



**COLLEGE OF LAW LTD.
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DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF THE COLLEGE OF LAW FOR 2018–2023

APPROVED

*At the Council meeting of the College of Law
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MISSION OF THE COLLEGE:

The mission of the College of Law is to educate and train qualified specialists for the labour market both in Latvia and abroad, who have acquired not only good theoretical knowledge, but also practical skills. The College of Law educates and trains mid-level professionals with first-level professional higher education not only in the field of law, but also in other most demanding occupations in the labour market, where the legal aspects play an important role in full-fledged work. Developing creativity and new ideas is the foundation of the study process.

MAIN STRATEGIC GOALS:

- to educate and train qualified specialists that are in demand in the labour market;
- to ensure the growth of the College by acquiring international experience and constantly improving the quality of studies;
- to be the best college in Latvia;
- to define legal science as the main field of strategic specialization of the College, envisaging that the legal aspect will be devoted special attention in other College's activities and study programmes.

The development of the College is based on the key policy documents and regulatory framework of our state.

1. COMPLIANCE OF THE COLLEGE'S ACTIVITIES WITH THE STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS OF LATVIA AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

The strategic direction of Latvia in the development of education is described in several regulatory acts of national level, for example:

The Guidelines for the Development of Education for 2014–2020 state that by increasing global competition in higher education and science and decreasing the number of potential students in Latvia, the need arises to create a flexible system of higher education that is internationally open, widely available, of high quality, i.e., capable of satisfying demand for professionals with appropriate qualification in accordance with the development needs of the Latvian economy and the trends of the global education market, and at the same time contributes to the individual's personality growth and social development. The guidelines set out basic priorities such as human-oriented education, education for sustainable development and education for a knowledge-based society. The goals of smart specialization in Latvia are set in the **Smart Specialization Strategy**, which is an economic development strategy. One of its essential components is the building of human capital capacity in the areas of knowledge important to Latvia, taking into account the development potential of existing sectors of the national economy, as well as the modernization of the research and education sector in order to achieve higher mobility of these sectors. In fact, the Smart Specialization Strategy and the National Industrial Policy Guidelines 2014–2020 are two mutually coordinated parts of the economic development plan and ensure the achievement of a single goal – structural changes in the national economy to increase the share of higher value added products and services in exports.

Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 685 of 28 December 2013 **“Guidelines for Science, Technology Development and Innovation 2014–2020”** (...the need to increase the development of information and communication solutions (ICT) and the implementation of the digital single market, thus contributing to economic growth, ..., ... A modern education system that meets the demands of the labour market and promotes the transformation of the national

economy and the development of competencies, entrepreneurial skills and creativity needed to implement the priorities of smart specialization strategies at all levels of education...)¹

Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 244 of 12 May 2015 **“Guidelines on Inclusive Employment for 2015–2020”** (... However, other areas of education may be faced with the necessary shortage of specialists. Natural sciences, mathematics and information technologies could experience it first. If the structure of education is not changed, by 2020 there may be a shortage of specialists with higher education in engineering, manufacturing and civil engineering, ...).²

The European Commission’s Strategy “Europe 2020 Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth” sets out key priorities for European development in different directions. The three key directions of the EU strategy are interrelated and are all relevant to activities of higher education institutions:

- Smart growth – developing knowledge- and innovation-based economy;
- Sustainable growth – promoting a more resource efficient, environment-friendly and competitive economy;
- Inclusive growth – promoting economy with high employment rates and social and territorial cohesion.

Due to the rapid economic change and globalization processes, today it is not enough to have only basic knowledge and employees need to constantly undergo professional development. Nowadays, during 4–5 years of studies it is not possible to acquire knowledge that will be sufficient for a lifetime, as knowledge is gradually aging.

Over the past decade, short-cycle higher education has become increasingly important as the first level of higher education and the fifth level of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The Bologna Process proposed in the Bologna Declaration and adopted in 1999 led to significant changes in the European Higher Education Area. The key educational aspects of the Bologna Process include lifelong learning, employment issues, financial support and degree awarding system, degree openness to the outside world, data collection and quality assurance.

2. THE MAIN CHALLENGES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDIES

The development of the College and the programmes in the coming years will be affected by the further decrease in the number of students in Latvia due to the poor demographic situation

¹ “Guidelines for Science, Technology Development and Innovation 2014–2020”: Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 685 (28 December 2013)//Latvijas Vestnesis. – No.253 (30 December 2013)

² “Guidelines on Inclusive Employment for 2015–2020”: Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 244 (12 May 2015)// Latvijas Vestnesis. – No.93 (14 May 2015)

in the country, the outflow of the population abroad, the increase of competition in higher education and especially in the college education system.

Problems with attracting qualified academic staff will remain, taking into account the insufficient number of persons holding doctoral degrees.

It will be increasingly difficult for the material and technical facilities to compete with the rapid increase in public funding and the attraction of European Union funds in the state funded higher education sector.

The rapid development of the labour market after overcoming the economic crisis will require increasing flexibility of study programmes, the need to adapt them quickly and effectively to the changing demands of employers.

2.1. Development Goals and Priorities

During the period of 2018–2023, the main goal of the development of study programmes is:

- to focus on the study field as a whole by ensuring sustainable development and offering high quality of studies in the context of increasing competition in higher education;
- to achieve purposeful and planned improvement of the study quality by ensuring a complex approach to the improvement of the study process, to ensure that the study process, which is relatively short in the programme, is maximally saturated and effective;
- to ensure that the theoretical knowledge to be acquired in the study programme is as effectively as possible related to the practice, using all possible forms and methods of the study process to meet the requirements of the labour market to the maximum;
- keep up with labour market demand and economic trends, responding rapidly to demand, introducing and developing new areas of specialization;
- to increase the mobility of academic staff members and students in cooperation with foreign higher education institutions;
- to develop the study process as part of lifelong learning, taking into account previously acquired knowledge and experience of students, as well as forecasting future development tendencies in the labour market.

2.2. Improvement of the Study Process Organisation

The main directions of the study process improvement until 2023:

- to provide an annual in-depth evaluation of the study programme by attracting external experts, incl. in some cases also from abroad and employers, as well as representatives of professional non-governmental organisations;

- to integrate the experience of other higher education institutions in the study process, both by visiting and learning onsite about the experience of these institutions and by inviting relevant specialists to the College of Law;
- to expand and deepen the work with the students so that at the beginning of their studies they acquire modern methods of learning, how to combine work in classroom with independent work at home, libraries and internship places;
- to improve the experience of supplementing theoretical knowledge with the acquisition of practice by regularly organising role-play activities.

2.3. Attraction and Qualification Development of the Academic Staff

- To develop cooperation with doctoral studies departments of higher education institutions in order to attract new, prospective doctoral students to work at the College;
- To promote the most qualified lecturers of the College of Law to pursue Doctoral studies by covering tuition fee and providing other incentives in order to improve their qualification;
- To promote the involvement of guest lecturers to the study process by inviting recognized professionals in their field of activity, as well as specialists and staff members from other countries and international organisations to deliver individual lectures or lecture cycles;
- To ensure regular professional development of the academic staff not only on the subject of the courses being taught, but also on issues that affect the study methodology and psychological aspects of the study process, as well as the role of leadership in society;
- To organise the internship of the academic staff members who need it in companies and state administration institutions according to the subject and specifics of the courses being taught;
- To develop, in the form of a separate statute, a system of motivation of the academic staff to stimulate their systematic involvement in research activities, conferences and preparation of publications;
- To provide an opportunity for every academic staff member who does not speak in a sufficient manner one of the foreign languages used in the European Union to acquire it at the necessary level and to motivate academic staff members to learn foreign languages.

2.4. Research Activity for New Knowledge Creation

- To engage all academic staff members, according to the approved plan, in the professional development and to ensure that each academic staff member is involved in the execution of the research programme of the College of Law and at least once every 3 years publishes or otherwise makes his/her research results public;

- In cooperation with the Latvian and foreign partner organisations – higher education institutions, colleges and scientific institutions – to organise international conferences on a regular basis in order to follow the development trends of science in the world and to acquire the best experience of knowledge transfer to students;
- To ensure acquisition of research skills by students starting from the first year of studies, by providing methodological lectures and seminars, engaging students in thematic research, the results of which are to be reflected in reports and qualification papers upon the completion of studies.

2.5. Attracting Students and Organising Advertising Campaigns

- To expand work with secondary school teachers and pupils, by explaining the importance of college education and career development, to promote regional cooperation by involving secondary school pupils with an aim of giving an idea of the chosen profession;
- To support and develop the College of Law and the New School of Lawyers operating at its affiliations and to promote its potential and role among young people in choosing their future career and profession; taking into account the diverse and often intrusive offers of advertisers, to conduct the research of the advertising market, finding out the most effective forms and types of advertising of the college, developing an appropriate concept for the implementation of advertising;
- To stimulate students who are making good progress with materials and other incentives;
- To prioritize internationalization and the creation of an international environment as key priorities and to put forward the following international activities:
 - developing cooperation and organising joint projects with higher education institutions and international organisations from other countries;
 - building an internationally recognised image of the College;
 - promoting mobility of students and academic and general staff members;
 - attracting and integrating foreign students in the College of Law;
 - developing international study programmes;
 - attracting foreign guest lecturers.

2.6. Strengthening the Methodological Basis of the Study Process

- To stimulate the academic staff members of the College to develop textbooks and methodological aids, to publish these materials, to prepare audio and video recordings of lectures as an aid to studies;

- To regularly publish the scientific articles of the College of Law, including the results of both the academic staff members and the students. On the basis of the College, to continue the practice of organising international conferences on the themes arising from the study programmes;
- To expand the economic and legal resources of the Library of the College of Law from 22,000 units of existing teaching and methodological literature to 26,000 by developing the libraries of the affiliations of the College of Law. To expand the diversity of foreign literature and databases required for the study process.

2.7. Development of Material and Technical Facilities

- To attract additional funds, state funding and the EU funds for the improvement of the material and technical facilities;
- To improve the infrastructure by expanding the premises used for the needs of the College of Law, creating new reading rooms and premises for methodological work. To establish a European law office in cooperation with the European Commission representation in Latvia;
- To regularly purchase new equipment (projectors, overhead projectors, interactive whiteboards, etc.) according to the approved plan.

3. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Future intentions of the College of Law can be implemented by introducing the Human Resource Development Plan (a separate document), which provides a complex approach to both academic and general staff selection, development and improvement, given that changes to be effective and achieving their goals cannot be fragmented and apply only to some staff members. However, given the diversity of goals to be achieved by the staff and the differences in the nature of the work, the measures to be taken in a number of processes are planned in parallel, using different solutions, and taking into account that the activities relating to academic staff or key performers are a priority.

The Human Resource Development Plan also sets out the appropriate development and remuneration policies that promote the achievement of strategic goals of a higher education institution.

Academic staff can be elected in compliance with the Election Regulations of Academic and Administrative Staff Members adopted by the College of Law. In accordance with the laws and regulations in force, the College of Law has the opportunity to develop its own academic staff selection policy, which ensures the formation of high quality academic staff.

The College of Law shall continue and further promote the professional development of academic and general staff. The current professional development procedure has been developed in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 622 of 28 October 2014 “Regulations on the Education and Professional Qualifications Necessary for Educators and Procedure for Improvement of Educators’ Professional Competence”. The regulations require that academic staff develop their knowledge, skills and competences. Professional development may also include international mobility and participation in conferences and seminars appropriate for the purpose of professional development.

An important tool for the development of academic staff is the remuneration system, which needs to be further developed through a result-oriented remuneration policy.

4. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Quality management in higher education is prioritized both by European documents and practices (Bergen Communiqué, 2006 – Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area) and national documents (Law on Institutions of Higher Education, Education Development Guidelines for 2014–2020). These documents emphasise the need to implement an internal quality management system at higher education institutions. The activities of the College of Law are evaluated according to ISO 9001: 2015 “Quality Management Systems. Requirements”; “Investor in Excellence” and “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area”, ENQA (European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education).

The strategic goal of the College of Law is to introduce a model of excellence, which is a structured model of a quality management system that sets out guidelines for implementing the concept of excellence. In fact, the excellence model is a unique framework that combines the best approach to excellence, providing an organisation with a reliable roadmap to high performance. The main elements of the model:

- leadership, resource management, service delivery and achievement that are based on efficient and effective actions and e-solutions.

The model of the management system of the College of Law provides for the self-evaluation of this system as well as for international comparative assessment and continuous improvement, based on regular stakeholders’ (students, graduates, employers, international cooperation partners) opinion. The competences and abilities of the management of the College of Law shall be developed to the level necessary for the independent maintenance and development of the management system model. (Quality Management – Quality Management Manual).

5. INTERNATIONALIZATION

By increasing global competition in higher education and science and decreasing the number of potential students in Latvia, the need arises to create a flexible system of higher education that is internationally open, widely available, of high quality, i.e., capable of satisfying demand for professionals with appropriate qualification in accordance with the development needs of the Latvian economy and the trends of the global education market, and at the same time contributes to the individual's personality growth and social development.

Promoting the openness of higher education to international cooperation and exchange of information, as well as increasing export capacity are the priority directions for the development of higher education. The goal of increasing the share of foreign students at the Latvian higher education institutions to at least 10 % of the total number of students has been defined in the Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030.

The College of Law is constantly focusing on international cooperation aimed at achieving the following results:

- Developing cooperation and organising joint projects with higher education institutions and international organisations from other countries;

To gain greater recognition at the European and global levels, the College of Law has joined several international organisations – PRME (Principles for Responsible Management Education); EURASHE (European Association of Institutions in Higher Education); WFCP (World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics), and AACC (American Association of Community Colleges). Within the framework of internationalization of international cooperation, to develop professional competencies and skills, as well as to increase competitiveness the students, graduates, academic and general staff members are provided with an opportunity for study and practice, teaching and exchange of experience at partner higher education institutions and foreign companies within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme. Within the framework of strategic development, the goal is to attract at least two partners every year; to develop the existing study programmes and offer new ones (in a foreign language), according to the leading world trends and demand.

- Building an internationally recognised image of the College;

Participation in international conferences, forums, discussions and projects. Participation in international education exhibitions.

- Mobility of students and academic and general staff members;

Within the Erasmus+ programme, which aims at collaborating in the field of science, attracting instructors who are specialists in a particular field, developing cooperation among higher

education institutions, attracting qualified instructors to deliver and develop individual study courses in partner countries, increasing the number of persons involved in mobility, by expanding the range of partners and developing the mobility of academic staff and students.

- Attracting and integrating foreign students in the College of Law;

The attraction of foreign students to the College of Law is ensured at its own expense, as well as within the Erasmus+ programme. At present, there is a small number of foreign students at the College of Law, and within the strategic development it is envisaged to achieve at least 4 % of the total number of the College students.

- Attracting foreign guest lecturers;

To increase the number of foreign lecturers, the College of Law plans to conclude new cooperation agreements, including at least two agreements a year within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme.

6. SCIENTIFIC AND RESEARCH ACTIVITY

The College of Law should constantly focus on the scientific and creative activity of the academic staff members and students, each year organising scientific conferences for students and academic staff members and the International Science Week, traditionally held in April, within the framework of Lawyers' Days in Latvia. Conferences are organised in cooperation with other Latvian higher education institutions (Riga Stradins University, Rezekne Higher Education Institution), foreign cooperation partners (Mykolas Romeris University, Nord University (Tallinn), University of Stuttgart (Germany), Caucasus University (Georgia)), Latvian Academy of Sciences, Baltic Strategic Research Centre etc. Conference and seminar materials are published in regular proceedings of the College of Law and are made available at the website of the College of Law.

7. PUBLISHING

In accordance with the study courses and research directions of the College of Law, the publishing activity shall be developed at the College of Law, by publishing not less than one textbook and conference proceedings a year. It is planned to publish new textbooks for study courses in administrative law, European and international law, finance and accounting, marketing, and real estate management.

Every year the College of Law publishes articles written by academic staff members and students who have participated in scientific conferences with reports, which undoubtedly complement the study process and ensure its quality.

The Publishing House of the College of Law regularly publishes textbooks as well as materials for study courses that are necessary for the acquisition of the study programmes and the development of research directions. Several times a year, the Bulletin of the College of Law “Juridiskās koledžas Vēstnesis” is regularly published, reflecting the College’s activities and the Student Self-government activities.

8. STUDENT SELF-GOVERNMENT

Students’ involvement in the improvement of the study process and enhancement of its quality is ensured by the Student Self-government, which is supported by the administration of the College of Law, providing financial, material and other support.

The Student Self-government is established in a democratic way, and it represents the interests and needs of the College students. It operates and is involved in the Student Council of the Latvian College Association.

9. ACTIVITIES IN THE LATVIAN COLLEGE ASSOCIATION

The College of Law, as one of the founding organisations of the Latvian College Association, actively participates in its activities through the exchange of experience in order to improve the organisation and quality of the study process, to defend the interests of the College, to improve legal regulation and legislative process, to promote college education in Latvia and to encourage international cooperation.