Welcome to Rīga Stradiņš University

Dear prospective student,

On behalf of all staff and students, thank you for your interest in Rīga Stradiņš University (RSU) – one of the best universities in the Baltic region with an ambition to become one of the best in Eastern Europe. RSU is committed to providing students with an unforgettable, unique, and valuable educational experience. After all, studies of medical sciences will require many years of your life.

Our ambition is fuelled by the academic staff being prominent and renowned doctors and experts in Latvia, many of whom are also acknowledged internationally; the developed network of clinical bases; the luxury of students studying in small groups; English as the study language; and, most importantly, the constantly growing number of international students.

RSU is located in Riga – the city that inspires – with its vibrant atmosphere of the Baltic metropolis, rich cultural and social life, and growing multicultural environment. We are confident that if you choose to pursue your academic and personal goals at RSU, Riga will inspire you, too, and you will always remember the time spent here with great joy and pride.

We are looking forward to welcoming you at our University. Should you have any questions, our International Office is always there for you.

Professor Jānis Gardovskis, Rector
Latvia

Latvia is situated in the centre of the three Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) that are all located on the Eastern coast of the Baltic Sea in North-Eastern Europe. Latvia is bordered by four countries – Estonia to the North, Russia to the East, and Belarus and Lithuania to the South.

For hundreds of years the strategic location has made Latvia not only an international crossroad for trade, commerce and cultural exchange, but also a notable centre of historic events. The cornerstones of recent history are: 1990 – regaining of independence and 2004 – becoming a member state of the European Union and NATO.

Latvia stretches 503 km from east to west and 190 km from north to south. Even though, it is considered one of the smallest states in Europe, its area is larger than that of Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Switzerland, or its neighbouring country Estonia.

The landscape of Latvia is characterised by fertile lowland plains, moderate hills, extensive networks of rivers and lakes, and, most importantly, a long coastline (almost 500 km) of white, sandy beaches, lined by dunes and pine forests.

Your Study Destination

Riga

Riga is the capital of Latvia. Inhabited by a population of 717,000 it is also the largest city in the Baltic States. It is not just the political, economic and cultural centre of the country, but also a vibrant metropolis of the Baltics. The city lies on the Gulf of Riga, at the mouth of the river Daugava.

Riga has been nicknamed The City that Inspires, and it truly does! You will fall in love with the medieval Old Town and the 19th and 20th century Art Nouveau architecture, which is a distinctive characteristic of Riga. Riga is also a stimulating setting for cultural life – the city will be the European Capital of Culture in 2014.

Riga is also a stimulating setting for cultural life – the city will be the European Capital of Culture in 2014. For relaxation Riga offers diverse options with its many cafeterias, restaurants and nightclubs.

AREA: 64,589 km²
POPULATION: 2.1 million
CAPITAL: Riga
OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: Latvian
RELIGIONS: Catholic (22%); Lutheran (20%); Orthodox (15%); Other (4%); Non-affiliated (~40%)
NATIONALITIES: Latvians (59%); Russians (28%); Others (13%)
CURRENCY: Latvian Lat (LVL; Ls);
Fixed exchange rate 1 EUR = 0.7028 LVL
POLITICS: Parliamentary democracy with a multi-party system; a member of EU and NATO
CLIMATE: Temperate maritime climate with mild summers (+20...+28 °C), moderate winters (-1...-15 °C) and frequently high levels of humidity (70%) and precipitation (600–700 mm)
Why Choose Rīga Stradiņš University?

EU/EEU Approved Diploma
- RSU diploma is acknowledged in the EU and EEA.
- RSU credits (ECTS) are transferable to any university within the EU and EEA.

Experienced and Accessible Academic Staff
- Members of RSU academic staff are prominent and renowned doctors and experts in Latvia, many of whom are also acknowledged internationally.
- Studies are organised in groups that are smaller than in most European universities. Student teacher ratio is 1:17 on average, providing students with extra professor-time.

Advanced Study Process
- Clinical bases are located in the leading hospitals of Riga city.
- Studies are equipped with high quality hardware.
- Clinical subjects are taught starting from the 4th year, when students start to practice with patients.

Study in English
- English is the only teaching language. Though, knowledge of conversational Latvian language will be a must at later years, when studying clinical subjects, in order to successfully work with patients.

Lower Costs
- Due to the liberal costs of study and living and competitive education RSU is becoming increasingly popular among international students in Europe.

Multicultural Environment
- International students constitute 12% of the total student body. In faculties of Medicine and Dentistry the proportion is significantly higher – 45% and 27%, correspondingly.*
- The majority of international students come from Europe – Germany, Norway, Sweden etc.
- All RSU students are encouraged to participate in the ERASMUS programme – to study from 3 to 12 months in one of 80 European institutions of higher education.

Inspiring Leisure Time
- Riga is the largest city in the Baltics – a vibrant and multidimensional metropolis, offering many opportunities to enrich one’s cultural and social life.
- Riga will be the European Capital of Culture in 2014.
- Latvia is claimed to be one of the greenest countries in the world. Good news for those fond of nature and outdoor activities.

* September 2012 data.
Study Programmes

International students at RSU can choose to study the programmes of Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy, and Nursing. Below is a brief overview of the key facts about these programmes.

Further in the prospect you will find more detailed information on study programmes Medicine and Dentistry, as these are the most popular among international students. More detailed information on Pharmacy, Physiotherapy, and Nursing programmes is available on RSU homepage (www.rsu.lv/eng).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDY PROGRAMME</th>
<th>START DATE</th>
<th>TEACHING LANGUAGE</th>
<th>PROGRAMME LENGTH</th>
<th>STUDY TYPE</th>
<th>FACULTY PROVIDING THE PROGRAMME</th>
<th>CREDITS (ECTS)</th>
<th>DEGREE AWARDED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEDICINE</td>
<td>Sep &amp; Feb</td>
<td>English*</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>Full-time studies</td>
<td>Faculty of Medicine</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>Medical Doctor (MD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DENTISTRY</td>
<td>Sep &amp; Feb</td>
<td>English*</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>Full-time studies</td>
<td>Faculty of Dentistry</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHARMACY</td>
<td>Sep</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>Full-time studies</td>
<td>Faculty of Pharmacy</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>B.Sc. Degree in Health Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYSIOThERAPy</td>
<td>Sep</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Full-time studies</td>
<td>Faculty of Rehabilitation</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>B.Sc. Degree in Rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSING</td>
<td>Sep</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Full-time studies</td>
<td>Faculty of Nursing</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>B.Sc. Degree in Health Sciences</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* KNOWLEDGE OF CONVERSATIONAL LATVIAN LANGUAGE WILL BE A MUST AT LATER YEARS TO SUCCESSFULLY WORK WITH PATIENTS, WHEN STUDYING CLINICAL SUBJECTS.
Study Programme Medicine

Course Outline

Programme Medicine, provided by the Faculty of Medicine, is specifically designed to teach students the core competencies that are required in order to become highly skilled doctors who upon graduation are capable to pursue a wide variety of careers. This program is characterised by student cooperation and active engagement in group work. Studies involve working on a series of patient-centred problems, revealing the basic principles that influence human health and disease. The medical knowledge and practical clinical skills are obtained by giving students the opportunity to work with patients as early as in the 3rd year.

The programme is based on the following principles:

• Basic, clinical, biological and social sciences are taught simultaneously, with communication skills being an important part of the curriculum.
• Dissection of cadaver is carried out when studying anatomy of the human body. This draws the study environment closer to real life situations, since, unlike with study models, each cadaver has its unique anatomical features.
• A significant part of study time (~30%) is devoted to the understanding of disease prevention – how a GP supervised family health service team works and how it promotes patient engagement in healthcare and supports use of preventive measures, thus noticeably reducing the number of hospitalised patients.
• Technological advances are fostered by systematic usage of information technology and development of students' computing skills.
• Professional development and ethics is an integral part of the programme.
• Lifelong learning skills are acquired by systematically using diverse learning approaches.
• The diploma received is recognized within the EU.

Studying medicine at RSU means hard work, but it is also great fun especially knowing this is also a part of realizing one’s dream becoming a good doctor. In my opinion, RSU provides very good basis in achieving that goal.

A day at RSU often comprises attending lectures and lessons where your level of knowledge is being tested quite often (mostly in the form of a discussion or written test). The teachers are nice and helpful, they work hard to teach and motivate the students, and their knowledge is very profound.

Caroline M. Sepp, Msc.
International student from Holland
RSU’s study programme Medicine, 2nd year
Course Structure

The study programme is comprised of compulsory and elective courses and studies are divided into three blocks:

(1) Basic subjects (year 1 to 2) – theoretical disciplines, which comprise subjects from different fields of sciences – anatomy, histology, physiology, medical chemistry and biochemistry, as well as the humanities – philosophy, psychology, languages.

(2) Preclinical subjects (year 3) – disciplines regarding pathological conditions and processes, which already include basic clinical disciplines.

(3) Clinical subjects (year 4 to 6) – disciplines that transform the knowledge gained in the previous years into clinical skills – a competence that is needed by every modern doctor.

Course Requirements and Assessment

Students are required to participate in lectures and seminars. Student knowledge is assessed and evaluated in colloquiums, practical tasks and theoretical tests, as well as exams.

Clinical Bases

Students of the Faculty of Medicine gain their professional grounding at the University’s clinical hospitals – some of the most important Latvian health care treatment and medical science establishments.

Riga Eastern Clinical University Hospital is the most significant among them all. Patients receive general surgery, traumatology, neurosurgery, vascular surgery, general therapy, cardiology, nephrology, urology, gynecology, and otolaryngology or ophthalmology services at this modern wide ranging medical establishment. Patients with malignant tumours, haematological illnesses, neurological illnesses, burns, frostbite, geriatric problems, and children with hearing problems or patients who are suffering from poisoning can all be treated at this hospital.

Other significant clinical bases are the Paula Stradiņš Clinical University Hospital, Children’s Clinical University Hospital, Riga Maternity Hospital, and the State Agency of Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases of Latvia.

Important

* KNOWLEDGE OF CONVERSATIONAL LATVIAN LANGUAGE WILL BE A MUST AT LATER YEARS IN ORDER TO SUCCESSFULLY WORK WITH PATIENTS, WHEN STUDYING CLINICAL SUBJECTS.

Further Study

Upon successful graduation of the programme students acquire professional and academic growth possibilities – to continue their education in a residency programme of their chosen speciality and become a doctor-specialist or to study medicine field’s Masters or Doctoral Degree programmes in Latvia or in any other country of the European Union.

Important

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY FACTS</th>
<th>MEDICINE PROFESSIONAL STUDY PROGRAMME</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>START DATES:</td>
<td>September &amp; February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEACHING LANGUAGE:</td>
<td>English*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUDY TYPE:</td>
<td>Full-time studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROGRAMME LENGTH:</td>
<td>6 years (12 semesters)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CREDITS:</td>
<td>360 ECTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEGREE AWARDED:</td>
<td>Medical Doctor (MD)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* KNOWLEDGE OF CONVERSATIONAL LATVIAN LANGUAGE WILL BE A MUST AT LATER YEARS IN ORDER TO SUCCESSFULLY WORK WITH PATIENTS, WHEN STUDYING CLINICAL SUBJECTS.
Study Programme Dentistry

Course Outline

Professional education programme Dentistry, provided by the Faculty of Dentistry, produces qualified dentists with a degree of Doctor of Dental Surgery. The obtained knowledge and practical skills allow them to practice in general dentistry – to treat patients with oral cavity and tooth diseases, as well as to carry out educative activities for the prevention of the mentioned diseases. Programme follows an integrated curriculum developing such knowledge, skills, judgement, and attitudes that enable graduates to deliver high standard of professional care in a rapidly changing educational and clinical environment.

The programme is based on the following principles:

- Studies in small groups of 8 people are guaranteed.
- Innovative teaching methods are applied throughout the entire study process:
  - Basic, clinical, biological and social sciences are taught simultaneously, with communication skills being an important part of the curriculum;
  - Elements of clinical case analysis and problem solving are used in the programme;
  - Focus on evidence based dentistry – acquisition of opinion and treatment methods based on scientific research, instead of learning authoritative opinions by heart;
  - Students are encouraged to participate in scientific work and projects;
  - Lifelong learning skills are acquired by systematic use of diverse learning approaches;
  - Computers, multimedia and the Internet are used in the study process;
  - Clinical training is geared to modern practice:
    - Practical clinical skills are obtained as early as the 3rd year, when the work with patients starts;
    - State-of-the-art dentistry equipment, with interactive technologies and top quality dental filling materials is used.
  - Lectures and practical classes are taught in a collegial way by highly recognised professionals and specialists, as all members of the academic staff have practiced and received qualifications in different European universities and clinics.
  - The diploma received is recognized within the EU.

If you are serious about your aims and ready to sacrifice plenty of your day and night time for studying to become a dentist, then RSU is the right choice. It provides you a nice frame of modern dental clinic, experienced professors, multicultural atmosphere and small groups for nice studying without long distances or anonymous life.

Leon Schneider
International student from Germany, RSU’s study programme Dentistry, 4th year
Course Structure

The study programme is comprised of compulsory and elective courses and studies are divided into 3 blocks:

(1) Basic subjects (year 1) – fundamental and medical disciplines: Anatomy, Histology, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Languages (Latin and English), profession-related subjects (Dental Anatomy, Anatomy, and Biomaterials Sciences).

(2) Preclinical subjects (year 2) – theoretical knowledge and practical experience necessary for work in clinic:

• General medical disciplines (Surgery, Internal and Infectious Diseases, Otolaryngology) and their connection with teeth and oral cavity diseases;
• Preclinical and paraclinical sciences: Physiology, Microbiology, Genetics etc.;
• Preclinical subjects of stomatology disciplines: Operative Dentistry, Anaesthetics, Prosthetic Dentistry, Dental Root Channel Filling, Dental Splintage performed on special dental phantoms (models imitating human head, oral cavity, teeth) etc.

(3) Clinical subjects (year 3 to 5) – work with patients in clinic:

• In-depth knowledge of Rentgenology, Dermatoven-erology, Pediatrics, Clinical Pharmacology;
• Combined treatment of teeth and oral cavity diseases.

Clinical Base

Professional grounding is provided by the University’s Institute of Dentistry, which is a new, modern, and internationally acclaimed practical dentistry centre, located next to the University’s main building. The institute is a leading diagnostics centre in orthodontics, prostho-dontics and oral maxillofacial surgery in the Eastern Europe, and hence is able to ensure outstanding quality of the undergraduate, as well as postgraduate study programmes.

This clinic is set-up with top-ranking dental digital Planmeca equipment, which is considered a technology leader in dental equipment design. In collaboration with some of the world’s leading universities, Planmeca has developed a unique learning environment for dental education based on intelligent equipment and software integration. The University’s Faculty of Dentistry was the third dental school to adopt the new learning environment.

Theoretical knowledge and practical skills are mastered under the supervision of the most qualified and renowned academics and practitioners in Latvia and in Europe, several of whom are members of prestigious honorary dental organizations like the International College of Dentists and Pierre Fauchard Academy.

Further Study

Students may continue their education in the postgraduate Residency study programmes – Orthodontics, Teeth Prosthetics, Endodontics, Periodontics, Paediatric Dentistry or Maxillofacial Surgery – or study Medicine field’s Masters or Doctoral Degree programmes in Latvia or in any other country of the European Union.

Course Requirements and Assessment

Students are required to participate in lectures and seminars. Student knowledge is assessed and evaluated in exams, theoretical tests, practical tasks, colloquiaums, as well as, in clinical training, writing of disease histories, solving of clinical cases, participation in scientific research project, and different presentations. Assessment of clinical skills is carried out on a continuous basis, with careful feedback.
Multicultural Environment

For over 20 years now, Rīga Stradiņš University study programmes Medicine and Dentistry have been on high demand for international students from the Canada, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, the UK and USA. The number of international students is increasing by every year, and today there are around a thousand* international students from a variety of countries studying at RSU.

Having international students at the University provides opportunity to meet and get-to-know other cultures, have a feel of multicultural environment. Besides that, many domestic students become mentors or just friends to international students.

* September 2012 data.

Erasmus

More than 1.5 million students from Europe have received a positive experience living and studying abroad in one of ERASMUS institutions of higher education. The ERASMUS programme allows also full-time students of RSU:

- to study from 3 to 12 months in one of 80 European institutions of higher education;
- to receive a scholarship, which helps cover at least part of the expenses connected with studies and travel;
- to acquire a valuable academic and cultural experience.

Full-time students of RSU are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity and acquire additional study experience at one of our partner universities in Europe.

Students who have taken this opportunity have pointed out that it has been a positive experience of acquiring an international experience in their chosen field of study, it has helped them to learn new languages and cultures, and additionally they have gained many new friends.

RSU is a great place to be, study, and last but not least, make friends. The open environment and the multicultural peers are only two factors that make it easy to settle in. Since everybody is at the same exposure, it is easy to approach your fellow students. The fact that everybody originates from another country makes tolerance and candidness towards other cultures a necessity. As foreigners we are studying away from our home countries and have to approach the situation accordingly. Stay open-minded and eager to adapt to the new culture, and people will pay you their due respect, and will welcome you heartily into their home country.

Johannes Göbel
International student from Germany
RSU’s study programme Medicine, 1st year
Visiting and Open Days

Open Days is a great way to learn more about the place you will spend a considerable amount of your life, and decide whether RSU will be the right choice for you. We organise several opportunities for our prospective students, who are considering studying at RSU, to visit us.

A typical Open Day includes:

• meeting with the staff of the RSU International Student Department;
• presentation of study programmes;
• question and answer session;
• guided University tour.

Should you wish to meet with us in person, we will be happy to have you on our Open Days, which are held on the last Friday of every month. However, please do inform us ahead of your visit at least three days prior to the event, either by e-mail foreign@rsu.lv or by calling +371 67409 212.

Admission Requirements

• Good command of English (see Language Requirements further in the text).
• Completed secondary education, including two semesters of Biology or Chemistry, preferably also Physics or Mathematics.
• Eligibility for university in your home country.
• Age requirements are 18 years or older, with no maximum age limit.

Language Requirements

All applicants, except native English speakers, must demonstrate their English language proficiency by submitting documents that testify their knowledge of English. Preferably you should submit one of the following certificates with a minimum score of:

• IELTS 6.0
• TOEFL IBT 80
• TOEFL CBT 213
• TOEFL PBT 550
• GCSE (or GCE) C level
• Cambridge First Certificate in English Grade B
• Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English Grade C

If none of the above applies, you may submit a substitute certificate, however RSU reserves the right to sit you through an entrance exam to test your knowledge of English.

Applications have to contain all of the required supporting documents, as partial applications are not considered valid. For more details on the application procedure, please visit the RSU homepage www.rsu.lv/eng

Tuition Fee

The tuition fee is regulated by the individual agreement between the student and Rīga Stradiņš University. Enrolled non-EU/EEA citizens have to pay the tuition fee in advance for the entire academic year, whereas EU/EEA citizens may make the payment per semester.

The tuition fee covers:

• attendance at scheduled lectures, practical and laboratory classes;
• attendance at scheduled tutorials held weekly by teaching staff of the University;
• testing of acquired knowledge and skills via weekly tests, colloquiums, examinations or final semester tests;
• use of lecture halls, rooms, laboratories, clinics and equipment during the academic year.

For more information on tuition fees and other payments, please contact the International Study Department either by calling +371 67409 128 or +371 67409 212, or writing an e-mail to foreign@rsu.lv.

Tuition Fee in Euros (EUR)

Please see the University homepage www.rsu.lv/eng.
Accommodation and Living

Moving to live in an unknown city is not always an easy transition; however, Rīga Stradiņš University and the city itself offer a variety of options, which can be adjusted to varied personal desires and financial possibilities.

• You may choose to live in the University Student Hostel. The cost of the hostel varies depending on the size and type of room (single en suite, single, shared bathroom, etc.). There is a 24-hour front desk as well as wireless internet connection and access to university subscribed databases is available in the entire hostel and is free of charge. Getting from the hostel to the University or the city centre by public transport takes approximately 15 minutes. However, it should be noted that due to a high demand, the University has limited possibilities of providing housing for all students.

• Students can also choose to live off-campus with other RSU students in the new housing estate at 2 Ventspils Street. Specially designed to provide comfortable and functional accommodation, the housing is situated in only 3 minutes from Pauls Stradiņš Clinical University Hospital and 15 minutes away from both the city centre and RSU. Each apartment is en suite with a separate kitchen and is designed to be occupied by only one student. It is equipped with a bed, a wardrobe, and a table with two chairs. Each apartment has Internet connection in its facilities and an optional cable TV. In addition to that, there is a shared laundry room and public space on the first floor of the building for different activities. The prices differ depending on the size of the apartment. The rent for the smallest apartments is 190 Euros per month.

• Another popular alternative is renting a private apartment, often shared by two or three students. Of course, the costs are higher and depend on the location and quality of the apartment. For example, furnished apartment in the city centre is going to be rather expensive.

Living Costs

The cost of living in Riga is quite the same as in most European capitals. Most students coming to Latvia from other EU countries find Latvia even cheaper than their home countries; however, the cost of living mostly depends on one’s individual lifestyle, desires and necessities.

As a rough guide, we recommend a minimum of around EUR 600.00 per month (including accommodation) for expenses such as phone, food, study materials, local transport, hobbies, leisure, hygiene and other. The table gives an overall insight into what it costs to live in Riga.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIVING COSTS</th>
<th>AVERAGE LOW</th>
<th>AVERAGE HIGH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RENT</td>
<td>130 EUR</td>
<td>400 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOOD</td>
<td>200 EUR</td>
<td>400 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTILITIES &amp; SERVICES</td>
<td>100 EUR</td>
<td>200 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUBLIC TRANSPORT</td>
<td>20 EUR</td>
<td>30 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTERTAINMENT</td>
<td>50 EUR</td>
<td>150 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>100 EUR</td>
<td>200 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>600 EUR</td>
<td>1380 EUR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"What I love about Riga is that when you are tired of studying you have a great variety of things to do for recreation. If you just want to relax, you can enjoy the sun at the sandy beaches of Jūrmala or just catch a train to Sigulda and enjoy pure nature. And if you are looking for some excitement, there are plenty of bars and clubs in the centre of Riga that will suit you!"

Lukas Kratzsch
International student from Germany
RSU’s study programme Medicine, 1st year
“Alongside with professionalism, always keep working on your personality: strive to be versatile – love art, literature, and music; grow the sense of beauty in your heart.”

Professor Pauls Stradiņš (1896–1958)