Self-evaluation of the Faculty of Dentistry, year 2009

Riga Stradiņš University, faculty of Dentistry is responsible for the realisation of the programme.

Up to year 1991, the education of dentist could be obtained according the united programme in the whole area of the USSR. The study programme of dentistry was medically driven; specialisation specific subjects formed less than 40% of the curriculum.

After 1991, when the Republic of Latvia was founded again, reforms in educating dentists took place. The programme which was carried out in the Faculty of Dentistry in Medical Academy of Latvia was altered in 1993 based on the regulation by the European Union (EU) of 1978, which are in force up to date (Directive 78/687/EEC).

Since 1993 amount of subjects related to dentistry has reached 60%, which corresponds with the requirements for obtaining the degree of a dentist. An ongoing work to harmonise the programme and matching it with national needs is in progress. In accordance with recognition of professional qualifications in the EU, the programme of dentistry is being updated, thus making it conformable with sectoral directives of the EU about the education and qualification requirements for dentists.

Faculty of Dentistry of Riga Stradiņš University is a member of ADEE (Association for Dental Education in Europe). Faculty has been involved in EU funded for the further improvement of dental education and the possible convergence of – DentEd and DentEdEvolves in Europe.

1. Programme Goals and Targets

The goal of the study programme “Dentistry” is to prepare students for becoming qualified dentists whose knowledge and practical skills would allow them to practice in general dentistry – to treat patients with oral cavity and teeth illnesses, as well as to be able to hold practical and educational events of dental illness prevention.

Programme targets:

1. Provide with qualitative and higher education related knowledge in basic sciences, medico-biological disciplines.
2. Provide with necessary theoretical and practical knowledge in general medicine related subjects.
3. Provide with qualitative theoretical knowledge and promote development of practical skills in speciality related subjects.
4. Facilitate professional behaviour pattern acquisition in order to promote cooperation with patients and colleagues.
5. Motivate certain attitudes, which would promote professional development and raise awareness of the need for lifelong learning.

Graduates of the Faculty are conferred a degree of Dentist. They are authorised to practice under supervision of a certified dentist or continue their education in the post-graduate study programme residency in orthodontics, teeth prosthetics, endodontic, periodontics, paediatric dentistry or maxillofacial surgery. After the practice that is at least two years long, one can try to pass the examination for obtaining the certificate, which would allow them to practice independently in general dentistry, as well as open a private practice.
2. Organisation of the Programme
The study programme is organised in accordance with the regulations by the Cabinet of Ministers No 481 “Regulations about the second level higher education state standard” of the 20th November, 2001. The curriculum of the programme has been designed according to the regulations in dentistry developed by the Dental Association of Latvia and approved by the Ministry of Welfare (regulation by the Ministry of Welfare of Latvia No 152 of the 18th May, 1999). It has also been designed agreeably with the School Law of the Republic of Latvia and directives of the Senate of RSU. The guidance of the programme is regulated by the laws and regulation of RSU and instructions about the study process at RSU. The improvement of the process has been going on since January of 2003 when the statutes of RSU Faculty of Dentistry were approved, in which the activity of the Faculty Board has been described; two members of the Student Board are also represented in the Faculty Board.

3. Realisation of the Programme
The study programme follows the classical model of lectures, seminars, laboratory work, practical tasks, and clinical practice, writing medical history, presentations of clinical conditions, and presentations of literature review, research design and presentation in class. Computers, multimedia and Internet are used in the study process. The programme has incorporated analysis of clinical conditions and elements of problem solving. In the last years a specific emphasis has been put on evidence based dentistry rather than acquisition of authoritative opinion. The main motivation of the studies is the need to use the obtained knowledge when working with patients in clinic. Every subject has clearly defined requirements and forms of assessment. Studies in clinic require an adequate level of theoretical knowledge and regularly trained practical skills.

4. Programme Related Research
Teaching staff is continually involved in scientific-research work, the result of which is publications in internationally cited editions. The information can be obtained in the annual list of bibliography issued by the Department of Bibliography and Medical Information (refer to Table 4).

In 2008, teaching staff was involved in the development of three different grant proposals of Latvian Council of Science.

In 2009, teaching staff was involved in the development of three different grant proposals of Latvian Council of Science: 2 - Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery; 1 - Department of Orthodontics.

In 2009, a book was published: Department of Oral Pathology: Selga G. “Enteral feeding”.

Defence of thesis: Department of Conservative Dentistry – 1 (dr. Gudina J.); Department of Prosthetic Dentistry – 1 (dr. Rgauska A.)

Number of publications and thesis in different departments in 2009: Department of Conservative Dentistry 8 publications; 13 theses; Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery 10 publications, 28 thesis; Department of Prosthetic Dentistry 11 publications, 3 theses; Department of Orthodontics 5 publications, 13 theses; Department of Oral Pathology 6 publications, 5 theses.
5. **Assessment**
There is no anonymous assessment of knowledge and skills acquired, thus limiting any concerns of subjectivity. The assessment is plurilateral varying from department to department. The chance of appeal exists. Since 2006/2007 student performance in examinations has been recorded. In preclinical subjects various forms of assessment take place during the course of study, computerised tests have become part of the process.
The State examination in the Faculty of Dentistry is a complex testing of student’s theoretical knowledge and practical skills that has taken place in 5 stages throughout 10 semesters. The State examination is guided by the Regulation, which is revised and approved annually in the Board of Deans. The State examination commission includes Prodean, department heads of dental disciplines, representatives of Latvian Dental Association Board and employer bodies. The examiners are the teaching staff or respective dental disciplines.

6. **Involvement of Students in the Programme**
To evaluate the programme, anonymous survey is conducted (the evaluation form was discussed and approved in the Faculty Board meeting on March 19th, 2003). The survey is conveyed within department or in the Faculty at the end of the fall semester of at the end of the year.

In 2009, there were 128 applicants, 52 matriculations, coefficient of the contest 5.3, and graduates – 34.

7. **Teaching Staff of the Programme.**
Majority of the staff in the Faculty is lecturers that have been elected assistants, assistant professors, associate professors and professors as a result of a contest. Between years 2000 and 2009, teaching staff of the Faculty of Dentistry has participated and increased their qualifications in various congresses, conferences and seminars.

8. **Sources of Finance, Material Support of the Programme**
The programme is a state-financed study programme.

9. **Public Relations**
The Faculty cooperates with other universities abroad:
Oslo University (Norway), Thromso School of Dentistry (Norway)
Goteborg University (Sweden), Malmo University (Sweden),
Karolinska University (Sweden), the Ludvig – Maximilian University of Munich “Dental Clinic” (Germany), University of Jena, Rostock University (Germany)
University of Wales (Great Britain), Cardiff School of Dentistry (Great Britain)
Vilnius University (Lithuania), Kaunas Medical Academy (Lithuania)
Tartu University (Estonia), Mississippi University (USA)
Exchanges of teaching staff and resident programme students happen.

Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry

prof. I.Čēma