



April 2026

**Riga Stradins
University
Consolidated
Institutional
Assessment**



Final report



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1 Summary of Unit-Level Performance

The unit-level assessments for Riga Stradins University (RSU) indicate a strong and relatively consistent performance profile, with both evaluated units receiving overall scores of 4 (very good). There are no outliers at either end of the scale for any of the evaluation criteria. This reflects a broadly coherent research performance across the institution.

The Health and Natural Sciences Platform demonstrates solid and improving performance across most evaluation criteria. The unit benefits from close integration with clinical and applied environments, and access to shared research infrastructure and support systems. It can take leadership roles in international consortia. The Social Sciences Platform demonstrates very good research quality with a high volume of applied and interdisciplinary research, successful participation in competitive European projects, and close integration with public-sector and policy environments. These strengths are not confined to isolated projects or individuals but appear to be systemic, reflecting platform-level organisation, challenge-driven research directions, and institutional support structures such as project management and research centres.

Similarly, strengths identified at the unit level appear also to be systemic. Both units show evidence that institutional frameworks, such as centralised doctoral management, digital research information systems, project management support, and advisory structures, are actively enabling research performance.

At the same time, some shared limitations are visible. While performance is strong overall, the scale and intensity of research impact on the discipline are not yet very strong. This is an area that would benefit from further strategic focus.

Full details of the unit's FTEs and scores are in Appendices A and B.

2 Institutional Context

The institutional self-assessment report presents a clear and credible mission and research strategy, centred on RSU's role as a research-intensive university with a strong focus on health, life sciences, and societally relevant social sciences. The strategy articulates well-defined priorities, including internationalisation, interdisciplinary research, talent development, and the integration of research with education and societal needs. This clarity provides an important framework for interpreting the unit-level results, particularly the consistency of performance observed across the two disciplinary platforms.

RSU has responded to the recommendations of the previous evaluation in a systematic and substantive manner, implementing a range of structural and strategic reforms at the institutional level. Key actions include the consolidation of faculties into thematic platforms, the establishment of central research governance bodies and support units, the reform of doctoral training, the introduction of tenure-track research groups, and significant investments in shared infrastructure, data management and digital research systems. Taken together, these measures indicate that RSU has not only formally addressed the main recommendations but has also translated them into sustained institutional changes that now underpin and support unit-level research performance.

Research at RSU is structured through thematic platforms and research units, supported by central governance and coordination mechanisms. This structure balances disciplinary depth with cross-cutting collaboration, enabling units to align their research agendas with institutional priorities while retaining sufficient autonomy. Institutional-level governance arrangements, such



as central research management, digital research information systems, support for competitive grant applications, and structured doctoral training, are repeatedly referenced in unit reports as enabling factors, suggesting that unit performance is embedded within a coherent institutional environment rather than driven by isolated initiatives.

The unit-level assessments indicate that RSU's institutional arrangements generally enable and sustain research performance, particularly through strategic recruitment, tenure-track development, incentives for high-quality publications, and investment in shared research infrastructure. The consistency of strong scores across both units suggests that performance is not concentrated in a small number of exceptional individuals but is instead supported by systemic institutional policies and support structures.

At the same time, the institutional context also helps explain some of the shared limitations identified at the unit level. While RSU provides a solid framework for high-quality, societally relevant research, the ambition to further strengthen international academic leadership will require continued strategic focus, particularly on enhancing international visibility, sustaining research scale, and ensuring long-term resource alignment. The importance of applied research in both units underscores the need to set not only disciplinary but also thematic priorities, and to match these to the needs of knowledge users nationally and internationally. Sharper prioritisation of the research portfolio would also support international competitiveness despite the university's small size.

3 Overall Institutional Score and Rationale

Assigned overall score: **4 (very good), strong international player.**

The overall institutional score of 4 (very good) is based on a balanced and well-substantiated synthesis of the unit-level evidence and the institutional context at Riga Stradins University. The unit-level evaluations demonstrate consistently strong performance. While performance varies across criteria and disciplines, these variations are moderate and do not weaken the institution's overall standing. This consistency supports the conclusion that RSU's research strength is systemic rather than isolated, and that its strongest units are broadly representative of the institution's overall research profile.

The institutional context reinforces this assessment. RSU's clearly articulated mission, coherent research strategy, and platform-based research organisation provide an enabling framework that supports unit-level performance. The unit-level evidence indicates that these institutional arrangements actively support research performance rather than merely providing a formal structure.

4 Recommendations

- RSU is a small university, so its strategy must be focused if it is to be competitive. The Chairs of Disciplinary Expert Groups recommend that RSU periodically review and sharpen its prioritisation of research topics at the institutional level. While the current platform-based structure supports a broad and diverse research portfolio, clearer strategic choices, based on scientific strength, societal relevance, international opportunity and capacity for leadership, would help concentrate resources and attention where RSU can achieve the greatest impact and visibility. In particular, focusing support on areas where RSU can contribute original concepts,



methodological advances, or agenda-setting research would strengthen its influence on the development of the discipline at the international level.

- The Chairs of Disciplinary Expert Groups encourage RSU to continue and deepen internal reflection on what constitutes research quality across its diverse disciplinary profile. As RSU combines fundamental, applied, clinical and policy-oriented research, this reflection should explicitly look beyond bibliometric indicators alone, and consider a broader range of qualitative evidence, including originality, methodological rigour, contribution to knowledge, relevance to practice and societal benefit.



Appendix A FTE academic and research staff at units as reported in the self-evaluation reports

	FTE academic and research staff at units as reported in the self-evaluation reports																	
	2019			2020			2021			2022			2023			2024		
Unit	Academic	Research	Total	Academic	Research	Total	Academic	Research	Total	Academic	Research	Total	Academic	Research	Total	Academic	Research	Total
Health and Natural Sciences Platform	67.33	69.52	136.85	64.8	61.84	126.64	61.36	62.91	124.27	71.23	61.77	133	70.24	58.28	128.52	70.99	67.97	138.96
Social Sciences Platform	14.02	1.32	15.34	13.72	2.81	16.53	13.16	3.68	16.84	16.8	7.96	24.76	17.6	8.12	25.72	18.95	9.13	28.08



Appendix B Unit scores assigned by disciplinary Expert Groups and Institutional Score

Unit	Unit scores assigned by disciplinary Expert Groups						
	Overall score	Quality of research	Impact on the discipline	Economic impact	Social impact	Research environment & infrastructure	Development potential
Health and Natural Sciences Platform	4	4	3	4	4	4	4
Social Sciences Platform	4	4	3	4	4	4	3

Assigned overall score: **4 (very good), strong international player.**