

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS**ASSESSMENT REPORT****HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: TALLINN HEALTH CARE COLLEGE**

STUDY PROGRAMME GROUP	Health care
ACADEMIC CYCLE	Master's studies
STUDY PROGRAMME	Health Sciences (Nurse-Specialist)

COMPOSITION OF ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE:

Ruud Heijnen – Chair; Zuyd University of Applied Sciences (Zuyd Hogeschool) in Heerlen, Faculty of Health. Coordinator of international cooperation for the faculty of health; Program coordinator for the master program Advanced Health Care (in development); National and international auditor for health care Education, the Netherlands

Josette Denekens – Emeritus Professor in General Practice, Head of the Department of General Practice, former Vice Rector at the University of Antwerp, Belgium

Margus Viigimaa – Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine, Director of the Institute of Cardiovascular Medicine, Tallinn University of Technology; Head of the Centre of Cardiology, North Estonia Medical Centre, Estonia

Samin Sedghi Zadeh – student member; Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, University of Turin, Italy

PERIOD OF EVALUATION: January – April 2018

DATE ASSESSMENT REPORT SENT TO INSTITUTION UNDER EVALUATION: 19 March 2018

DATE COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM INSTITUTION UNDER EVALUATION: 24 March 2018

ASSESSMENT BY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE: THE QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION PARTIALLY CONFORMS TO A REQUIRED STANDARD

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS**Comments:**

The Master in Health Sciences (Nurse–Specialist) of Tallinn Health Care College complies with the requirements and standards of Master level studies and the quality of studies provided in chapter 6 of the Standard of Higher Education and with the level 7 of the European Quality Framework.

There is clearly a need and wide support for opening the Master level studies in Nurse–Specialist.

After the assessment and the preparatory work, the Committee is convinced that the Master of Nurse –Specialist will lead to high level educated nurses needed for the labour market in the health care system in the near future and to provide a body of research for the profession of nursing. The study programme will contribute to fulfilment of the mission of the educational institutions and will achieve its objectives. Employers and other stakeholders are involved in the study programme development.

Beyond that, this Master programme should deliver nurses with competences regarding leadership, change management, innovation in health care and in research. The Committee holds the opinion that these roles should be made more explicit in the learning outcomes, and that teaching and learning activities activate these roles. Especially the role of the ‘collaborator’ should be further elaborated. In this respect the question arises whether the title ‘Master Nurse–Specialist’ is the best fitting title. There is an opportunity to open this Master also for other professionals like physiotherapists, social workers, occupational therapists, etc.

There is an excellent body of teachers to launch and deliver the programme. There are several teachers with PhD degree and several others are involved in PhD studies. There is collaboration with the University of Tartu to guarantee as much opportunities as possible to do research for the teachers and to involve students in research. The Committee is worried that the total amount of FTE of teachers might not be enough to cover all the teaching and coaching activities in the Master programme next to the regular programmes.

The available infrastructure is outstanding.

The financial resources are sufficient according to the rector and vice rectors.

To further develop the programme, the College should consider the recommendations below:

- manifest your unique profile to society; international comparison should support this fundament.
- intensify your partnership with Tartu Health Care College and other Estonian Universities to increase the availability of experts;
- consider a Master in Health Sciences that is open for wide range of health care professionals. An interdisciplinary Master will respond even better to the needs of the health care system in the future;
- Intensify your international contacts to obtain more insight in international evolutions in the field of education in health sciences, to get more

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS

opportunities to take the lead in the developments and innovations for your health care system;

- consider part time delivery of the study programme;
- more consideration should be given to additional support (extra staff, at least 2 FTE) to guarantee sufficient supervisors for the developmental plans and the master examination/master thesis.

ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

Ruud Heijnen – Chair; Zuyd University of applied sciences in Heerlen, Faculty of Health. Coordinator of international cooperation for the faculty of health; Program coordinator for the master program Advanced Health Care (in development); National and international auditor for health care Education, the Netherlands

Josette Denekens – Emeritus Professor in General Practice, Head of the Department of General Practice, former Vice Rector at the University of Antwerp, Belgium

Margus Viigimaa – Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine, Director of the Institute of Cardiovascular Medicine, Tallinn University of Technology; Head of the Centre of Cardiology, North Estonia Medical Centre, Estonia

Samin Sedghi Zadeh – student member; Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, University of Turin, Italy

APPROVED THE ASSESSMENT 4 VOTES IN FAVOUR AND 0 VOTES AGAINST:

ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR: Ruud Heijnen, 27.03.2018

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS**REQUIREMENTS FOR QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION****1. Study Programme and Organisation of Studies**

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GATHERED	COMMENTS
<p>The study programme is based on the needs of the labour market and target groups, and contributes to fulfilling the mission of the educational institution and achieving its objectives.</p>	<p>Study programme; the development plan of the educational institution, development plans of specific fields and structural units; discussions with the management of the College, with the developers of the programme and with the employers and representatives of cooperation partners</p>	<p>Improving the availability of nursing and midwifery services is one of the primary goals of the “Estonian Nursing and Midwifery Development Strategy for 2011-2022” composed in 2011 by the Estonian Nurses Union and Estonian Midwives Association.</p> <p>The Strategy 2011-2022 emphasises also the need for active research in advancement of evidence-based nursing and to focus on systematic research and development.</p> <p>The proposed programme “Health Sciences (Nurse-Specialist)” is definitely based on the needs of the labour market. This is strongly confirmed by the representatives of the employers. Nurse specialists as known from the previous existing specialization programmes do not have enough competencies to be a change leader in research-based development projects. This is very much needed in the Estonian health care these days.</p> <p>A survey carried out in 2016 among graduates of nursing specialisation shows that the professional responsibility of the nurses is increasing in the field: 48 % are involved in teaching and 44% are involved in innovation of the professional field.</p> <p>A survey was also carried out in 2015 among hospital nurse managers. This survey reveals that nurse specialists are needed in the future in conducting independent nurse appointments to obtain improvement of service availability for patients, especially for patients with chronic</p>

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS

		<p>diseases.</p> <p>Also for the primary level health care centres, there will be more demand for nurse specialists in the future according to the OSKA health care report of 2017.</p> <p>Other sectors with more demand in the future are the independent stationary nursing services and the emergency medical services.</p> <p>A survey among graduates of nursing specialisation confirms the interest towards more in-depth specialisation studies for nurses with 73% of respondents finding that specialised nursing should be taught at a Master’s level.</p>
<p>Employers and other stakeholders of the study programme group are involved in the study programme development.</p>	<p>Study programme; the development plan of the educational institution, development plans of specific fields and structural units; discussions with the management of the College, with the developers of the program and with the employers and representatives of the partners</p>	<p>The Master of Science programme was developed in cooperation with Tallinn and Tartu Health Care Colleges, University of Tartu, Estonian Nurses Union, employers and graduates.</p> <p>A joint board was formed including representatives of these institutes. During the development, all partners have been actively involved and informed; this will also be the case the upcoming years.</p> <p>The demand for Master’s programme in health science for educating nurses has been approved by nurse managers of Estonian Health care establishments, Estonian Nurses Union and representatives of the Ministry of Social Affairs, and representatives of these institutes agree on the content and organisation of the programme.</p> <p>The employers and stakeholders not only ask for nurse specialists, but also for health professionals with competencies regarding leadership, innovations, collaboration and change management.</p>

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS

<p>The title of the study programme is consistent with its content.</p>	<p>Study programme</p>	<p>The title of the programme appears to be controversial. The “MSc in HEALTH SCIENCES” gives the impression of a broad, inter-professional based program, whereas the actual design focuses on the Specialization of Nurses on a scientific basis.</p> <p>A critical remark is that the core value of Master’s level in Nursing is seen by many as being competent in initiating and leading changes on a scientific basis in contemporary health care. This should be more visible and explicitly addressed. In addition, inter-professional cooperation is one of the underlying competency areas and should also be more intensively approached. A clear description of the main objectives, leading to a profile of the graduates is lacking. International comparison should support this fundament.</p> <p>In the profession, the nurses work in inter-professional teams and especially the training in these inter-professional teams will be a great challenge in the future to be competent to implement innovations in the health care system.</p> <p>Thus, the profile of this master graduate can be/should be broader in the opinion of the Committee. In that respect, the title ‘Master in Health Sciences’ is perhaps a better choice and opens the possibility for masters in physiotherapy, social care, etc. and not only masters in nursing specialists.</p>
<p>The objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme are formulated in such a way that they provide a basis for evaluating the knowledge and skills of graduates of that study programme.</p>	<p>Study programme documentation: Development Plan; Curriculum description; examples of modules; discussions with the developers of the programme and teaching staff</p>	<p>The study programme consists of 90 ECTS, divided over 3 semesters. The curriculum contains 3 modules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - development of profession and management 30ECTS - Speciality module 45 ECTS (to choose from clinical nursing, intensive care nursing, mental health nursing and health nursing. In every module there is 15 ECTS for internship - Master’s degree examination 15 ECTS

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS

		<p>The learning outcomes are clear, though they are formulated very broadly and not as competencies. It is recommended to the College to revise the learning outcomes and reformulate them in such a way that the intended level of knowledge, skills and behaviour is very clear and in line with the professional status.</p> <p>A summary of all the learning outcomes of all parts of the programme should be in line with the general aims (core values of the programme). The worldwide well-known and often used CANMEDS-model could be helpful in this process.</p>
--	--	---

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS

<p>The objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme are equal and comparable to the learning outcomes of the academic cycles of higher education as described in Annex 1 to the Standard of Higher Education.</p>	<p>Study programme; Annex 1 to the Standard of Higher Education; the analysis by the educational institution on the compatibility of learning outcomes with the Standard of Higher Education.</p>	<p>The learning outcomes are very broadly defined; perhaps they should be rewritten as competences with active verbs as in some cases has been done.</p> <p>The higher levels of competences (as described by Bloom) must be reached, leading to an integration of knowledge and skills in the appropriate behaviour, for example: 'be able to', 'providing adequate care', 'use thorough 'clinical knowledge,' 'is able to give advice', 'contributes to', 'use', 'applies', 'compares', 'assessed develops', 'realise', 'makes', etc.</p> <p>The coherence between the programme objectives and the learning outcomes of all the modules and other activities related to the programme should be very transparent. For example, inter-professional cooperation is an important competency to be achieved but insufficiently visible in the learning outcomes and in the content of the modules.</p> <p>The final assessment in the programme is not assessed by a master thesis but by a combination of a development programme and a presentation of a critical analysis of a research report. This issue is often discussed in the development of the programme and well elaborated. The Committee thinks the way research competencies are assessed shows a good alternative for a thesis and the graduate really meets the required standards of level 7. Tallinn HCC is active in incorporating external and even international examiners, though there is still a way to go regarding this aim.</p> <p>Clinical practice is an important part of the programme. The objectives of the clinical practice modules are in line with the theoretical part. The learning outcomes are formulated in an integrated way and reflect the competencies of a nurse working in practice at a Master's level. In close collaboration with clinical supervisors, research questions are formulated based on a need for innovative developments on the work floor.</p>
--	---	--

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS

<p>Forms of study and student workload for independent work and practical training support the achievement of objectives of the study programme.</p>	<p>Study programme; additional information obtained during the site visit</p>	<p>The assessment methods give evidence to assure that effective learning has taken place. The learning outcomes all appear to encourage independent and autonomous learning.</p> <p>The master examination module is well constructed and meets the requirements of Estonian legislation. Grading is clearly stated in the course documentation.</p> <p>The Committee finds it a pity that there is not a master thesis done by each student and hopes that in the future the master examination will be replaced by doing research by the students themselves in the form of an individual master thesis. In this respect more consideration should be given to additional support from university in order to guarantee sufficient research topics and to provide sufficient supervisors for the developmental plan and the master examination/master thesis.</p> <p>The management started to select and prepare the learning environments for the internships in the different workplaces and is making agreements with the supervisors at the different workplaces.</p> <p>The recommendations of the assessment report of 2016 shows that there is a need for external examiners to obtain parity in marking. In this respect there is an urgent need to do the master examination in English. This also applies for the developmental plan that has to be made by the students.</p> <p>More international teachers should be involved in the teaching and learning activities and especially in the processes of assessment.</p> <p>More attention should be paid to the proficiency in academic English of the students. It could be necessary to give a course in academic writing to ensure that students are sufficiently proficient in writing in English.</p> <p>The delivery of a part time form of the study should be considered as this would probably encourage and enable more applicants to start this Master programme</p>
--	---	--

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS

<p>The study programme meets the requirements and trends in international legislation that regulates the professional field and, if a professional standard exists, takes into consideration the acquisition and implementation of the knowledge and skills described therein. In professional higher education, study programmes of a study programme group are related to a specific vocation.</p>	<p>Study programme; international legislation regulating the corresponding professional field.</p>	<p>The study programme meets the requirements and trends in international legislation that regulates the professional field of nursing. The document of the master programme in Health Sciences (nurse-specialist) gives an overview of the different documents supporting the curriculum (Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act, Framework requirements for nurse, development plan for nursing education, Principles of nurses' specialist training, Statutes of Tallinn Health Care Colleges, Strategic plan for Nursing and Midwifery in Estonia, Code of Ethics of international Council of Nurses for Nurses, developmental trends of Estonian Health Care until 2020, Population Health development plan, 2009-2020, Estonian Life Long Learning Strategy 2020, Directive of European Parliament and Council 2005/36/EU, recognition of professional qualifications, 7.09.2005)</p>
<p>The master degree programme of an institution of professional higher education is developed as a continuation of the study programme of professional higher education in the same field of study.</p>	<p>Study programme</p>	<p>To enter the master a bachelor of nursing is required. The question is raised to broaden the entrance for other professionals and to create an inter-professional master (including a broader offer of speciality modules). Master's programme is actually a fluent continuation of the Basic Nursing Education programme at the professional higher education level in Tallinn HCC.</p>
<p>The organisation of studies is regulated and takes into consideration the specifics of the study programme group; recognition of prior learning and work experiences is regulated as well.</p>	<p>The document regulating the organisation of studies and the policy for recognising prior learning and work experiences; specific examples of recognising prior learning and work experiences at the educational institution obtained during the site visit</p>	<p>The study regulations constitute the document regulating the organisation and relationships of students at Tallinn Health Care College, the Republic of Estonia and the European Union.</p> <p>Recognition of prior learning and work experiences is regulated and quality is assured by following the quality requirements of studies at the College.</p>
<p>The organisation of practical training is clearly regulated, the requirements for implementing practical training are</p>	<p>Regulations for practical training; preliminary agreements with practical training facilities</p>	<p>The organisation of practical training is clearly regulated; the requirements for implementing practical training are determined and preliminary agreements with practical training facilities are in place.</p>

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS

determined, and preliminary agreements with practical training facilities are in place.		<p>Negotiations with institutions (hospitals, primary care setting, prevention settings, etc.) are running.</p> <p>In the quality manual the process of organisation of practical training is well described.</p> <p>Students will be working on assignments derived from actual and relevant issues. This implies that students in this way are trained to recognize and examine practical issues and handle them in a kind of development project. The learning outcomes, place and supervising lecturers are arranged according to the possibilities. No issues are foreseen from any side.</p> <p>The evaluation and feedback is thoroughly described in the quality manual, where there is a strong voice for the practical supervisor(s) of the student – responsibility for the assessment grade, however, remains with the College.</p>
Students are provided with counselling (study, career, and psychological counselling).	Information gathered during the site visit	Students are provided with counselling. There are trained and qualified Student Advisors who council students regarding study organisation related issues (problems, questions). If necessary the Student Advisors refer to the Curriculum Coordinator, the psychologist or another specialist to get help. According to the different discussion groups the system works very well.

2. Teaching Staff

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GATHERED	COMMENTS
Qualifications of the teaching and research staffs involved meet the requirements established in legislation as well as those arising from the specifics of a study programme group	Information about the teaching staff involved; agreements with the members of the teaching staff	The qualifications of the academic staff members involved in the Master's program show 13 (37,2%) having a PhD (where two of them are working full time) and 18 (51,4%) having a MSc degree and 4 (11,4%) of them have another level of higher education. The ratio PhD/MSc will grow, thanks to an active policy to give more staff

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS

<p>and the academic cycle of higher education. The educational institution has entered into binding contracts with its teaching staff to conduct studies.</p>		<p>members the opportunity to do a PhD programme. The College gives real support to those teachers who are capable and motivated to start PhD studies.</p> <p>The staff members involved in the Master's programme are mainly (almost completely) recruited from the team of teachers of the nursing department. Some external expert teachers are added, coming from regional and local institutes and from Tartu HCC and the University of Tartu. The staff members all have detailed contracts with the college including a specification of the involvements in the Master's programme. All external staff members have individual agreements/contracts. The college strives to invite more and more international teachers – until now this is limited to some guest lecturers from Finland.</p>
<p>The level and extent of research and development by the teaching and research staffs involved are adequate to teach in the corresponding academic cycle of higher education and to supervise student research.</p>	<p>Information about research and development activities by the teaching staff (the Estonian Research Information System ETIS, additional information provided by the educational institution)</p>	<p>The department is involved in many research studies, all of them in combination with a development project. An overview of current research projects shows that 19 projects are running; some of these are together with international partners. Many of the teachers planned to be involved in the Master's programme have contributed to these studies.</p> <p>Involved staff members have realized a number of publications.</p>
<p>The teaching staff involved have an adequate teaching competency.</p>	<p>Discussion with the programme leaders and developers and with the teaching staff</p>	<p>Teaching in the Master's programme is strongly based on cases. These cases are either derived from clinical practice and brought to the College by the students, or carefully designed by the teachers. Anyway, all learning activities are closely related to the reality.</p>
<p>The number of members of ordinary teaching and research staffs involved – based on their responsibilities, workload, and the number of supervised students – is adequate for achieving the</p>	<p>Information about qualifications as well as research and development activities of the teaching staff involved</p>	<p>The team consists of 35 of staff members and only 11 of them are working full time. The others mostly have an authorisation agreement. The total staff will be expanded during the upcoming academic year with 5 full time equivalents (FTE). Approximately 5 FTE are allocated for running the Master's programme, based on a group of 60 students starting in</p>

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS

objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme(s) in a given study programme group.		<p>September 2018. Next to that, practice supervisors will be connected to the College.</p> <p>The Committee is worried that the total amount of FTE of full time teachers might not be enough to cover all the teaching and coaching activities in the Master programme next to the regular programmes</p> <p>The capacity of the College to find clinical placements and adequate supervisors is sufficient, according to the managers and to the employers.</p>
The teaching staff involved are aware of the objectives of the study programme and their roles in achieving them.	Discussion with the teachers, with the programme developers and with the management	<p>In all discussions it was stated that the main objective for the new Master's programme is described as "high level educated health workers who are able to lead new research-based developments".</p> <p>The whole team is informed of and supports the plan.</p> <p>Many discussions were organized throughout the development process. The teachers involved in the Master's programme have intensively discussed the content of the programme and the didactical approach.</p> <p>The generic outcomes of the study programme however need further elaboration and discussion in the group. Not everyone is aware of the fact that competency areas such as leadership, change management, inter-professional collaboration are explicitly targeted. The objectives related to research and the specialization are all well addressed, but "new" competency areas seem to be covered too much (it was mentioned as "hidden" curriculum).</p>
The ordinary teaching and research staffs of the educational institution have undergone the required evaluation. The educational institution provides its teaching staff with opportunities for their professional and individual development.	The procedure for evaluation; additional information obtained during the site visit	Staff evaluation is part of the standard quality assurance system of the Tallinn Health Care College.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS**OVERALL ASSESSMENT BY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE OF THE TEACHING STAFF (AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT):**

- The staff is well motivated.
- The staff is well-equipped to execute the programme and to reach the intended learning outcomes.
- The Committee is worried that the total amount of FTE of full time teachers might not be enough to cover all the teaching and coaching activities in the Master programme next to the regular programmes.
- The profile of the graduates of this new programme should be further elaborated and be recognized and shared by all staff members.
- Competency areas related to innovations in health care (e.g. leadership skills, change management) should be further elaborated and more explicitly brought to the attention of the students.

3. Resources

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GATHERED	COMMENTS
The educational institution ensures that financial resources necessary for conducting studies are available and prepares a strategy for acquiring them (prepares risk analyses and financial forecasts that include a calculation of the cost of a student place, takes into account the risks arising from the operational environment, and uses other appropriate measures to ensure the resources).	Tangible resources and financial information of the educational institution, and the information about the infrastructure of the study programme group; the risk analysis and financial projection	Financial resources necessary for conducting studies are available. The Ministry of Education and Research is providing funds to the College. The employers expressed the willingness to support students. However, the sustainability of financial resources necessary for conducting the programme must be ensured.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS

<p>There are facilities (lecture halls, laboratories, seminar rooms, rooms for students' independent work) necessary for educational activities, as well as for research and development related to doctoral studies, which are furnished and equipped adequately and are up to date to achieve the objectives of study programmes; or there are specific existing financial decisions/ projects to finance the additional needs.</p>	<p>Tangible resources and financial information of the educational institution, and the information about the infrastructure of the study programme group</p>	<p>All necessary rooms and infrastructure for study, research and developmental activities are in place. Rooms of the study building (lecture and seminar rooms, skills labs, staff rooms, the library etc.) support effectively educational and research activities, enabling the use of various study methods and independent learning of students. There are rooms equipped with computers for individual or small group tutoring. Simulation room are suitably equipped and used by students with supervisors.</p>
<p>Means of information technology and communications between national and international communication networks – needed for educational activities as well as for research and development related to doctoral studies – are available.</p>	<p>Tangible resources and financial information of the educational institution, and the information about the infrastructure of the study programme group</p>	<p>Lecture and seminar rooms are equipped with modern technical devices (computer, video projector, document camera and smart board). Teachers are using equipment of the rooms in order to achieve the learning outcomes most efficiently. For conducting lectures to big student groups there is a large auditorium for 200 students.</p>
<p>The educational institution ensures that up-to-date information sources (including data bases) needed for teaching, learning and research in the study programme group are available.</p>	<p>Information about existing information sources (including data bases) and those to be acquired</p>	<p>Up-to-date information sources needed for teaching, learning and research in the study programme group are available. There are open library, information centre, computer stations and Wi-Fi available across the study building. Each staff member has a computer workstation.</p> <p>It is recommended to amend up-to-date online information sources (including data bases) in order to improve research opportunities for students and staff.</p>
<p>Financial indicators regarding economic sustainability of the educational institution are available to the general public. Annual reports of the educational institution or its organising body are</p>	<p>The annual report</p>	<p>Financial indicators regarding economic sustainability of the educational institution are available to the public. Annual reports are audited.</p>

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS

audited, unless otherwise established by law. This requirement does not apply to new educational institutions.		
--	--	--