



ESTONIAN QUALITY AGENCY
FOR HIGHER AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Report on Quality Assessment of Study Programme Group of Social Services

Tallinn University

2020

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. General information about Tallinn University and the study programme group of Social Services	4
3. Main changes based on recommendations of the last quality assessment of the study programme group of Social Services	9
4. Summary of general findings and recommendations at the study programme group level	11
5. Strengths and recommendations for improvement of study programmes by assessment areas	13
5.1 Study programme and study programme development	13
5.2 Resources	18
5.3 Teaching and learning	21
5.4 Teaching staff	27
5.5 Students	30

1. Introduction

Quality assessment of study programme groups on first and second cycles of higher education

Quality assessment of a study programme group involves the assessment of the conformity of study programmes and the studies and development activities that take place on their basis to legislation, national and international standards and developmental directions with the purpose of providing recommendations to improve the quality of studies.

The goal of quality assessment of a study programme group is supporting the internal evaluation and self-development of the institution of higher education. Quality assessment of study programme groups is not followed by sanctions: expert assessments should be considered recommendations.

Quality assessment of a study programme group takes place at least once every 7 years based on the regulation approved by EKKA Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education “Quality Assessment of Study Programme Groups in the First and Second Cycles of Higher Education”.

The aim of the expert panel was the evaluation of the **Study Programme Group (SPG) of Social Services at Tallinn University**.

The panel was asked to assess the conformity of the study programmes belonging to the study programme group and the instruction provided on the basis thereof to legislation and to national and international standards and/or recommendations, including the assessment of the level of the corresponding theoretical and practical instruction, the research and pedagogical qualification of the teaching staff and research staff, and the sufficiency of resources for the provision of instruction.

The assessment took place in April 2020. The Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (EKKA) formed an international expert panel. **The following persons formed the expert panel:**

Kerstin Svensson <i>Chair</i>	Professor in Social Work, Lund University (Sweden)
Juha Nieminen	University Teacher (Youth research and Youth work), Tampere University (Finland)
Lowis Charfe	Senior Lecturer in Social Work, University of Central Lancashire (United Kingdom)
Gerlin Gil	Student, Tallinn University of Technology; Chairman of Student Body; Project Manager, TalTech Development Fund (Estonia)
Rudi Roose	Associate Professor of social work, Ghent University (Belgium)
Miriam Teuma	Chief Executive Officer, Agenzija Zghazagh, Director General for Youth in Malta; Lecturer at the University of Malta (Malta)
Epp Reedik	Education and Youth Authority (Estonia)
Guido Van Hal	Professor and Research Leader at the Research Group on ‘Social Epidemiology and Health Policy’ in the Department of Epidemiology and Social Medicine, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Antwerp (Belgium)

Assessment process

The assessment process was coordinated by Ms Tiia Bach (EKKA).

After the preparation phase, the work of the expert panel in Estonia started on Monday, September, 28, 2020, with an introduction to the Higher Education System as well as the assessment procedure by EKKA, the Estonian Quality assurance organization for higher and vocational education. The members of the panel met online also Monday October 5, agreed the overall questions and areas to discuss with different groups at Tallinn University. The distribution of tasks between the members of the panel was organised and the detailed schedule of the site visit agreed.

During the next two days – Tuesday 6 and Wednesday 7 October – meetings were held with the representatives of Tallinn University.

On Thursday, October 8, the panel held a meeting, during which both the structure of the final report was agreed and findings of panel were compiled in a first draft of the assessment report. This work was executed in a cooperative way and the members of the panel intensively discussed their individual views on the relevant topics.

In the following sections of the report, the expert panel summarise their general findings, conclusions and recommendations which are relevant across the whole SPG. The panel provides an external and objective perspective on the programmes and the contexts within which they are delivered. The intention is to provide constructive comment and critique which may form the basis upon which improvements in the quality of the programmes may be achieved.

Tallinn University provided some explanations and comments on the preliminary report of the panel. When finalizing the assessment report, the panel took into consideration comments made by the university and made some adjustments in the final report. The panel submitted the final report to EKKA on 21.12.2020.

Impressions of the institution, self-assessment report and the site-visit

Due to the situation with COVID-19, most of the assessment has been managed online. We have had very good support from Tallinn University and we have been given access to online material, films from the facilities etc. The Estonian members of the panel have participated in a tour of the facilities and they have also been on site for the interviews, whereas the international members have participated online. The online and mixed format has not been the ideal condition for the contact, but in the situation, the best conditions have been provided. All participants in the assessment process have been very helpful and interested in giving the information needed.

2. General information about Tallinn University and the study programme group of Social Services

Tallinn University (hereafter also referred to as *the University* or *TLU*) is the third largest public university in Estonia and focuses primarily on the fields of humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. TLU is a result of the merger of several higher education institutions (Tallinn Pedagogical University, Academy Nord, Estonian Institute of Humanities, Institute of History of the Estonian

Academy of Sciences, and the Academic Library of Estonia) into a single institution, which resulted in the founding of TLU as a public university on 18 March 2005. The chief milestones in the history of the university's predecessors and founders since 1919 can be found on the [TLU homepage](#).

In 2015, a significant structural and management reform took place. 26 existing then academic units were replaced by just 6 schools (Baltic Film, Media, Arts and Communication School; School of Humanities; School of Digital Technologies; School of Educational Sciences; School of Governance, Law and Society; School of Natural Sciences and Health), 1 regional college in Haapsalu, and the Academic Library. Also, 5 [Centres of Excellence](#) (e.g., CE in Behavioural and Neural Sciences, CE in Interdisciplinary Life-course Studies) and 6 [research centres](#) were established (e.g., Centre for Innovation in Education; Competence Centre in Health Promotion and Rehabilitation; Estonian Institute for Population Studies; Institute of International Social Studies).

The strategic development priorities are set out in the Tallinn University [Development Plan 2015–2020](#).

The strategic objective of TLU for 2015–2020 is to consolidate its activities into five focus fields:

- 1) educational innovation;
- 2) digital and media culture;
- 3) cultural competences;
- 4) healthy and sustainable lifestyle;
- 5) society and open governance.

From 2015, each focus field is represented by a separate school, while the School of Digital Technologies fulfils also a supporting role with digital technologies and analytics for all other schools.

TLU has currently about 7,100 students (10.6% of them international) and over 800 employees, including over 500 researchers and lecturers. The [university campus](#) is located mainly in the centre of Tallinn, you can make a virtual tour [here](#).

According to the Self-Assessment Report, the curricula of Social Services study programme group contribute to the development of our three focus areas- 1) healthy and sustainable lifestyle; 2) educational innovation and 3) society and open governance. The schools that carry out social services study programmes are **Haapsalu College (HC)**, **School of Educational Science (SES)** and **School of Governance, Law and Society (SOGOLAS)**.

Aggregate data about the study programme group

Table 1. Information about study programmes in the study programme group of Social Services

	School responsible for the programme	Study programme	Study level	Language of instruction	ECTS	Year of study programme launch	Study programme administrator
1	Haapsalu College	Health Promotion Specialist	PHE	Estonian	180	2008	H. Leek-Ambur
2	School of Educational Sciences	Youth work	PHE	Estonian	180	2012	T. Dibou
3	School of Educational Sciences	Youth work management	MA	Estonian	120	2015	I.- E. Rannala
4	School of Educational Sciences	Social Pedagogy	BA	Estonian	180	2008	R. Mikser
5	School of Governance, Law and Society	Social Pedagogy and Child Protection	MA	Estonian	120	2002	M. Leino
6	School of Governance, Law and Society	Social Work	BA	Estonian	180	2002	A. Tiko
7	School of Governance, Law and Society	Social Work	MA	Estonian	120	2002	M. Medar
8	School of Governance, Law and Society	Social Entrepreneurship	MA	English	120	2017	Z. Bugarszki

Source: Self-Assessment Report: Social Services Study Programme Group Evaluation

Table 2. Aggregate data about the study programme group

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of students, total	805	715	668	590
Admission, total	241	177	197	202
Drop-out, total	102	81	81	73
Graduation, total	183	173	174	130
Mobility (only long-term; No of outgoing/incoming students)	4/0	6/0	4/0	2/0

Source: Self-Assessment Report: Social Services Study Programme Group Evaluation

Aggregate data about study programmes

Table 3. Aggregate data about Health Promotion (PHE)

Health Promotion Specialist, PHE	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of Students	64	72	75	65
Admission	22	22	22	21
Dropout	4	5	9	4
Graduation	12	16	24	15
Percentage of students who completed their studies within a nominal period*	52%	57%	81%	82%
Mobility (outgoing/incoming students)	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0

*Calculation is based on the standard duration of SP + 1 year

Source: Self-Assessment Report: Social Services Study Programme Group Evaluation

Table 4. Aggregate data about Youth Work (PHE)

Youth work, PHE	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of students	145	123	103	78
Admission	39	27	29	27
Dropout	24	10	23	11
Graduation	27	39	31	19
Percentage of students who completed their studies during the nominal period*	35%	53%	48%	62%
Mobility (outgoing/incoming students)	3/0	2/0	1/0	2/0

*Calculation is based on the standard duration of SP + 1 year

Source: Self-Assessment Report: Social Services Study Programme Group Evaluation

Table 5. Aggregate data about Youth Work Management (MA)

Youth work management, MA	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of students	32	25	33	30
Admission	17	0	16	8
Dropout	3	9	1	4
Graduation	6	5	5	8
Percentage of students who completed their studies during the nominal period*	-	47%	47%	47%
Mobility (outgoing/incoming students)	0/0	1/0	1/0	0/0

*Calculation is based on the standard duration of SP + 1 year

Source: Self-Assessment Report: Social Services Study Programme Group Evaluation

Table 6. Aggregate data about the Social Pedagogy (BA)

Social Pedagogy, BA	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of students	61	46	27	21
Admission	20	0	0	15
Dropout	4	3	3	5
Graduation	13	16	18	0
Mobility (outgoing/incoming students)	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0

Source: Self-Assessment Report: Social Services Study Programme Group Evaluation

Table 7. Aggregate data about Social Pedagogy and Child Protection (MA)

Social pedagogy and child protection, MA	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of students	103	99	111	105
Admission	5	15	34	35
Dropout	10	9	12	14
Graduation	22	17	23	24
Percentage of students who completed their studies with a nominal period*	60%	40%	51%	51%
Mobility (outgoing/incoming students)	0/0	2/0	1/0	0/0

*Calculation is based on the standard duration of SP + 1 year

Source: Self-Assessment Report: Social Services Study Programme Group Evaluation

Table 8. Aggregate data about Social Work (BA)

Social work, BA	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of students	276	225	182	165
Admission	70	58	49	42
Dropout	43	29	14	20
Graduation	86	66	51	36
Percentage of students who complete their studies in the nominal period*	57%	63%	64%	61%
Mobility (outgoing/incoming students)	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0

*Calculation is based on the standard duration of SP + 1 year

Source: Self-Assessment Report: Social Services Study Programme Group Evaluation

Table 9. Aggregate data about Social Work (MA)

Social work, MA	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of students	120	123	124	106
Admission	35	33	33	34
Dropout	8	17	20	13
Graduation	17	14	22	17
Percentage of students who complete their studies in the nominal period*	60%	25%	46%	39%

Mobility (outgoing/incoming students)	1/0	0/0	0/0	0/0
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*Calculation is based on the standard duration of SP + 1 year

Source: *Self-Assessment Report: Social Services Study Programme Group Evaluation*

Table 10. Aggregate data about Social Entrepreneurship (MA)

Social Entrepreneurship, MA, ENG	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of students (of them foreign students)	-	-	13 (11)	20 (19)
Admission	-	-	13	20
Dropout	-	-	-	2
Graduation				11
Mobility (outgoing/incoming students)	-	-	0/0	0/0

Source: *Self-Assessment Report: Social Services Study Programme Group Evaluation*

3. Main changes based on recommendations of the last quality assessment of the study programme group of Social Services

In 2015, the study programme group of Social Services at Tallinn University was assessed by an international panel (the assessment report by the panel and assessment decision made by EKKA Quality Assessment Council for higher education can be found on [EKKA website](#)).

The recommendations given by the assessment panel in the quality assessment report in 2015 focussed on the need for the programmes to enhance their identity, internationalisation and interdisciplinarity. In this assessment we have noticed improvements in all these areas. Different aspects were brought up with each programme, and therefore we will address them separately.

For **Youth Work, professional higher education programme (PHE)**, the past quality assessment has been taken up very seriously and all recommendations have been worked upon with commitment.

- The curriculum is further developed to include a balance in theory and practice and the study programme is more coherent.
- The study programme has been aligned with the youth worker occupational qualification standard and the programme meets occupational qualification standards to reflect the vocational perspective. The study programme is coherent in its objectives, learning outcomes, content as well as support literature.
- The structure of the PHE programme and its courses have been changed and now each course has the theoretical framework and uses theoretical literature. The material covered in the study module “Foundations of youth work”, which is delivered during the first semester as an introductory module, is revisited in the next two semesters through a theoretical framework.
- One of the previous recommendations emphasises the strengthening of non-formal education in the curriculum and evidence from the interviews shows that the approach in the programme is very practical, including self-reflective practice, which the students use not only later on the job, but for life.
- The placement modules scaffold from one placement to the next and they are in a logical order in terms of content and level of requirements. More efforts to include the students in

the professional youth work community have been made. The research components have also been structured and clearly set. More lecturers are involved in teaching and learning, and their qualifications are much higher than in the past years.

- Efforts have been made to improve the mobility of both students and lecturers. The lecturers' mobility has been more successful than students' mobility. A number of guest lecturers both from Europe and beyond have been invited to the university; however, students' long-term mobility has not increased since the previous assessment.
- The support to students has been improved significantly. However, the issue of dropouts is of concern to all those involved. Several measures have been put in place to give support and flexibility to students, and these measures have helped to achieve positive results in the decrease of dropout rates in 2019. Yet, such results are to be further monitored to see if these will prevail in the coming years. All students interviewed expressed that those taking up this programme might not be aware of what youth work is exactly about and their expectations are different. Hence, this might be one reason for dropping out. A suggestion to work further with all the stakeholders on the recognition of youth work might improve further the situation.
- It is worth noting that a lot of effort has been made to develop Youth Work Master's Programme and this deserves recognition. PHE and MA programmes complement each other and scaffold coherently.

Health Promotion, professional higher education programme, has also improved in the areas mentioned by the previous assessment panel:

- The need for a clear concept and core of the study programme ("What is this programme about?") has been improved, so that there is a clear focus on nutrition counselling in the current curriculum on the one hand and that the focus on elderly people will be one of the future choices of the curriculum development.
- The internationalisation of the study programme has progressed. During the interviews, it was mentioned that an important input into study programme development came from the international Interreg project 'Aligning Professional Future-Orientated Training on Health Promotion to Boost Development and Economic Growth in Läänemaa and Helsinki-Uusimaa Regions (2016-2019), the so-called Health Promotion Programme, which could for a great deal give an answer to the recommendations mentioned in the previous evaluation report.

Social Work Bachelor's and Master's programmes have improved in the following areas:

- Teaching staff do now have international perspectives and career support that enhances their theoretical knowledge as well as teaching skills.
- The process of development of the curriculum is well connected to both feedback from students and in dialogue with stakeholders, which more evidently connects the education to the needs of the labour market.
- Teaching is well organised and the workload appears to be more even for the students now.

There are still some concerns about the relation between the BA and MA programme, where an overlap was seen in the previous assessment, which could be connected to the open admittance that we question in this assessment.

Social Pedagogy, Bachelor's programme, has developed in several areas:

- The programme is more clearly focussed on social pedagogy and has developed its teaching methods.
- Students and teachers have better access to digital learning tools and databases.
- The workload for both teachers and students is better monitored and more even.

- The international perspectives are better connected to the programme.

For **Social Pedagogics and Child Protection Master's programme**, questions remain concerning the open admittance to the programme (admission requirements are as follows: Bachelor's Degree, Diploma of Professional Higher Education or a corresponding qualification; passing of the admission examination, i.e., interview, candidate's CV and a letter of motivation), but improvements are seen in the following areas:

- Connection between social pedagogy and child protection through the realities in the labour market. Still, as a disciplinary issue, it is complicated to find a common theoretical rationale.
- The awareness of social pedagogy as a discipline is enhanced both among students and teaching staff. There needs to be more clarity between the role of a social pedagogue and a child protection worker.
- The international connection of the programme has improved by having more international literature, lecturers, etc.
- Staff have better connection to the fields of social pedagogy, child protection and have support through a career program.

4. Summary of general findings and recommendations at the study programme group level

The overall impression from this quality assessment of the Social Service Study Programme Group is positive. We have taken part of material that shows good structures and programmes well held together and we have met engaged and hardworking students, staff and managers as well as employers and stakeholders with great interest in the studies. In this first section, we highlight some of the general strengths and areas of improvement and recommendations, before we in the next section go into detail about each programme under the five central assessment areas.

Strengths

- The programmes are dynamic and open for continuous development in line with feedback from and dialogue with students, employers, and stakeholders.
- There has been a very positive development since the evaluation five years ago and new programmes have also been launched.
- The new career model puts an emphasis on the importance of teaching, includes mentoring and gives support for teachers to do research.
- The teachers are well anchored in their field of teaching.
- There is good access to digital tools and material for studies.
- All programmes are connected to practice through cooperation with teachers from practice, dialogue with future employers, stakeholders and the students' different field practices, projects etc. carried out in practice.
- The teaching and learning environment is supportive and teaching modules are planned for meeting the students' situation in the best way possible, for example as session learning.
- The students are highly motivated, enthusiastic and hard working.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The borders between the different programmes are not always explicit, neither are the different identities of each programme. This would be possible to develop both by enhancing the identity of each program and further the development between programmes. Teachers' need to discuss the core themes in each programme in order to have a solid ground in relation to the students.
- Although a study about the labour market has been conducted for the Health Promotion Specialist programme, the future labour market remains uncertain. Hence, it remains important to pay attention to the jobs of the graduates, especially regarding those students not finding study related jobs.
- Language is an issue for all programmes. There is good access to digital material, but it is mainly in English and students ask for material in Estonian as well as for having at least some study books that are not digital. The language issue has to be constantly considered in order to handle the need of Estonian as the everyday language in most programmes, English in international texts and cooperation. In addition to that there is also the need to include Russian as that will be needed in at least some of the students' future work. There is no quick fix or easy solution for this, it has to be constantly taken into consideration in the work and development so that resources in the proper language are used in each situation and that managers, teachers and students are supported in developing relevant language skills.
- Textbooks in Estonian is demanded from students, so that they in some study material easier can connect the knowledge to the Estonian life and situation.
- The mobility programmes offered for international exchange most often demand longer stays abroad that does not match most students' life situation with family, work, etc. Efforts could be made for finding new, creative ways of international exchange, as short term stays abroad and more online activities.
- There is a certain tension between the demands from the university and from the vocational practice. The students would benefit from having these two perspectives more explicitly elaborated during their studies in order to facilitate for them to develop a professional role based on higher education.
- Students point at varying levels of feedback depending on whether the teacher is based in the department or is external. However, when giving instructions to students during their studies and giving them feedback, teachers should preferably use similar principles; therefore it is important that also part-time and external teachers are guided by, for example the programme managers, to do so.
- There is a dilemma in having students who also work and take care of family. It is evident that the still high dropout rate is connected to the students' situation and this has to continue to be supported from the programmes. It is complicated to uphold the academic and professional demands under these preconditions, and therefore this issue needs continuous attention.
- The MA programmes have difficulties in reaching the standards of profound professional knowledge, especially in social pedagogy and social work. One of the reasons being that these are by definition generalist specialisations. But, as there is an open access to MA level, regardless of the disciplinary knowledge base from BA level, valuable time in the MA studies are used for themes that should have been preconditions for admittance. Thereby, the programmes cannot assure that the standards are met for all students. In practice, this is solved by most students having the proper background, but it is not the case for all students, why it is a problem that has to be solved.

- Field practice is an important part of these programmes but is in some of them far too short and unstructured. Placement in practice should be better integrated in the curricula, more developed for making it possible to actually practice (not only observe) and more thoroughly followed up by the teachers. This would help students to be able to reflect over practice as well over their own doing in practice, with support from research and literature.
- Teaching staff, and especially study programme managers, should have at least a basic proficiency in English, given the internationalization of educational programmes and the wide use of study material in English. The university is making changes to this in 2021 and this will be a positive move to support teaching staff and students.
- The admittance to the MA programmes has to be clarified in order to promote studies on MA level to provide profound professional knowledge.

5. Strengths and recommendations for improvement of study programmes by assessment areas

5.1 Study programme and study programme development

Standards

- ✓ The launch or development of the study programme is based on the Standard of Higher Education and other legislation, development plans, analyses (including labour market and feasibility analyses), and professional standards; and the best quality is being sought.
- ✓ The structure and content of modules and courses in a study programme support achievement of the objectives and designed learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ Different parts of the study programme form a coherent whole.
- ✓ The study programme includes practical training, the content and scope of which are based on the planned learning outcomes of the study programme.
- ✓ The study programme development takes into account feedback from students, employers, alumni and other stakeholders.

YOUTH WORK (PHE); YOUTH WORK MANAGEMENT (MA)

Evidence and analysis

The developments of the study programmes for both professional higher education (PHE) and MA considered the youth worker's occupational qualification standards, the Youth Field Development Plan (2014–2020), the Education Field Development Plan, the Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020, and OSKA report. A survey among Estonian youth workers and the feedback from students and alumni were also taken up to further develop the programme. For example, some modules have been added in English, the sequence of courses is made more logical, and the structure of the programmes are sessional and flexible now. The study programmes meet occupational qualification standards to reflect the vocational perspective. Since 2019, the PHE study programme is entitled to award the professional youth work qualification, level 6. The structure and content of modules and courses have been changed significantly and there are no elective specialisation modules anymore. More teaching staff has been introduced (academics as well as practitioners) and major subject areas are taught in a collaborative way. The programme has been reviewed to combine theory and practice.

In the meantime, the Master's Programme has been developed with outcomes which aim to achieve mainly: the shaping of the field of youth work; links with other subject fields; an understanding of the principles of management; innovations in the field of youth work at international, national, local and organisational level; and the principles of conducting research and its results in the field of youth work. This MA includes several international partners and projects. Since 2020, the Master's programme has been entitled to award the professional youth work qualification, level 7.

Interdisciplinary work has improved. The content of courses is now oriented towards different disciplines and learning materials, and lecturers from different disciplines collaborate in teaching.

Strengths

- The flexibility and sessional structure of the programmes help students' balance with work and study.
- The structures of the study programmes are well developed, and the students understand how the different years of the studies are interconnected.
- The programme development team is open for critique and feedback and has opened internationally.

Opportunities for further improvement

- The rationale for the choice of the background philosophies and frameworks for both PHE and MA (e.g., American positive youth development), as well as their applicability, can be further developed. Background philosophies and frameworks can be evaluated in the long term, for example when reviewing and reforming curricula.
- Systemisation of the PHE course is very well underway and well managed but more efforts can be done to further review courses to ensure that there is no duplication.
- The importance of youth work should be justified to policy makers. Upon graduation, students should be able to market youth work in society.
- Studies related to economics and administration of youth work can be strengthened in the Master's programme.

HEALTH PROMOTION SPECIALIST (PHE)

Evidence and analysis

The Health Promotion Specialist Study Programme is coherent and fulfils the Standards of the Higher Education in Estonia. The development of the study programme has been decent since previous quality assessment in 2015. However, students expressed that the programme does not sufficiently develop their entrepreneurship skills.

The opportunity of Recognition of prior learning and working experience (RPL) is hardly used by the students. The internships are evaluated very favourably by the employers and external stakeholders.

Students have a hard time finding a job in their study field, although the curriculum management has the opposite feeling. In the previous evaluation report, it was mentioned that a plan should be developed for comprehensive and continuous feedback from students, employers, alumni, and other stakeholders such as service users that forms the basis of an internal quality assurance system. Although this seems to be the case now for most of the above-mentioned groups, there still is a lack of systematic follow-up and feedback from alumni. Where do alumni find their job? Haapsalu College

should have a better overview of their alumni and whether they are working in their study field or do they just continue their previous work.

Also, it was mentioned in the previous evaluation that financial resources for Health promotion field activities and development usually come from regional municipalities because this field is not popular among politicians and does not receive support from the state, which can result as a problem for students to find appropriate work places in the field of specialisation in the future. This is also what students told us during the interview that it is often difficult to find a job.

The study programme is maybe too restricted now regarding the different segments of society and could provide a broader overview of topics on different minority groups, such as people with disabilities, people living in poverty, people with a migration background.

Strengths

- The staff responsible for curriculum management and teaching is reviewing study materials regularly and taking into account feedback from various interest groups, including students and external stakeholders, future employees, teaching staff.
- Due to the session learning students are able to study and work at the same time easily. The study programme is a successful example of lifelong learning, because most of the students are adult learners who have already previously graduated some other studies and want to have scientific knowledge of health management and nutrition now.

Area of concern and recommendations

- Currently, there is still lack of systematic follow-up and feedback from alumni in order to have a better overview of their career: whether they are working in their study field or they just continue their previous work. A systematic follow-up of and constant feedback from alumni could be advantageous to get a better view on the organizations and workplaces where alumni find a job. This could certainly be helpful to support and guide future alumni to find an appropriate job.

Opportunity for further improvement

- Study programme should cover equally all parts of society including minorities. For example, focus on disabled people is questionable at the moment. The focus could be on these minority groups which are of importance for organizing society in a proper way, such as the elderly, people living in poverty, people with a migration background. Minorities can be involved in the study programme by visiting organizations working with minorities, by organizing lectures given by members of these minorities.

SOCIAL PEDAGOGY (BA); SOCIAL PEDAGOGY AND CHILD PROTECTION (MA)

Evidence and analysis

The programmes have made significant improvements in comparison to the study programme group assessment in 2015. More qualified teachers have been installed and the level of theoretical underpinning of the program has been improved. The Social Pedagogy (BA) and Social Pedagogy and Child Protection (MA) programmes are developed in line with professional standards and form a coherent whole. Feedback from students and other stakeholders is taken into account in the continuous development.

The 6 ECTS of internship in the programmes remain very limited, which raises the concern of the competences of people getting into the labour market. We realise the University promotes lifelong learning and learning on the job and that many students work parallel to their studies. As we learnt

through the interviews, students have to rely on the practical training they get through their work and those jobs do not always have direct relevance for the studies. It is neither a requirement that students should work parallel to their studies. Thus, the practical training included in the programmes is not sufficient for reaching the learning outcomes for these students.

The MA focus on child protection has shown to emanate from needs in the labour market for specific training. This demand together with a very open access to the MA level raises concerns about the possibility to develop the profound professional knowledge demanded on MA level. The level of competences acquired by the students without matching bachelor education obstruct the chances to narrow and deepen the knowledge through the programme. In the interviews, this was shown to be an evident issue. Although the students have a 6 ECTS course that is aimed at compensating the lack of basic knowledge and they are also being motivated by the lecturers to take special electives, this remains very limited and leaves it up to the students themselves how they deal with this.

The panel finds that the staff has a good perspective on the notion of social pedagogy (with a reference to German and Finnish traditions) and child protection (from a wide international perspective) but could benefit from a strengthened external 'identity' of the programmes. It was hard to grasp what is meant with social pedagogy (which was at a point also called "social work in schools") and what the link is between social pedagogy and child protection. The identity of the MA programme is clearly linked to Estonian occupational qualification standards, yet from an academic perspective they are not clearly linked to international standards in a broader sense, as the combination of social pedagogy and child protection is not recognised in an international context. According to additional arguments from the university, the connection to international practices had been enhanced during some years, but the different traditions of social pedagogy and child protections has not yet been highlighted.

The panel assesses that an academic programme needs an 'autonomous' identity which is not only obedient to demands of the labour market, and the teaching staff needs to be part of developing that identity. This more explicit identity would also make it possible to develop a more clear position towards and collaboration with other programmes, e.g., what is the link/difference with social work and with youth work (as youth work is in some countries and historically a part of social pedagogy). The university is in a process of developing these identities for the programmes and the efforts should continue and relate to international, professional, and academic standards.

Strength

- The study programmes are clearly embedded in a local context and have a direct relevance for the Estonian labour market.

Areas of concern and recommendations

- Around half of the students are employed as social pedagogue or child protection workers, however there is concern for the students who are not. The university is taking steps to address this but a stronger commitment to internship should be developed in order to better integrate field practice.
- Access to MA level ought to be built on relevant disciplinary knowledge in order to fulfil the standards of profound professional knowledge and specialisation.
- We recommend that the programmes make its identity and the theoretical/value/ perspective on social pedagogy and child protection more explicit and links this more explicitly to international debates and developments.

Opportunity for further improvement

- Tallinn University and the staff are increasingly embedded in international collaboration, which offer opportunities to further clarify its own identity in relation to an international context.

SOCIAL WORK (BA); SOCIAL WORK (MA); SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP (MA)

Evidence and analysis

The programmes have made significant improvements in comparison to the study programme group assessment in 2015. More qualified teachers have been installed and the level of theoretical underpinning of the programmes has been improved. The organisation of the conference of European Association of Schools of Social Work in June 2021 brings an important dynamic to the programmes and opportunities for internationalisation. The programmes relate strongly to the occupational qualifications standards. Employers and stakeholders are involved in curricula development and student feedback is continuously integrated in the development.

As a panel we realise this has to do with the context of working students and legislation; yet, although the level of practice has gone up, the hours of internship stay very limited (90-120 hours on BA level and 60 hours on MA level), which raises the concern of the competences of people getting into the labour market. We realise the University promotes lifelong learning and learning on the job, yet field practice integrated in the programme is essential for professional development. The limited practice the students are provided within the programmes only give glimpses of the practices. AN integrated internship should give opportunities for both training in and reflections on practice in order to facilitate and introduce a development into a reflective practitioner with academic standards.

The 'open' access to the programs – especially the Master's – raises concerns about the coherence of the programmes and especially the level of competences acquired by the students without matching Bachelor's level education. Although the students have a 6 ECTS course which aim to compensate for this and they are also motivated by the lecturers to take special electives, this remains very limited and leaves it up to the students themselves how they deal with this.

Although the panel finds that the staff has a good perspective on the notion of social work, the panel thinks it would be a good idea to strengthen the external 'identity' of the programmes. Without the conversations, it was hard to grasp what is meant with social work (there was, for instance, no reference to the global definition in the self-assessment report, but this was mentioned in the conversations) and what the link/difference is with, for instance, social pedagogy and child protection. The identity of the programmes is so far very much linked to occupational qualifications standards. However, the panel assesses that academic programmes need an 'autonomous' identity which is not only obedient to the demands of the labour market and that these also should have a clear position in relation to international developments. The ongoing work in that direction should continue.

Strengths

- The new programme of Social Entrepreneurship is an asset for the university and the program group. Although only recently started and still in transition, the program is well-considered and shows a lot of potential, also from an international perspective.
- The social work MA and BA has good connection to international social work through literature and increasing international contacts and is developed in dialogue with employers, stakeholders, and students.

Areas of concern and recommendations

- More internship or forms of practice training should be developed in order to better integrate field practice in the programme, as not all the students have access to adequate time of practice experience in order to reach the required vocational competences to enter the field. The university is addressing this issue and recognises prior learning, but they still need to continue to support students to develop vocational competences.
- Access to MA level ought to be built on relevant disciplinary knowledge in order to fulfil the standards of profound professional knowledge and specialisation. We suggest that a stronger 'linkage' programme with more ECTS is organised for students with a lack of fitting educational background.

Opportunity for further improvement

- The panel understands that the conference of EASSW in June 2021 offers an opportunity to discuss the possible different perspectives in the program, yet the panel assesses that programs should not be dependent on such casual events to have a culture of discussing and making perspectives explicit. The programmes would benefit from a common identity and a more explicit theoretical/value/perspective on social work and links this more explicitly to international debates and developments. This could be developed through internal disciplinary discussions and seminars. This more explicit identity would also make it possible to develop a clearer position towards and collaboration with other programs, e.g., what is the link/difference with social pedagogy and child protection?

5.2 Resources

Standards

- ✓ **Resources (teaching and learning environments, teaching materials, teaching aids and equipment, premises, financial resources) support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.**
- ✓ **There is a sufficient supply of textbooks and other teaching aids and they are available.**
- ✓ **Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).**
- ✓ **Resource development is sustainable.**

YOUTH WORK (PHE); YOUTH WORK MANAGEMENT (MA)

Evidence and analysis

The teaching and learning environment is accessible and appropriate and digital sources are widely available. There is access to a digital information database as well as there are several digital tools in use. Zoom and other different e-learning platforms are in use. Also, e-learning modules have been developed. Most of the literature is in English and made digitally accessible. There has been improvement in using English material more proactively and are more effectively integrated within the course work. In collaboration with lectures and alumni there are some youth work articles published and a plan to translate some materials into Estonian. Overall, students and teachers are satisfied with the resources available.

Opportunities for further improvement

- It would be more beneficial for the students if the teaching staff works more together to use one e-environment until students get used to all the environments. There could be better ways to organize the use of new e-tools, so that it would not be so overwhelming for students. It is good that the students can learn different e-tools, but it would be good if students can learn these tools also step by step.
- Additional foreign language teaching for those who need it could be valuable. The MA programme uses a lot of English-language material, which causes difficulties to some students. Some, on the other hand, like foreign language material and international lecturers and estimate that they broaden students' views.
- In order to avoid fragmentation, attention should be paid to the integrity of the learning material. Based on the interviews, it was noted that at the beginning of the studies, a lot of articles and online materials are used. However, the connections of the learning materials are not always clear, and it can be difficult to build an overall picture of youth work and therefore the learning material can be better integrated.

HEALTH PROMOTION SPECIALIST (PHE)

Evidence and analysis

Due to the COVID-19 situation, panel members could not physically visit Haapsalu College. However, it was obvious that the students have access to all materials they need. As mentioned in the previous evaluation, the small size of the institution allows changes when a need is recognised. Although the students know they have access to different types of university counselling, it became apparent that when problems arose, the students themselves tried to solve them between them and they did hardly make use of the official university counselling opportunities. Although we could read in the Self-evaluation report that the workload of the teachers is very high, this was not really what came to the fore during the interviews. They told us the workload was reasonable. Also, because 'they like what they do'. Only in Spring, it gets a bit more difficult due to the theses.

There seemed to be no problem at all to switch to the 'corona modus' with online lectures; the needed infrastructure is present.

Strengths

- The learning environment is overall good and materials are adequate and up to date. Students have access to different databases and have to use them often in studies.
- Passionate teachers and management who take their work seriously.

Opportunities for further improvement

- The lack of a comprehensive study book was clearly mentioned in the interviews with the teaching staff. By preference, this study book should be in Estonian. It would be nice if a study book could be developed in Estonian by the teaching staff themselves. Although we understand this is a hard task which will entail a lot of energy and efforts; we think it is worthwhile. Once a first version is ready, the adaptations for the next versions are much easier to keep track with.
- Also, other materials in Estonian language could be useful, as already mentioned in the previous evaluation report. Although, it must be said that the students in the Health Promotion study programme already use a lot of English sources. It remains important that a certain level of English is present in the student's academic luggage.

SOCIAL PEDAGOGY (BA); SOCIAL PEDAGOGY AND CHILD PROTECTION (MA)

Evidence and analysis

The BA programme has some classrooms designated specifically to the programme, but they can also be used by others. The classroom equipment is provided after dialogue with the students. All students have free Wifi, there are relevant equipment for video streaming and e-learning, digital resources for literature and a lab for digital learning support is developed, the latter has though just come in use due to the Covid-19 situation. The university library supports the programme with material, and knowledge in information search. Specific information related to social pedagogy and social work practice is provided. Nevertheless, students ask for also having traditional physical books, and not only being referred to online material.

The MA programme does not have designated rooms, but access to rooms with relevant technology. A subject librarian supports the programme with material and the literature can be continuously updated. Access to research literature and training in accessing material is provided through the library.

Strengths

- Good access to material and tools through digital sources.
- Good support from library.
- Continuous development of the physical environment in dialogue with students (SES).

Opportunities for further improvement

- It is important to continuously stay updated with research literature on social pedagogy, new research, etc.
- More books (not only online-material) would be appreciated by students.

SOCIAL WORK (BA); SOCIAL WORK (MA); SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP (MA)

Evidence and analysis

A system with prioritisation of classrooms makes some rooms designated for the specific programme. All lecture rooms have sufficient technology, and these have been updated recently. Rooms for project-based learning is not available at the School of Governance, Law and Society (SOGOLAS), but in other parts of the university.

Tools for e-learning are available and there is an ongoing update. Information and guides for the students are provided online and librarians support their knowledge in information search. Access to databases and literature is provided and printed copies are accessible at the library. The library has access to relevant and central journals.

Social Entrepreneurship has good use of resources within the University, but classrooms are not set out to support project-based working and staff and students have to spend time re-arranging desks. Teaching staff make good use of spaces and buildings outside of the university to assist with teaching and learning. Teaching staff and students asked that communication from the university be in English as well due to the number of international students on the course. Also, signs and information in the university building could also be in English as students can find it difficult to navigate their way around.

Strengths

- Good access to material through digital sources.
- Modern campus with relevant technological support.

Opportunities for further improvement

- An area designed would facilitate social entrepreneurship teaching and learning.
- Access to extra spaces for certain purposes would facilitate having events, which now is limited in the tight room planning.
- The digital tools available could be used in more creative ways.
- There are not enough resources in Estonian and the majority are in English, with a base in conditions in other contexts than the Estonian, which was highlighted as an issue by the students.

5.3 Teaching and learning

Standards

- ✓ **The process of teaching and learning supports learners' individual and social development.**
- ✓ **The process of teaching and learning is flexible, takes into account the specifics of the form of study and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.**
- ✓ **Teaching methods and tools used in teaching are modern, effective and support the development of digital culture.**
- ✓ **Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.**
- ✓ **The organisation and the content of practical training support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.**
- ✓ **The process of teaching and learning supports learning mobility.**
- ✓ **Assessment of learning outcomes is appropriate, transparent and objective, and supports the development of learners.**

YOUTH WORK (PHE); YOUTH WORK MANAGEMENT (MA)

Evidence and analysis

The programmes' teaching give and construct a good picture of youth work in society, and the programmes are flexible in terms of content, organisation and practices. Each programme has named some of its background philosophy frameworks for youth work and such frameworks are also reflected in course contents and teaching arrangements. Research has found its way in youth work education very well, and both programmes have solved many challenges concerning the relationship between theory and practice. The development of both programmes has been influenced by academic perspectives, research, and government policy. The reason for launching the MA programme was to further an in-depth study in youth work, especially in its management, which has proved to be effective.

Communication skills, self-development, self-knowledge as well as self-leading learners are developed during the studies. Critical and strategic thinking is understood as an important learning outcome. Group work and teamwork are used as social forms of teaching methods which are also useful for the job in later working life. The students get practical methods and tools they can use in working life. Non-formal education and activities are connected well with theory. According to the employers and stakeholders, the students have a good understanding about non-formal education and are capable of understanding both policy and practice. Students bring new ideas and ways of working to the field. In addition to placements, the contacts with the authors of research and theses are important to the employers and stakeholders. The instructions from the university enable meaningful placements that are suitable for the employers. Master's students are enabled to become analytic and capable of doing complex projects and understand the importance of lifelong learning.

The attitudes towards the current emphasis of e-learning due to the pandemic are two-way: on the one hand, e-learning enables studying in special circumstances, but on the other hand, there is a need for sufficient face-to-face contact teaching.

There are still a few Erasmus+ student exchanges but there are several short-term projects. There is a lot of information and support to students to encourage them to get involved in an Erasmus+ project, but for long-term projects the students are too engaged in their work or family issues. Several activities and cooperation projects with other Estonian universities are made.

Strengths

- The teaching and learning methods of the programmes are good, and the teachers are skilled and committed to their work.
- The non-formal learning aspect is valued.
- Master's education motivates further education and doctoral studies in the field.
- There is a good ability to manage digitally the learning and teaching, which is especially needed in the Covid-19 situation.

Opportunities for further improvement

- Sometimes it is a challenge for the students when many teachers and the university itself have a lot of different virtual tools and environments. The harmonization of e-systems and e-tools could help learning.
- The cooperation with the youth work field can be further strengthened. There have been fieldtrips and there is a well-functioning training system, but long-term cooperation can be improved.
- It would be interesting to research whether the low uptake of the exchange opportunities is due (for example) to the current lifestyle of young people or to the livelihood difficulties that force students to work during their studies. Short time mobility and virtual exchanges can work better these times and these are commended.
- Time management is sometimes difficult for PHE students, especially at the beginning of the studies due to the large number of the documents and materials. There is a danger of an overwhelming flow of the information about the arrangements and contents of studies at the very beginning of studies. Improving and systematizing the study guidance, especially at the beginning of studies, can help. Information on how to structure and plan the studies would facilitate the students' work. The large amount of study material used can be difficult to deal with at the beginning of both PHE and MA courses. Students considered it important to structure their learning and set priorities, so they can manage better.

- In PHE, familiarization with the theory depends on how the student independently becomes acquainted with the assigned literature. In the course contents, the contribution of joint theoretical reflection should be kept in mind.

To support youth mobility there might be several other options that could be considered:

- Short term mobility and transnational activities can be made use of rather than the traditional programmes, such as Erasmus+.
- Improving and systematizing the study guidance, especially at the beginning of studies (in addition to the course Studying at the university), can facilitate mobility. Virtual exchanges can be made use of in a number of courses.
- Virtual courses with foreign lectures through organised MOOCs with other universities can be developed.
- The network with other universities that have youth work programmes might help to get contracts for youth exchange and mobility.

HEALTH PROMOTION SPECIALIST (PHE)

Evidence and analysis

Haapsalu College has a supportive study environment and teaching methods introduced to panel members were sufficient. The small size of the College supports learners' individual and social development.

The limited number of students also makes it possible to organize the very well-structured individual student feedback, which helps students to develop themselves more efficiently. Teaching methods are flexible and assessment of learning outcomes is objective. Students' study outcomes are measured by tests, individual and group works, practical trainings in different fields related to study. For example, students have to go to high schools and promote and give contact lessons on a healthy lifestyle and nutrition topics.

Students can access different study materials by lecturers via the Moodle platform. Students mostly receive personal feedback. It is clear that the relationship between teachers and students is friendly. Theoretical knowledge is applied to practice and studying seems to be exciting and beneficial. The opportunity of recognition of prior learning and working experience (RPL) is hardly used by the students regardless of the fact that the students are aware of the possibility. They just prefer not to transfer their previous study and work experiences because students want to study and refresh their knowledge.

It came out that every year Haapsalu College introduces to students the possibility to go and study abroad. Even though students find study mobility appealing, they still are not taking part in it because they have families, full-time jobs and other responsibilities. To stimulate international student mobility, it is also important that the teaching staff has at least a basic proficiency in English, which did not always seem to be the case.

Strengths

- Direct and friendly communication between management, teaching staff and students. Every student receives personal feedback on their assignments.
- Students have different backgrounds and disciplines. It brings diversity to the health promotion professions and Haapsalu College sees it as a positive aspect. It makes discussions

and group works more comprehensive and students can bring their personal professional experiences into the studies.

- Teachers know they have the possibility to receive different forms of support provided by the university, for example courses enabling self-development in teaching methods or IT skills.
- Haapsalu College has efficient e-learning opportunities. During covid-19 lockdown Haapsalu College managed to bring their studies online smoothly and students were satisfied with the learning possibilities. They even had virtual group work sessions and achieved the necessary study outcomes.
- Student feedback is well organised and students see the results of their feedback. Every student receives personal feedback on their assignments. The number of students is limited, so there are more opportunities to give individual feedback to each student. Excellent relationships between teachers and students.

Areas of concern and recommendations

- Students do not take part in study mobility, because they have many other responsibilities. Internationalisation should be developed in ways that suit the students' conditions. Short term exchange and online events could help to further the students' international experiences.
- Teaching staff, and especially study programme managers, should have at least a basic proficiency in English, given the internationalisation of educational programmes.

Opportunities for further improvement

- From interviews it came out that students would like to have more contact lessons. They enjoy their studies so much that they would like to gather even more knowledge about their studies. Students feel that the time in contact lessons is limited.
- College should offer and promote more opportunities for short time mobility to make it more accessible for students who have families and work full time.

SOCIAL PEDAGOGY (BA); SOCIAL PEDAGOGY AND CHILD PROTECTION (MA)

Evidence and analysis

The school has clearly responded and acted upon the recommendations set out in the previous Quality Assessment Report. The Social Pedagogy (BA) programme has been moved from TLU Rakvere College and is now taught alongside other courses in the department which has been an extra development. There has been an increase in teaching staff including two doctoral students with experience of working in social pedagogy and child protection. Their experiences in practice are used to enhance the content of teaching on the study programme. Staff talked about collaborative development of teaching and learning within the programmes and due to the relatively small staff team this is easier to undertake.

The increase in staff with relevant practice experience is clearly supporting the students' learning and their understanding of application of theory into practice. There have also been positive developments made to the content of the courses which focused on assisting students to gain the knowledge and skills needed to gain employment once they qualify. There has been an increase in focus on using creative and digital teaching methods which once again supports student learning. The title of the MA

programme is specifically linked to child protection to widen and enable the graduates to secure employment. This is in line with how support and welfare services are set up in Estonia.

Teaching has been aligned with the social pedagogy occupational qualification standards which supports student development of the skills needed to undertake work as a social pedagogue. Teaching is flexible and it is acknowledged that for the Master students in particular, many have employment and family commitments outside of the university. This creates challenges for the students with regards to their studies, but the teaching is responsive to these needs and the teaching staff try, where possible, to have a flexible approach. For example, 'block' teaching on the MA programme and support to students when they are not in the university between teaching blocks. There is also a clear focus on the importance of values in practice and also some on the theoretical nature of social pedagogy.

There are also opportunities for student mobility as part of the teaching and learning offered to the students on the courses. As with the common experiences of many universities, the personal and professional demands on students' time means that many are unable to take up this offer. Therefore, shorter mobility trips are being planned in the future.

Strengths

- Course materials and learning are constantly reviewed and amended in light of social changes and the development of teaching around children's rights is an important development on the course.
- Good collaboration on developing the content of the courses happens between the university and organisations such as the Union of Social Pedagogues.

Area of concern and recommendations

- There is a concern that the placements for students do not offer enough time for the students to gain the necessary skills and experience needed before they qualify. Placements should be increased to support students to develop field practice skills and apply theoretical learning to their direct work. Thus, it needs to be more explicitly integrated in the curricula in order to support, both those who are not in employment and those who parallel their studies work, to integrate theory and practice.

Opportunities for further improvement

- The Massive Open On-line Course "Social Pedagogy Across Europe" could be a helpful resource with regards to looking at social pedagogy in a wider European context with regards to the issue of student mobility.
- It was identified by staff that there has been little opportunity for them to discuss the theoretical opinions of social pedagogy and that they acknowledge that this is important. It is therefore suggested that space is made for teaching staff to critically discuss their theoretical opinions of social pedagogy and how these can be embedded into teaching across the programmes.

SOCIAL WORK (BA); SOCIAL WORK (MA); SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP (MA)

Evidence and analysis

Both Social Work study programmes provide adequate teaching and learning for the students and cover the areas needed to assist students in being able to work as a social worker once qualified. The teaching and learning is responsive to changes in society but it was felt that there was an over

emphasis on focusing on 'individuals' and not on the impact of wider society on people's lives. The shared modules and learning with other courses within the department highlighted as being helpful to the students in developing their understanding of the professional role. Having practitioners and social workers teach on the course supported students' understanding of social work. It was highlighted that there could be more focus on court and practical skills and legislation, but it is recognised that here is the ongoing tension between teaching theory and practice on study programmes such as these. There has been an increase in placement hours on the social work programmes with more visits to organisations where students can undertake observations of social work practice. There are options for student mobility but as with other courses there are few students able to take up the opportunity due to personal commitments and their employment. Shorter student mobility trips are being planned in the future with the hope that more students will be able to attend these. This is a solution also students say could work, as shorter trips could be done also for many students that have work and/or family. The teaching staff are linking in to the growing number of on-line events looking at international social work as a result of the current Covid pandemic.

Due to the Covid pandemic, teaching has been more blended between face to face classroom teaching and on-line. This brings a new set of challenges which the teaching staff have managed well. A range of teaching methods are used in the Social Work BA programme and the following were listed: group work, creative tasks, playful solutions.

In Social Entrepreneurship MA, there is a real focus on international work, but this needs balancing with a focus on developing social enterprise projects in Estonia. The main reason behind this is the public's understanding of the term 'social' which is seen in a negative light due to historical and cultural factors. They suggest a focus on 'impact' of the work instead and as this is a new course and area of practice it will take time to develop.

There is a good link with university and placements being offered to students to balance the theoretical nature of the teaching along with practical experience. Technology is being used well to support teaching and learning and if something does not work well the teaching staff can flexibly change this. An example of it has been the hybrid classrooms, which did not work as well as was hoped, so all teaching has been moved on-line. There is excellent use of social media platforms to communicate with students and gain feedback. There are also excellent student mobility opportunities offered, and due to the fact that over half of the students are 'overseas' students they take up the offer. This was highlighted as a positive for the students and supported their learning.

Strengths

- Teaching is organised so that it makes it possible for students to also work.
- Social Entrepreneurship MA makes excellent use of the international networks and links to inform and develop teaching as well as support students to develop their own projects and practice.

Area of concern and recommendations

- Even though the social work placements have been increased in hours it was felt to still be very low. There was concern that the placements did not allow enough time for the students to gain the relevant skills and experience needed before they completed the course. Social Work study programmes should increase placements to support students to develop practice skills and apply theoretical learning to their direct work. The teams responsible for BA and MA programmes would benefit from meeting jointly and participating in the roundtable of professionals regarding placements.

Opportunities for further improvement

- The development of an area within the university that can be used to support the teaching of project-based work.
- Even if there are possibilities through elective courses, the Social Work MA would benefit from an increased focus on court and practical skills.

5.4 Teaching staff

Standards

- ✓ **There is teaching staff with adequate qualifications to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.**
- ✓ **Overall student assessment on teaching skills of the teaching staff is positive.**
- ✓ **The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the higher education institution and with partners outside of the higher education institution (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other Estonian or foreign higher education institutions).**
- ✓ **Recognised foreign and visiting members of the teaching staff and practitioners participate in teaching the study programme.**
- ✓ **The teaching staff is routinely engaged in professional and teaching-skills development.**
- ✓ **Assessment of the work by members of the teaching staff (including staff evaluation) takes into account the quality of their teaching as well as of their research, development and creative work, including development of their teaching skills, and their international mobility.**

YOUTH WORK (PHE); YOUTH WORK MANAGEMENT (MA)

Evidence and analysis

In the PHE programme there are 12 lecturers involved in the programme, including PhDs, 1 international lecturer once a year, and 1–3 practitioners from youth field whose background is diverse. The lecturers have several ways on how to continue improving their competences. Biannual development seminars, research seminars, university wide experience cafes, and regular meetings are organised. A mentoring system is in place for new lecturers. The feedback is gathered. Feedback by students is forwarded to lecturers to enable them to improve their teaching. Evidence that they participate in International conferences and Erasmus+ mobility projects is given.

For the Master's programme, most of the teaching staff are PhD graduates, or students of PhD. There are several lecturers from abroad. Lecturers are internationally mobile. Several of them have taken part in international conferences and Erasmus+ mobility projects, and the experiences are shared between staff. The teaching staff meets regularly to manage and further develop the content of courses. Staff also develops their teaching skills together with adult education lecturers. The academics are provided in-service trainings and can also receive individual counselling regarding teaching.

In both programmes, lecturers have good competencies, and the students have open interaction with the staff. The number of the staff has increased, and the qualification of staff has improved. The feedback from the students, stakeholders and employers has been very good. The commitment of the teaching staff to their work and to their programme is exemplary.

Strengths

- Programmes have dynamic teams of lecturers and well-organized cooperation with other teaching staff. The lecturers have a versatile background.
- The students have good contacts with the staff and the students value the staff highly.
- The competence of the teaching staff is high, and the staff gives good and constructive feedback to the students.
- The student feedback system works well, feedback is taken into account in teaching, and students participate in the development of the programme's education.

Opportunity for further improvement

- Feedback from part-time and external teaching staff to student has shown to be limited in at least some cases. An induction training of part-time and visiting staff to provide student feedback could help.

HEALTH PROMOTION SPECIALIST (PHE)

Evidence and analysis

Teaching staff has good qualifications and students' feedback on practitioners has been very positive. Teachers' practical experiences and knowledge are especially highly valued. The feedback of students on teaching methods overall is positive as well. Students enjoy that teachers are providing them a lot of group work and practical tasks.

Expert panel members found it interesting that the self-evaluation report mentioned that lecturers' high workload and the lack of thesis supervisors. During the interviews none of the teachers in Haapsalu College agreed that their workload is too high, although they mentioned it is slightly difficult during the end of the Spring semester when students are writing their theses and require timely feedback.

Teachers take students' feedback very seriously and try to improve their teaching methods and materials accordingly. Teachers suggested that there is not enough collaboration between different study programs inside the Social Services study program group. It might be useful to have a better understanding and knowledge about their colleagues' teaching methods. It was surprising to the expert panel that teachers' and curriculum managers' English skills varied greatly. Scientific materials are mainly in English, to understand the latest study results and do high quality research in your teaching field, it is obligatory to understand and speak fluent English. Excellence in English could also increase teaching mobility and even international collaboration.

Strengths

- Teachers are passionate experts and enjoy teaching. They are specialists in their field and participate actively in courses, trainings, seminars and conferences provided by different associations or educational institutions.

- Teachers are working in other organisations in the related fields and they keep themselves up to date with the newest trends and latest research.

Area of concern and recommendations

- The English language competence of the lectures is variable. There were teachers whose English skills should be improved. During the interviews, we discussed with managers who had difficulties with expressing themselves in English and sometimes there was a discussion in Estonian, which was afterwards translated by those respondents who were proficient in English. The limited knowledge of English could also be a barrier for staff mobility and could hinder programme development from an international perspective.

Opportunities for further improvement

- Increasing collaboration between teaching staff of different study programmes in the Social Services study programme group could be advantageous.
- All lecturers must attain a sufficient level of English to conduct research and be aware of the latest trends in their field.

SOCIAL PEDAGOGY (BA); SOCIAL PEDAGOGY AND CHILD PROTECTION (MA)

Evidence and analysis

The BA programme is now manned by university lecturers in combination with practitioners. After moving the programme from TLU Rakvere College, some teachers have changed. New teachers are supported by either the study programme administrator or a colleague, a mentor programme is also mentioned. The study programme administrator and head of studies monitor the students' feedback and the study programme administrator gives the feedback to the lecturers when it is negative. The lecturers have opportunities to be active in research and development in relation to their courses as well as to develop their technological skills, teaching methods and knowledge in language. 14 lecturers teach at the MA programme, of which 11 have permanent positions. Half of the teaching staff has a PhD while a fourth are practitioners with a MA. The curriculum has become more specialised and underpinned by international perspectives.

Internationalisation is shown in visiting lecturers, but this could be developed further.

Strengths

- Teaching staff is connected both to research and practice.
- Teaching staff with high competence and clear links to social pedagogy networks, mainly in the Nordic region at this moment.

Opportunities for further improvement

- Digital forms for international exchange could be used to further improve the connection to social pedagogy in other countries, this could be a way for teaching staff to develop in their role as teachers.
- The teaching staff have been engaged in the Nordplus project and this is seen as an excellent opportunity. Links to international platforms on social pedagogy need to continue and be strengthened.

SOCIAL WORK (BA); SOCIAL WORK (MA); SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP (MA)

Evidence and analysis

Teaching staff consists of permanent lecturers with PhD, doctoral students and also some practitioners with MA degree. The teaching staff on the Social Entrepreneurship programme are connected to four different Schools of TLU. Teachers have the chance to participate in one international conference or similar per three years (BA), every year (MA). Guest lectures are invited to teach on Social Entrepreneurship programme, international scholars as well as practitioners from business. Thereto, they can apply for external funding for more international cooperation and some have used that opportunity for Erasmus exchange in north-European countries. Research is promoted by encouraging cooperation in projects and writing, a research development team and research outcome can render workload reductions.

Development in pedagogical methods is supported by training, technology, and also language skills (English). Teaching staff is evaluated from the students, but also within the university annually and more thoroughly every five years.

The Social Entrepreneurship MA has developed well over the last two years and now employs staff with relevant experience and knowledge. There are a number of lecturers with international and direct experience of running a social enterprise project, which clearly strengthens the teaching and learning on the course. They also utilise the international and national links which they have to benefit the students; this can be seen in developing partnership with the SEB Bank which is offering student placements/internships. As with the programme leader, the teaching staff demonstrated lots of passion and commitment to developing a high standard of teaching and learning. The teaching staff have developed lots of links to organisations and international networks as well as using the alumni to help show current students what type of work they can do but also offer on-going support.

Strengths

- Teaching staff is well anchored in social work as well as in research.
- The interdisciplinary and international team for Social Entrepreneurship MA is a major strength.

Opportunities for further improvement

- Teachers who also are PhD students would benefit from a not so heavy workload, so that they can finish their PhD.
- New ways could be developed to measure the outcomes of Social Entrepreneurship MA programme as its achievements cannot be measured in traditional academic ways.

5.5 Students

Standards

- ✓ **Student places are filled with motivated and capable students.**
- ✓ **The dropout rate is low; the proportion of students graduating within the standard period of study is large.**
- ✓ **Students are motivated to learn and their satisfaction with the content, form and methods of their studies is high.**

- ✓ **As part of their studies, students attend other Estonian and/or foreign higher education institutions as visiting or international students.**
- ✓ **Employment rate of alumni is high.**
- ✓ **Alumni and their employers are pleased with their professional preparation and social competencies.**

YOUTH WORK (PHE); YOUTH WORK MANAGEMENT (MA)

Evidence and analysis

Although the drop out is still the issue here, there have been several measures to deal with the issue. A session-based programme has been developed and at the beginning of the first academic year, an orientation session describes the programme, courses, lecturers and how the communication is organized. Interim sessions with students and the group leader system, support the students to enable them to pursue their studies. There is also a provision of learning guidance and students can discuss their reasons for quitting. Students also receive an email which informs the options they still must complete in their studies. The presence of a counsellor and psychologist at the university is also valued. The dropout rate shows that it is slightly decreasing.

At the end of each academic year there is a satisfaction survey among students. The feedback of recent years is positive. Students are satisfied with programme, as well as with the contribution of the academic staff. They highly value youth work professional placements. Students feel that their feedback is considered. Students are highly motivated. The employers and stakeholders also confirm that students are motivated and knowledgeable.

The MA students have specialized work experience and efforts have been done to engage the students and integrate their experience into the studies. Students also have opportunities to participate in projects, cooperate in writing articles and organise events and are also involved to give lectures even outside Tallinn University. Students are active and motivated to participate in several activities. Teachers considers MA thesis most valuable and if suitable these are used to improve PHE courses. Students have several possibilities to impact the field.

Strengths

- The student feedback system works well, feedback is considered in teaching and is constantly used to improve learning, and students participate in the development of the programme's education.
- The students are active and can see how they can impact the field.
- 2nd year students support 1st years students to reduce dropouts.
- MA students research results are used in a very practical way in developing PHEs courses.
- Involving students in university lectures even outside Tallinn University and encouraging students to publish is good practice.

HEALTH PROMOTION SPECIALIST (PHE)

Evidence and analysis

Students are motivated and capable learners. Students have a strong mission to promote a healthy lifestyle and they want to make an impact in society. Majority of the students have prior work and study experience in fields. All of the interviewed students seek to start a full-time job in their field of studies and they are thankful for the possibility of session learning. Dropout rate is rather low and the number of students who graduate with the nominal period of study is above average.

In general, the employers and other stakeholders are satisfied with the graduates and are willing to employ some of them after graduation.

Students are aware of universities counselling opportunities but are not using them actively. They have a very friendly atmosphere in Haapsalu College where everyone knows each other and students can get necessary help and information from their study program manager, teaching staff or other students and do not need the counselling offered by university.

Compared to previous report students' English level has improved and they do not find it difficult to learn from materials which are in English. Even though the study programme council has added a management course to the curriculum, students still find that it would be useful to attain additional knowledge in entrepreneurship skills. Majority of students work in some other field than their studies. Even though they know what positions are open for them after graduation they believe it is quite hard to find a job in their field of studies because there are not many available positions. Students are not interested in going abroad because they have families and other responsibilities in Estonia.

Strengths

- Very motivated, passionate students who really enjoy their studies and are eager learners.
- E-learning opportunities are excellent, students have very up-to-date and practical study materials. Students actively use research-based articles in their studies. Every student knows how to use scientific databases.
- Great cooperation between academic staff and students. Due to the small size of Haapsalu College the relationship between students and teaching staff is direct and warm. Students know their voice is always heard and the College provides them all the necessary support.

Area of concern and recommendations

- The University should look more into the problem of students not finding study related jobs. Research about the labour market and its needs regarding the health promotion specialist and nutrition specialist positions could be conducted.

Opportunity for further improvement

- The University should have a better understanding of what is the occupational satisfaction level of their graduates and whether it is easy or rather difficult to find a study related job. From these results they could have a better overview of the situation and make an action plan to improve it. Although job advertisements are shared in student lists, it might still be useful to create a job and internship portal. It could be an open webpage or database with active alumni. Students and graduates could mark their occupational status, add their CV and why not even include available job offers if they see any, so the ones who are still searching for a job could find it more easily.

SOCIAL PEDAGOGY (BA); SOCIAL PEDAGOGY AND CHILD PROTECTION (MA)

Evidence and analysis

On both study programmes it was clearly seen that students were highly motivated to study and are often balancing family life with employment and studying. This is a common issue throughout educational institutions in Europe and is part of the reality for students in being able to balance their studies alongside working and family life. Students feel a good sense of connection to the university and teaching staff and feel supported in their studies. The introduction and welcome to the school at the start of the year for new students is an obvious part of this. This has also helped to reduce the number of students who have dropped out of the study programmes.

Regular feedback is gained from students and this is done in various ways and the students felt that the university took this feedback seriously and acted on it accordingly. The self-evaluation report also highlighted a good level of peer support and a feeling of connection between students which is a link to social pedagogy theory and hopefully will support their learning. There was also a focus on values needed for practice which was considered helpful when developing the skills needed for practice.

The issue of contact with alumni is being looked at for future students and this is a very helpful form of support for students.

Strengths

- Students are encouraged to support one another and again this links well to social pedagogy theories around relationship based working and holistic learning.
- Students feel supported, that their feedback is used in the development and that they have good connections to the department and their lecturers.

SOCIAL WORK (BA); SOCIAL WORK (MA); SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP (MA)

Evidence and analysis

Students from all three study programmes were highly motivated and were also balancing family life and employment with their studies. There was a feeling of being supported by lecturers and that they could approach them if there was a problem. The university staff have addressed the numbers of students who drop out of the course by strengthening the tutorial support offered.

Social Work MA programme had a focus on theoretical teaching and the students felt that this could at times be a disadvantage to students with less practice experience. Recommendations that were made in the last assessment report have been acted upon. There is now a good level of support for the MA thesis and meetings are held every two weeks.

The students on the Social Entrepreneurship programme talked a lot about the high levels of support given to them and also mentioned that their student representative was very good at communicating what was happening with the course and in the University at large. They did highlight that more physical resources such as books would be helpful. They are made aware of the workload and commitment of the course before they start, and they liked the part-time and hours of the courses as it fitted around working.

An issue for all courses was a focus on English, students are given help with this if their English is poor. However, Russian is the main language after Estonian spoken by people they will be working with in a professional capacity and reading and understanding Russian can be an issue for some students.

On all study programmes there were good rates of employment of graduates.

Strengths

- Students feel a high level of support from all teaching staff and there is a good communication and information flow from the teaching staff to students.
- The use of social media and digital platforms are used to communicate relevant information to students.

Opportunity for further improvement

- More resources in Estonian would support students who are not able to read English.