the infrastructure and provides access to specialized software, plagiarism detection tools, and medical databases.

Student support is coordinated by the *Student Services Department*, which provides academic counseling, information, and administrative assistance. The *Student Union* represents students and participates in decision-making processes. The information about studies and regulations is available in Latvian and English via the website and student portal.

RSU provides targeted assistance to students with functional limitations based on the *Guidelines for Support for Students with Functional Disabilities (Annex 13)*. Support includes accessible facilities, adapted teaching materials, and individual accommodations. Psychological counselling and personal guidance are also available.

Additionally, international students receive assistance from the *International Student Department* and the *International Admissions Office*, including help with residence permits, integration, and orientation.

Financial support is provided through state-funded study places, scholarships for academic excellence, and state-guaranteed student loans. RSU also offers student employment opportunities within projects and administrative units. The University maintains sports and recreation facilities and promotes student well-being through extracurricular activities.

Feedback on learning resources and support services is collected regularly through surveys and discussions. Results are analyzed by responsible departments and used to improve infrastructure and support mechanisms. This ensures that facilities and services remain aligned with students' needs and program requirements.

Judgement

According to the experts, teaching and learning activities are supported by modern physical facilities, clinical training bases, digital infrastructure, and student support services. The University has sufficient and appropriate physical facilities to support the delivery of the curriculum. Teaching takes place in adequately equipped lecture halls, laboratories, simulation rooms, and other specialized facilities corresponding to the requirements of medical education. Purpose-built laboratories support biomedical, preclinical, and research-oriented teaching, while the Medical Education Technology Centre enables simulation-based skills training. The technical infrastructure is regularly maintained and upgraded.

RSU provides appropriate and sufficient resources to ensure that students receive the required clinical training. Clinical education is delivered in hospitals and specialized clinics with which RSU has formal cooperation agreements. These clinical bases offer supervised practical training opportunities that are integrated into the curriculum and aligned with program requirements. Simulation-based preparation further supports students' readiness for clinical placements.

Students and staff have adequate access to both physical and virtual information resources that support the institution's mission and curriculum. The RSU Library provides comprehensive printed and electronic resources, including access to major international medical and scientific databases. The e-studies platform ensures continuous access to course-related materials, learning outcomes, and assessment information, while institutional IT services maintain the necessary digital infrastructure and specialized software.

The institution offers accessible and confidential student support services covering academic, social, psychological, financial, and career-related needs. Support is coordinated through dedicated institutional units and includes counseling services, assistance for students with functional limitations, targeted support for international students, and financial aid mechanisms. Students' feedback on facilities and support services is systematically collected and used for improvement. On site the students describe the possibilities for scholarships. In addition to institutionalized support by RSU, the student union provides support to new students as well. They provide extensive help in the onboarding process, which can be challenging, especially for international students. The students also have the opportunity to communicate feedback via the semester speaker to the University administration.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

3.7 Quality Assurance

ESG 1.7: Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyze, and use relevant information for the effective management of their programs and other activities.

ESG 1.9: Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programs to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the program. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all these concerned.

ESG 1.10: Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.

WFME 7.1 The institution has implemented a quality assurance system that addresses the educational, administrative, and research components of the institution's work.

Summary

Riga Stradins University describes its quality assurance (QA) system as a comprehensive framework that covers all areas of University activity, including studies, research, and management. The system is organized in accordance with the ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Standard and is aligned with the principles of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

RSU's quality management system is defined in the *Quality Policy* and the *Quality Manual (Annex 14)*. The policy emphasizes continuous improvement, student-centered learning, and the involvement of stakeholders. The university applies the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle to ensure systematic monitoring and development of its activities. The *Quality Assurance and Internal Audit Department* coordinates the implementation of the system and supports all structural units in applying quality principles.

The *Quality Policy* is approved by the RSU Rector and is publicly available on the University's website in Latvian and English. It defines RSU's commitment to ensuring high-quality education, research, and service, in line with its mission and strategic objectives. The *Quality Manual* describes procedures for planning, monitoring, and evaluating processes across the institution, including responsibilities for program management, decision-making, and documentation.

The RSU outlines that the QA system is based on regularly conducted internal audits, self-assessments, and reviews at the faculty and program levels. Internal audits verify compliance with internal regulations and the ISO 9001 standard. Findings are documented and followed by corrective or preventive measures. Each faculty, including the Faculty of Medicine, is responsible for monitoring the quality of its study programs and reporting annually to the Rectorate.

The Self-Evaluation Report of the Study Program (SER) itself is part of the internal QA process, serving as a basis for external evaluation and accreditation. The preparation of the SER involves the program director, teaching staff, students, and representatives from clinical institutions. The report reflects on the program's development, achievements, and planned improvements.

Students's feedback plays an important role in the QA system. The University regularly collects feedback through surveys at the course, semester, and program levels. The results are analyzed by program directors, deans, and the *Study Quality Department*. Information about the results and improvements is made available to students and staff. Additional feedback is gathered through focus groups, meetings with student representatives, and participation in faculty councils.

Academic staff are also involved in the QA process by reviewing course content, assessment methods, and student feedback. The *Centre for Educational Growth* contributes to quality improvement through pedagogical training and methodological support for lecturers.

External evaluation and accreditation are organized by the *Quality Agency for Higher Education (QAHE)*. RSU participates in regular external quality assessments as

required by Latvian legislation. The University notes that the Medicine program underwent accreditation in 2024 and received a positive evaluation for the maximum possible period. The RSU systematically addresses recommendations from previous evaluations, ensuring that improvement measures are implemented.

The University also participates in external benchmarking and cooperation with professional organizations to ensure that its study programs meet international standards and national healthcare needs. Clinical partners and employers are regularly consulted on program relevance and graduate performance.

The QA processes are documented in the RSU *Document Management System*, which includes procedures, process descriptions, and reports. Each process is assigned a responsible unit and reviewed periodically. The *Quality Assurance and Internal Audit Department* maintains records of audits, feedback summaries, and improvement plans. Data from the QA system are used to inform strategic and operational decisions at all institutional levels.

The RSU emphasizes that quality assurance is an ongoing process aimed at maintaining and improving the quality of education. Improvement measures are based on the results of internal audits, feedback, and external evaluations. Annual quality reports summarize achievements, identify challenges, and propose actions for further development. These reports are reviewed by the Rector's Council and the Senate, ensuring institutional oversight of quality matters.

Judgement

Riga Stradins University has established a structured quality assurance system that systematically collects, analyses, and uses relevant information for the effective management of its study programs and institutional activities. The system is based on ISO 9001:2015 and applies a Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle, supported by internal audits, self-evaluations, program reports, and student surveys. Quality-related data are documented, analyzed at program, faculty, and institutional levels, and used to inform strategic and operational decision-making. The experts describe the quality assurance system of RSU as robust and comprehensive.

The institution has formal mechanisms in place for the regular monitoring and periodic review of study programs including medicine. Program reviews, internal audits, and the preparation of Self-Evaluation Reports assess the achievement of program objectives and responsiveness to student and societal needs. Stakeholder input, including student feedback and external perspectives, is integrated into these processes. Improvement measures are defined, implemented, and followed up within the quality assurance system, and outcomes are communicated to relevant

stakeholders. RSU undergoes external quality assurance on a cyclical basis in line with national legislation and the ESG. According to the experts, all relevant stakeholders, like practice partners, are included in the quality assurance system.

In talks with the University and students, it became clear that the frequency of curricular changes is relatively high. The University attaches great importance to the wishes and criticism of its students, which the experts appreciate. In addition to the adjustments made based on student feedback, there are also regular changes from the Ministry. The experts see a necessity in ensuring curricular stability. An evidence-based approach integrating the focus on competency-based training for changes in the curriculum is recommended, whenever possible.

The institutional quality assurance system comprehensively addresses educational, administrative, and research activities. Responsibilities are clearly assigned, processes are documented, and implementation is coordinated centrally and applied at faculty and program levels. Regular reviews, combined with stakeholder involvement and documented follow-up measures, support continuous quality improvement across the institution.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

3.8 Public Information

ESG 1.8: Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.

Summary

The RSU ensures open and accurate communication about its study programs and activities. Public information is made available in Latvian and English and follows the principles of transparency and accessibility defined in RSU's internal regulations and quality policy.

Information about the program is published on RSU's official website. The site provides details on admission requirements, program structure and duration, study outcomes, qualification awarded, teaching staff and contact information. The Academic Regulations, Admission Rules, and other key documents are also accessible online. The *Communication and Marketing Department* coordinates regular updates, while program directors ensure accuracy and relevance of the published data.

RSU publishes its *Quality Policy, Development Strategy 2022–2027*, and annual quality reports. Accreditation results, including the validity period and decisions, are available on the University's website and in the national database managed by Quality Agency for Higher Education (QAHE). According to the RSU, they also inform students and staff about the results of internal and external evaluations, including survey findings and planned improvements.

Statistical information about student numbers, graduates, and mobility is compiled within the University's information systems and included in annual reports submitted to the Ministry of Education and Science. Summaries of these reports are publicly accessible.

Public communication is coordinated by the *Communication and Marketing Department*, which manages the website, social media, and press relations. RSU informs the public about study opportunities, research, and institutional developments through newsletters, press releases, and online platforms. The *Student Union* and *International Student Association* also contribute to information sharing and represent student initiatives. The University organizes open days and orientation events for prospective students.

The University publishes information on governance, structure, and management decisions. Senate decisions, internal regulations, and financial statements are accessible online. These practices are intended to ensure openness and accountability in the University's academic and administrative operations.

Judgement

Riga Stradins University publishes accessible information about its study programs and institutional activities. Key information, including admission requirements, program structure, intended learning outcomes, qualifications awarded, academic regulations, and contact details, is publicly available in Latvian and English through the University's official website.

Responsibilities for maintaining and updating public information are clearly defined. Program-specific information is ensured by program directors, while the Communication and Marketing Department coordinates institutional communication. Strategic and quality-related documents, such as the *Quality Policy, Development Strategy 2022–2027*, annual quality reports, and accreditation results, are publicly accessible. The publication of governance-related information, internal regulations, and financial statements further supports transparency and accountability.

Overall, the institution demonstrates a systematic approach to publishing objective and

up-to-date information that is readily accessible to stakeholders.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

3.9. Governance and Administration

WFME 8.1: The institution has a defined governance structure in relation to teaching, learning, research, and resource allocation, which is transparent and accessible to all stakeholders, aligns with the institution's mission and functions, and ensures stability of the institution.

WFME 8.2: The institution has policies and procedures for involving or consulting students and academic staff in key aspects of the institution's management and educational activities and processes.

WFME 8.3: The institution has appropriate and sufficient administrative support to achieve its goals in teaching, learning, and research.

Summary

The governance and administrative system of RSU is described as clearly defined, transparent, and regulated by national legislation and internal University documents. According to the University, the structure ensures effective management of academic, research, and support processes and the implementation of the University's mission and strategic goals.

RSU operates as a state-founded University under the supervision of the Ministry of Health. Its governance is regulated by the *Law on Higher Education Institutions* and the *RSU Constitution*. The highest decision-making body is the Senate, which approves strategic and academic documents, study regulations, and program structures. The Rector is the chief executive officer responsible for daily management and implementation of Senate decisions. The Rector's Council coordinates operational and academic matters across faculties and departments.

Faculties are led by deans, who oversee academic and administrative processes at the faculty level. Each study program, including Medicine, has a program director responsible for its planning, implementation, and quality monitoring. Program directors report to the dean and cooperate with the *Study Quality Department* and the *Centre for Educational Growth*. Department heads supervise specific subject areas and teaching activities.

The University's internal quality management, personnel, finance, and IT units support governance and administration. The responsibilities and communication channels between structural units are documented in internal regulations and job descriptions, ensuring clear distribution of duties and accountability.

Decision-making at RSU follows a collegial and hierarchical model. Proposals for program development or revision are discussed in departmental and faculty councils before submission to the Senate. Strategic planning is guided by the RSU Development Strategy 2022–2027, which sets priorities for education quality, research, and institutional sustainability. Implementation of the strategy is monitored through annual performance reviews and quality reports prepared by the Rectorate.

The students, academic staff, and external partners participate in governance through representation in councils and working groups. Student representatives are members of the Senate, faculty councils, and other decision-making bodies, ensuring that the student perspective is included in institutional decisions.

Administrative functions are performed by specialized departments that provide support for academic and research activities. These include units responsible for finance, human resources, student services, and international cooperation. The *Information Technology Department* maintains the digital infrastructure that supports study administration, e-learning, and data management. Information about decisions, regulations, and meeting outcomes is shared through the RSU intranet and e-mail system. Regular meetings between the Rector, deans, and program directors ensure coordination across faculties and administrative units.

The University's operations are subject to internal and external audits. The *Quality Assurance and Internal Audit Department* conducts internal reviews according to the ISO 9001 framework, while financial audits are performed externally in accordance with national requirements. Reports on financial and academic performance are publicly available on the RSU website. Governance practices emphasize transparency, legality, and the efficient use of resources.

Judgement

Riga Stradins University has a clearly defined and legally regulated governance structure that covers teaching, learning, research, and resource allocation. Governance arrangements are established in accordance with national legislation and internal institutional regulations and are aligned with the University's mission and strategic objectives as set out in the RSU Development Strategy 2022–2027. Roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes are clearly assigned at institutional, faculty, program, and departmental levels. Information on governance structures,

regulations, and decisions is made accessible to stakeholders through internal communication systems and public reporting.

RSU has established formal policies and procedures for involving students and academic staff in institutional governance and educational processes. Students and academic staff are represented in key decision-making bodies, including the Senate, faculty councils, and relevant working groups. Program-related decisions are discussed collegially at departmental and faculty levels prior to approval by the Senate, ensuring participatory decision-making and consultation. These arrangements support the systematic inclusion of internal stakeholders in the management and development of educational activities.

According to the experts, the University provides appropriate and sufficient administrative support to enable the effective implementation of its educational, research, and strategic objectives. Dedicated administrative units support finance, human resources, student services, international cooperation, information technology, and quality assurance. Clear documentation of administrative responsibilities, combined with regular coordination meetings between academic leadership and administrative units, ensures effective support for teaching, learning, and research activities. Internal and external audit mechanisms further contribute to the efficient and accountable use of resources.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

4 Conclusion

On site, the experts see a strongly committed University and Faculty of Medicine at Riga Stradins University, where engagement was demonstrated by all levels. The program is clearly embedded in the institutional mission and strategic priorities of the University. The student-centered philosophy at the University is highly appreciated. The structure of the study program “Medicine” is comprehensive with a combination of theoretical, practical and clinical modules. The progressive structure of the program, including practical training and supervised clinical placements, supports the gradual development of knowledge, skills, and professional competencies. Simulation-based education and structured clinical rotations provide students with opportunities to consolidate learning before and during real clinical practice.

The examination system is well-regulated and fair, with a variety of tools available to assess student progress. The staff is highly qualified. The quality assurance system in place is robust, well-established and coherent, and effectively supports the program’s objectives and its implementation. Evaluation results are used to make changes. The institution has nondiscriminatory practices in place for admission and promotes gender equality.

Based on the information from written documents and the results of the site visit, the experts came to the conclusion that the study program “Medicine” offered at the Riga Stradins University fulfills the above-described criteria. Hence, the experts recommended that the Accreditation Commission of AHPGS make a positive decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

For the continuous development of the study program, the experts have outlined the following recommendations:

- Outpatient care with patient encounters should be incorporated regularly into the curriculum.
- Meetings between preclinical staff and clinical staff should be institutionalized in order to focus on longitudinal integration of curriculum and its content.
- The newly created intensive care unit and the department for daily care surgery should be integrated as possible elective clinical placements.
- The facilities and possibilities of the different study programs at the University or at the hospital should be used to integrate interprofessional learning experiences.
- An evidence-based approach integrating the focus on competency-based education for changes in the curriculum should be used, whenever possible. Curricular stability should be ensured.

5 Decision of the Accreditation Commission

Decision of the Accreditation Commission February 12, 2026

This resolution of the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS, adopted on February 12, 2026, is based on the University's application, as well as the expert review and the site visit covered in the Assessment Report. The site visit of the University took place on December 01-02, 2025, according to the previously agreed-upon schedule.

The accreditation procedure is structured according to the "European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG 2015) in consideration of "Basic Medical Education WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement" (BME Standards 2020) as defined by the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME).

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS discussed the procedural documents and the vote of the expert group regarding the Assessment Report.

The study program requires the obtainment of 360 credit points according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The regulated study period in the program "Medicine" is six years: five years at the University, followed by a clinical study year. The study program comprises 65 courses, of which 60 are obligatory and five are elective. The program is offered in English and Latvian. The study program "Medicine" is completed with awarding of the academic degree "Medical Doctor". Admission takes place once per year during the summer semester intake for Latvian students, and twice per year, in August and February, for international students. The first cohort of students was admitted to the study program in the academic year 1950/1951.

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS adopts the following decision:

The Riga Stradins University's study program "Medicine" was duly reviewed in an accreditation procedure in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015) and the Basic Medical Education WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement (BME Standards 2020). Compliance with both the ESG 2015 and the WFME BME Standards 2020 has been confirmed.

The study program "Medicine", as outlined above, is accredited for the duration of five years until September 30, 2031. The accreditation is based on the circumstances described in the Assessment Report.

For further development and enhancement of the study program, as well as of the University as a whole, the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS supports the

recommendation articulated in the Assessment Report.

An appeal against this decision may be filed within two weeks of its notification. The appeal must be submitted in writing or recorded at the office of AHPGS Akkreditierung gGmbH, Sedanstraße 22, 79098 Freiburg, and must include a statement of reasons.