



STUDENT HANDBOOK 2020

Russian Language Academy Durbe
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Dear Student,

We are glad to have received your application and would like to welcome you to Russian Language Academy Durbe! The following handbook contains useful information about our academy, programs, services and our website address, which will help you to enjoy your stay in Riga. We wish you a nice stay in Riga and successful studies at Russian Language Academy Durbe!

Director Nora Poiša

RUSSIAN LANGUAGE ACADEMY DURBE

Russian Language Academy Durbe (RLA Durbe) has more than 20 years of experience in international language tourism. RLA Durbe was the first private language school in Latvia accredited by the Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia. We are also proud to be members of [EAQUALS](#) (Evaluation & Accreditation of Quality in Language Services), an international association of institutions and organizations involved in language education. The academy is also a certified **tele** examination centre and our Russian language courses are recognized as “Bildungsurlaub” in Hamburg (B level), Rheinland-Pfalz, Niedersachsen, Schleswig Holstein, Mecklenburg (Germany).

Our mission is to promote our students' language development through all four language domains: reading, writing, speaking and listening, to enrich your vocabulary, grammatical and language structures.

THE ACADEMY

Russian Language Academy Durbe is located in the very heart of the capital of Latvia - RIGA. An elegant atmosphere and architectural beauty surround us! Thanks to our very central location, you just have to cross the street to reach both the vast Central Park and the great Central Train Station. The beautiful Old Town is just five minutes away, with dozens of restaurants and cafés to enjoy, with the stunning National Opera House and garden right at the entrance of Old Town. We are also lucky to have a huge shopping mall nearby, where you can find everything you might need during your language stay, including stationery, books, groceries and much more.

You can find our academy on the second floor of a historical building. We have 10 individual and bright classrooms, all equipped with the latest technology for learning. You will have access to a computer room, a self study area, an extensive library and fast free Wi-Fi. The computer room is available daily (Monday – Friday) from 12.30 to 17.30. In our cozy student lounge, you can relax and enjoy a hot cup of coffee or tea. We also provide two refreshing water dispensers that are always free at your disposal.

PROGRAMS OFFERED

Russian Language Academy Durbe offers a great selection of Russian language courses for your needs and interests. We guarantee that you will find a suitable one! For more information, please visit www.russian-academy.com.

YOUR STUDIES

- Students have both face-to-face study hours (20 to 40, depending on the chosen program), and they are welcome to practice Russian skills outside class, including weekly activity programs that are held in Russian (3 hours weekly, but from June - August up to 5 hours) and communication with their Russian host family (if this type of accommodation is chosen).
- In order to achieve good progress, the student must attend lessons on a regular basis and complete the daily homework given by the instructor. The estimated time to complete homework is about 60 minutes per day, with a total of about 5-6 hours per week. Self-study is also important; please take the time to check the various resources for self-study that our teachers have prepared for you.
- In order to get a certificate, students must attend at least 75% of lessons.
- Students are placed in classes according to their Russian language level – please take the Online Placement Test before arrival. Students attend Group lessons in the mornings or in the afternoons, but if you do not complete your placement test, you will be tested instead of going to class on your first day. Placement Test: <https://russian-academy.com/application-form/test-0/>
- Individual lessons (including those students whose group lessons switch to individual lessons) are scheduled in the afternoons. The academy guarantees individual lessons and Group lessons in the mornings for bookings of 30+ lessons per week only.
- In order to monitor your Russian language study progress, a weekly test is given to every student. Don't worry, your teacher's aim is to help you, not to fail you. ☺

- Upon completing the program and after the final exam, students are issued a certificate that states their language level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Language Learning, Teaching and Assessment standards.

Study Plan for Standard and Intensive Russian Courses

Course	Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
General 20 lessons per week	9.00-10.40	Standard	Standard	Standard	Standard	Standard Russian
		Russian	Russian	Russian	Russian	Weekly progress Test
	10.40-10.50	Coffee break				
	10.50-12.30	Standard	Standard	Standard	Standard	Standard Russian
Russian		Russian	Russian	Russian		
	12.30-13.30	Lunch				
Intensive 25 lessons per week	13.30- 14.45		Intensive and Mini group lessons		Intensive and Mini group lessons	
	14.45-14.55	Tea Break				
Mini group 5 or 10	14.55-15.45		Intensive and Mini group lessons		Intensive and Mini group lessons	

EAQUALS ACCREDITATION

Education Centre Durbe is an Equals-accredited member since 2011, and in 2015 it has been reaccredited. Equals promotes excellence by inspecting and accrediting language centers that meet the highest standards in all of the most important areas of language education. Equals' accreditation allows us to be up-to-date with the latest field trends and guarantees the highest possible quality for your money.

With a total commitment to excellence, Equals also provides independent channels through which you can file any complaints (info@equals.org).

Further information about benefits of studying at an Equals-accredited language centre can be found on the website: www.russian-academy.com

TELC EXAM

Pass the telc Exam to Prove Your Russian Language Competence While in Riga!

Telc is an internationally recognized exam that covers 4 Russian language levels from A1-B2 and provides tangible proof of your language proficiency. The exam's major advantage is its concentration on communicative competence rather than academic skills. Another advantage of **telc** includes international recognition of the certificate at universities, companies and government authorities.

In order to help you achieve excellent results on the exam, we advise you to book our special **exam preparation module** (5 lessons in mini groups of a maximum of 5 participants) or individual lessons. Getting acquainted with the structure of the exam and types of tasks ensures the best possible exam preparation! Students are advised to book their **telc** exam at least 4 weeks in advance, prior to the exam date.

For more information about the **telc** exam, please visit: www.russian-academy.com or <https://www.telc.net/en.html>

SOME USEFUL GENERAL INFORMATION:

- Starting Dates: Every Monday, except for beginners;
- Starting Dates for Beginners: These start at specifically set dates, check the dates on our website: www.russian-academy.com
- Minimum Enrollment: Group program - 1 week, individual course – 10 lessons;
- Maximum Students Per Class: 8 (in summer up to 10), average 5;
- One lesson: 50 minutes;

- Minimum Age: 16 (upon agreement with consent from parents - 15); work experience program - 18; closed groups - school age children, adult groups.
- Course Program Includes: Pre-arrival placement test, tuition, teaching materials for one level, Monday's Riga Walking Tour, free access to Wi-Fi and your course certificate. Weekly social activity programs are offered for an extra fee, if so desired.
- The school is closed for lessons:
In 2020: January 1; April 10, 13; May 1, 4; June 23, June 24, November 18, December 24-26, December 31. All group courses end on Friday, December 18, 2020 and resume on Monday, January 4, 2021.
- Students are welcome to use our library and take a book to read from classroom 6 every day from 12.30 until 17.00 – please contact our Client Manager or the Director of Studies if you would like to read or borrow a book.
- Remember the door codes to enter the building! **6B** at the gate doors and **486** at the building doors.
- The school has three exits with emergency plans put on them and 5 fire extinguishers that are located all around the school. Safety instructions are explained to all students at the beginning of their course.

STUDENT LOUNGE

Our students are welcome to use the academy's student lounge at anytime, but we ask to observe the following rules: please keep the lounge clean and tidy, properly wash all dishes that have been used and do not leave dirty dishes in the classrooms or in the sink. It is also permitted if students bring their own snacks, tea or coffee.

“RUSSIAN ONLY” ZONE

During study hours from 8:30 until 17:30, communication at the academy is in Russian only. This will help you to develop your language knowledge and emerge into a truly Russian atmosphere. The teachers and staff members will encourage you to speak Russian during the breaks. Please, don't be afraid to speak in Russian! At first it may seem a bit strange, but later on you will be happy that you didn't miss out on the chance! Those who do not follow this rule are fined 50 cents☺. The collected funds will be transferred to the **Durbe Education Charity**.

DURBE EDUCATION CHARITY “PAKĀPIES AUGSTĀK” (Latvian for “Climb Higher”)

The Durbe Education Charity is aimed to support the desire of others for educational growth and development. It offers a helping hand to those who cannot afford an education or those who are struggling in their life due to disabilities. We consistently provide support and we aim to establish lasting relationships between the charity and the beneficiaries.

You may support the charity and help make someone's dreams come true by buying our souvenirs (Charity Shelf in the student lounge) or by donating money to the alms box in the academy's premises or to our bank account.

The Durbe Education Charity encourages you to use this opportunity to become a sponsor and penpal with one of your chosen Russian-speaking sponsee. Keep in contact and follow up with their progress and achievements to see how they've climbed higher in life thanks to your attentive support.

Contacts and banking details:

Name: "Durbe Education Charity "Pakāpies augstāk!", Reg. nr.: 40008243086;

Address: Raina Bulvaris 31-5, Riga, LV1050, Latvia;

Email: charity@durbe.edu.lv.

Account Nr.: LV89HABA0551041028639;

Bank: Swedbank, swift: HABALV22; address: Balasta dambis 1a, Riga, LV-1048, Latvia.

PROCEDURE AND TERMS

The following guidelines should help you to stay clear of any uncertainties and will remind you of some important points to consider when planning your language stay in Latvia.

- The Course: You can book and take the Placement Test either on our website or through your local agent.
- After booking, you will receive your enrollment confirmation, an invoice stating all services booked and a request for a deposit of **200 EUR**.
- After confirmed payment of the deposit, you will receive your accommodation confirmation (in the case the student chooses our in-house residence, shared flat or Hotel Irina accommodation).
- The host family accommodation confirmation is sent at the beginning of the week prior to the arrival week, the arrival transfer confirmation – in the middle of the week prior to the arrival.
- We do ask to fill in the online pre-arrival placement test no later than 1 week prior to arrival.
- Students who need a visa: after receiving the necessary personal information and full payment, we apply for a visa invitation, which usually takes around 10 working days. After you receive your visa number, you can proceed to go to the nearest Embassy responsible for Latvian visas.
- For information about our cancellation policy please visit: <https://russian-academy.com/russian-language-school/terms/>
- All courses start on Monday (except public holidays) and last until Friday. There is no reduction in course fees when a course includes a public holiday, except individual lessons which are rescheduled.
- In case of complaint, please talk to the school's administration who will do their best to solve the situation and help you. If you cannot reach an agreement with the school, you may submit Equals Complaints Procedure form (info@equals.org), available on Russian Language Academy Durbe's homepage.

YOUR CONTACTS AT THE ACADEMY

You will be met by our friendly and welcoming staff, who are ready to help and assist you. Please note the following useful contacts at our academy in order to get advice and assistance regarding any important questions.

Nora Poisa / Director		
Guna Gabrane / Director of Studies	Study program and materials, teachers, timetable.	Phone: +371 67844449
Jekaterina Celebija / Client Manager	Student care, social activities, enrollment, extension of study program, payments, general questions.	E-mail: jekaterina.celebija@durbe.edu.lv Phone: +371 67363331

YOUR FIRST DAY

In the case that you booked host family accommodations, your host family members will show you the way to the academy. In any other case, you can easily find us on Raina bulvaris 31-6, close to the Stockmann Shopping Center and Central Train Station. Your first group lesson starts on Monday at 9:00 am. You are welcome to arrive at the academy starting at 8:35 in the morning. Upon your arrival, you will be given a tour of the academy by the RLA Durbe staff.

ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

HOST FAMILY ACCOMMODATION

This is the ideal choice for students who wish to experience the daily life of Russians and practice the language in an informal atmosphere. Host families live within easy access to the academy and the city centre, and are usually located either in Riga or Jurmala (seaside).

What does a typical Russian host family look like? A host family does not always mean a traditional married couple with children; it also can be a single person. Above all, we look for

someone who is sociable, likes to meet new people and can give a warm welcome to our students. Our host families talk to our students during their meals, and are patient and understanding. The hospitality and attention you will receive in a friendly family atmosphere will definitely help you to adapt more effectively to your new linguistic and cultural environment.

The academy has approved all offered accommodation. The staff members responsible at the academy personally know and are acquainted with the families and their homes. You can choose a single or twin room (in the case of arriving together with friend or partner), breakfast only or half board (breakfast and dinner). Private bathroom booking is also possible. All students are provided with a place for self-study and homework.



The academy offers the following types of host families:

1. Standard Host Family-- single room with breakfast or half board;

3. Executive* Host Family-- single room with breakfast or half board;

* Priority for placement at an Executive Host Family is given to the students who choose Intensive or Individual (at least 20 lessons per week) courses.

* Executive HF - offers high-quality accommodation with extra high comfort and maximum of 50 minutes away from school by public transport.

If you choose a host family, please read the house rules for home-stay below:

HOUSE RULES FOR HOMESTAY

The most important thing about living with a host family is being emerged in a different atmosphere and culture. Please accept your host family's traditions and use the opportunity to learn something new.

1. GENERAL

- Security is very important. Please ensure that all windows and doors are locked upon leaving the room/the apartment.
- Please remove your shoes upon entering the home! We advise you to take slippers to walk in the house; they are commonly used in Russian families.
- Please call your family in advance if you will not be home for dinner (for students who select Half-Board option). Inform the family if you will arrive late in the evening or stay out overnight.
- Invite guests to the home only with permission of the host family. No overnight house guests. No visitors after 10:00 pm.
- Consult the host family before using household appliances or equipment and use them in ways approved by the family. Spend time with your hosts and participate in the daily family routine.
- You are responsible for paying for any damages you make to the host property and for the costs incurred if you lose your home-stay key. Don't lend the keys to anyone.
- Don't change host homes without the knowledge and permission of the accommodation manager.

2. YOUR ROOM

- There will be a bed/sofa, a chair and a cupboard in your room. Your host family will provide you with a place for studies and homework, but it may not necessarily be in your room.
- Please keep your room tidy. Don't scatter your belongings. Once a week, you will need to vacuum and to dust your room. Bedding and towels are changed once a week by your host family.
- Turn off all electrical items when they are not in use.

3. BATHROOM

- Please leave the bathroom clean after each use, including the bathtub, mirrors, and the counter.
- You can use the shower for no longer than 25 minutes per day. It could be possible to use the shower or take a bath for longer time, but please arrange it with your host family.
- The tap water in Riga is safe to drink, although most of the families prefer to boil it or use special filters.

4. KITCHEN

- Clean and tidy the kitchen after you have used it. Ask your host family for permission before using the refrigerator.
- You can help your host family with the chores (dish washing, table serving). Your host family will appreciate this.
- Our host families are also good cooks. Be prepared to eat traditional Russian cuisine, however, it will contain little that you are not familiar with. Russians eat a lot of potatoes, rye bread, curd and cheese, especially Russian cheese, which can be bought at the Central Market at a reasonable price.
- If you feel you need a special place for your food in the refrigerator, you can ask the host family to free a shelf in the refrigerator.

5. LAUNDRY

- Host family will wash your personal clothing once a week (laundry amount should fit into a one washing machine). If you'd like to wash by yourself or more clothing needs to be washed, an extra fee will be charged. Please arrange it individually with your host family.

6. RELATIONSHIP AND COMMUNICATION WITH HOST FAMILY

- The host family will help you practice Russian by taking part in daily conversations with you.
- Feel free to ask your family about everything in Riga – events, interesting places, public transport, medicine etc. You won't have another chance like it! ☺
- The host family will explain how to get to the Russian Language Academy Durbe and show you the way to the public transport stop you need.
- During your stay, your family will be nice and friendly with you; you will feel as if you are a part of the family!

7. PROBLEMS WITH HOST FAMILY

- If you have any problems with the accommodation/host family or if something is unclear to you, try to speak with your host family first. We are aware of cultural differences and cultural shock that sometimes happens when you are placed in a foreign atmosphere - don't be afraid to tell them what you don't like / understand. From our experience, we know that sincere communication helps out in most of these situations. If this does not help, inform your accommodation manager immediately. We'll do our best to resolve the problem.

8. ACCOMMODATION CHANGE

- Please inform your host family and your accommodation manager 3 days in advance if you want to move to a hotel and at least 5 days before departure if you want to change your family. Be ready to make one week's payment to your host family in such case.
- If you'd like to change the family, please provide a trustful and a concrete reason.
- We won't change a host family after the first complaint. An accommodation manager will try to resolve the problem first.

Alternatively to the host family accommodation, you may choose a shared flat, in-house residence, hotels or apartments to live in. We have special offers and prices for our students and will be happy to allocate any request.

SHARED FLAT ACCOMMODATION

The shared flat is located in the very centre of Riga on Brivibas Street 93, the main artery of the city. Located on the 2nd floor, the flat's interior is decorated in a simple and functional spirit, and the floors and furniture are from real wood, creating a unique atmosphere of home comfort.

The flat provides 5 comfortable bedrooms (twin bedroom accommodation is available if requested together with friend or partner), kitchen with large common space for eating and chatting, and 2 WCs. A washing machine is available for students use. Upon your arrival you are given two sets of

bed linen - you're welcome to change and wash it at your convenience. Flat cleaning is done not less than once a month by the school's staff and when necessary – more frequently. Wi-Fi is provided. The flat has central city heating, as well as hot and cold water. Please pay attention that RLA Durbe is not responsible and does not compensate expenses in the case that the water/heating is turned off by the house-manager due to technical reasons.

Thanks to a wonderful location, the shared flat accommodation is just a 15-20 minutes walk from the academy or a short (7-8 minute long) bus ride. Nearby, there are a lot of cafes and restaurants, a small marketplace across the street, as well as a bookstore and a tabletop game shop.



Security Deposit

The security deposit of **200 EUR** is not the same as the registration fee and has to be paid at least 5 days before your arrival. A secure payment link will be sent to you to make an online payment by a credit card (please make sure you have a valid **Visa** or **Mastercard**). The deposit will be returned to you within 10 working days after your departure, provided that there are no damages left in the accommodation premises after inspection.

For a complimentary arrival transfer, please book your arrival flight between 12:00 and 22:00 on Sunday. For late arrivals, a transfer fee of 40 EUR applies. Please note that departures must be scheduled for Sunday before 12:00 PM. Minimum age: 18.

RESIDENCE ACCOMMODATION

The academy has its own cozy student residence with 2 bedrooms and shared kitchen facilities. In the kitchen, there is a microwave, refrigerator and everyday kitchen appliances and tableware. The residence is conveniently located in the city centre, in the same building as the academy, on the 3rd floor with a separate entrance. The building also has an inner garden. Each room has its own WC and a shower. Upon your arrival you are given two sets of bed linen - you're welcome to change and wash it at your convenience. Flat cleaning is done not less than once a month by the school's staff and when necessary – more frequently. Wi-Fi is provided. The residence has central city heating, as well as hot and cold water. Please pay attention that RLA Durbe is not responsible and does not compensate expenses in the case that water/heating is turned off by the house-manager due to technical reasons.

For a complimentary arrival transfer, please book your arrival flight between 12:00 and 22:00 on Sunday. For late arrivals, a transfer fee of 40 EUR applies. Please note that departures must be scheduled for Sunday before 12:00 PM. Minimum age: 18.

Security Deposit rules are the same as above for the SHARED FLAT ACCOMMODATION



HOUSE RULES FOR IN-HOUSE RESIDENCE and SHARED FLAT

1. GENERAL

- Security is very important. Please ensure that all lights are out, and windows and doors are locked upon leaving the room/ the residence.

- Please remove your shoes upon entering the residence. We advise you to take slippers to wear in the residence.
- Invite guests to the residence only with the clear permission of other students living in the residence. No overnight house guests allowed; no visitors and noise after 11:00 pm. In case of the violation of these rules, RLA Durbe reserves the right to evict the student from the residence without compensation.

- You are responsible for any damage you make to the property and for the costs incurred if you lose your shared flat/residence key. It is forbidden to lend the key.

- Minimum age - 18.

2. YOUR ROOM

- There is a table, where you can study, a bed, a chair and cupboard / shelves in your room.
- Please keep your room tidy at all times. Upon your arrival you are given two sets of bed linen - you're welcome to change and wash it at your convenience. Flat cleaning is done not less than once a month by the school's staff and when necessary – more frequently.

- Please do not use any electrical heating devices in your room and common premises without the explicit permission of RLA Durbe. In case of the violation of this rule, RLA Durbe reserves the right to fine the student 100 EUR.

- Turn off all electrical items when they are not in use.

3. BATHROOM

- Please leave the bathroom clean after each use, including a bathtub, mirrors and a WC.
- You can use the residence washing machine. Clothes drying should take place in the dryer.
- You can change the towels as often as you like. Please wash the towels, dry them and put them back in the storage place.

4. KITCHEN

- Clean and tidy the kitchen after each use, including washing the dishes and other tableware, oven, tables and any other surfaces you have been using. Please keep the refrigerator tidy too and do not leave leftovers in there.

- You can take out the trash whenever you need. The dumpster is located in the inner yard. Please always lock the dumpster after you have used it! The key should be hung on the hook in the kitchen.

APARTMENTS FOR RENT (1-2-3 room)

RLA Durbe offers apartments for sole use for those students who would like extra privacy during their stay in Riga. These apartments are located in the center of Riga, in the same building as Russian Language Academy Durbe. It is possible to book the whole apartment or just a part of it.

For more information about RLA Durbe accommodation options, please visit: www.russian-academy.com

TRANSFER SERVICE

Airport arrival transfer services (Riga International Airport) are provided free of charge only in case you book a RLA Durbe accommodation. When booking a Shared Flat/Residence/Apartment accommodation, please note that the complimentary airport arrival transfer is provided only for flights between 12:00 and 22:00. For late arrivals, a transfer fee of 40 EUR applies. If you wish to arrive earlier or depart later than Sunday, a full week's rate is charged for the extra night. Otherwise, you can order a transfer service at any time, but no later than 1 working day before your arrival/departure. The transfer service costs 40 EUR. In case you have ordered a transfer, please send us your flight details (arrival/departure date and time, flight number and the city you are arriving from) as soon as possible. After we receive the flight details, we send a transfer confirmation.

After landing in Riga, You will find a RedCab taxi service representative's stand in your flight's arrival gate. Your name will be written on the whiteboard. Please wait for the RedCab taxi representative right there. He/she will confirm your name and will then guide you to the taxi. Taxi transfers are pre-paid. If you can't find the representative, the taxi helpline phone number is +371 60008383. The emergency phone number is +371 29284480. Please wait for 30 minutes before calling the emergency number, as there can be delays due to numerous arrivals simultaneously.

In case a school representative meets you at the airport, they will wait for you for 50 minutes after your plane has landed (due to the airport's small size, 30-40 minutes are enough to get a luggage, find the exit and go through customs). If you realize you will be at arrival hall later due to any personal reason (trouble finding your luggage, flight delay, etc.), please contact us immediately through the emergency phone number stated above.

In case you decided to cancel the transfer service, and do not let us know ahead of time (at least 1 working day before), you will not be given a refund.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

We believe that social activities and cultural events are an important part of your stay and successful study process! You will have a great opportunity to join in social activities with your coordinator, find out more information about Riga, visit the most interesting and exciting places in Riga and practice listening and speaking Russian after lessons!

All students are invited to join the *free* weekly Monday Riga Walking Tour, which takes place on Mondays for new students (please note that all our tours are conducted in Russian). The guide meets everyone at 16.00 in the student lounge and the tour usually finishes around 18.00.

In addition to the walking tour, our students also sign up for various guided activities offered 2-4 times a week for an extra fee, doing sightseeing around Riga and Jurmala. The coordinator is always happy to find out your wishes and expectations of the program. Don't hesitate to also ask about the events taking place in Riga and Latvia on a particular date.

From exhibitions, concerts, festivals, to historical monuments - Riga has a lot to offer you!

For events in Riga visit: <http://www.liveriga.com> or <http://www.latvia.travel/en/page/whats-latvia>

INTERNAL RULES

RLA Durbe aims for a harmonious learning, as well as working environment and atmosphere. The internal rules are:

- To respect the values of international relations and customs, multiculturalism and multi-lingual environment, the Latvian state, its constitution, history, society, national symbols as well as the school, its culture, and symbols;
- To respect the rights and interests of teachers, students, and other persons;
- To prevent emotional and physical violence;
- To endanger anybody's health, safety, and life and that of any other person;
- It is prohibited to commit violence, to attack physically, emotionally, psychologically, and humiliate students and employees of the school;
- It is strictly prohibited to bring substances that are harmful to the environment or health of other persons. For instance, cigarettes, alcohol, weapons (arms, gaseous weapons, tasers, etc.), dangerous chemicals, explosives or flammable substances, and pyrotechnics. Additionally, animals and agents that contaminate the environment are not allowed. Gambling, smoking, and the use of alcohol and drugs are also strictly forbidden on the premises, area, vicinity of the school. Similarly, these activities are forbidden during educational tours and school events.

Liability for the Violation of the Internal Rules

Failure to follow the Internal Rules of RLA Durbe will result in warnings, counseling, or reprimands. The contract with the school will be terminated in case of serious breaches.

The Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Students have the right to:

- To receive an education and the use of education services in compliance with the provisions of the Education Law,
- Be kept informed of the progress and results of their training,
- Follow school rules, internal regulations, and guidelines concerning health protection and safety with which they were made familiar with.

If the student has any questions regarding the program or would like more detailed information, they are welcome to contact the academy. RLA Durbe answers any email within one working day.

PRIVACY POLICY

Purpose of the Policy

This policy is designed to ensure that personal information is handled safely and accurately in accordance to the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). It will be applied to all information regardless of the method collected, used, recorded, stored and destroyed, and irrespective of it being a tangible hard-copy or uploaded electronically. All staff involved with the collection, processing, and disclosure of personal data will be aware of their duties and responsibilities and will adhere strictly to these guidelines:

Personal Data

In our context, Personal Data refer to items such as:

Name, age, location data, online identifiers, qualifications, background information, factors relating to the physiological, mental, genetic, socio-economic, financial, gender identification, health, cultural, and social identity of the individuals.

We are mandated and required to store and process information about:

- current, past, and prospective students
- current and former staff
- homestay families, including other residents in their homes

Your personal information and how we use it

We will ask you to complete application forms, as well as the entry and exit questionnaire that provides us with your personal information about services booked and received during your stay. We may use your personal contacts in the case of an emergency to contact you or one of your family members in cases of need. We hold and use your information to help you study and learn the chosen language, to check and to report on your progress, and to ensure your wellbeing. The information that we hold includes your contact information, class attendance, special educational needs, and any important medical information. We give important medical and dietary information to your homestay and to other staff members involved in taking care of your wellbeing. We will also give your contact information to homestay hosts and to other staff members. This is done to ensure your health and safety.

Please read the full privacy policy on our website <https://russian-academy.com/privacy-policy/>

USEFUL TIPS AND INFORMATION ABOUT RIGA AND LATVIA

RIGA MAP

You can get a map of Riga when you arrive at the academy on your first day. In case you'd like to know Riga's geography before your arrival, you can find a map of Riga on the following websites:

<http://www.riga-life.com/map/map.php>, www.maps.google.com

Russian Language Academy Durbe can be found on **Raina bulvaris 31, Riga.**

TRAVEL WITHIN RIGA

If you come to Riga by plane, you can get to/from the airport by the № 22 bus or by taxi. With the help of a convenient public transportation system, it is easy to access different parts of Riga quickly and stress free. Our academy is easily accessible by buses, trolleybuses, trams and taxi bus routes. The cost of a single journey by bus, trolleybus or tram is 1.15 EUR. Passengers can acquire one way ticket on public transport from the driver for 2 EUR. Tickets for several trips can be bought in any local kiosks, usually from "Narvesen". For example, you can buy a 5-trip-ticket for 5.75 EUR, 10-trip for 10.90 EUR or 20-trip one for 20.70 EUR. In case you are planning to stay in Riga for a longer period of time, it is advisable to buy monthly tickets which are valid for one month from the first registration day. A monthly ticket valid for one specific route costs 30.00 EUR. For more information on Riga's public transport system, please visit the following website: <https://www.rigassatiksmelv/en/>

If you're staying in the outskirts of Riga, you can get access to the center by train. Latvia's railway system includes routes from Riga to all other major towns in the country. The central railway terminal is located at Stacijas Laukums: <http://www.ldz.lv/en> or <http://www.pv.lv/en/> .

You may make use of **rent-a-car** services in Riga. Car rental rates are from 40 EUR per day. <http://www.avis.lv> or <http://www.carrent.lv>

You can use a **taxi service** as well. Cost per 1 km is about 0,70 EUR.

<http://redcab.lv> / www.baltictaxi.lv

JURMALA

The city of Jurmala is known for having one of the greatest beaches in Europe. It was once a summer resort for members of the Russian Czarist Family and nowadays it remains popular among tourists from Russia. Jurmala has smooth white sandy beaches and a very beautiful environment: pine forests, small cafes and narrow romantic streets. Make sure to include it in your "to-visit" list!

CLIMATE

In Latvia, there is a moderate climate with considerable variations in temperature. The summers are warm, but the winter lasts from November till mid-March can be very cold, which does not necessary mean there's a lot of snow on Christmas. The weather in autumn and spring is relatively mild. Snowfall is common in January and February. Average temperatures: July +18C, February -5C. Usually summers are quite warm to enjoy them at the seaside in Jurmala. +27C in July and August can be quite common.

MONEY

The national currency is the Euro. 1 Euro equals 100 cents. Dollars are not accepted as a form of payment in stores and restaurants. You can convert your currency either in banks or numerous exchange points (called "Valūtas maiņa"). The banking system is well developed. Most banks, hotels, restaurants and shops accept Eurocard, MasterCard, Visa, JCB, Diner's Club and American Express. We strongly advise our students to bring smartcards with chips, as cards with only magnetic stripes are not accepted in Latvia.

The most popular banks in Riga are Swedbank, Citadele, SEB Bank and Nordea. It's not a problem for a foreigner to open a bank account. All over Riga, there are dozens of ATM machines, even in provincial centers. The closest ATMs to RLA Durbe are located in the Origo Shopping Centre across the street from the academy.

In case you have a 200 EUR bill and no shop accepts it, you can exchange it for smaller banknotes in one of the "Narvesen" kiosks. The closest one to the academy is on the left side from the entrance, on the corner of Marijas street and Raina bulvaris. www.bank.lv / www.swedbank.lv

RESTAURANTS

The large number of cafes and restaurants in the city that will satisfy every visitor's taste and desires. The people in Riga most often arrange rendezvous at the Laima clock, and then they head off to Old Riga, where you can find the largest number of cafes and restaurants, with cuisines from different countries in the world. You can enjoy traditional Russian cuisine in numerous Russian restaurants. The most famous are "Pelmeni XL" – good price value, "Krievu Sēta", "Traktieris" and "Uncle Vanya". If you want to taste Latvian cuisine, a chain of restaurants under the "Lido" brand name is the best suggestion. In the city centre and out along the river, these restaurants are the ones where employees wear stylized folk costumes and offer modern interpretations of traditional Latvian cuisine.

If you'd like to try something other than the local food, there are a lot of international restaurants in Riga. Many of them offer a home delivery for sandwiches, pizzas or more exotic food. Kiosk "Narvesen", cafeterias "CoffeeInn" and "Double Coffee" make really good take away coffee. Information about restaurants in Riga: www.rigathisweek.lv / www.liveriga.lv / www.1188.lv

THEATRES

It is no accident that Riga's theatrical troupes often leave the capital city and are often invited to travel outside of the capital city to offer their art both in Latvia and beyond its borders.

The Riga Russian Drama Theatre, located in the Old Town (7 minutes away from the academy), is the oldest professional theatre in Latvia. In 2013, the theatre turned 130 years. Thanks to the artful conduction, strong actor's ensemble and thoughtfully created repertoire, the Riga Russian Drama Theatre is one of the best theatres in Latvia's capital city.

Latvians love and respect their National Theatre, which is housed in the building where the country's independence was proclaimed in 1918. The Daile Theatre is also highly respected. New York has Broadway and off-Broadway performances, and similarly, Riga has its "major" theatres and a significant number of independent or amateur troupes.

www.trd.lv / www.dailesteatris.lv / www.opera.lv / www.teatr.lv

CONCERT HALLS

What can be more beautiful than the sound of classical music? The globally renowned pipe organ in the Dome Cathedral is magnificent. Or perhaps you prefer chamber music performances for smaller audiences? Maybe you favor choral music or stage arts?

Riga is the true capital of culture and the arts in the Baltic region. There is the widest possible repertoire for every taste, every mood and every leisure requirement offered.

For information about concerts of Russian and world-known pop stars bands visit:

www.bilesuserviss.lv / www.liveriga.lv / www.meeting.lv / www.rigathisweek.lv

SPORT AND FITNESS CLUBS

We have plenty of sports clubs, dance activities and pools in Riga. Probably you'd like to go to a sport club that is close by your accommodation. Our social activity manager will be happy to advise you a sport club in your area. Fitness clubs that are closest to the academy are: "Sporta Klubs Centrs" on Audeju Street 16 and "City Fitness" on Marijas Street 13/8.

Two of the most popular pools among students: www.baseins.lv, www.peldet.lv.

MOBILE PHONES AND OPERATORS

In Latvia there are 3 main mobile phone operators: LMT, Bite and TELE-2. In the Shopping Centre Origo close to RLA Durbe, there are branches of all these companies, as well as in tunnel B, where it's possible to buy a cheap mobile phone. www.bite.lv, www.lmt.lv, www.tele2.lv.

SHOPPING

Riga is a paradise for fashionistas! We have a lot of modern and spacious shopping centers in an accessible distance from the academy and other places in the city. To name a few of those: Galerija Centrs, STOCKMANN, Mols etc. Each shopping centre differs from the others by offering specific goods or unique shops and trademarks. For more information about shopping centers please visit:

www.alfaparks.lv/en, www.galerijacentrs.lv/en/, www.galleriariga.lv/en.

GROCERY STORES

For everyday needs we advise you to shop in Latvia's most popular grocery stores like "Rimi" or "Maxima". They can be found in various shopping centers around Riga and Latvia.

COSMETICS

Latvians love nature and nature-inspired cosmetics are very popular here. We are proud of many famous and popular perfume and cosmetics manufacturers with more than 100 year of history! Try the fragrant perfume "Riga Lilac" from "Dzintars" to experience the charm of Latvia, relax in a bubble bath from "STENDERS" and explore Latvian nature through herbal creams and lotions made by "Madara Cosmetics". Detailed information available:

<https://www.stenders-cosmetics.com/>, <https://www.madaracosmetics.com/>, <http://dzintars.com/>

SPA AND HAIRDRESSING

You will be surprised at how many hairdressings salons you will find in Riga. The prices will be an additional benefit - in Latvia you can get a truly fabulous haircut for an average price of 20 EUR. Usually, hairdressing salons also offer cosmetologists' and manicurists' services. We've also got some smart barbershops, so don't worry that your gorgeous beard will overgrow while in Riga. There is also a great range of different spas, visit these links to find out more:

<http://www.kolonna.com/en/>, <http://www.espariga.lv/en/>, <http://jokerklubs.lv/en/>

You can find more useful information about lessons, Riga and your free time on the academy's info-boards and on RLA Durbe's website: www.russian-academy.com

If you have any questions or wishes about your free time and weekends, please contact us at iekaterina.celebija@durbe.edu.lv

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

General Emergency Number	112
Fire	112
Police	110
Ambulance	113
Medical clinic "Ars" with English-speaking personnel (therapist/dentist/ traumatologist etc)	
Address (15 mins from RLA Durbe): Skolas str. 5	+371 67201006 (http://ars-med.lv/en/)
Inquiries	188, 1189

WHAT TO BRING FROM LATVIA

The most popular - Riga's Black Balsam! *“Deliciously different, exceptionally smooth and velvety on the palate, it opens a whole world of sensations with its 24 ingredients/herbs”*. Balsam can be used as it is, on the rocks or mixed with schnapps, or warm, in tea, coffee or black currant juice.

Want something special? A special and unique **brown bread** is made of rye flour, only possible to taste and buy in Latvia. It is one of the healthiest kinds of bread due to many vitamins, minerals and fiber. It's delicious not only with the main meal, but also in deserts, yogurts and even ice cream!

Would you like to try a sweet cow? Enjoy our “cow” (in Latvian “Gotiņa”) - the most well-known sweets from Latvia are milk toffee candies. Another popular dainty from Latvia is **zephyr** (marshmallows) – made from natural, high quality apple puree, sometimes covered with chocolate. Zephyr made in Latvia is unique because there isn't anything like it in the rest of the world - Latvian candy masters created it.

Enjoy the sensual “Garden of Feelings”! One of the most popular and world known brands, “Stenders” produces cosmetics which combines the power of nature with a modern lifestyle. Treat yourself to chocolate, milk, lavender or even gold, which are widely used in “Stenders” products

Keep warm! Knitwear in Latvia is widespread. Knitted socks and mittens are so beautiful, rich with colorful patterns and very warm. Even if you come from a country “far away from frost” – it's difficult to keep away from such a colourful souvenir!



We are looking forward to seeing you in Riga!