

EESTI EVANGEELSE LUTERLIKU KIRIKU
USUTEADUSE INSTITUUT

INSTITUTUM THEOLOGICUM ECCLESIAE EVANGELICO-LUTHERANAE ESTONIAE

The Institute of Theology
of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church

Assessment Report on Theology

Submitted to the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education:
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All documents related to this self-evaluation are available online at <http://ui.eelk.ee/index.php/en/faculty-of-theology/286-quality>.

Abbreviations

APDP	action plan of the development plan 2018–2021 of the Institute of Theology of the EELC
BA	bachelor's studies
CFT	Council of the Faculty of Theology
DP	development plan 2018–2021 of the Institute of Theology of the EELC
DPCC	Diakonia and Pastoral Care and Counselling
EBS	Estonian Business School
EELC	Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church
EHIS	Estonian Education Information System
EKKA	Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education
ECC	Estonian Council of Churches
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System credits
ESF	Evald Saag Foundation
ETF	Estonian Science Foundation
ETIS	Estonian Research Information System
FT	Faculty of Theology of The Institute of Theology of the EELC
FTE	full-time equivalent
FTUT	Faculty of Theology of the University of Tartu
Institute	Institute of Theology of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church
IT	information and communications technology
TATIT	Tartu Academy of Theology of the Institute of Theology of the EELC
MA	master's studies
OCE	Orthodox Church of Estonia
PCC	Pastoral Care and Counselling
PHE	professional higher education
PHEI	professional higher education institution
RDC	research, development and/or other creative activity
SCC	Studies in Christian Culture
SIS	Study Information System
ST	Systematic Theology
TAT	Tartu Academy of Theology
VÕTA	Recognition of Prior Learning

1. General

1.1. Brief overview of the Institute

1.1.1. General information

Name	The Institute of Theology of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church
Legal Status	Institute is a professional higher education institution under the jurisdiction of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church.
Establishment	1946
Contact data	Pühavaimu 6, 10123 Tallinn, Estonia ui.eelk.ee Siimon Haamer Head of the Tartu Academy of Theology of the Institute of Theology of the EELC e-mail: siimon.haamer@teoloogia.ee phone: +372 515 9127
Formal Education Curricula and their registration numbers in the Estonian Education Information System (EHIS)	Theology, professional higher education, 111134 specialties: Lutheran Theology Pastoral Care and Counselling Orthodox Theology Theology, master's studies, 111135 specialties: Theology Diakonia and Pastoral Care and Counselling Studies in Christian Culture, master's studies, 111133

1.1.2. Self-determination and brief history

The Institute of Theology of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church (Institute) has a unique history, which began already on 01.02.1943 in Tartu, and studies became permanent after 1946 in Tallinn. A tradition that valued classical theological education, published books and research materials, well known among Estonian intelligentsia, has developed and flourished during the period of almost 70 years. In the last years, the scope of the Institute has widened, because of the changes in the Estonian higher education system, which have brought about merger of different schools of theology, as well as reorganizing of the Institute into professional higher education institution (PHEI) at the end of 2011.

During the last years, we have experienced many positive developments that have opened new perspectives for the future. Tartu Academy of Theology (TAT) and the Institute merged in 2013 which added pastoral care and counselling (PCC) teaching know-how, and the curricula was complemented with PCC specialty. In 2014, in co-operation with [Orthodox Church of Estonia \(OCE\)](#), we opened the Chair of Orthodox Theology with the goal to train priests for OCE. Such co-operation between Lutheran and Orthodox Church is unique in the whole world.

1.1.3. Areas of activity and main objectives of the development plan

The institute's areas of activity include:

1. Degree studies and research.
2. Vocational studies: Pastoral Seminary and The Church Music Department.
3. Lifelong learning.

The development of these areas of activity are supported by the following lines of action:

1. Partnership cooperation
2. Organisation and management
3. Resources: human resources, material resources, financial resources.

Strategic goals of the [development plan](#) are as follows:

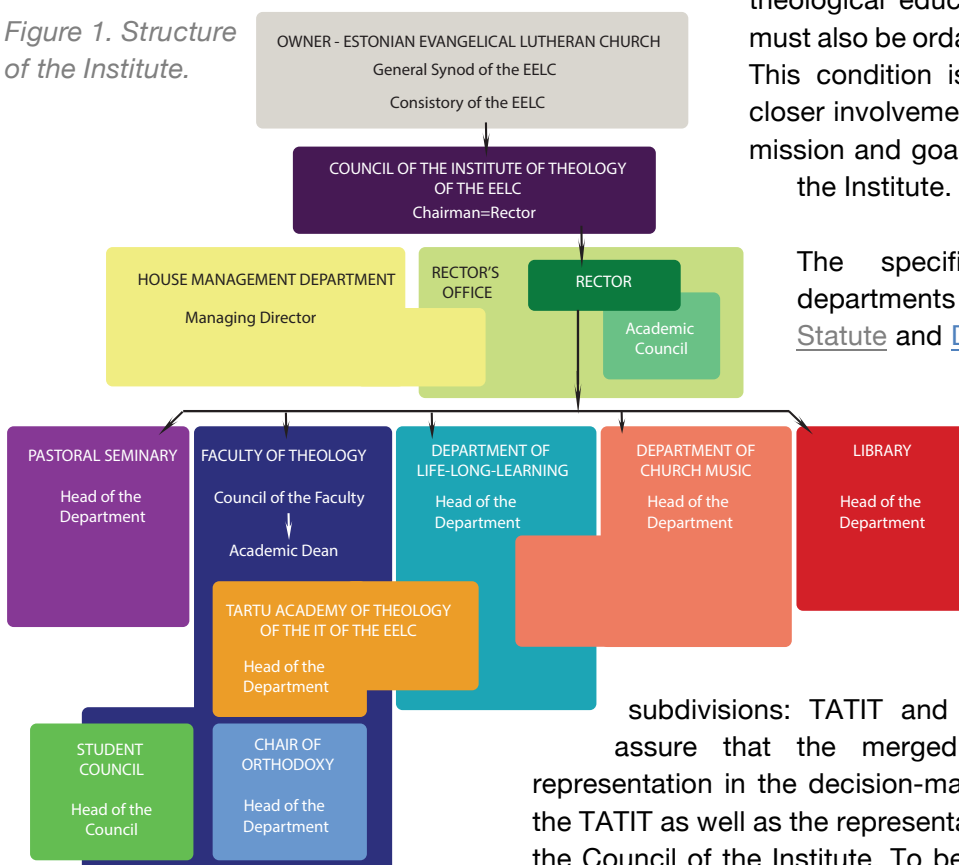
1. The Institute is valued by the EELC.
2. The Institute is nationally, internationally and ecumenically recognized educational and scientific centre.
3. The study environment in the Institute is modern and flexible.
4. The Institute participates in fostering continuing education in Church and society.
5. The Institute participates successfully in the international networks.
6. The Institute is academically and economically sustainable educational and scientific institution.

When formulating the mission, vision and values, we regarded it important to define the foundations of our activities so that when guided by them, we can serve the church and the society in the best manner. Since the church by nature is in the service of the society, it is not possible to separate these two clearly. Society awaits clear representation of Christian set of principles from the church, but this means training of educated theologians, while integrating theology and practice. We also feel responsible for giving chance to get to know Christian culture for those, who do not wish to work as clergy in the church.

1.1.4. Structure of the Institute

The owner of the Institute is [EELC](#), who holds the jurisdiction, which is carried out according to the management structure of the EELC. EELC is also involved through its representatives in the Institute Council and there is also connection through the Rector of the Institute since in addition to academic

Figure 1. Structure of the Institute.



theological education and PhD, a Rector must also be ordained minister in the EELC. This condition is important to guarantee closer involvement of the daily life with the mission and goals formulated in the DP of the Institute.

The specific goals of all the departments are formulated in the [Statute](#) and [DP](#) of the Institute; actions to reach these goals are specified in the [APDP](#). There are five departments as independent units with specific goals (see figure 1). Faculty of Theology as the biggest, has two

subdivisions: TATIT and Chair of Orthodoxy. To assure that the merged institutions have their representation in the decision-making bodies, the Head of the TATIT as well as the representative of the OCE belong to the Council of the Institute. To better define work of TATIT

and Orthodox Chair, the Council of the Institute has adopted a statute for each unit. Responsibility of each Head of department is implementing of the action plan according to the mission of the school and general strategic goals. The more precise differentiation of labor is defined in the job description of each staff-member.

More detailed description of the structural units can be found from the file [Structure of the Institute](#).

1.2. Aggregate data on the study programmes of the study programme group

All study programmes of the Institute belong to the theology study programme group and the theology faculty is responsible for carrying out the studies.

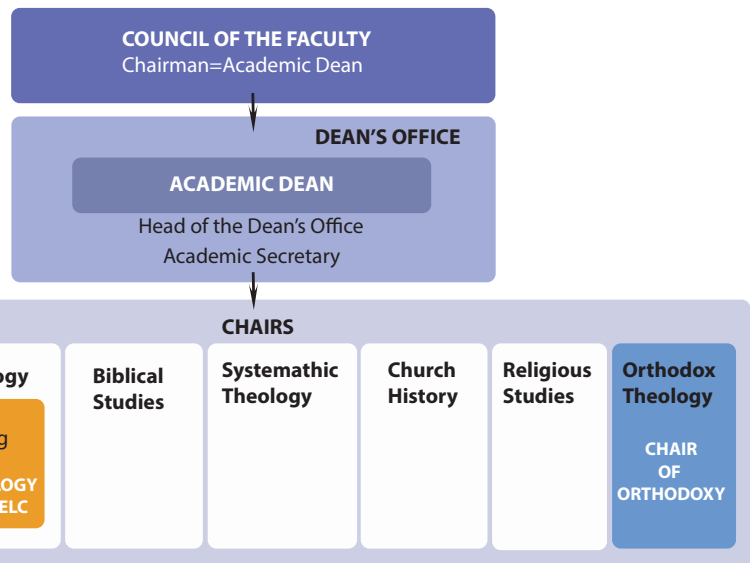


Figure 2. Structure of curricula of Faculty of Theology.

Figure 3. Organisation of curricula.

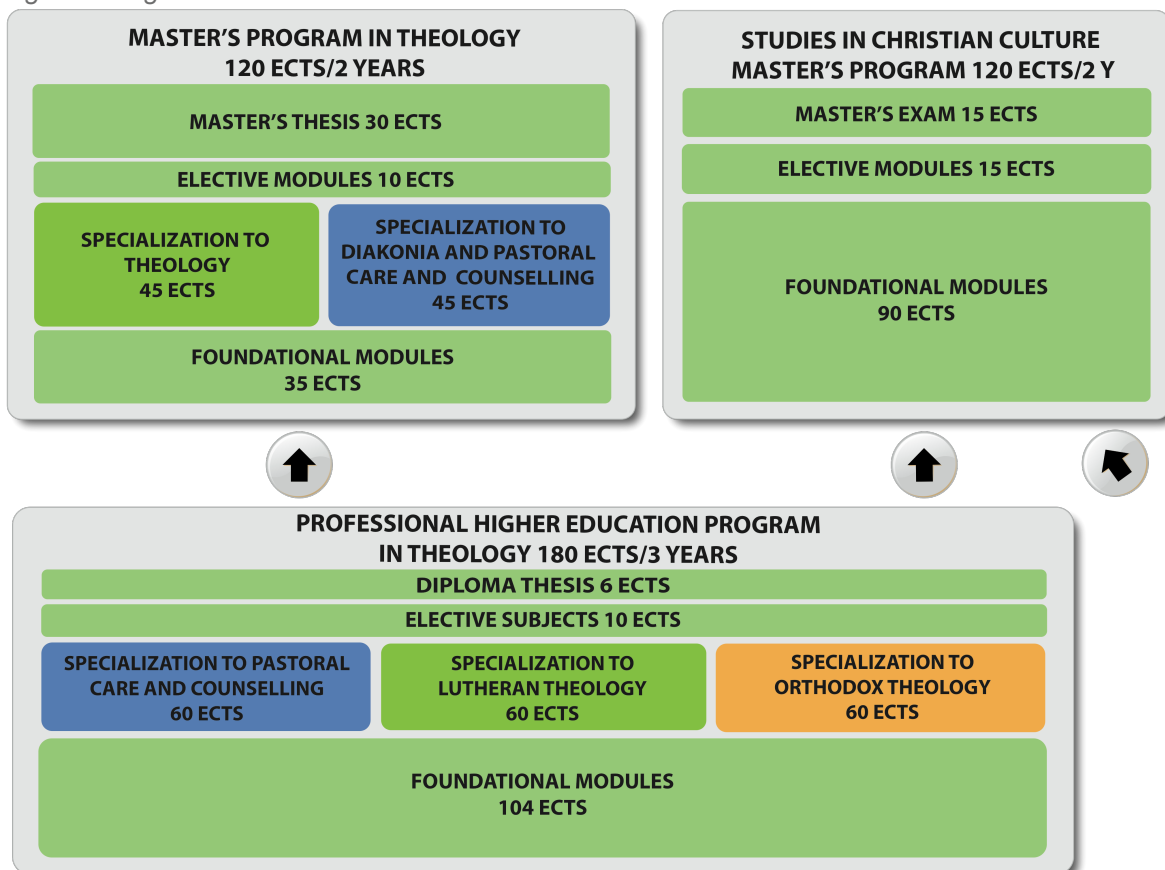


Table 1. Data of all employees.

EMPLOYEES	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of all employees (incl. visiting lecturers)	54	57	50	64	61
Number of acad. staff (excl. visiting lecturers)	8	11	11	11	12
Number of non-academic staff (incl. house management dept.)	21	19	18	18	18
All employees (FTE)	23,2	27,2	26,1	29,5	28,9
incl. academic staff (FTE)	7,3	10,2	9,5	12,7	12,9
incl. non-academic staff (FTE)	15,9	17,0	16,6	16,8	15,9
Academic staff with MA (FTE)	3,9	6,2	5,0	7,6	8
Academic staff with PhD (FTE)	3,3	4	4,4	5,1	5
Percentage of women among academic staff	39%	21%	17%	30%	28%
Average age of academic staff	51	53	52	50	51

The statistics in the table have been submitted based on the statistics at 31st of December of every year.

Table 2. Data of the academic staff.

ACADEMIC STAFF	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Plac es	Con test	Plac es	Con test	Plac es	Con test	Plac es	Con test	Plac es	Con test
Elections of ordinary faculty staff										
Lecturer	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4
Associate Professor	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Professor	1	1	-	-	-	-	4	4	1	1
Ordinary faculty staff in office (FTE)	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
Lecturer	3,0		3,0		3,0		3,0		3,0	
Associate Professor	1,5		1,5		2,25		2,25		-	
Professor	1,0		1,5		1,5		1,5		4,1	

The document [Data of the academic staff](#) presents by curriculum the proportion of subjects being lectured by the ordinary academic staff.

Table 3. Data of academic publishing.

ACADEMIC PUBLISHING	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
incl 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 3.1	1	12	9	5	3
incl 1.1	1	10	3	1	1
Domestic publishing, articles	17	12	15	15	23

In the table are presented only the research works published in the highest rated (1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 3.1) pre-reviewed publications. Promoting of theology and culture to the Estonian public is presented in the bottom row. This year (2018), we have had 9 publications that indicates mission-specific domestic and Estonian language publishing activities.

Table 4. Overview of curricula developments.

CURRICULA	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
PHE Theology	+	+	+	+	+
Specialties: Lutheran Theology	+	+	+	+	+
PCC	+	+	+	+	+
Orthodox Theology	-	+	+	+	+
MA Theology	+	+	+	+	+
Specialties: Theology	+	+	+	+	+
Religious Pedagogics	+	-	-	-	-
Diakonia	+	+	-	-	-
DPCC	-	-	+	+	+
MA Studies in Christian Culture	+	+	+	+	+

Table 5. Data of students.

STUDENTS	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of all students	119	133	136	130	131
PHE Theology	62	73	79	77	75
Specialties: Lutheran Theology	31	39	34	35	34
PCC	31	32	42	38	38
Orthodox Theology	–	2	3	4	3
MA Theology	33	33	32	31	32
Specialties: Theology	10	15	15	11	12
Religious Pedagogics	11	9	5	5	5
Diakonia	12	9	8	8	8
DPCC	–	–	4	7	7
MA Studies in Christian Culture	24	27	25	22	24
Average age of students	42	44	43	44	46
Graduates	3	12	17	17	9
PHE	1	3	6	6	6
MA Theology	2	3	4	6	1
MA Studies in Christian Culture	-	6	7	5	2
Admission	38	33	33	36	19
PHE	20	19	18	23	12
MA Theology	4	6	8	5	2
MA Studies in Christian Culture	14	8	7	8	5
Admission of international students	-	-	-	-	-
Students Dropout*	8%	9%	13%	11%	7%
PHE	10%	5%	13%	18%	12%
MA Theology	3%	9%	13%	0%	0%
MA Studies in Christian Culture	4%	4%	16%	9%	4%
International mobility**	4	7	2	3	2
PHE	-	1	-	-	-
MA Theology	4	4	1	2	1
MA Studies in Christian Culture	-	1	1	1	2

*Dropout % relative to student body.

**Specific information about students international mobility is presented in a document [International mobility of students](#).

The statistics have been submitted based on the statistics at 31st of December of every year.

1.3. Positioning of the study programme group in the Institute and Estonia

All study programmes of the Institute belong to the theology study programme group and the theology faculty is responsible for carrying out the studies. [Chapter 1.1.4.](#) and the file [Structure of the Institute](#) give an overview of the structural units of the Institute.

In addition to covering direct needs of the EELC, the Institute contributes to the Estonian life in the wider context with its study programmes. The following describes more important activities by areas.

Training of the clergy	The Institute does not train clergy only strictly for the church work, but when preparing the study programmes, also takes into account that people who desire to become the clergy could acquire necessary skills and knowledge to become the promoters of the social life in the local community.
Pastoral Care and Counselling	Growing support for hospitals and other social care facilities has grown through teaching and preparing of PCC staff from the means of the EELC and the Institute. The demand for PCC workers in the society is continuously growing and thanks to

	joining forces with the TAT, the Institute is the only school in Estonia, where specialists in this field are trained. We do not receive any funding from the state for this work, so it is fully our service to Estonian society. The Institute has played an active part in development of occupational qualification standards and organizing spreading of specialized information. In spring of 2018, the Institute established the Pastoral Care and Counselling support fund that is aimed at supporting the activities that help to make the pastoral care service better available for the ones in need and develop the pastoral care areas in Estonia more comprehensively.
Chaplaincies	Education in the Institute gives sufficient preparation for working as a chaplain in the Estonian Defence Forces, Police and Border Guard, prison, Defence League and hospital.
Ecumenicalism	There is a Chair of Orthodoxy in the Institute from fall 2014 according to the agreement with the OCE. There are students from different denominations in all curricula and therefore the Institute plays ecumenical role.
MA Studies in Christian Culture	On MA level, the Institute broadens competency and occupational possibilities for educated specialist from different fields through curriculum of Studies in Christian Culture (SCC).
Continuing Education	Continuing education department of the Institute offers different trainings in pastoral care and counselling and other unique areas.
Pastoral Seminary	Pastoral Seminary has an important task in training of the priests and deacons in Lutheran church, giving them important practical know-how to manage in real-life situations. As the church serves society through her clergy, also the Pastoral Seminary is involved in this service.
Church Music	Church Music Department keeps alive and develops church music tradition, which is not only part of the liturgical life of the church, but also inseparable from Estonian high culture.

Operation of other theological educational institutions is also somewhat an influencer, but not significant one. Both Baptist Seminary and Seminary of the Methodist Church are denominational schools, and their main target groups are their own church members. Faculty of Theology of Tartu University (FTUT) has lately paid more attention to Religious Studies, and the students are not often affiliated with any denomination. The strength of the Institute is our differentiation and diversification, which allows targeting more than one denomination and church. In addition to training ministers for EELC, one of important strengths is the PHE specialty to PCC, as well as MA studies in SCC, DPCC, and Orthodox Theology in PHE.

PHE and theology MA study programmes have placed an emphasis on the New Testament, the systematic theology with ethics and practical congregation work in the context of Estonia. Here the cooperation with the FTUT's Old Testament and oriental cultures and religion sociology areas support achievement of synergy. Also, cooperation with Estonian Business School for deepening the management skills and in the ethics area. Contact points with the Baptist and Methodist Church lie in the higher educational institute pedagogy and refreshment courses.

1.4. More important developments in the study programme group in between the assessment periods

Changes in the study programs after the institutional accreditation in spring of 2016 are described below. These changes were based on the feedback forms regularly collected from the students and the proposals collected during the academic mentoring programme that was launched from the beginning of 2017. The aim of the development of the study programmes in 2017–2018 was the specification of the learning outcomes, and making changes in the study programme based on that. Specification of the

learning outcomes took place in the course of the cooperation of the academic staff. The ratio of the recommended and actual situation was specified within the Chairs and the Council compared the data from the Chairs with one another.

1. The orthodox minor specialty started in the PHE study programme in 2014. Together with the first graduates, we started to analyse functioning of the study programme and the Council of the Faculty approved the changes made in the whole volume of the study programme of the orthodox minor specialty (60 ECTS) on March 15, 2018. The analysis was carried out by the teachers, students, alumni of the Chair of Orthodox and clergy of OCE.
2. The research seminars of the systematic theology (ST) that support writing the final thesis take place as the elective subject for PHE and MA students from spring semester of 2017. The seminary of the modern basic texts was created to the ST module of the MA study programme.
3. The main objectives of the steps guiding towards the study programme development that were initiated by the ST Chair were forming of students' active working skills in the area of ST already from the beginning of the studies, active involvement in Lutheran reformation and classical basic texts of the modern protestant theology, reduction of duplications, increasing cohesion in ST subjects and optimisation of names of subjects.
4. The Theology Faculty Council approved the changes of the following study programmes on March 15, 2018:
 - 4.1. The general studies of PHE with only overview lectures in the ST module, the number of subjects carried out in lectures was reduced and the ST pro-seminary was established for the students to exercise the basic methods of the discipline.
 - 4.2. Feedback received from the clergy, teachers and students of the practice congregation showed that there is need for improve the level of knowledge of the Bible of the students since this is the basis for further studies and completing the tasks. At the same time the level of knowledge of the Bible is low among the applicants. As the result of the discussion based on it, and in agreement with the colleagues of the Chair, the course on the History of the New Testament Era and the Biblical study (4 ECTS) was introduced to the PHE study programme.
 - 4.3. To support the indispensable access to the foreign professional literature, the English language courses were established as an elective subject (3 ECTS).
 - 4.4. The ethics seminar was brought to the MA general module in connection with greater shift of acquisition of study and research methods to the PHE study programme so that also the DPCC students could attend it.
 - 4.5. The changes in the pastoral care speciality aimed at improving the coherence between the study programme and the learning process. The module [*Thematic areas of Pastoral Care and Counselling*](#) (16 ECTS) were redesigned and replaced with the module [*Pastoral Care and Counselling and Crisis Intervention*](#) (20 ECTS). Supervised internship (20 ECTS) was divided into two parts (10 ECTS each) to receive better overview of the whole process of the practice and give the students an opportunity to perform practice in parts.

1.5. An overview of international cooperation in developing the study programmes and learning process

The development of the study programmes of the Institute takes into account the local traditions as well as actual needs and experiences and developments in Europe as well as elsewhere in the world.

The Institute participated in the consultation process of the Europe-wide CPCE and theology faculties „Training for the Ordained Ministry in the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe“ (2006–2012) via Dr O. Sander and others where the first joint description of the good theological education was developed. [The corresponding document](#), which helps raise awareness of the theological education

standard, and towards which also the Institute is oriented, was formally adopted in 2012 in the General Assembly of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE). This international document has been an important auxiliary material in the development of the study programmes of the Institute in recent years. The Institute has continued participating in the Europe-wide cooperation with CPCE in the area of theological education and focused on the 3rd phase of theological education, i.e. continuing education and life long learning during the period of 2012–2018.

The Institute has participated in the ecumenic cooperation network "The Graz Process" of the European faculties of theology (operating since 2002, and the last of the consultation was in 2013), which is related to the Conference of European Churches, and within the framework of which the European Protestant, Orthodox, and Roman Catholic faculties of theology and other higher education level theology schools met for consultations on European theological education and research work.

The Institute has followed as an observer and taken into account the results of the activity of the World Conference of Associations of Theological Institution (WOCATI), the cooperation network of the ecumenical theological education related to the World Council of Churches.

In the period of 2012–2018, the emphasis is put on supplementing the staff of the Institute with the teachers of the Doctor's degree and having international work experience whose recent work has involved close interactions with international specialists of their specialty (see document [International mobility of the academic staff](#)). All of these relationships contribute to development of the study programme in different ways.

1.6. An overview of conducting the research, development, and/or other creative activities (RDC) in the study programme group

The Institute composes and publishes [Proceedings](#) and [educational literature](#), which are used also by students from other theological institutions and by people representing other professions related to theology.

Latest and planned educational literature:

1. Monograph on the history of Christianity composed by the associate professor of the Institute [Riho Saard](#) and published by publishing house Argo (2013).
2. Associate professor of the Institute [Arne Hiob](#), "Foundations of Lutheran dogmatics" (2013);
3. Lutheran Letters of Confession (2014);
4. Associate professor of the Institute Arne Hiob, "A Short overview of Russian philosophy of religion" (2014);
5. Rector [Ove Sander](#), "EELC – insights and outlooks" (2015);
6. Paavo Kettunen, study book of PCC "Helpful meeting I" (2016);
7. Lutheran World Federation, "Liberated by God's Grace" (2016);

Latest and planned Proceedings:

1. No XXII Traugott Vogel's „Philosophy of Religion“ (2015);
2. No XXIII and XXIV Compendium of the history of the Institute (Two editions, 2016 and 2017);
3. No XXV [Tasmuth, R.](#), Burghardt, A., [Pöder, T.-A.](#) (koost./ed.), Reformatsioon 500 – vaimsus, kultuurimõjud, perspektiivid (2017) [Reformation 500 – Spirituality, Cultural Influences, Perspectives];
4. No XXVI [Rohtmets, P.](#), Rimmel, A. (toim./ed), „Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church 100“ (2017);

5. No XXVII T.-A. Pöder, „Usukultuur evangeelses luterlikus vaatevinklis. Teoloogilise mõtte uurimusi ja arendusi“ (2018, ilmumas) [„Culture of Faith in Lutheran Perspective. Historical and Constructive Exploartions in Theological Thought“ (forthcoming, 2018)].

From 2015, a noteworthy scientific work in the Chair of the Systematic Theology has been introduced to the three areas of activity in respect of current development plan. It covers international cooperation in different networks. The students' respective area research work takes place through initiating special seminars all over Estonia where also the students of the University of Tartu are involved.

Four-year project [Research & Development Strategic Plan 2016–2019](#) is financed by German North Church. An academic mentoring was established within the framework of the project (2016–2017), mentoring training has been conducted for 16 clergy of EELC, special seminar on systematic theology has started and the New Testament forum has been developed. This has resulted in academic junior staff: [Randar Tasmuth](#) and [Jaana Lahe](#), who lead the New Testament forum, supervised the doctoral thesis of Ergo Naab on New Testament that was defended in October 2017.

Development activities of four important RDC areas

1. Biblical Studies, including Studies of Antiquity.
 - a. Objectives of the [ETF Grant 8665](#) "Formative Factors of the Early Christian Ideology in the Syncretistic Roman Empire" are fulfilled. The publications published within the framework of 2011–2014 grant form the main part of the Institute's last years' high-level research. Published articles are internationally recognised. Co-operation on Estonian level has enhanced doctoral dissertation of Elo Süld in FTUT. Biblical Studies form the foundational subject of theology, so the Grant 8665 has developed research in Biblical Studies and Antiquity and provided materials for students' future research topics. See "Usuteaduslik Ajakiri" (Theological Magazine) [special edition 2/2014 \(67\)](#): Special issue „Within and Around Early Christian Ideology“ in English and German was published as the Grant result.
2. Church History, including Lutheranism and Sociology of Religion.
 - a. In 2012–2014, the Institute's lecturers [Ringo Ringvee](#) and [Liina Kilemit](#) participated in international Grundtvig project "Religion and Multiculturality: Educational Pathways for Local Church Leaders", no 527098-LLP-1-2012-1-NO-GRUNDTVIG-GMP. This research on beliefs deals with sociological issues bordering with theology.
 - b. [Riho Saard](#) project "E. Vilde 150" researched the writer's relationship to faith and church. The project ended with the conference on 24 April 2015 dedicated to the writer's 150th anniversary. In addition, two research articles were published in magazines: "Keel ja Kirjandus" (Language and Literature) no. 5, 2015 and "Looming" (Creation) no. 11, 2015. The third article will be published in the magazine "Looming" in the spring of 2016. The project financed by Estonian Ministry of Culture served the 2nd strategic objective of DP, expressing the recognition of the Institute's research in the society.
 - c. Study about "Religious questions in Estonia before 1940 in the context of Religious Affairs Department" was conducted by R. Saard from September to November 2015, financed by the Ministry of the Interior. Outcome was a presentation on 20 November 2015 when the conference to celebrate 25th anniversary Religious Affairs Department of Ministry of the Interior was held. In addition, an article will be published in 2016.
3. Practical theology, including PCC and Diakonia.
 - a. In May of 2014, lecturer [Naatan Haamer](#) with two MA students Karin Härm and Siimon Haamer and PHE student Liidia Meel participated in [consultation of European Network of Health Care Chaplaincy](#) "Open for the Future: Envisioning chaplaincy in the midst of transition" in Salzburg. Kai Jõemets, who had just acquired the MA degree and masters student Saima Sellak-Martinson, visiting professor of the Institute's pastoral care, Annika Laats and the Rector of TATIT, Siimon Haamer, participated in the same organisation's

conference "Nurturing Spirituality in Healthcare Chaplaincy" in June 2018. Therefore, the participating students have been involved in the work and continuity of a Europe-wide organization.

- b. The Head of the TATIT, Siimon Haamer has been the member of the committee of the European Network of Health Care Chaplaincy since 2016.
 - c. Lecturer in practical theology, Naatan Haamer and the Head of the TATIT Siimon Haamer are involved in the work of the [European Research Institute for Chaplains in Healthcare](#) (ERICH). In 2018–2019, ERICH carries out the Europe-wide survey [Specialist Spiritual Care Patient Reported Outcome Measure](#), and the Institute also participates in its performance by collecting the basic information of the survey with the assistance of the alumni and masters students.
4. Systematic Theology.
- a. Revitalization of research and development in the area of systematic theology from 2015 has significantly supported the development of study programmes when [Thomas-Andreas Pöder](#) joined the Institute.
 - b. Research projects of T.-A. Pöder: „The Ecumenical theology (church communion; dialogue of religions/worldviews)” (2015–2018), „Reformation theology and its contemporary meaning” (2015–2017), „The current state of theological research and systematic theology in Estonia” (2016–2018), „Semiotics of religion and theosemiotics” (2016–2021).
 - c. 42 scientific and popular science publications by T.-A. Pöder have been published or being published in the period of 2015–2018 „Solidary Tolerance. Theology of the Cross and Social Ethics in the Work of Alexander von Oettingen“ (2016), published by one of the world's leading theological scholarly publishing houses (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck Ruprecht & ; Bristol, CT), and the monograph (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen; Bristol, CT), „Culture of Faith in the Evangelic Lutheran perspective“ published at the end of 2018.
 - d. T.-A. Pöder participated in total of 27 conferences/seminars (of which 20 were international) from 2015, and has delivered total of 24 presentations in Estonian, German and English.
 - e. The most significant international cooperation partners of T.-A. Pöderi during 2015–2018: Dr. Johann-Christian Pöder (Copenhagen, ST), Prof. Heinrich Assel (Greifswald, ST), Prof. Frederike Nüssel (Heidelberg, ecumenical theology), Prof. André Birmelé (the Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg), Prof. Martin Friedrich (Vienna, Community of Protestant Churches in Europe), Prof. Ulrich Körtner (Vienna), Prof.Em. Wilfried Härle (Heidelberg, ST), Prof.Em. Michael Beintker (Munich, ST), Prof. Massimo Leone (Torino, semiotics), Jaroslaw Płuciennik (Lodz, linguistics, semiotics), Prof. Risto Saarinen (Helsinki, ecumenical theology).
 - f. T.-A. Pöder Pöder was an intermediary for the international scholarship grantors (Förderverein e.V., Pfarrhaushilfe Baden; Community of Protestant Churches in Europe). As the result, one student studies 2 semesters in the Heidelberg University, one student participated in the summer school of Global Ecumenical Theological Institute in Berlin, one student participated in the conference of young theologians in Kraków. On recommendation of T.-A. Pöder, one student studied in the Norwegian School of Theology.
 - g. On subjects involved in the research projects, T.-A. Pöder was a consultant and an expert for the society and church in Estonia as well as wider Europe and represented the EELC in local and international theological and ecumenical societies, commission and work groups.

During Master's degree studies, lecturers from different Chairs will introduce methods of research of their particular study field as a part of the module [Theory of Science, Research Methods and Thesis](#)

Design. This creates the possibility of cooperation which will be a basis for inter-disciplinary projects. The module is a place for introducing and developing projects for strategical RDC areas mentioned above.

International mobility of students during 2013–2018 is described in a [special document](#).

1.7. Functioning of the and the results of the feedback of the students, alumni, academic staff and employers

Feedback from the students

Feedback from the students on subject courses is collected through the SIS regularly. Feedback surveys are usually completed at the end of the semester, when the courses are over. Average feedback percentage is 76. The teachers of the PCC themselves collect the feedback on pastoral studies during each session in writing as well as in oral form. It is necessary for better planning and guiding the studies in the form of the process-oriented instruction. Separate feedback is collected on instructing the final thesis and master's thesis. The academic staff can examine the feedback of the subject course via SIS.

Written feedback is mostly very positive. 85% of respondents evaluate the knowledge on subject and rhetoric skills of the academic staff as very good (see figure 4). No teacher has received any bad or very bad assessment.

The criticism can be a little bit felt about satisfaction with receiving feedback (see figure 5). Providing feedback has improved in recent years and also the satisfaction of students has increased. To a certain extent, the criticism on feedback is related to the skill of using Moodle by teachers and hence we have arranged the training sessions on using the e-learning environment Moodle for the teachers. The Dean has also handled the importance of providing feedback in the meetings of the faculty council and in private with teachers. The teachers also say that the lack of giving feedback is due to high workload.

The criticism that deserves to be highlighted is the size of the Greek and Hebrew language study groups and too fast covering of the subject with 5 ECTS (during the semester). The studies are planned to be carried out in smaller groups from the academic year 2018/2019 and divided into 3 and 2 ECTS subjects that are taught in two semesters.

The students indicate as positive the following: **(1)** communion atmosphere that provides an opportunity to share concerns and joys with companions; **(2)** joint prayers; **(3)** enriching joint events; **(4)** common lunches; **(5)** general spirit and ecumenicity; **(6)** helpful and professional employees; **(7)** learning facilities; **(8)** infrastructure and location of the school that is close to the bigger interchanges of public transport; **(9)** favourable accommodation opportunity provided in the study building.

Also the Student Council has collected feedback on the study process and the received outcomes have been analysed the faculty council where also the students belong. Thus, they also receive feedback on

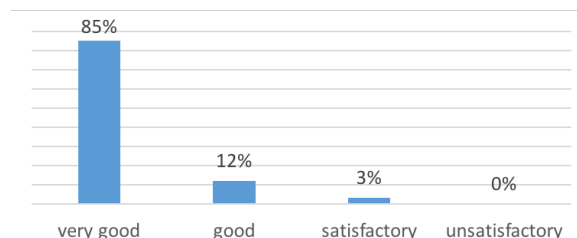


Figure 4. Knowledge on subject and rhetoric skills of the academic staff (2017/18).

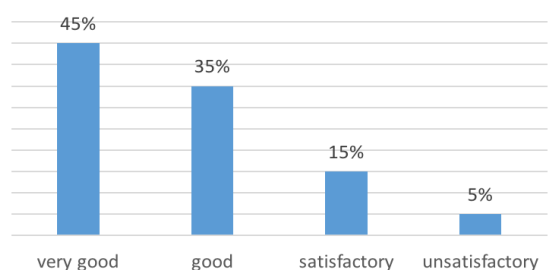


Figure 5. Students satisfaction with receiving feedback from lecturers (2017/18).

the made proposals and changes. Information flow within the framework of the subject courses have been highlighted as a bottleneck - since people from several course attend one subject, it has happened that the teacher sends necessary information only to the second year students and the third year students remain unaware of it. To avoid such a situation, we have used Moodle or SIS more and more for sharing information via which everyone who have signed up for the subject will receive the email.

The students rate the availability of learning materials as very good (81%) or good (19%) based on the students' feedback survey. The students are mostly satisfied with the study facilities. Sometimes there may occur problems with the capacity of the auditorium for some lecture courses since more so-called exceptional students participate in the lecture: **(1)** the students who have not passed that subject on time, or **(2)** those who take the course as an elective subject from the study programme of some other specialty.

The specific activities in the development of the study programme, which are based on the students' feedback are described in [Chapter 2.1](#).

We have not asked for feedback on the support services from the students in any questionnaire. If the students see any problems or a need for development activities regarding the support services, they will provide their observations through the Student Council, or communicating directly with the employees, whose competence covers the topic. The feedback received was one of the reasons why we started the academic mentoring program at the beginning of 2017. The students felt the need for a trustee to whom to turn with issues and problems concerning the studies.

Students feedback on supervision

We are asking supervision satisfaction feedback from all the students who defend their thesis. In the figure below there are results from 2017–2018. 93% of replies was received.

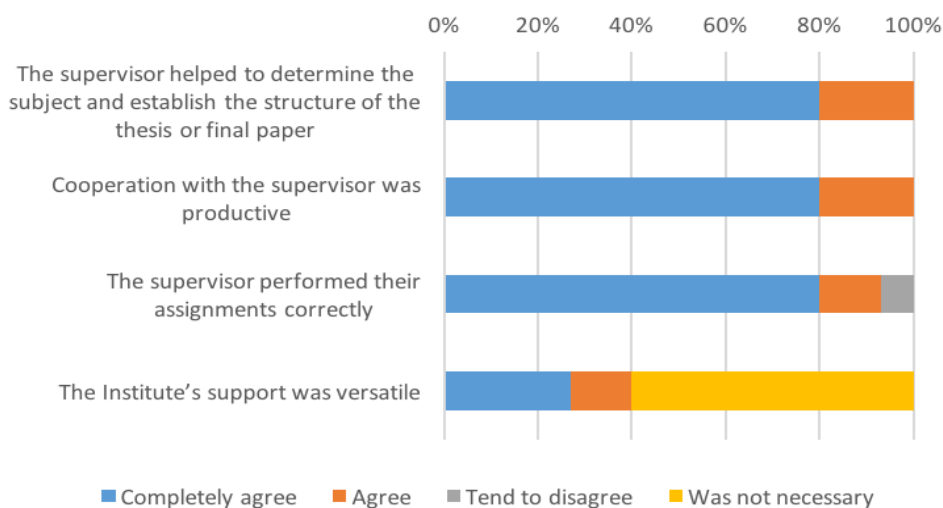


Figure 6. Theses supervision satisfaction inquiry among graduates, 2017–2018.

One complication at supervision is the study form with sessions since finding the suitable time for meeting presumes good time planning from the teacher as well as the student as during the sessions both parties are very busy. The role of the teacher is to find the time for meeting during the sessions with the students who come to school from further places. Different electronic social media channels like Skype, Zoom and others are also used.

Academic mentoring programme

A significant increase in the student body in 2012–2014 highlighted the need for more effective personalized counselling in the feedback given by the students to cope better with the difficulties that arise in the learning process. Considering the feedback given, and to support the students' progress in studies, the Institute launched the academic mentoring program from January 2017. The training for the teachers called *Academic mentoring* took place in 2016 and *Academic writing and mentoring* in 2017 to prepare the programme.

Mentors were selected from among the Institute's teachers and employees who passed the relevant training. Since we did not have the capacity to involve the whole student body at once, we started with the PHE 1st year students and divided them into 3-4 member mentor groups. The set goal determined that the mentor meetings take place at least once a semester. In September 2017, we joined the new first year students to the programme and thus we increase the number of the students involved in the mentoring system. By the end of 2018, all PHE students with the nominal length of study will be involved in the mentoring programme, and based on the received experience, we will estimate whether such system is necessary and operational also for the MA students.

The mentor groups allow to respond faster to the problems related to studies. For example, lots of question were asked about the specialty subjects and practical work which were quickly addressed in the interest of common understanding. The topics emerging in the mentor groups are very versatile: **(1)** the use of time of people or how to reconcile work, family and studies; **(2)** the further use of gained knowledge; **(3)** making choices within the study programme; **(4)** personal development related topics. There is also a need for individual mentoring for the students, who have returned, for example, from the parental leave, or are enrolled again and have to draw up their study plan themselves by following the class schedule of different courses.

Feedback from academic staff

Academic staff provides feedback on the organization of studies mainly to the employees of the Dean's office on an informal basis. Performance reviews are carried out with the head of the chair and Dean on the content of the study programme and the subjects.

The Dean will meet with all teachers by Chairs at least once during the academic year. One of the aims of these meetings is to gather feedback on the teaching process as a whole, and fix the topics concerning organisation of the studies and development of the study programme. Staff is satisfied with the study rooms and organisation of studies. Academic staff appreciate the consistent publishing activities of the Institute of Theology at production of study materials. The Dean encourages to write the suitable material in the form of articles and less translate the material and helps create opportunities for the study-related materials written by the teachers as the creative scientific work.

Academic staff evaluates supply with study literature as good. Since the Institute has funds in its budget for buying textbooks every year, the teachers can submit the need for acquiring literature to the head of the library who will order the textbooks.

Some of the teachers have difficulties with using Moodle and SIS and hence from 2015, we have organised the Moodle training session for the teachers, as well as individual counselling provided by the head of the Dean's office.

Feedback from alumni, employers, and other target groups

We use co-operation network of EELC to collect the information that is needed for the development of curriculum. Through this network we will have an output to the society and the employers' segment. The Institute's employees are active in many public and professional organisations (see document [*The Institute employees' participation in the activities of professional associations and other social*](#)

[*supervisory boards and decision-making bodies in 2018*](#)), which widens the network even more. All of these different outputs guarantee a good awareness of the developments taking place in society and give a good starting point to plan the Institute's curriculum to meet the needs and expectations of the society and employers.

During the academic year 2017/18 the main changes in the PHE Lutheran Theology and MA Lutheran Theology curricula were introduced by taking into consideration the feedback received from the owner and first employer, The EELC. The changes in the PHE Orthodox Theology were influenced by the feedback from the Estonian Orthodox Church. Current curriculums of the Institute demonstrate the effectiveness of this development strategy:

1. PHE Lutheran Theology serves first of all the interests of the owner (EELC), PCC needs of the society and Orthodox Theology ecumenical co-operation.
2. MA Theology specialty is directly ordered by the EELC and DPCC corresponds to the needs of the labour market and needs of the society.
3. MA SCC corresponds to the objectives of the Institute as well as the expectations of the society in the area of culture and ethics.

We have not researched the satisfaction of graduates and employers with any particular method which could be statistically analyzed, as considering the small number of our graduates and employers the formal ways of collecting feedback is not the best solution. We have used different measures for keeping track of coping of our graduates and practical use of the learned material in their professional career:

1. Institutional connections:
 - a. Representatives of the EELC are members of the Institute's Council, the owner ratifies the curricula;
 - b. Deans and supervisors give feedback on success of their trainees and graduates;
 - c. OCE has tight connections with all the students studying Orthodox Theology already during their study period and continues to support their personal spiritual growth after graduation;
 - d. Meetings with chaplaincies (defence forces, defence league, police, prison) to clarify their specific needs and satisfaction with the quality of our education;
 - e. Feedback from the representatives of the contracted internship partners.
2. Personal contacts:
 - a. There are about 200 clergy in the EELC, the lecturers and leadership of the Institute form part of it and have contacts with clergy that has graduated from the Institute;
 - b. The circle of PCC workers is still quite small, the Institute lecturer Naatan Haamer is conducting supervision for them also after graduation;
 - c. Employers of PCC are also internship partners and involved in curriculum development;
 - d. Different activities for graduates.
3. Continuing education courses, conducted by the Continuing Education Department to where the graduates are invited:
 - a. When planning courses the needs of the graduates for self-education and professional growth are considered.
4. All the graduates desiring to become an ordained minister in the EELC, have to go through a year-long programme in the Pastoral Seminary, where the learned material will be put into practice through supervised internship. During this study programme, the possible shortcomings in the studies will come out and the Head of the Pastoral Seminary will draw the attention of the FT to these.
5. In spring 2015, Tiiu Lintalu defended a master's theses *Feedback of the graduates to EELC Institute of Theology Studies of Christian Culture according to the satisfaction survey in 2015*. This thesis studies the reputation, availability, success of studies and reasons for interruption (see table 6 below).

MA SCC status compared to other curricula is different, as it is not in direct service to any concrete organization or field. So the most important is the feedback from graduates and students. One of the main reasons for studying is a desire to widen one's perspective, but also to use the new knowledge at work. In the 2015 survey, the graduates of SCC were asked how much they have been able to use the education in their daily work and activities.

Table 6. Survey among the graduates of SCC (conducted 2015).

I have been able to use it a lot	29%
I have been able to use it a little	57%
I have not been able to use it	3%
Difficult to say	11%

The outcome shows that when summarised, 29%+57% = 86% of the graduates of the MA SCC can use this education their professional work a lot or at least a little. This outcome is encouraging and proves that graduates appreciate that kind of Master studies and this curriculum responds to public demand.

1.8. Overview of the continuing education related to the study programmes and other learning activities addressing the public

Main areas for conducting further training are organised in theology, church music, diaconia (emphasis on pastoral care, family work and cooperation with local governments), pastoral care and counselling, work with children in the church, training sessions addressing the teachers and religious education of Christian schools. To use the resources better, some of the courses are conducted for the formal education students as well as provided for the continuing education outside. A particularly good example of this is the *Basic training of pastoral care and counselling* that we are organising every year, and the students form of the 10-15-member group, and the rest of the group (5-10) consists of participants in the continuing education who are mainly the representatives of some other assisting position or the workers of the congregation. The same practice concerns the visits of the foreign lecturers, and so a larger number of people can benefit from it. For example, lectures of Prof. Anne Vandenhoeck on pastoral theology, also lectures by Barry Voss on leadership, but also the subject *Creative methods in diaconia and pastoral care* and *Group processes and management*. A similar form is often for providing the church music vocational training and continuing education since the groups of students who study church music are small.

The training sessions are organised together with the sub-institutions of the church: Mission Centre of EELC, Association for Work with Children and Youth of the EELC (conducting the bible and mission course), Department for Diaconia and Social Action of the Consistory of the EELC (different diaconia and pastoral training sessions), Family centre of the EELC (different family counselling training sessions). Ecclesiastical higher education institutions cooperate in training their faculty staff. There is at least one training a year (staff trainings are described in [Chapter 2.4.](#)).

Attempts are made to be flexible and to respond to the needs of the target audience quickly when selecting the topics. For example, five years ago, the training sessions on family counselling were not so important as they are today when the family centre is established to EELC that is expanding steadily and needs constant continuing education and supervision of its employees. Thanks to the vigorous development, EELC pays more attention to the topic of the family counselling and hence there is more interest towards these training sessions. The Institute organizes 4-5 training sessions on family counselling a year. It is planned to organize the training on handling Christian values and pastoral care

to the family counsellors outside the church to help them understand and advise the customers with religious backgrounds.

The Church Music Department of the Institute organised the vocational training for the church musicians. The program includes two two-year courses for applying for the Church musician's D and C category. 12 persons have attended these courses during 2013-2017. 7 church musicians have finished the church music D-course and 2 the C-course. The results of the study comply with the employment of the organists in Estonia. There have also been different continuing education training sessions and the diagram below gives an overview of the total volume.

The pastoral seminary also operates in the form of the continuing education that provides vocational training for people preparing for the position of the Priest (presumes the MA in Theology) or Deacon (presumes theology studies in the volume of at least 30 ECTS) in EELC.

Feedback is collected from the participants of the refreshment courses that is usually so positive that it is not possible to plan the development activities based on it. The bigger challenge is how to get the input for the organisation of the training from those who do not participate in the refreshment courses.

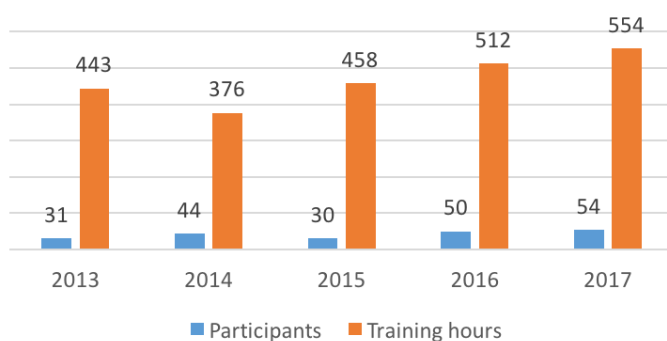


Figure 7. Training volumes of Church Music department, 2013–2017.

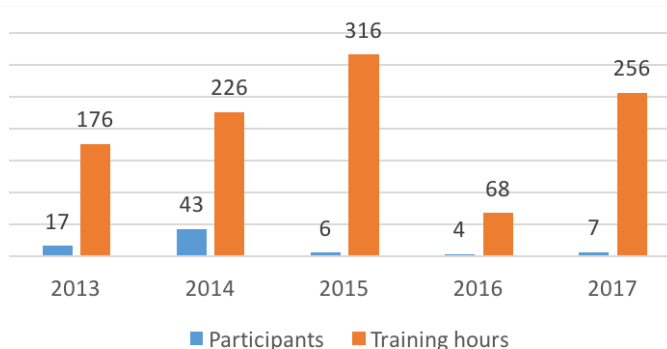


Figure 8. Training volumes of Pastoral Seminary, 2013–2017.

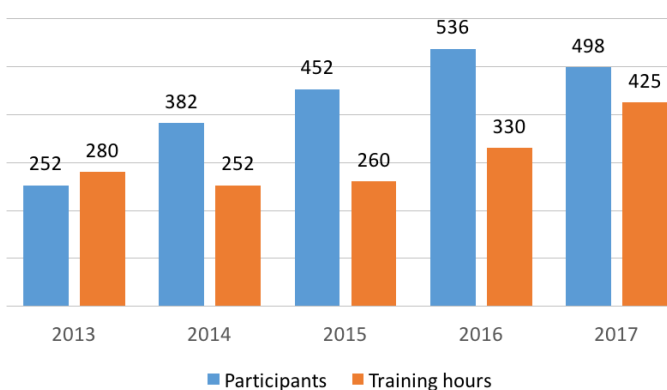


Figure 9. Training volumes of Continuing Education department, 2013–2017.

1.9. Areas of good practice and improvements

Good practices

In addition to the higher education, the Institute is engaged in vocational training (pastoral seminary, church music department) and providing lifelong learning for its alumni as well as broader public.

Implementation of the academic mentoring programme from the beginning of 2017.

Considering the size of the academic staff, RDC is of considerable volume.

The Institute is the only educational institution in Estonia, which educates pastoral caregivers and counsellors and gives professional education on the Orthodox theology.

Being a small educational institution, the Institute still provides significant contribution to society by impacting also the areas outside the clerical sphere.

A large selection of different continuing education training sessions, which also gives the alumni to undergo professional training.

Areas for improvement	The action plan
All subjects do not have syllabi in SIS.	The syllabi will be prepared for the missing subjects in the autumn of 2018. Information from the Dean's office and an action plan for compiling the syllabi is performed in cooperation with the Dean.
For the majority of PHE subjects, the required reading is only in the native language.	Like the MA study programme, to add the examples of the foreign required reading for covering the single issues to the PHE study programme.
There are some shortcomings in the assessment criteria.	In November 2018, a training called "Integration of teaching methods and assessment methods for ensuring the quality culture" is planned for the academic staff".
Collecting feedback from different target groups.	SIS is a good tool for collecting feedback, but it often seems that the students do not take it seriously and mainly give the most positive evaluation. The personal feedback that works very well thanks to the small size of the Institute still needs to be of great importance. The Student Council that highlights very specific bottlenecks of the studies and takes them under discussion in the council of the theology department as well as the Institute is still very important.
It is necessary to organise feedback to students' written work better.	We continue personal counselling of teachers on more skilful use of Moodle's opportunities. The Dean also handles the importance of providing feedback in the meetings of the faculty council and in private with teachers. The teachers' workloads must also be reviewed so that they could have more time for giving feedback to the written works of the students.
Some teachers have difficulties in using Moodle and SIS.	From 2015, we have organised the Moodle training sessions for the academic staff and provided individual counselling for the use of Moodle as well as SIS.

2. Self-analysis of the study programme group by assessment areas

		Structural unit responsible for performing the study programme
Name of the study programme, teaching	Theology, PHE Specialties: Lutheran Theology Pastoral Care and Counselling Orthodox Theology	Faculty of Theology
	Theology, MA Specialties: Theology Diakonia and Pastoral Care and Counselling	Faculty of Theology
	Studies in Christian Culture, MA	Faculty of Theology
Main originator of the self-analysis of the study programme group	Leading of the process of self-evaluation and compiling of the report itself was delegated to Siimon Haamer, head of the TATIT.	
Brief overview of compiling the self-analysis of the study programme	The core group for creating the self-evaluation report met for the first time in October 2017. In 6 November 2017, the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (EKKA) performed the higher education accreditation training for the staff of the Institute. The first draft of the report was ready in the middle of January 2018. After that the whole staff of the Institute became involved as well as the student council. The tasks for compiling of the self-evaluation were distributed to our staff members according to the area of responsibility in the Institute structure. Discussions were held in small work groups as well as with the whole staff of the Institute.	

2.1. The study programme and development of the study programme

The goal that we have determined in the development plan is that the study programmes support ecumenical cooperation, spiritual growth of students and entering the ecclesiastical service and serving the society based on the needs of the labour market and occupational requirements of the EELC clergy. To assess the level of achievement of our goals and the compliance of the quality of education to the presented expectations, the employees of the Institute are the members of different decision-making bodies of EELC (see [The Institute employees' participation in the activities of professional associations and other social supervisory boards and decision-making bodies](#)). The Episcopal Council handles the topics of liturgy and position of the clergy once a year where the attention is also paid to on how the changing needs of the church and the teaching activities of the Institute are engaged. It is also important for the teachers to link theory and practice daily and thus many of the teachers are also the practitioners of the area.

[Chapter 1.7.](#) describes collecting of feedback from the students, teachers and other interest groups necessary for development of the study programme. [Statute of the Curriculum](#) describes the complete process of opening, changing the study programme and the internal assessment.

The Chapters 1.4., 1.5 and 1.6. also described the activities supporting the development of the study programme. One important input of the last development work of the PHE and theology MA study programmes followed the quality requirements of the matriculation to the Pastoral Seminary updated by the leadership of EELC. The outputs to be achieved with 2+3 years were fixed for the theology MA graduates and based on that the *pro venia concionandi* exam's specific requirements were determined. The main emphasis lies on knowledge of the basics of the theology (biblical studies, systematic theology) and acquiring pastoral skills (practical theology, incl communication with the society). In assessing compliance with the *pro venia concionandi* requirements, the study process of 5 years was analysed: **(1)** diachronically bottom-up to find gaps and improve coherence; **(2)** synchronically to reduce overlapping of the similar subjects and supplementing the complementarity between different Chairs.

The process of the last phase of development of the study programme 2017–2018 was carried out via three main activities:

1. The Dean analysed the objectives, status and relations with other area separately with all Chairs. The input here was the feedback from the academic staff.
2. The debate on developments of the study programmes took place in the meetings of the faculty council on September 5, 2017, November 21, 2017, November 6, 2017. The results were approved on March 15, 2018. The representatives of the students are also involved in the work of the faculty council who participate in the discussion concerning the development of the study programmes as well as handling the teaching of specific subjects (e.g. difficulties in teaching Greek and Hebrew based on big groups)
3. The Dean's office analysed the students' feedback and presented the result to the faculty council for discussing.

Comparison of the study programmes has analysed the changes in the structure and functioning of the study programmes of the Theology Faculty of the University of Tartu during last 4 years and by individual Chairs, the programmes of the University of Eastern Finland (R. Saard, church history) and the University of Manchester (R. Tasmuth, New Testament).

Being and institution of professional higher education, it is important to bear in mind that by passing the study programme, the student will acquire a good level of knowledge and skills that are necessary for working on the acquired profession. According to the higher education standard, the PHE study programme must contain 15% of internship. On this basis, the PHE study programme of the Institute includes internship in the volume of 27 ECTS that the students must pass according to their choice of specialty. There is no such obligation for the MA studies, but internship is included in certain volume also at this level.

The Institute has sufficient partners network to offer quality conditions for students for mentored/supervised internship that meets curricula learning outcomes.

Table 7. List of partners offering internship bases for students.

Curriculum and specialty	Partner
PHE Lutheran Theology and MA theology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EELC Haapsalu St. John's Congregation • EELC Rakvere Holy Trinity Congregation • EELC R�pina St. Michael's Congregation • EELC Tallinn St. John's Congregation • EELC Viljandi St. John's Congregation • EELC Tallinn Holy Ghost Congregation
PHE PCC and MA DPCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tartu University Hospital • EELC Diakonia Hospital • North Estonia Medical Centre

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tallinn Cathedral School • EELC Family Centre • Ida-Viru Central Hospital
PHE Orthodox Theology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home congregations of the students of Chair of Orthodoxy • OCE Tallinn Congregations
Pastoral Seminary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EELC Tallinna Bethel Congregation • EELC Haapsalu St. John's Congregation • EELC Rakvere Holy Trinity Congregation • EELC Tartu St. John's Congregation • EELC Tartu St. Paul Congregation • EELC Tallinn St. Mary's Cathedral

To allow the students a high quality internship, we have created a considerable network of internship basis. We are advising students on finding the proper internship. If none of the existing internship basis does not suit for the student for internship, the head of the Dean's office or the head of the TATIT in cooperation with the student will find the suitable internship base and creates necessary connections and agrees of arrangement of the internship. All internships are carried out based on the internship instructions (see as an example [syllabus of supervised practice in PCC](#)). In accordance with the prescribed requirements, the student will draw up the internship report and present it on the internship seminar. It is also the best source for students' feedback based on which it is possible to make changes in the organisation of internship. The pastoral students give specially high evaluation to regular supervision and partaking in the clergy's life in its entire versatility during the internship.

The organisation of internship of different study programmes is described in a [separate document](#).

The Institute has the study programmes only in Estonian and hence the foreign students cannot participate in the studies without the knowledge of Estonian. The Institute also does not have any common study programmes or modules with any of the foreign educational institutions. Naturally, there is a diversified collaboration with different theological higher education institutions and networks all over the world (see [Development Plan ch. 6.2](#)).

To develop general competencies of students, there is module [Introduction to the Study of Theology](#) in the PHE study programme during which the basic knowledge in academic writing is acquired (3 ECTS) and correct language use is learnt (3 ECTS). The subject *Use of media* (2 ECTS) teaches communication with public. We provide *Preparing and management of the project* (3 ECTS), *Basics of Social Entrepreneurship* (3 ECTS) and *Social psychology* (3 ECTS) as elective subjects. We direct the students to choose these subjects as the skills and knowledge of the social entrepreneurship area are necessary in specialties taught here. The Institute does not place emphasis on development of digital competencies since generally the capability of students is already good in that area.

It is important to master English or German in learning theology but according to the feedback from the teachers, at least one third of the students have problems with it. Since the majority can cope with at least one of the indicated foreign languages, existence of the relevant mandatory subject is not justified. But as the problem is still serious, we added *English language* (3 ECTS) to the elective subjects to raise students' level of English language.

The coherence of the study programme is described in [Chapter 2.3](#).

2.1.1. Areas of good practice and improvements

Good practices

The PHE and MA study programme of the theology have been attuned: better preparedness for attending the pastoral seminary as the output of the theology. Some gaps have been filled, for example, the subject of ethics that was missing from the MA study programme earlier, was added to achieve better the learning outcomes.

The identified overlapping of similar subjects under different chairs has been liquidated.

The academic staff has become aware of addressing the research work and creation to compilation of the study materials.

The academic staff is actively involved in the work of the various professional organizations and decision-making bodies.

The arrangement of the internship and versatile internship basis network has been well developed.

Areas for improvement	The action plan
About one-third of students fail to read literature in foreign language.	English is as an elective subject in the PHE study programme from autumn 2018 to help increase the language skills of the students who are not able to work through the study material in a foreign language.
The study programme contains subjects with outdated study materials.	Under the leadership of the Dean, the needs and opportunities to direct some of the research work to writing new study materials relating to the local context will be specified.
The expert assessment group for the study programme has not been formed.	Already in 2016, there was a plan to form the expert assessment group for the study programme, but we have not found the proper working method and composition of the work group so far that could contribute something significant for the study programme development compared to current structures. We will continue searching for a working structure for this idea.
Teaching Hebrew and Greek language.	Due to the big size of the classes, the effectiveness of the Hebrew and Greek language teaching is low. To improve the situation, we divide the study groups into two in the academic year 2018/2019.

2.2. Resources

One of the Institute's strategic goals is possession of a modern and flexible learning environment (see [Development Plan](#)). Thus, we naturally follow the specific characteristics of our study programmes, and we can confidently say that today's space programme and upcoming development plans are fully in line with our needs. The network of internship basis is constantly changing based on the developments of the study programmes, changes in students' profiles and processes taking place in the society. To achieve the objectives of the study programmes, we have good internship basis network which overview is provided in [Chapter 2.1](#). The presence of contemporary study literature is also important, and the Institute has done lot of work for the sake of it. More detailed information about the study literature published by the Institute is given in [Chapter 1.6](#).

As the research and learning topics of the Institute belong to humanitarian subject field, the important infrastructural assets are library, classrooms, working rooms for academic and administrative staff with their technical support (computers, Internet, multi-media devices etc.). There is also a chapel in Tallinn building but the closest base for practical work is the church of Holy Ghost, which is situated next door to the Institute and is used mostly during the sessions.

Overview of the Institute's infrastructure:

1. In Tallinn and Tartu facilities, there are altogether 5 rooms for the use of the academic staff.
2. There are 9 classrooms with 174 seats.
3. Classrooms are equipped with necessary technical equipment for learning.
4. There is a classroom in Tallinn equipped with 5 computers for students.
5. Buildings are covered with WiFi.
6. Church Music Department have two organs and two pianos. In addition to that, there is an agreement to use the concert organ of the Holy Ghost church for both practice and lessons.
7. In the Tallinn facility, there is a day-room for the lecturers, guest rooms for students, allowing to stay overnight. The guest area is equipped with kitchen facilities.
8. The Institute's library is the biggest library of theological literature in Estonia (ca 67 000 units). Area is 187 m² including the work-area for visitors. Considering the needs of school, library is well-stocked. During the last years, it has been possible to acquire additional necessary literature with the help of different grants. It is likely that usage of the library will decrease to some extent due to the better availability of digital books. For the last two years, the focus has been laid on acquisition of educational literature published in English in the field of systematic theology. On the basis of student feedback, the availability of study materials is very good and the studying process is very much supported by the library's director, whose competent advice on finding literature and other sources is highly valued both by students and teaching staff.

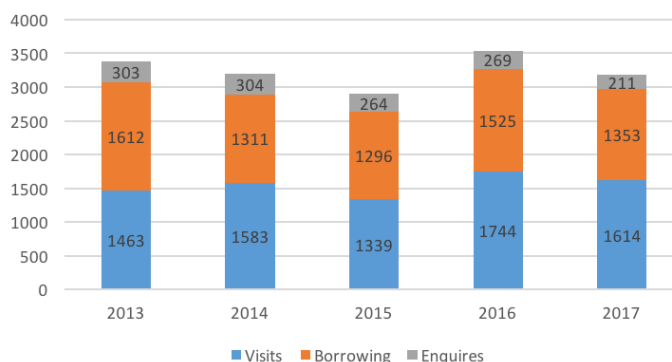


Figure 10. Institute's library usage data 2013–2017.

9. There is an agreement with [the University of Tartu Library](#) that allows students and academic staff access to the databases important for theological research: EBSCO, JSTOR Arts & Science.

The new study facilities will be completed by September 2019 in Tartu, which shall replace the current small, leased study environment with limited opportunities. There will be a centre for different Christian organisations in the new premises (Pastoral Care and Counselling Centre, Christian radio Family Radio, and others) that cooperate with the Institute and also provide diversified internship options for students. The study building will be equipped with modern technical solutions, which allow giving lectures also in the virtual classrooms. This also improves the opportunities for providing continuing education courses.

The purposeful work of many years of the Institute in diversification of study materials is very important. Today, the Institute's own proceedings form comprehensive collection of theological literature in Estonian. The study programmes include literature references to the study literature as well as the proceedings of the Institute and the articles by the teachers of the Institute contained in them. The feedback of the academic staff on study materials and rooms is described in [Chapter 1.7](#).

Online Study Information System (SIS)

The Institute is using SIS from fall of 2014. SIS is administered and developed by the Information Technology Foundation for Education. Using of SIS favours the learner centeredness. The students have a real-time overview of their study results, they can access data on their user account through Internet. This saves the time of the Learning Management Specialist, as there is no need to draw up excerpts of study performance any more. It also gives the staff of the FT considerably quicker overview about the progress of the students, as well as allows faster action in case of problems students might have. The staff have access to all info they need for their work through SIS and don't need to depend on anybody else's info exchange. There are also the course annotations in SIS that are available for the academic

staff as well as students that give a clear overview of the topics handled within different subjects. Using SIS expands the possibility of distance working and helps to use the staff resources better. So also the Head of Office of TATIT can perform tasks in Tartu that were previously possible to be performed only in Tallinn. From fall 2015, also recognition of prior learning (VÕTA) applications are processed in SIS, again helping to use more effectively working time of the staff and lecturers and speeding up the process revision.

Moodle

E-study platform Moodle is in use. It is a good tool to support the learning process also outside the session period. Unfortunately Moodle is not used by all lecturers as much as we were hoping. 47% of courses have the online support. In APDP 1.1.5 we have set a goal that by 2020 70% of courses would have online support. It's not easy to realize this goal, because some lecturers lack both time and know-how for working with two online system (Moodle and SIS). To introduce Moodle, we have facilitated individual instructions for all staff members and we have organized several trainings for lecturers. The Head of the Dean's Office offers individual Moodle and SIS counselling.

Databases

The Institute has co-operation agreement with University of Tartu that allows all the students and academic staff to access the main databases that carry important value for theological research, e.g. EBSCO, JSTOR Arts & Science. [Chapter 1.7.](#) describes the feedback on availability of study materials and practicability of the classes by students and teachers.

Financial resources

The table 8 shows that thanks to different financial sources, the Institute does not directly depend on one financier. It is certainly necessary to continue diversification of the financing sources and thus not paying attention directly on studies only but contributing to the development of specialties taught here in the wider society. A good example of acting towards that direction is the *Support Fund of Pastoral Care and Counselling* established by the Institute in spring of 2018 with the objective to support activities that help make the pastoral care and counselling service better available for the ones in need and develop more comprehensively the pastoral care area in Estonia. This also includes financing of the studies and establishing better employment opportunities for the alumni of the pastoral care and counselling studies. The fundraiser was organised for launching the Fund on 11 May, 2018, and the income was 35 199 €. *Paul-Gerhardt and Sieghilde Hoerschelmann Support Fund* was established in May 2018 with the objective to support the activity of the Pastoral Seminary of the Institute by granting the scholarships and bonuses and financing research programmes. Already 2013 was established *Evald Saag Foundation* for supporting of research-work of the academic staff and for paying of scholarship for students (see table 9 below).

Table 8. Institute's Budget 2013–2017.

INCOME	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Tuition fees	54 180	84 579	81 658	88 421	102 348
EELC budget support	100 000	100 000	100 000	100 000	100 000
NPO TAT support	22 341	55 232	57 081	75 805	73 794
OCE support	0	0	1 300	3 011	787
Targeted financial supports and donations	66 706	63 436	49 670	75 874	69 552
Projects	34 223	20 173	24 277	22 700	25 400
Revenue from lease of premises	62 465	71 758	66 433	63 348	64 723
Other revenue	3 929	11 881	6 087	8 489	8 678
Mediation of services	9 657	6 096	5 148	8 738	11 713
The revenue from previous periods	0	58 549	0	0	0
TOTAL	353 500	471 703	391 654	446 385	456 995

EXPENSES	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Remuneration of the full-time adm. staff	17 366	36 937	37 841	41 151	40 031
Remuneration of the full-time teachers	42 524	67 772	70 743	85 525	93 895
Other full-time employees	118 294	124 905	125 367	145 721	146 139
Remuneration of the contract staff	16 230	14 515	16 899	15 241	10 319
Other contract staff of the Institute	25 309	20 325	26 076	10 382	10 825
The staff's continuing education costs (except in-house training)	482	1 280	1 219	2 081	1 226
Research and development costs, incl additional pay for research	22 923	24 458	3 203	28 874	21 856
Scholarships, grants, donations	2 290	4 425	9 754	9 376	10 534
Organisational costs of training sessions	11 621	11 711	15 347	22 279	16 910
Publishing costs, incl additional pay for publishing	3 960	13 676	7 068	10 815	15 536
Textbooks and periodicals to the library	2 592	2 776	3 114	3 813	2 207
Advertising	1 854	1 350	2 078	2 332	2 344
IT, communication and registry expenses	12 227	12 015	16 431	21 536	16 634
Management and representation expenses	15 269	11 182	14 787	22 066	22 725
Transport and vehicle expenses	17 352	18 733	16 781	15 411	16 776
Utilities and maintenance expenses	25 196	34 634	26 298	26 437	27 186
Real estate expenses	3 483	7 051	6 026	5 560	6 071
Mediation of service	9 755	10 018	7 424	8 738	11 713
TOTAL	348 726	417 764	406 454	477 338	472 924
Profit/loss	4 775	53 939	-14 800	-30 953	-15 929

Table 9. Scholarships provided by Evald Saag Foundation, 2014–2018

	Presented applications	Approved applications	Funds provided
2014 spring	3	3	1 225 €
2014 fall	5	5	1 500 €
2015 spring	4	4	900 €
2015 fall	6	4	2 200 €
2016 spring	5	5	1 696 €
2016 fall	5	5	2 100 €
2017 spring	6	6	2 200 €
2017 fall	5+1	5	2 100 €
2018 spring	6	4	1 500 €
Total	46	41	15 421 €

In general demographic situation in Estonia, the higher education institutions struggle with yearly decreasing numbers of high-school graduates. This does not influence so much the admission numbers of the Institute, as the percentage of high-school graduates amongst the student body is very small. The average age of the students in the Institute is 46. Therefore, the main influence to the admission is not the demographic situation, but rather the attitudes in the society and prospects on the job-market after graduating the offered programme. Operation of other theological educational institutions is also somewhat an influencer, but not significant one. Both Baptist Seminary and Seminary of the Methodist Church are denominational schools, and their main target groups are their own church members. FTUT has lately paid more attention to Religious Studies, and the students are not often affiliated with any denomination. The strength of the Institute is our differentiation and diversification, which allows targeting more than one denomination and church. In addition to training ministers for EELC, one of important strengths is the PHE specialty to PCC, as well as MA studies in SCC, DPCC, and Orthodox Theology in PHE. Majority of our students are still members of the Lutheran Church, but this ratio is

starting to change in the last years. In 2011, 96% of the PHE and Theology MA students (the ecclesiastical affiliation of SCC students is not inquired) were members of the Lutheran church, but in the spring of 2018, this figure has dropped to 66%. One of the goals of the Institute is to be open to people from different denominations (Strategic objective 2 in the DP). This objective is supported by the developments of last years. Our student body involves representatives from different churches (Orthodox, Baptist, Methodist, Adventist, Roman Catholic and Pentecostal) and 10-15% of the students do not belong to any churches (We are not asking for the church membership from the SCC study programme and hence it is not possible to indicate an exact percentage).

According to our mission, the Institute has to cover the need of the Church labour market first, in order to ensure continuity of the practical theological education for the ministers. In the hospitals and social care institutions there is a growing need for PCC workers and therefore student body of this specialty is quite high (see [table 5](#)). Developing of the occupational standards for the PCC worker and for chaplains (the Head of the Dean's office Kerstin Kask and lecturer Naatan Haamer participated in the development process and they both are members of occupational qualification committee for PCC and chaplains qualification) has been a significant supporting factor in initiating interest in learning in these programmes and to the development of PCC field in general.

2.2.1. Areas of good practice and improvements

Good practices

There is a considerable number and availability of teaching materials in the native language, including the Institute's own printed literature (Textbooks and Proceedings).

Institute owns the biggest specialized theological library in Estonia.

The activities of the different areas of the Institute are financed by support funds: Evald Saag Foundation for allocation of study and research scholarships; Support Fund of Pastoral Care and Counselling for supporting broader development of studies of PCC by creating better employment opportunities for alumni; Paul-Gerhardt and Sieghilde Hoerschelmann support fund for supporting the activities of the Pastoral Seminary.

More versatile financing model due to merger of the Institute and the Tartu Academy of Theology.

The learning facilities of the Tartu department will be finished by 2019, and also the organisations that provide versatile internship options for students will find space.

Areas for improvement	The action plan
The continued renewal and enrichment of native language teaching materials.	Under the leadership of the Dean, we have launched the programme for the academic staff for development of the creative research work to increase the volume of the study-related articles written in the native language, to publish them and make them available electronically.
The diversification of sources of income and the increase in the budget.	The creation of support funds with different targeted financing and seeking additional project financing.

2.3. Teaching and learning

The aim of teaching is supporting the informed and focused study activities of the learner or the subject of teaching. Observing and analysing learners' ability to cope, selection of topics of final thesis and results and joy of acting we conclude that the objectives of teaching have been realized most in the

areas of systematic theology, PCC and the New Testament. The teachers communicate with each other and with learners closely on the informal level.

The goals of learning include supporting of personal setting of the objective by the student, time usage, activeness and social skills. This focus on students has been checked and supported by the means of the mentor system. Learners' activity in the learning process has found the expression by seeking the solutions for the issues of the real life through acquiring and reflecting different subjects. Mentor groups (see [Chapter 1.7.](#)) that support learning fulfil the goal of supporting the learning.

Management of the teaching process is important for realising the objectives of learning and teaching. The conscious attempt is made to relate and interact the four components: content of studies, teaching, learning and learning tools. The task of management of the learning process is shaping the spiritual and safe learning environment. Attention is paid to clarity of the learning objectives, assessment methods and assessment criteria of each subject and their presentation to the students at the beginning of teaching each subject. Achievement of learning objectives has improved through learning awareness and integrity of assessment by the teacher.

The Dean will meet with all teachers by Chairs at least once an academic year to have an overview of the learning process as a whole and fix the topics on organisation of studies and development of the study programme, which is important to handle jointly with the teachers in the meetings of the faculty council that take place 5-6 times an academic year. The Head of the Chair organises the information exchange between the teachers within the Chair and is responsible for the substantive integrity of own area. The quick exchange of information takes place between the Head of the Church History, R. Saard and Prof. P. Rohtmets and, for example, the proposals by the Church History chair arrives quickly to the study programme development. The same can be seen regarding the cooperation of the teachers responsible for the pastoral care and diaconia. The head of the ST Chair, T.-A Pöder has presented and developed the most far reaching studies and research development plans during conversations.

Matching the study and assessment methods with the objectives and outputs of the study programme and subjects is assessed annually in the discussions of the different levels indicated above. An important input in handling these topics is also the feedback regularly collected from the students on the subject course via SIS. Average feedback percentage is 76.

The size of the student body (138 students as of 31.05.2018) enables good monitoring of academic progress. Dean's Office staff know all the students by name and face. They can quickly act, should they notice someone being absent from school. Generally the student is then contacted to find out the reasons for absence. Help and support is offered to find best possible solution. Using of SIS has also simplified monitoring the academic progress of the students. This system also allows students to monitor their progress and results better.

To help those who cannot attend all the lessons to keep up with the studies, the Institute has put energy and money publishing study-books in Estonian and replenishing the library. The lecturers also use Moodle, SIS and mailing lists to share materials, and they also allow individual exams.

To support students in their studies, we have launched the academic mentoring from 2017. More detailed description is in [Chapter 1.7.](#)

[Chapter 2.1.](#) describes development of students' general competencies.

A good example of the innovative learning method is the module [Pastoral Care and Counselling and Crisis Intervention](#) in the PHE study programme's specialty studies of pastoral care that is conducted as 4-days training cycles performed five times. Group dynamics and self-reflection form an important

part in that learning process. The learning process undergoes regular group supervisions that handle the topics that have emerged during the internship in between the learning sessions as well as the students get to know themselves as care givers. The practical tasks of liturgy are performed according to the selection of specialty either in the environment of the Lutheran or Orthodox church. To promote the application of new teaching methods, the Institute organises methodical continuing education for the teachers once a year (see [Chapter 2.4.](#))

[Chapter 2.2.](#) describes the use of the digital tools in the learning process.

There is no internship during the first academic year because it is necessary to acquire sufficient theoretical basis (see file [Example of the study process](#)). Internship may start from the spring of the second year but the main execution time of the internship is the third year. The studies take place in parallel with the internship. The emphasis of the studies is placed on increasing the professional competence through the specialty subjects. [Chapter 2.1.](#) describes the organisation of internship in more detail.

Average age of students is 46 so they are mostly working family people. The only possibility is to organize studies in sessions. From September to June there are 14 3-day sessions for MA SCC (from Thursday to Saturday) and 11 4-day sessions (from Wednesday to Saturday) for PHE and MA Theology programme. The Head of the Dean's office and the Head of the TATIT compile the class schedule. The studies take place mostly in Tallinn, but for PCC students also in Tartu in the 2nd and 3rd year. The last study year has a smaller lecture-load, so that the students could have more time to concentrate on their theses and internship.

In the job description of the academic staff, the supervision of the students' graduation theses is defined as an obligation of the lecturer. The supervision process is not defined in detail in any document, but the principles are agreed informally amongst the lecturers. The students are informed about supervision details in the framework of PHE subject *Introduction to Academic Writing* and MA module *Theory of Science, Research Methods and Thesis Design*. Student involvement in research, creativity and development activities focuses on four strength areas of the Institute:

1. In the area of Biblical Studies and Antiquities
 - a. Randar Tasmuth has compiled a list of topics which is used to guide students' graduation theses and prepare materials for publishing a compendium of edited articles in 2018. These topics support the theological development work in the Institute's forum specially completion of the final paper.
2. In the area of Church History
 - a. Riho Saard will involve one student in composing of the overview of the history of the Institute for the 70th anniversary of the Institute in fall of 2016;
3. In the area of Practical Theology
 - a. Students will be involved in development activities of mentoring and PCC, including research, through a project [Research & Development Strategic Plan 2016–2019](#);
 - b. An alumnus of the Institute, MA Kai Jõemets and masters students Saima Sellak-Martinson and Katri Aaslav-Tepandi are involved in the Europe-wide survey [Specialist Spiritual Care Patient Reported Outcome Measure](#) under the supervision of Naatan Haamer in 2018–2019.
4. In the area of Systematic Theology
 - a. T.-A. Põder involved students in handling the topics that are related to research projects from 2015 and this has substantially increased the number of students who wish to write their final thesis by the ST Chair. Because the number of interested students became so high, the systematic theology research seminar was launched from the beginning of 2017 that supports writing the final thesis at all stages (some MA and Doctor's degree students supervised by T.-A. Põder from the Theology Faculty of the University of Tartu

participated. In the spring of 2018, 14 researchers-students (incl one PhD candidate from New Testament) and 3 PHE and MA works were submitted for defending.

Supervisors, except ordinary lecturers, are paid for each supervised theses. In 2015 there was an exception made and the Rector decided to reimburse all the lecturers (also ordinary lecturers) for every supervised theses, because there was more theses than usually. Ever since we have paid for every supervised thesis to all the lecturers.

[Chapter 1.7.](#) describes the satisfaction of students with supervision.

The vast majority of theses are supervised by ordinary or visiting lecturers, but specific subjects sometimes require supervisors outside the Institute (see figure 11). For raising the level of the final papers and Master's theses, we have conducted a pre-defense before the official defense of theses. This instrument brings clearly out also the shortcomings on the part of supervision and creates possibilities for finding solutions for fixing the situation.

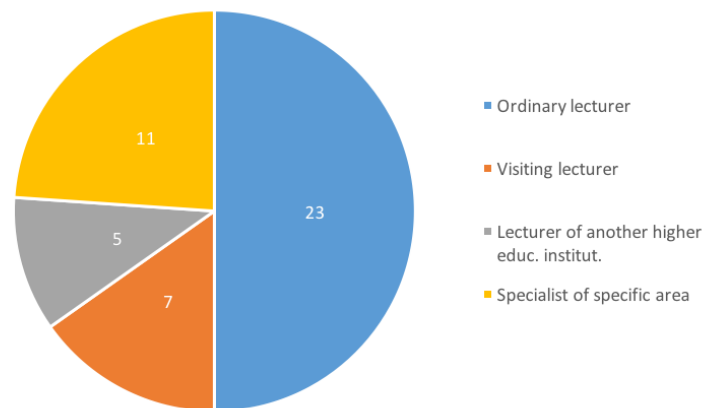


Figure 11. Supervision of final papers and master theses divided by lecturer position, 2015–2018.

1 ECTF means 26 hrs of work, corresponding to 5 hrs of in-class work and 21 hrs of independent work which is described in detail in syllabi of every subject. In-class work is either a lecture or seminar depending on the goals of the specific course. Resources supporting independent work are described in [Chapter 2.2.](#)

The problem has been acquiring an overview of an actual workload of the students. We have paid more attention to better application of SIS during the last years for that so that the teachers, students as well as employees responsible for organisation of studies could have current overview of tasks given within the framework of different subjects and their compliance with the volume of ECTS credits. We cannot declare that we have a full overview but the situation has specially improved during academic year 2017/2018 as all teachers have been able to raise the usage skills of SIS and become more and more active in it. To achieve that, we have organized a number of SIS training courses for the teachers and arranged personal instructions.

Support staff, who supports the teachers as well as students during performance of studies are well qualified for work in the Institute since 63% of these employees have theological higher education and all of them are members of FT Council being fully competent to deal also with questions about the institution more widely (for more information see file [Counselling related to studies and career](#)). At the moment, we do not see the need for changes because also the academic mentoring has given good results that is described in more detail in [Chapter 1.7.](#)

The Institute's curricula is outcome based and all syllabi must contain information on the knowledge, skills and competences gained by the student upon completing a course, i.e. learning outcomes. The syllabus must list assessment criteria and methods, final assessment and conditions for eligibility to take exam and resits. Assessment criteria are formulated and the methods are chosen by the lecturer according to the learning outcomes. Main assessment methods are a written exam, essay and report. More seldom also portfolio, creative work, group work, research, case-study or oral exam. For written papers, the feedback from lecturers can be quite different. Some lecturers give thorough and informative

feedback even during the process of writing. We must strive to include better feedback for written papers as part of the whole learning process. Assessment procedures are regulated in [Study Regulations of the FT](#) of the clause 72–109.

There have been cases where the student has submitted a complaint, that the teacher has not been fair in their assessments. In such cases, we have involved an external expert from another educational who has performed assessment based on the learning outcomes and assessment criteria described on the course annotation.

VÖTA takes place according to [VÖTA regulation of the Institute](#). VÖTA works well and students use it more and more (see figure 12). From 2015/2016, academic year applications are processed only through SIS that is simplifying and speeding the process. Learning Management Specialist, the Head of Dean's Office and the Head of the TATIT give advice to the students in case of questions.

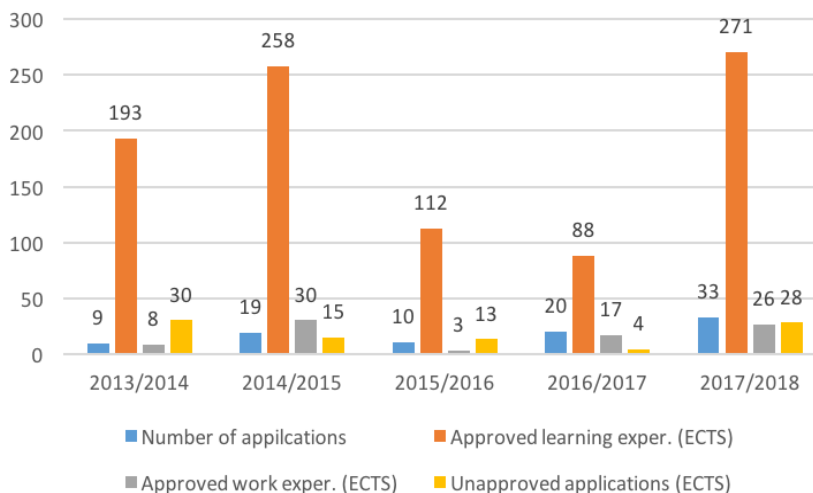


Figure 12. Statistics of VÖTA, 2013–2018.

The topic of plagiarism is handled in the framework of PHE subject *Introduction to Academic Writing* and MA module *Theory of Science, Research Methods and Theses Design*. Procedure for dealing with plagiarism is regulated in the [Study Regulation of the FT](#) in the clause 164–171. To enhance plagiarism recognition and prevention, we planned to join the plagiarism recognition system KRATT already in 2017. We have not done it so far, because our student body is still pretty small and we have been able to avoid plagiarism very successfully. High average age (46) of student body is probably also one of the reasons why we face with plagiarism issues so seldom. The last plagiarism was discovered in 2009. The expert opinion confirmed the plagiarism and student was exmatriculated.

[Chapter 1.7.](#) describes students feedback to the study process.

2.3.1. Areas of good practice and improvements

Good practices

Learning and teaching and exams take place evenly through the year, and are not accumulated to a short time. The students are introduced with the outputs of the study programme and the attention of the students who want to become a priest has been brought to the content of the *pro venia concionandi* exam and the professional requirements of the clergy.

The size of the student body (138 students as of 31.05.2018) enables good monitoring of academic progress.

As an innovative learning method, the module *Pastoral Care and Counselling and Crisis Intervention* in the PHE study programme's specialty studies of PCC is conducted as 4-days training cycles performed five times. Group dynamics, self-reflection and regular group supervisions form an important part in that learning process.

The wide network of internship basis and good organisation of internship.

Areas for improvement	The action plan
One complication at supervision is the study form with sessions since finding the suitable time for meeting presumes good time planning from the teacher as well as the student.	In respect of the biblical studies and systematic theology, already entrenched New Testament forum and special seminary on systematic theology help promote also coaching of final thesis. Both form an example for other Chairs for finding own additional work form.
Compliance of the realistic study volume with the ECTS credit volume and having an overview of the real load of students has become better but further work is necessary with this topic.	The recommended document regulating the study volumes has been prepared and approved and it is planned to make efforts for its regular use and monitoring.
Joining the plagiarism detection system KRATT.	Plagiarism has not been a serious topic in the Institute and thus joining the system KRATT has been postponed but despite that we are continuing to deal with that topic.

2.4. The academic staff

Different manuals have been adopted for determining the qualification, teaching skills and professional development of the academic staff that are compiled in cooperation with the teachers and jointly approved (see [Regulations for Elections of the Academic Staff](#); [Rules of Procedures for Ensuring Professional Development for Academic Staff and Research Fellows](#); [Procedures and Requirements of Evaluation of the Qualification](#); [Job Description of the Academic Staff](#)). The teachers actively participate in professional activities outside the Institute in Estonia as well as internationally (see [The Institute employees' participation in the activities of professional associations and other social supervisory boards and decision-making bodies](#); [International mobility of the academic staff](#)) and involve also students, if appropriate (see [Chapter 1.6](#)). Good cooperation between the academic staff and linking the wide contact network to the Institute's development activities is a good indicator of effective operation of the teaching body. Chapter 1.2. [table 2](#) shows the changes that have taken place among the teaching body.

The Head of the Chair and the Dean introduce the study programmes, objectives and outputs to the novice teachers. Also the academic staff supports each other. Based on the needs of the teachers, and development activities of the Institute, we organise at least one joint continuing education of the academic staff annually. The topics from 2014 have been as follows:

1. November 2014 – *Didactics of the higher education institution*.
2. September and November 2015 – *Training of an online study environment Moodle*.
3. May 2016 – *The academic mentoring*.
4. October 2017 – *Academic writing and mentoring*.
5. November 2018 – *Integration of teaching methods and assessment methods for ensuring the quality culture*.

Personal development is supported by financing participation in international conferences and, if appropriate, ordering the flight tickets directly by the Institute (see file [International mobility of the academic staff](#)).

Teachers are supported upon publishing that is evidenced by big number of publications and proceedings of the Institute (see [table 3](#) and [ETIS](#)). Publishing includes own publications of the Institute ([textbooks](#) and [proceedings](#)). Topics necessary for the textbooks and proceedings are found out beforehand by the teachers in cooperation with the students. After that, it is agreed on writing and publishing of the articles necessary for studies with the heads of the Chairs and the funds are found.

The academic staff see the students' feedback in SIS and the heads of the Chairs talk about it with other teachers of the Chair. The more dealt tendencies are annually discussed in the faculty council under the leadership of the Dean. Additional pay is paid for supervision of the final theses. All candidates submitted their development work plan with an application at re-elections in 2015–2017 and the Faculty Council discussed the candidates separately based on their statistical and substantive results of the earlier work. Election of two new candidates considered the information on their teaching in previous working place and research work submitted to ETIS.

The topics of the final thesis provided for the students rely on the research work of the teacher. Systematic theology special seminars (T.-A. Pöder) and the New Testament forums (R. Tasmuth, J. Lahe, a young novice teacher E. Naab) deal with final thesis in progress of which large number is written based on the research work trends of the supervising main teachers. Involvement of masters students as co-authors of own publications of the Institute has been started.

The good cooperation forms with foreign teachers mainly come through international networks or personal acquaintances. There are remarkably more opportunities for involving teachers outside since the Erasmus programme creates very good opportunities for that but we have to maintain proper balance and place the emphasis on quality. Lecture courses delivered by the foreign teachers should not have too big percentage form the total studies. The documents [Data of the academic staff](#), [Involvement of international and local visiting lecturers](#) and [tables 1 and 2](#) show an overview of the workload of the academic staff, their qualification and age structure, involvement of foreign teachers and other indicators.

An average age of the teachers is 51. It has been more or less the same for years (see [table 1](#)). We consciously follow the age composition of the academic staff and deal with ensuring the renewal of the teachers. For that purpose mature scholars with splended academic record, T.-A. Pöder, P. Rohtmets and J. Lahe, have all been employed within last three years. In 2019 a splended graduate, Karin Kallas, will be probably working as a part time assistent of Systematic Theology, and we support her doctoral studies beginning presumably also in 2019. Attention is simultaneously focused on Old Testament studies to find a good graduate in order to support his or her doctoral studies in Nordic Countries, probably in Norway.

[Chapter 1.7.](#) describes the students' feedback on the work of the academic staff.

2.4.1. Areas of good practice and improvements

Good practices	
Academic staff is participating in the continuing education sessions. At least one joint continuing education training takes place every year.	
Academic staff can see the Students' feedback from SIS and take it into account.	
Academic staff is supported in planning, preparation and publishing teaching materials.	
The topics of the final thesis provided for the students rely on the research work of the teacher.	

Areas for improvement	The action plan
Salaries of the academic staff are low compared to the overall standard of living in Estonia.	The management of the Institute is engaged in finding additional financial resources, to raise the salaries of the academic staff. One example of movement towards that objective is the Support Fund of Pastoral Care and Counselling that was established in spring of 2018.

It is possible to improve the choice of topics for the final papers.	More attention should be paid to selection and revision of the plans of the fundamental research and applied research with clear targets when approving the topics of the final papers in the faculty council and these are recommended for the students.
The workload of the Systematic Theology Chair and the need for an assistant for the extraordinary systematic theology assistant.	The research development activity in the area of systematic and ecumenical theology and other society oriented resp. ecclesiastical consultative expert and representation activity in Estonia and on international level does not fit into the workload of Prof. T.-A. Põder. The situation could be solved by recruiting an extraordinary systematic theology assistant with 0.75 load at least for one year. The challenge is in finding the necessary financial resources for this purpose.

2.5. Students

We have set a goal that the structure of the studies considers the needs of the target groups and the support activities support professional development of students (APDP 1.1.8). We have implemented flexible form of studies for that, which will enable learning in parallel with working. In cooperation with the partners-employers, we collect information on provided professional working places and opportunities for acquiring work experience abroad. And we also share information about studying abroad. We support the studies of the students from the funds of the Evald Saag Foundation (see table 9 ESF scholarships 2014–2018). From the beginning of 2017, we have launched the academic mentoring programme (see details in Chapter 1.7.). The Document [Counselling Related to Studies and Career](#) outlines more detailed information about different counselling services for students.

The important objectives of all these the various supporting activities is to reduce dropout (figure 13) and increasing the percentage of graduates with nominal time (figure 14). The efficiency of the performed work is reflected by relatively low dropout percentage. If student will have difficulties to participate in regular study work we at first advice to take sabbatical leave (figure 15). It is possible to enrol the expelled students again after one year. We have always offered that opportunity and when the ex student wishes to start the studies again, they do not have to take the entrance exam in full volume but we will have an interview to find out whether the earlier obstacles that caused expelling have now been eliminated. There are two main reasons for dropout: **(1)** the study requirements are too high, **(2)** matching the studies with daily life is too complicated. It is understandable considering the average age (46) of our student profile.

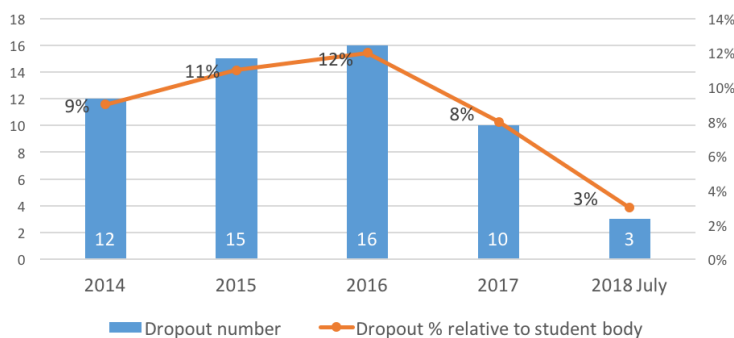


Figure 13. Students dropout rate, 2014–2018.

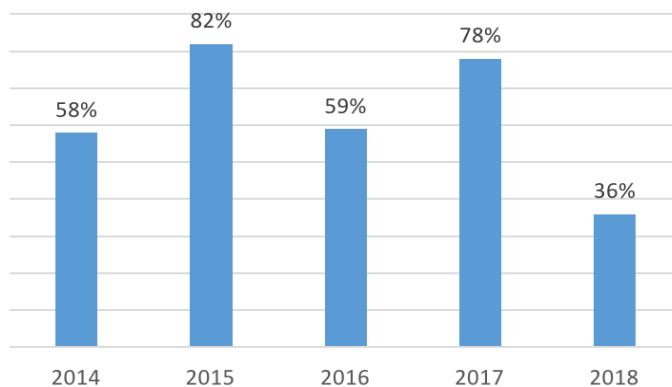


Figure 14. Percentage of students (relative to student body) completing studies within the nominal period, 2014–2018.

Admission rules are described in the document [Admission rules](#). As the first objective of the Institute is to prepare ministers and to ensure continuity of the theological education, the Bible knowledge and ability to express in written and spoken form are evaluated (essay and interview) during admission procedure. Student candidates for MA studies in theology are tested based the PHE curriculum learning outcomes, using test and interview. In both levels the interview has helped to clarify the candidate's motivation and goals. Interviews are conducted by three lecturers, also representatives of TATIT are invited as well as the representative of the OCE. The last is important considering the needs of the ecumenical partner.

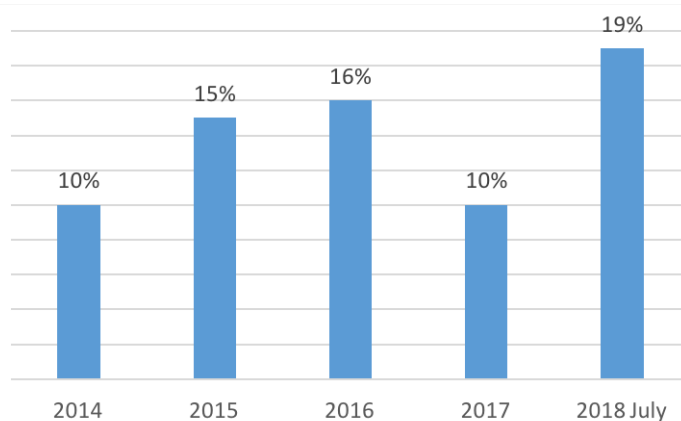


Figure 15. Percentage of students (relative to student body) taking sabbatical leave, 2011–2015.

In finding out of the motivation of the candidates for the SCC, the important factor is the candidate's awareness how to use the desired education in their profession and personal development, as well as what new possibilities can the MA diploma offer in their career and personal development.

Recently graduated one student with physical special need (not able to manually write written tests). The person was given permission to write all exams on computer. We have also made it possible to fulfil the requirements of the curricula slower for people with psycho-physical special needs and hindrances due to social conditions.

Study opportunities for people with physical needs are poor also because the Tallinn building does not have an elevator nor it is possible to install it. The new Tartu facility, that will become in use starting from September of 2019, will be fully accesible for disabled people. We are, however, willing to offer study opportunities for people with special needs if the access to the building or the professional demands do not limit the student. 2 visually impaired students have studied in PCC programme in TAT. Special software for visually impaired people was purchased to accommodate their needs. As for a person with special needs it is very difficult or almost impossible to work as a pastor in Estonia, the labour market dictates the low number of students with special needs amongst our student body.

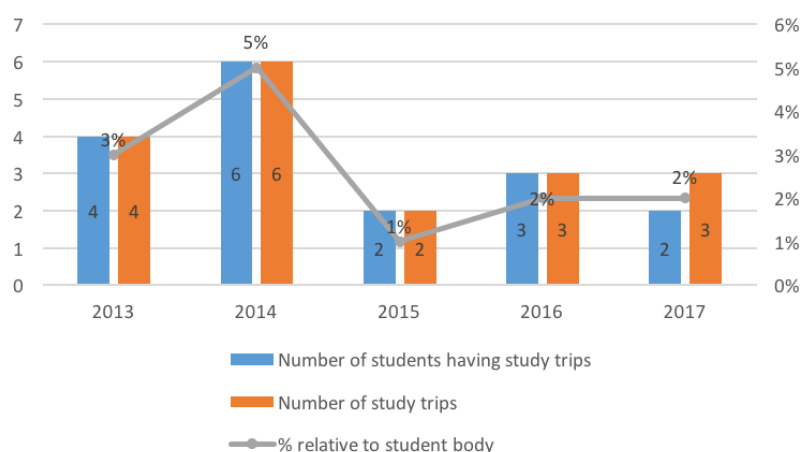


Figure 16. International mobility of students, 2013–2017.

The students have been given good opportunities for domestic as well as international mobility. In accordance with the cooperation agreements, the students can pass the subject courses in the University of Tartu, Estonian Academy of Music and Estonian Business School. Because of high average age of the student body (46), international mobility is not very popular. Therefore also the Erasmus+ mobility programme has been used very seldom, as the minimum stay abroad has to be 3 months and more. Suitable for our profile and also actively used programme is [Dora Plus](#) which offers opportunity

for MA students to go on shorter study trips (conferences, visits to universities abroad etc.) Detailed overview of international mobility of students is given in the [additional file](#). As Dora was stopped from first half of 2015 until Spring of 2016, the international mobility was very low during this period.

[Chapter 2.2](#) gives an overview of different support funds by the Institute that expand the employment opportunities and help students cope with their economic problems. Students' feedback on the support services is described in [Chapter 1.7](#).

2.5.1. Areas of good practice and improvements

Good practices

Once a semester, the students are granted study supports from the ESF funds based on their applications.

Discounts are offered to support those who are planning to work in the church or church related positions.

The expelled students can continue their studies later without taking the matriculation examinations again. It is necessary only to have an interview with the commission.

Implementation of the academic mentoring programme from the beginning of 2017.

Areas for improvement	The action plan
Lecturers have not enough consultations.	This is greatly due to the fact that study process is carried out by sessions. The IT based means have to be used better, like SIS and Moodle.
Provision of better learning opportunities for the people with special needs.	It is not possible to make the Tallinn school building better accessible for the people with reduced mobility but an access for the people with special needs will be ensured in the facilities finished in Tartu by autumn of 2019.
The average age of students is quite high.	In this situation, we do not see it as a direct problem of direct, because the life experience is a benefit regarding the specialties taught in the Institute but we still have to analyse the causes for the constantly increasing average age.

2.6. Aggregated analysis of the study programme group

Good practices

In addition to the higher education, the Institute is engaged in vocational training (pastoral seminary, church music department) and providing life long learning for its alumni as well as broader public (department of continuing education).

Implementation of the academic mentoring programme from the beginning of 2017.

Considering the size of the academic staff, RDC is of considerable volume.

The Institute is the only educational institution in Estonia, which educates pastoral caregivers and counsellors and gives professional education on the Orthodox theology.

Being a small educational institution, the Institute still provides significant contribution to society by impacting also the areas outside the clerical sphere.

The academic staff has become aware of addressing the research work and creation to compilation of the study materials. The academic staff is supported in planning, preparation and publishing teaching materials.

The academic staff is actively involved in the work of the various professional organizations and decision-making bodies.

The arrangement of the internship and versatile internship basis network has been well developed.

There is a considerable number and availability of teaching materials in the native language, including the Institute's own printed literature (Textbooks and Proceedings).

Institute owns the biggest specialized theological library in Estonia.

The activities of the different areas of the Institute are financed by support funds: Evald Saag Foundation for allocation of study and research scholarships; Support Fund of Pastoral Care and Counselling for supporting broader development of studies of PCC by creating better employment opportunities for alumni; Paul-Gerhardt and Sieghilde Hoerschelmann support fund for supporting the activities of the Pastoral Seminary.

The learning facilities of the Tartu department will be finished by autumn 2019, and also the organisations that provide versatile internship options for students will find space.

Areas for improvement	The action plan
There are some shortcomings in the assessment criteria.	Attention should be drawn to the assessment criteria when supplementing the syllabi in SIS. In November 2018, a training called "Integration of teaching methods and assessment methods for ensuring the quality culture" is planned for the academic staff.
Some teachers have difficulties in using Moodle and SIS.	From 2015, we have organised the Moodle training sessions for the academic staff and provided individual counselling for the use of Moodle as well as SIS.
The continued renewal and enrichment of native language teaching materials.	Under the leadership of the Dean, we have launched the programme for the academic staff for development of the creative research work to increase the volume of the study-related articles written in the native language, to publish them and make them available electronically.
About one-third of students fail to read literature in foreign language.	English is as an elective subject in the PHE study programme from 2018 to help increase the language skills of the students who are not able to work through the study material in a foreign language.
The study programme contains subjects with outdated study materials.	Under the leadership of the Dean, the needs and opportunities to direct some of the research work to writing new study materials relating to the local context will be specified.
One complication at supervision is the study form with sessions since finding the suitable time for meeting presumes good time planning from the teacher as well as the student.	In respect of the biblical studies and systematic theology, already entrenched New Testament forum and special seminary on systematic theology help promote also coaching of final papers. Both form an example for other chairs for finding own additional work form.
Compliance of the realistic study volume with the ECTS credit volume and having an overview of the real load of students has become better but further work is necessary with this topic.	The recommended document regulating the study volumes has been prepared and approved and it is planned to make efforts for its regular use and monitoring.
All subjects do not have syllabi in SIS.	The syllabi will be prepared for the missing subjects in the autumn of 2018. Information from the Dean's office and an action plan for compiling the syllabi is performed in cooperation with the Dean.

2.7. An action plan on the level of the study programme

Activities concerning all study programmes

Activity	Person responsible	Deadline	Expected outcome
Making syllabi available for the students via SIS.	Randar Tasmuth, Helen Kuldkepp	January 2019	Syllabi of all subjects are available for students in SIS.
Improvement of the assessment criteria of the subjects.	Kerstin Kask	June 2019	Assessment criteria for subjects are more adequately determined.
Increasing the number of scientific articles published by the full-time academic staff of the Theology Faculty in the previously peer-reviewed scientific publications with international proliferation.	Randar Tasmuth	Current	At least one scientific publication has been published a year and at least 1 presentation is delivered in an international research conference a year.
Broadening of learning opportunities of the Institute to the people in South-Estonia.	Siimon Haamer	2019-2020	The study building of the Institute is ready in Tartu.
Liquidation of discrepancies in subjects where the study volume does not comply with the ECTS volume.	Randar Tasmuth	2019	The study volume corresponds to the credit points volume.
Better application of SIS for obtaining an overview of the actual load of the student.	Kerstin Kask	2020	Real-time monitoring of an actual load of students is available in SIS.

PHE studies of Theology

Activity	Person responsible	Deadline	Expected outcome
All PHE students are involved in the academic mentoring programme.	Siimon Haamer	Academic year 2018/2019.	Percentage of students excluded from the studies is diminishing and the percentage of students who graduate with nominal time is increasing.
Determination of the research areas important for the church with the Consistory in connection with development plan of EELC.	Randar Tasmuth	Academic year 2018/2019	The Institute's research activities support the achievement of the objectives of the development areas of EELC.
Increasing the employment opportunities in the pastoral care area with the support of the activities implemented by the Support Fund of Pastoral Care and Counselling.	Siimon Haamer	2018-2020	The support network of pastoral caregivers is developed and at least 5 new working places in Estonia are evolved.
Teaching of English as an elective subject to raise the capability of the students to read professional literature in a foreign language.	Kerstin Kask	From autumn 2018	Students' English language skills have improved.
Dividing the study groups of Hebrew and Greek language into two.	Kerstin Kask	Autumn 2019	The quality of the Hebrew and Greek language teaching is improving.

MA studies of Theology

Activity	Person responsible	Deadline	Expected outcome
Involvement of master students and alumni in the implementation of the Europe-wide research, which examines the impact of the hospital pastoral care work to the patient's treatment process.	Siimon Haamer	2020	Hospitals and social welfare institutions are more aware of the role of the pastoral care in the treatment process of the patient.
All MA Theology study programme students are involved in the academic mentoring programme when the pilot programme of the PHE students has given good results.	Siimon Haamer	Academic year 2020/2021.	Percentage of students excluded from the studies is diminishing and the percentage of students who graduate with nominal time is increasing.
Determination of the research areas important for the church with the Consistory in connection with development plan of EELC.	Randar Tasmuth	Academic year 2018/2019.	The Institute's research activities support the achievement of the objectives of the development areas of EELC.
Increasing the employment opportunities in the pastoral care area with the support of the activities implemented by the Support Fund of Pastoral Care and Counselling.	Siimon Haamer	2018-2020	The support network of pastoral caregivers is developed and at least 5 new working places in Estonia are evolved.

MA studies in Christian Culture

Activity	Person responsible	Deadline	Expected outcome
Consulting of the topics of the MA exam written partworks and bringing them into better conformance with the masters students' permanent working place profile and personal and work-related development needs.	Randar Tasmuth, Riho Saard	from 2018	The topic of the partwork that the masters student is interested in and that corresponds to their needs has been found out during the first year of the MA studies.
Collecting development ideas of the study programmes from alumni with the aim to design the study programme to support better the professional development of the students.	Kerstin Kask	2019	Description of needs has been drawn up.
Supplementing the study programme.	Randar Tasmuth, Kerstin Kask, heads of the Chairs	2020	The supplemented study programme is approved in spring 2020 based on which the studies start in autumn of 2020.