

Akkreditierungsagentur für Studiengänge  
im Bereich Gesundheit und Soziales  
Accreditation Agency for Study Programs  
in the Area of Health and Social Sciences



## **Assessment Report**

**for the Application of  
Taibah University,  
College of Nursing,  
for the Accreditation of the Study Program "Nursing"  
(Bachelor of Nursing)**

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Decision	February 16, 2023

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## 1 Introduction

The Accreditation Agency for Study Programs in Health and Social Sciences (AHPGS) is an interdisciplinary and multi-professional organization. Its mission is to evaluate Bachelor and Master's programs in the fields of health and social sciences, as well as in related domains, such as law or economics. By implementing accreditation and recommendation procedures, the AHPGS contributes to the improvement of the overall quality of teaching and learning. However, the higher education institutions remain responsible for fulfilling the quality assurance, too.

Since 2004 the AHPGS has been a member of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA). In 2006, the AHPGS also joined the ENQA and became a member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) in 2009. Since 2012, the AHPGS has been a member of the Network of Central and Eastern European Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA). Starting from 2009, the AHPGS has been listed in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR).

In carrying out accreditation procedures, the AHPGS follows the requirements of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). In the present case, the decision regarding the accreditation of the study program is carried out by the AHPGS Accreditation Commission based on the following accreditation criteria<sup>1</sup>:

1. Program aims and learning outcomes
2. Curriculum design
3. Personnel
4. Facilities and learning resources
5. Study process and student assessment
6. Program and quality management
7. Gender equality and equal opportunities

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<sup>1</sup> Approved by the AHPGS Accreditation Commission

The external assessment procedure is carried out in four steps:

### **I. The University's application**

The AHPGS verifies the sufficiency of the documents submitted by the University, namely the self-evaluation report and its corresponding annexes. These are to fulfill the assessment spheres as well as the AHPGS standards. As a result, the AHPGS produces a summary (see Sections 2-5), which is to be approved by the University and subsequently made available for the expert group, together with all other documentation.

### **II. Written review**

The main documents are reviewed by the expert group assigned by the accreditation commission of AHPGS. This is done in order to verify the compliance of the study program with the above-mentioned criteria. Consequently, the experts comprise a short summary regarding the study programs.

### **III. On-site visit (peer-review)**

The experts carry out an external on-site visit at the University. During this visit discussions are held with members of the University, which include University and department administration, degree program management, teachers and students. This provides the expert group with details about the study program beyond the written documents. The task of the experts during the on-site visit is to verify and evaluate the objectives of the program and its projected study results, its structure, staff, material resources, course of studies and methods of assessment (selection of students, assessment of achievements, students' support), as well as of the program management (program administration, external assurance of study quality).

Following the on-site visit, the expert group issues the expert report. This report is based on the results of the visit, the written review of the study programs, and the documents submitted by the University. Finally, the report is made available to the University so that it can issue a response opinion.

The expert report as well as the University's response opinion – together with the provided documents – is submitted to the accreditation commission of the AHPGS.

#### **IV. The AHPGS accreditation decision**

The accreditation commission of the AHPGS examines the documentation made available in the process of application, namely the University's self-evaluation report, its annexes, the summary comprised by the AHPGS, the expert report, as well as the University's response opinion. These documents represent the basis for the commission's decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

## 2 Overview

### 2.1 Procedure-related documents

The Taibah University delegated the task of accrediting its Bachelor study programs “Nursing”, “Clinical Nutrition”, “Clinical Laboratory Sciences” as well as “Diagnostic Radiology Technology” to AHPGS.

The self-evaluation report for accreditation (without the awarding of the official seal of the Accreditation Council of the Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programs in Germany) of the above-mentioned study programs (hereinafter the Self-evaluation report) of Taibah University (hereinafter the University) was submitted to the Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Science (AHPGS e.V.) in electronic format on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The decision regarding the accreditation of a study program is carried out by the Accreditation Commission of AHPGS. The contract between Taibah University and the AHPGS was signed on June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022 the AHPGS forwarded the open questions and explanatory notes (hereinafter OQ) pertaining to the Application for accreditation for the study programs to the University. On July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022 the University submitted the answers to the open questions and explanatory notes (hereinafter AOQ) to the AHPGS in electronic format.

The present document presents the summary of the AHPGS for the Bachelor study program “Nursing”. The first cohort for this program was admitted in 2015.

The application documentation submitted by the University follows the outline recommended by the AHPGS. Along with the application request towards accreditation of the Bachelor study program “Nursing”, the following additional documents can be found in the application package (the documents submitted by the University are numbered in the following order for easier referencing):

Specific documents for the study program “Nursing”:

Annex 01	Program Specification
Annex 02	Course Specifications

Annex 03	Students' Course Guide NUR461
Annex 04	Exam Unit Guide
Annex 05	Field Experience Description
Annex 06	Internship Logbook
Annex 07	Learning Outcomes Assessment Map and Alignment
Annex 08	Exam Alignment
Annex 09	Field Experience Report
Annex 10	Sample Intern's Evaluation Form
Annex 11	Key Performance Indicators
Annex 12	Matrix of Benchmark
Annex 13	Student Manual
Annex 14	Samples of Course Equivalence Decisions and the Transcript for a Transferred Student
Annex 15	Program Tree
Annex 16	Sample of Meeting Minutes: Attributes of Nursing Graduates
Annex 17	Correlation Activities Students Club and Learning Outcomes
Annex 18	College of Nursing Guide
Annex 19	Quality and Accreditation Procedure Manual
Annex 20	Stakeholders' Survey Report
Annex 21	Sample Alumni Survey Form
Annex 22	Sample Employer Survey Form
Annex 23	Timetable Faculty Members
Annex 24	Teaching Matrix
Annex 25	American Association of College of Nursing (AACN)
Annex 26	Consistency of Graduates with the National Qualification Framework
Annex 27	Graduates Attribut Assessment



Annex 28	Module Overview
Annex 29	Module Descriptions

Alongside the study-program-specific documents, the following documents pertain to all study programs submitted to AHPGS for evaluation:

Annex A	Rules and Regulations of Undergraduate Study and Examinations
Annex B	Academic Program Preparation Handbook
Annex C	National Qualification Framework for Higher Education
Annex D	University Enrollment Guide
Annex E	Digital Transformation Program
Annex F	Admission and Registration Guide
Annex G	Quality Assurance System
Annex H	Students' Rights and Obligations
Annex I	Covid-19 Adaptions
Annex J	Directory College of Applied Medical Sciences
Annex K	Student Disability Center Guide
Annex L	Accreditation Certificate
Annex M	Handbook of Safety Instructions in Laboratories
Annex N	College of Applied Medical Sciences Strategic Plan
Annex O	Agreement letter with MOH
Annex P	System and Regulations of Higher Education Council
Annex Q	Regulations for Saudi Staff
Annex R	Regulations for Non-Saudi Staff
Annex S	Taibah University Strategic Plan
Annex T	Ethical Professional Code

Annex U	Statistics and Information Unit Report and Alumni Unit Report
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The application, the open questions (OQ) and the answers to the open questions (AOQ), as well as these additional documents, together build the basis for the present summary. The layout bears no significance, as it solely reflects the agreed standard within the University.

## 2.2 Study program

### 2.2.1 Structural data

University	Taibah University
Faculty/Department	College of Nursing
Cooperation partner	Directorate of Health Affairs in Madinah, King Fahad Hospital, Health services of the Royal Commission in Yanbu, and The Saudi-German Hospital.
Title of the study program	"Nursing"
Degree awarded	Bachelor of Nursing
Form of studies	Full time, on-campus
Organisational structure	5 Days a week (Sunday to Thursday) 8 am to 4 pm for 156 weeks Each trimester has 13 weeks Each year has 3 trimester = 39 weeks
Language of Studies	English
Period of education	4 years / twelve trimesters (preparatory year included) + 1 year noncredit internship
Credit Hours (CH) according to the Credit Hour System	135 Credit Hours (equals 229 ECTS Credit Points)
Hours/CP	1 Theory Credit Hour = 1 Hour 1 Lab/Practical Hour = 2 Hours 1 Hospital Training/Field Training Hour = 3 Hours

Workload	Total: 5,311 hours Contact hours: 2,676 hours Individual Work: 555 hours Internship: 2,080 hours
Launch date of the study program	2015
Time of admission	Fall Semester
Number of available places in the program	Council of the University decides the number of available places depending on the proposal of the Councils of Colleges and related bodies at the University 129 (101 female and 28 male) Students in Year 19/20
Number of enrolled students since the launch	1.433
Number of dropouts since the launch	138
Number of graduates since the launch	516
Particular enrollment conditions	Saudi Arabian Secondary School Certificate (science section) or its equivalent; General Aptitude Test (GAT) (provided by the National Centre for Assessment in Higher Education).
Tuition fees	Free

Table 1: Structural data of the study program

### 2.2.2 Qualification objectives and employment opportunities

The vision of the University is to be an internationally recognized, comprehensive institution which is dedicated to excellence in teaching, research and community service. Therefore, it has set up the mission to contribute to society building that promotes sustainable development,

knowledge economies through education, research and community partnership in a stimulating environment for learning and creativity.

According to the university, the program's learning objectives are to empower the students with comprehensive knowledge of nursing sciences, including theories and principles related to the field, with reference to the correlated sciences, arts and legislations essential for nursing practice. Furthermore, the study program will:

- Expand the students' ability to use critical thinking scientifically and professionally in solving patient health problems
- Prepare the students to participate and cooperate actively in health teams considering social and cultural issues while providing holistic nursing care to individuals, families and communities
- Develop the student ability to use numerical, statistical and communication skills in addressing health problems with appropriate application of suggested solution
- Qualify the students to apply nursing process in solving problems and in providing competent holistic patient care according to evidence based practice with respect to Islamic culture

Taibah University follows the National center for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA) standards as per the National Qualifications Framework for Saudi Arabia. The learning outcomes, overarching skill and competencies for the "Nursing" program are categories according to the domains of learning. The students acquire the knowledge and skills required in the following five domains according to the approved program specifications which are derived for National Accreditation Standards: knowledge; cognitive skills; interpersonal skills and responsibility; communication, information technology, numerical; psychomotor (SER 1.3.3).

According to the University, most of the graduates are employed in governmental hospitals. Among other health care institutions where they can work, the University names private health care centers, hospitals of Armed Forces and the National Guard, primary healthcare facilities, rehabilitation centers, Saudi Red Crescent organization and various community nursing facilities. Besides that, graduates can find employment in nursing facilities at

secondary and higher education institutions, research centers and home-care agencies (SER 1.4.1).

According to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Health (MOH), nurses constitute about one third of the nation's total healthcare workforce. Only 38 % of these nurses are Saudi nationals. As the annual population growth rate in Saudi Arabia constitutes 2,7 %, more hospitals are expected to be established, which will create more working positions for graduates of medical programs, including the "Nursing" program (SER 1.4.2).

### **2.2.3 Modularization and exam system**

The program comprises 46 modules, out of which 10 mandatory courses are taught in the Preparatory Year (1 and 2 trimester). 36 modules are taught program-specific, out of which 30 are mandatory and 2 (out of 6) are elective program courses as well as 4 elective university level courses. 5 modules are provided by the College of Medicine, 1 module by the College of Pharmacy and College of Applied Medical Sciences. There are 18 modules studied together with students from other study programs. To ensure that the objectives of modules offered by other study programs of the university meet the program-specific module objectives, the following is done regularly (SER 1.2.2):

- The module specifications are finalized by the offering departments and approved by College of Nursing
- Reviewing the courses' contents and objectives and making sure that they support and fulfill the intended learning outcomes (ILO) of the program
- Continuous coordination and consultation with other nursing departments
- Continuous and final feedback from the course report & students' evaluation of courses

Before the beginning of the trimester, the nursing deanship for academic affairs communicates with the department concerned with teaching the module for construction of specific classes for nursing students, allocation of teaching staff and organization of the schedule (SER 1.2.2).

There are between 3 and 5 modules in total provided for each trimester. All modules have to be completed within one trimester.

The following study plan lists the required sequence of courses for the attainment of the degree "Bachelor of Nursing"

Level	Course Code	Course Title	Required or Elective	* Pre-Requisite Courses	Co-Requisite Courses		College or Department
Prep Year		Prerequisite N/A					
Level 1	ENG101	English Language skills (1)	Required	-----		4	The General Requirements Center
	CHEM101	Introduction to Chemistry	Required	-----		3	College of Science
	GS111	Arabic Language Skills (1)	Required	-----		2	The General Requirements Center
Level 2	GSE 151	University Life Skills	Required	-----		2	The General Requirements Center
	MATH101	Introduction to Mathematics	Required	-----		3	College of Science
	GS101	Islamic Studies: Belief and Worship	Required	-----		2	The General Requirements Center
	BIOL101	Introduction to Biology	Required	-----		3	College of Science
Level 3	ENG102	English Language Skill (2)	Required	ENG101		4	The General Requirements Center
	GS152	Computer Skills	Required	-----		2	The General Requirements Center
	PHYS101	Introduction to Physics	Required	-----		3	College of Science
Level 4	MMIC203	Medical Microbiology	Required	-----		3	College of Medicine
	PHSL201	Introduction to Physiology	Required	-----		3	Physiology department College of Medicine
	GS102	Islamic Studies: Features of	Required	-----		2	The General Requirements Center

		<b>the Prophet's Biography</b>					
	ANAT201	<b>Introduction to Anatomy</b>	<b>Required</b>	-----		3	<b>Anatomy department College of Medicine</b>
<b>Level 5</b>	CBCH201	<b>Medical Biochemistry</b>	<b>Required</b>	-----		3	<b>Biochemistry department College of Medicine</b>
	GS 112	<b>Arabic Language Skills (2)</b>	<b>Required</b>	GS 111		2	<b>The General Requirements Center</b>
	CLN216	<b>Fundamentals of Nutrition and Diet Therapy</b>	<b>Required</b>	-----		3	<b>Applied Medical Science college</b>
	NUR221	<b>Fundamentals of Nursing</b>	<b>Required</b>	-----		4	<b>College of Nursing</b>
<b>Level 6</b>	PATH202	<b>Pathology</b>	<b>Required</b>	PHSL201		3	<b>Pathology department – college of Medicine</b>
	PHT 272	<b>Pharmacology</b>	<b>Required</b>	-----		3	<b>College of Pharmacy</b>
	NUR 224	<b>Physical Assessment and Health Promotion</b>	<b>Required</b>	-----		3	<b>College of Nursing</b>
	NUR 222	<b>Medical Surgical Nursing (1)</b>	<b>Required</b>	NUR221 ANAT201 PHSL201	NUR 224 PATH202 PHT 272	4	<b>College of Nursing</b>
<b>Level 7</b>	NUR 331	<b>Nursing Childbearing Family</b>	<b>Required</b>	NUR222 PATH202 PHT272		4	<b>College of Nursing</b>
	FE1	<b>Free Elective Course (I)</b>	<b>Elective</b>	-----		2	<b>Variety of university colleges</b>
	NUR 321	<b>Medical Surgical Nursing (2)</b>	<b>Required</b>	NUR222 NUR224 PATH202 PHT272		4	<b>College of Nursing</b>
	NUR 362	<b>Biostatistics &amp; Epidemiology</b>	<b>Required</b>	-----		3	<b>College of Nursing</b>
<b>Level 8</b>	NUR 322	<b>Medical Surgical Nursing (3 )</b>	<b>Required</b>	NUR321		4	<b>College of Nursing</b>

	NUR 1	Program Elective Course (I)	Elective	-----		2	College of Nursing
	GSE (1)	University Elective Course (1)	Elective	-----		2	The General Requirements Center
	NUR342	Psychology For Nursing	Required	-----		3	College of Nursing
Level 9	NUR323	Nursing and Health Informatics	Required	-----		3	College of Nursing
	GS 301	Islamic Studies: Human Rights in Islam	Required	-----		2	The General Requirements Center
	NUR325	Nursing Ethics	Required	-----		2	College of Nursing
	NUR332	Parent and Child Nursing	Required	NUR321		4	College of Nursing
Level 10	NUR421	Critical Care Nursing	Required	NUR322		4	College of Nursing
	NUR441	Psychiatric And Mental Health Nursing	Required	-----		4	College of Nursing
	GSE2	University Elective Course (2)	Elective	-----		2	The General Requirements Center
	NUR 466	Geriatric Nursing	Required	NUR322		3	College of Nursing
Level 11	GS104	Islamic Studies: Islamic Values and Ethics	Required	-----		2	The General Requirements Center
	NUR462	Community/ public Health Nursing	Required	NUR322 NUR331 NUR332		4	College of Nursing
	NUR422	Nursing Administration and Quality Management	Required	-----		4	College of Nursing
	FE2	Free Elective Course (2)	Elective	-----		2	Variety of university colleges
Level 12	NUR420	Emergency Nursing Care	Required	NUR421		3	College of Nursing
	NUR 2	Program Elective Course (2)	Elective	-----		2	College of Nursing



	NUR423	Health Education	Required	-----		2	College of Nursing
	NUR461	Nursing Research	Required	NUR362		4	College of Nursing

Elective Courses:

No	Course Number & Code	Course Title	Credit Units	Units Type		Study Level	Course Requisite
				Theo.	Prac.		
1	NUR 361	Program Elective Course (1) Environmental Health	2	2	-	5 <sup>TH</sup>	-
2	NUR 333	Program Elective Course (1) Evidence Based Nursing	2	2	--	5 <sup>TH</sup>	-
3	NUR 327	Program Elective Course (1) Oncology Nursing	2	2	-	5 <sup>TH</sup>	-
4	NUR 428	Program Elective Course (2) Holistic Nursing	2	2	-	8 <sup>TH</sup>	-
5	NUR 442	Program Elective Course (2) Communication Skills	2	2	-	8 <sup>TH</sup>	-
6	NUR 424	Program Elective Course(2) Transition into Registration and Practice	2	2	-	8 <sup>TH</sup>	-
<b>Total Units of Elective Specialization Courses</b>			<b>4</b>				

The module descriptions (Annex 29) covers the following aspects: Module number, module title, level/trimester, credit hours, language, learning outcomes/goals/skills of the module, content of the module, examination.

After the first year of the study program, students begin to have courses specialized for the "Nursing" program. In trimester 4, 5 and 6, the "Nursing" program focuses on the students' abilities to observe and record. The students describe laboratory and diagnostic procedures and other relevant data needed for client care and recognize safety precautions and infection control practices to protect themselves, clients, and other health care personnel. They are enabled to explain the theoretical concepts and nursing care process in addressing the client's basic needs. Furthermore, the students are prepared to describe the causes, risk factors, manifestations, and complications of common medical and surgical health problems as well as demonstrate competency performing nursing skills when caring for patients with common

medical and surgical health problems and identify the appropriate types, techniques and principles of physical examination in assessing a client.

In trimester 7, 8 and 9, an extension of basic nursing skills is implemented to include increasingly complex diseases. The students continue with medical surgical nursing 2 and 3 and apply the nursing process and management of system disorders as well as demonstrate effective communication skills during patient care in clinical training. Furthermore, they explore skills integral to nursing practice in different specialties as they demonstrate skills in monitoring different health needs during the childbearing periods and regarding children during common medical and surgical problems. The students gain the ability to explain the concepts of evidence-based nursing and problem-solving techniques, explore basic ethical principles, analyze data using nursing informatics to competently deliver nursing care and evaluate the collected data. They also discuss the basic concepts and principles of epidemiology as well as the procedures useful in the surveillance and investigations of health-related states or events and recognize the basic concepts and techniques of biostatistics for preparing for nursing research in the next year.

During the final year the students' progress to the wider application of critical thinking and problem solving to the emergency and critical nursing scenarios. In addition, they touch on the theoretical concept of psychiatric and mental health nursing which is essential in developing knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to meet the individual family and community mental health needs. During this year, the students are prepared to apply the nursing research principles and process nursing practice with a focus on the role of evidence-based practice (EBP) in clinical nursing decision-making. The "Nursing" program integrates the previous students' knowledge and skills with the concepts of the health education process which emphasizes planning, implementing and evaluating health education applied to the individual, family and community. The program also emphasizes nursing management including leadership skills and decisions making in health care settings. Finally, the process of transition into an actual nursing career and the process of registration are considered within a course that is designed to synthesize previous experience in nursing and examine the discipline of nursing as a

profession and the multi-dimensional role of the professional nurse in health systems.

The Bachelor study program “Nursing” uses a variety of teaching and learning methods. These methods and strategies are aligned with the learning outcomes of programs and courses as well as with the assessment methods. Methods of teaching and learning include traditional as lecturers, individual and group work, case studies, practical activity in laboratories, group discussions, assignments, clinical simulations, field training, research project, etc. The “Nursing” program pays particular attention to direct instruction in laboratory, classroom and hospital environment. In addition, blended learning methods are used such as blackboard system, which includes virtual classes, electronic exams, quizzes and discussion boards (SER 1.2.4).

Upon completion of all 12 trimesters of the “Nursing” program, students must attain a mandatory internship year at a local or regional governmental and private hospital, which is not awarded any credits. The internship is one-year on a full-time basis (52 weeks, 5 days/week, 8 hours/day) after the successful completion of all modules of the “Nursing” program. All interns and supervisors are guided by the policies and procedures contained in the “Internship Logbook” (Annex 06). Furthermore, an academic coordinator and a clinical instructor work in tandem to ensure that each intern achieves the objectives of clinical training during the placement. The internship and clinical training unit is the college’s entity that is responsible to coordinate and facilitate the student training process between the College of Nursing and the affiliated health settings. During the internship, students rotate in different units in the hospitals they have been assigned to. Regularly, they remain in a department for 4 or 6 weeks. Additionally, students spend 8 weeks in the unit he or she wishes to remain for further specialization. The students’ progress is monitored by a preceptor (SER 1.2.6).

During the clinical practice courses and the internship year, the students are expected fine-tuning their professional skills to:

- Utilize the knowledge, professional values and discipline specific competences to deliver safe, high quality, compassionate, ethical, legal and accountable practice across the life spectrum and in diverse health care settings.

- Integrate knowledge derived from the basic medical, nursing, and humanities with problem solving skills to provide competent nursing practice.
- Formulate specific nursing care plan to meet needs/problems considering timeframe, workload and available resources with the context of holistic care.
- Apply theoretical principles to the practice of nursing using professional judgement, critical reasoning, problem solving and reflection derived from an evidence-base of nursing and from the applied life, health and social sciences.
- Demonstrate professionalism, leadership and communication skills in providing effective nursing care and quality services.
- Use information technology and numerical skills related to patient / client care, health promotion and continuing professional development.
- Practice as a competent nurse to assess, plan, prioritize, deliver and evaluate nursing care based on a comprehensive and systematic assessment of health and nursing needs in consultation with the person receiving such care and the multi-disciplinary team.

The quality of the internship-training year is assured by means of criteria set by the College of Nursing (Annex 06). These pertain to the setting and the qualifications/competences of clinical instructors. All instructors are required to hold the Bachelor degree in "Nursing" as well as comprehensive clinical experience. Interns are prepared for the internships by an orientation covering hospital policy, health and safety regulations, patient safety and infection control measures (SER 1.2.6).

Concerning the aspect of internationality of the program curriculum, the College of Nursing expresses a vivid strive towards international standards in teaching and research. Hence, the curriculum is complied with international standards in terms of its structure, the grading system, and the system of credit hours as well as the content of clinical training. Furthermore, the program is meet standards of professional competence determined by such institutions as the American Association of College of Nursing (AACN) and various universities both nationally and internationally. The curriculum committee of Nursing college reviewed several national and international nursing curricula from KSA (King Saud University), Jordon (Jordan University)

and USA (Lakeview, Maryland, and Northwestern State) as benchmarks to construct and develop study plan, courses, learning outcomes and credit hours per each course (SER 1.2.8).

Currently, there are no possibilities for studying abroad. However, for students wishing to transfer to the College of Nursing from an internal college within Taibah University or external college affiliated to other Saudi universities are governed by the University's regulation (Annex A).

As the University states, students are familiarized with scientific research, learn to think analytically and to develop academic research proposals. There are four courses with a focus on research aspects: In "Nursing Research", students learn the general principles of research in nursing. "Evidence-based Nursing" involves applications of research in professional practice. In "Nursing and Health Informatics", students explore the use of informatics and information systems in advanced nursing practice and in the course "Biostatistics and Epidemiology", essential principles of these are offered. Furthermore, the students are encouraged to attend research-oriented seminars, workshops and conferences.

Students' academic performance in each course in the program is assessed by different methods including mid-term exams and continuous assessment tasks as quizzes, projects, research critique, assignments, role play assessment, practical evaluation (case study, case presentation, health education classes, observational checklist and nursing care plan), final practical and theoretical exams.

All data regarding the students' performance in examinations, assessment tasks, week due, proportion of total assessment method, criteria for evaluation of students' performance in assignments and different individual and group activities are discussed and represented in the first lecture in each course through the students' course guide.

The following assessment schedule is used to evaluate students' performance at each course:

Assessment task	Week due
Quizzes	Throughout the trimester
Projects, research critique	11 <sup>th</sup>
Assignment- trimester activities	Throughout the trimester
Mid-term exams	7 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup>
Role play assessment	Throughout the trimester
Practical evaluation (case study, case presentation, health education classes, observational checklist and nursing care plan)*	Throughout the trimester
Final practical exam*	12 <sup>th</sup>
Final theoretical exam	13 <sup>th</sup>
*Practical exams are applied only in course of practical training in labs/hospitals.	

According to the University regulations and program specification, students' final grade for each course is calculated based on the results of continuous exams (50 to 60 %) and final exams (40 %). Students should have attended at least 75 % of the contact hours in order to be admitted to the final examinations.

The College of Nursing may allow students to complete a course in the following trimester based on the recommendation of the course instructor after the approval of department. In that case, students receive a temporary grade "IC" (incomplete) which will later be changed into the obtained grade or into "F" in case of failure. There is no re-examination specific schedule; in some extraordinary cases, for instance, sickness or other emergency cases approved by the university system and regulations, re-examination is planned accordingly. Exams are repeated for students who were absent from exams and provided institutionally approved excuse within two weeks. This is applied for quizzes, midterm and final exams (SER 1.2.3).

Students' performance is evaluated according their Grade Point Average (GPA) and cumulated Grade Point Average (cGPA). The University uses a grading scale with 5.00 as the maximum grade:

Grade	%	Weight of Grade	Grade Code
Exceptional	95 – 100	5.00	A +
Excellent	90 – 94	4.75	A
Superior	85 – 89	4.50	B +
Very good	80 – 84	4.00	B
Above average	75 – 79	3.50	C+
Good	70 – 74	3.00	C
High pass	65 – 69	2.50	D +
pass	60 – 64	2.00	D
Fail	Less than 60	1.00	F
In-progress	--	--	IP
In-complete	--	--	IC
Denial	--	--	DN

The College of Nursing assures to follow a non-discrimination policy, although it admits that physical fitness is one of the admission requirements. This is insured by performing a medical examination and a laboratory investigation for each student at the “health services administration department” at Taibah University. The University explains this by the fact, that the students are trained for a profession where they will have to perform physical work. Students with chronic illnesses are admitted to the program provided that their condition does not cause any kind of physical or psychological danger to themselves, their colleagues and patients (SER 1.2.3).

#### **2.2.4 Admission requirements**

Admission policies and procedures along with the requirements are listed in the “Admission and Registration Regulations” (Annex F). In order to be accepted to the study program, students must (SER 1.5.1):

- be a Saudi national or have a Saudi mother and must be a holder of national identity for Saudis,
- hold a general school certificate or an equivalent document not later than 3 years after school graduation,
- hold a Aptitude Test Certificate (ATC) administered by the National Center for Assessment in Higher Education,
- not exceed 25 years of age at the beginning of the study,
- pass the personal interview determine by the college.

The total admission score of an applicant is calculated based on his or her scores in science section of the Saudi secondary school certificate (30 %), the cumulative score of the school certificate as a whole (40 %) and the ATC results (30 %).

Furthermore, candidates are required to provide a medical fitness report from a public hospital. After that, they have to do a medical investigation in medical clinics of Taibah University, who will finally decide about their fitness.

## **2.3 Study conditions and quality assurance**

### **2.3.1 Human resources**

The University emphasizes that the number of instructors in the program varies from one academic year to another because all the staff of the "Nursing" program is employed on the basis of annual renewable contract.

Currently, the teaching staff amounts to a total of 48, distributed to one female professor, 9 associate professors (5 male, 4 female), 22 assistant professors (8 male, 14 female), 6 lecturers (1 male, 5 female), 2 female demonstrator and 8 faculty members on scholarship.

The full teaching load of all regular academic staff members per week is 10 hours for professors, 12 hours for associate professors, 14 hours for assistant professors, 16 hours for lecturers and 18 hours for instructors.

In the academic year 2019/2020, there were 94 male and 254 female students in the program. Considering the number of the teaching staff, the faculty-to-student ratio is 1:6,3 for the male section and 1:7,7 for the female section.

A demonstrator must have at least a Bachelor's degree from one of the Saudi Arabian Universities or other recognized University with a very good average grade, lecturers must hold a Master's degree. Assistant/adjunct professors hold a doctorate degree. To be appointed to the level of associate professor, a doctorate degree, four years' experience in the faculty of a recognized university and a group of scientific research published in refereed journals are required. Being appointed to the level of a full professor requires a doctorate degree and at least eight years' experience in the faculty of a recognized university, including at least four years after promotion to the level of associate professor as well as scientific research published in refereed journals. The faculty's qualifications are documented in the CVs submitted by the University (Annex 40).

Workshops are organized yearly by the Deanship of University Development to develop the capacities of the university staff, raise the efficiency and provide a suitable work environment for excellence and creativity. College additional



workshops are also organized for undergraduate students and graduate students in addition to teaching staff, technicians and administrators. The staff is encouraged to participate in national and international conferences. Moreover, the heads of the department complete an evaluation form for each staff member covering the academic performance, the attendance, the activities inside and outside the college, the collaboration with staff members and students and the complaints received from other members or students. (SER 2.1.3)

Regarding further human resources, a study program coordinator, a clinical skills and laboratory coordinator, student registration and schedule coordinator, the students' academic advice coordinator, the quality assurance coordinator, an exam center coordinator, an alumni unit coordinator, a library unit coordinator, student activities unit coordinator and e-learning unit coordinator are working in the "Nursing" study program.

### **2.3.2 Facilities**

The College of Nursing is divided into male and female sections at Taibah University. The male section is situated within the main building of the University, the female one at the female campus of the University. The male section has 5 classrooms (with the capacity from 20 to 40 seats) and 3 laboratories. The female section contains 7 classrooms (with the capacity from 30 to 50 seats, two of them are shared with the College of Medicine) and 8 laboratories.

The laboratories are called Nursing Simulation Units and divided into basic, intermediate, and advanced units to match students' development according to their course. The male campus has three laboratories: G 9 for Obstetrics & pediatric lab; G 11 for Fundamentals and Geriatric; and G14 for Medical-Surgical (Advanced). On the other hand, the female campus has eight (8) laboratories and the main storage room. Where in rooms A208 and A205 are Obstetrics and Gynecology Lab, A207 is Pediatric Lab, B201 is Emergency and Critical Lab, B204, B 206 for Medical-Surgical, B205 Fundamentals and Geriatric, C203 is Advance Medical-Surgical Lab, and C205 is the storage room. There are more laboratories in the female section since it has more students.

The laboratories are equipped with simulators such as Laerdal's SimMan; a computer based programmable human patient simulator; Pediatric and Infant Simulator (Sim Child and SimBaby); Birthing Simulator and Basic Nursing Care Simulator (Meti Man) and the adult emergency and critical care simulator.

The central library of the University is located on the main campus building. The library offers a collection of study and research material for nursing student. The total number of printed materials related to nursing sciences in the central library is 861 items. In addition to the central library, the College of Nursing has its own 'small library' containing nursing and medicine specific books and learning material. The total number of printed materials related to nursing sciences in the internal library is 1175 items at College of nursing – female section. Electronic library is available for all students. The University Deanship of Library Affairs manages the central library and its branches, as well as the electronic library. The college library opening periods is currently from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm. Central library at male section opening period is from 8:00 am to 9:00 pm and at female section from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm (SER 2.3.2).

The colleges and departments have their own public-access computers and keep a complete inventory of all equipment. The university-wide information kiosks are managed by the Deanship of information technology which provides technical support. Security systems are there to protect the sensitive personal and institutional information and avoid externally introduced viruses. Every classroom and laboratory is equipped with computer terminals and free Wi-fi is available in all university facilities. The college provides a professional screen for documentation and has its own official social media to assure a good communication with students, staff and community. (SER 2.3.3)

All researchers are eligible to fund and can apply through the DSR (Deanship of Scientific Research) portal. Research groups are provided with financial support for the supply of required equipment and research materials. Moreover, a researcher who publishes his/her work in an acknowledged journal can obtain incentives and a reward of excellence. The Deanship of Scientific Research supports researchers with the University Scientific Excellence Prize, with research centers facilities and with the Taibah University Initiatives (SER 2.3.5).

### **2.3.3 Quality assurance**

The University follows the quality concept of the National Center for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA) from which Taibah University has recently got full accreditation for 7 years (2019-2026). That means that all sectors of the university have to be committed to its quality assurance standards. Represented by Deanship of Quality, the University has set up a quality assurance system (Ejadaa) to ensure that all colleges and programs perform all quality measures and rules provided by the NCAAA. This assurance can be achieved through incorporating the best practices related to the educational process and research, following up and evaluating their application as well as locating strengths and weaknesses (SER 1.6.1).

The quality assurance measures of the study program are divided in two cycles: the course report cycle and the program report cycle. The course reports are gathered by the course coordinators at the end of the trimester and submitted to the head of the department. The head of the department then reviews all reports and thereafter prepares the yearly program reports, taking all key performance indicators (KPIs) into consideration. All reports are discussed during the departmental board meeting along with the marks and grade distribution. The student evaluations of the individual courses are discussed to list the most important improvement and strength points. The results of this board meeting are then used to prepare an action plan for the next year and improve the program. The Quality & Academic Accreditation Unit is there to improve the culture of quality and to encourage practices of the Total Quality Assurance Management, working on their application, evaluation and improvement. The Unit is also there to supervise all practices required for an institutional and a program academic accreditation at the college level (SER 1.6.2).

All course instructors are required to follow the approved course's specifications. An evaluation has to be completed by the students at the end of the trimester. The course outcome is then analyzed by the course coordinator based on students' grades, teaching staff comments and course evaluation survey. Depending on the results and the difficulties faced from the students and the teachers, the coordinator implements an action plan to improve the course. The student council meetings at program level also play an important role in the evaluation of the program. (SER 1.6.3).

The practical courses are evaluated through a field experience survey, the Alumni survey and an internship evaluation form. It is also evaluated through the graduate survey and the alumni questionnaire. The college has also designed a survey in which the employers can describe their satisfaction on the graduates' performance. The Statistics and Information Unit analyzes the results and evaluates the related KPIs. Feedback is obtained from stakeholders (employers, hospital trainers of interns and head of corresponding departments) and from the Advisory committee at college and program level. The results are then evaluated by the Vice-Dean for Development and Quality, by the University Data Management Office and by the Statistics and Information Unit (SER 1.6.4).

The number of credit hours per trimester is scheduled to be 8-13 CH, however, according to the academic achievement of students (GPA), they can have a minimum of 8 credit hours and a maximum of 13 hours per trimester, and a maximum of 6 hours for summer courses. A student can register for one more course over the maximum CH allowed per trimester (with approval of the Vice-Dean of academic affairs) in some cases (e.g. for graduation). Lower workload can be approved for students in special situations. The academic advisor has to sign an approval form for withdrawing from one or more courses after discussing all consequences with the student especially in pre-requisite courses (SER 1.6.5).

An introduction week is organized at the beginning of every year to give all information and rules to the students. The University electronic services system gives students all information about the study program, requirements and regulations. All the updated course specifications are available on the websites Student Important links, College of Applied Medical Sciences website and Deanship of Student Affairs services. Complaints can be made through the Student Administration Office. (SER 1.6.7)

The university counseling center, founded in 2010, includes academic, psychological and social mentors and offers individual and group counseling service as well as therapeutic intervention. Every student is linked with an academic advisor from the department faculty members who is there to assist the students facing academic or non-academic difficulties. Meetings are organized with every student to discuss ongoing issues or possible difficulties faced during the trimester. The students are also assisted in the

registration/dropping of courses and in the control of their academic performance. Any problem in courses' registration that cannot be solved is referred to the academic affairs which can communicate with the deanship of admission and registration. 4 office hours per week are reserved for the students in the timetable of each faculty. (SER 1.6.8)

A report on gender equality is attached in Attachment 20. A nursery is available at the campus and the students get a special discount on children day care (available in the week from 7am to 4pm). The university counseling center helps students with special living situations. The deanship of student affairs supports students who have a high GPA (4.5 or more) for 3 trimesters by offering a financial reward of 1000 Saudi Riyals and by offering sports competitions, cultural or social activities. The medical center provides free health services to the students and their family. All essential lab investigations are provided and the pharmacy is also there to provide the prescribed medications. (SER 1.6.9).

The university facilities are planned to provide a barrier free environment for physically challenged students. Students with chronic non-infectious diseases might be admitted in the program following special reports and guidelines for accepted disabled students announced on the web site. The Student Disability Center is there to serve the students with disabilities.

## **2.4 Information about the University**

The Taibah University was founded in 2003 by merging the two branches of King Abdulaziz University and Imam Mohamed bin Saud Islamic University in Madinah. There were more than 60,000 students enrolled in 2020. The University has 23 active colleges and 139 active departments and offers 120 undergraduate and graduate programs. From the 23 colleges, 15 are located on the main campus while the 8 others are in Yanbu, Al-Ola, Khaibar, Hnakiyya and Badr. The University has a total of 153 buildings with 208 student labs, 67 research labs, 17 research centers, 163 computer labs and 15 university libraries.

In order to improve the quality of education, the ministry of higher education has set up 8 strategic goals to align with the 2030 vision in higher education. The University has aligned its strategic planning with the national vision and

already achieved projects, for example the NCAAA institutional accreditation and the digital transformation initiative. (SER 3.1.1)

There are four scientific departments in the College of Nursing:

- Medical Surgical Nursing,
- Maternity and Childhood Nursing,
- Community Health Nursing,
- Psychiatry and Mental Health Nursing.

The college is aligning with the “Taibah university program transformation initiative”. Specifically, the program is currently under revision to ensure the alignment of the courses with criteria required by the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties (SCHS). Some modifications have already been made such as the restructuring of the university deanships and the removal of some vice deans from the college. (SER 3.2.1)

As part of a national initiative, led by the Saudi Arabian ministry education, all Saudi Arabian public universities are moving from a semester system (2 semesters per academic year) to a trimester (3 trimester per academic year). As demonstrated in the table below, the number of weeks dedicated for teaching per trimester are to be changed from 15 to 12. To compensate for the change in the number of weeks per trimester, the duration of a single lecture will be increased from 50 to 60 minutes, whilst the duration of practical sessions will be increased from 100 minutes to 120 minutes per session. It is however, important to highlight that this change has just been applied in the beginning of this academic year (28<sup>th</sup> of August 2022).

	Semester system	Trimester system
Number of semesters per year	2	3
Number of teaching weeks per semester	15	12
Number of weeks dedicated for exams	2	1
Overall duration of a semester (weeks)	17	13
Duration of a single lecture (min)	50	60
Duration of a single practical (min)	100	120

According to the University, this change will not affect any of the related accreditation criteria nor standards. Rather, the proposed changes will allow the transition from a semester system to a trimester system without impacting the program learning outcome, nor program's study plan, as program administrative teams have rearranged courses over 12 level rather than 8 levels for 4-year programs.

### **3 Expert report**

#### **3.1 Preliminary remarks**

The Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences (hereinafter AHPGS) was commissioned by Taibah University (hereinafter the University) to accredit the study program “Nursing” (Bachelor of Nursing).

The on-site visit evaluation of the study program “Nursing”, as well as the study programs “Clinical Laboratory Sciences”, “Diagnostic Radiology Technology” and “Clinical Nutrition” offered at the Taibah University, was carried out on December 12 and 13, 2022 at Medina, Saudi Arabia.

The documents of the University, the feedback from the experts to the documents and the results of the discussions with the representatives of the University during the on-site visit serve as a foundation for the statements made in the Expert Report.

The following experts were appointed by the Accreditation Commission of AHPGS for the evaluation of the study program:

**Prof. Dr. Dr. Anja Bosy-Westphal**

Christian-Albrechts-University Kiel, Germany  
Institute for Human Nutrition and Food Science  
Head of the Department of Human Nutrition  
Spheres of professional activity: clinical nutrition and dietetics

**Dr. Mathias Maximilian Dilger**

Albert-Ludwigs-University Freiburg, Germany  
licensed physician and currently student of dentistry

**Prof. Dr. Johannes Keogh**

Fulda University of Applied Sciences, Germany  
Professor of Nursing Sciences  
Former program leader for Nursing at the Faculty of Nursing and Health at Fulda University of Applied Sciences  
Research and science in Nursing, Nursing Education, Public Health, Preventive Care and Health Promotion  
Qualification as nurse, midwife, community nurse and in psychiatric patient care



**Prof. Dr. Gerd Mikus**

Ruprecht-Karls-University of Heidelberg, Germany

Professor and former Deputy Medical Director of the Department of Clinical Pharmacology and Pharmacoepidemiology at the Ruprechts-Karls-University of Heidelberg

Deputy head of the Ethics Committee of the Landesärztekammer Baden-Württemberg, Member of the Expert Committee of controlled substances of the Federal Ministry of Health, Germany

**Prof. Dr. Waldemar Zylka**

Westphalian University, Campus Gelsenkirchen, Germany

Professor of Physics, Medical Engineering and Medical Physics at the Faculty of Physical Engineering

Dean of the Study Program “Medical Radiology Technology” (Bachelor of Science)

Founding member of the Westphalian Institute of Health

Member of the Germany Physical Society (DPG), Germany Society of Biomedical Engineering (DGBMT)

According to the Rules for the Accreditation of Study Programs and for System Accreditation (determined by the decision of the Accreditation Commission, of December 8, 2009 in the version of February 20, 2013, Drs. AR 20/2013), the task of the experts in the accreditation procedures is to evaluate the education concept of a specific study program as well as to estimate the possibility of its successful implementation. This concerns, in particular, qualification objectives of the study program, its conceptual integration into the system of education, the concept of the study program, feasibility of the content and scope of studies, the examination system, study-relevant collaborations, personnel, material and space resources, transparency and documentation, application of the results of quality assurance for further development of the study program (it is especially important to present the analyses and evaluation results of student workload, academic accomplishments and employment of graduates, which are to be documented and taken into account within the framework of continuous development of the study program), as well as the provision of gender equality and equal opportunities.

The on-site visit of the experts is carried out in accordance with the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area”

(ESG), established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). After the announcement of the accreditation decision, the expert report will be published as a part of the Final Report.

### **3.2 Basic information about the study program**

The main objective of the Bachelor study program “Nursing” offered at the College of Nursing of Taibah University is to provide the community with scientifically and skillfully qualified nurses through a stimulating educational and research environment that contributes to the development and service of the community.

The study program requires the obtainment of 135 credit hours (CH) according to the internal credit hour system. One credit hour is equal to one contact hour of lectures, two hours of lab/practical hours and 3 hours of hospital training/field training hours per week. The program applies the University’s internal credit system. Thus, students’ performance is evaluated based on the results of a Grade Point Average (GPA) and the Cumulative Grade Point Average (cGPA). GPA is calculated by dividing the sum of the grade points (with 5 being the best achievable grade and 0 being the worst) received in all courses registered during one semester by the total credits received from all courses a student has completed since joining the program by the sum of the credit hours of these courses. According to the University regulations, students with a GPA of at least 2.00 are considered to have successfully completed the respective course. To successfully complete the whole program, students have to pass all obligatory examinations with the minimum grade of 2.00 cGPA score.

The total workload of the program constitutes of 5,311 hours, of which 2,676 hours are contact hours, 2,080 are training/internship hours and 555 are hours of independent study. It is a full-time study program with a regular duration of 4 years/12 trimesters plus one year of rotary internships. As part of a national initiative led by the Saudi Arabian ministry of education, all Saudi Arabian public universities had to move from a semester system to a trimester system. Therefore, the number of weeks dedicated for teaching per trimester were changed from 15 to 12. To compensate for the change in the number of weeks per trimester, the duration of a single lecture was increased from 50 to 60 minutes, whilst the duration of practical sessions was increased from 100

minutes to 120 minutes per session. This change has been applied in the beginning of the academic year 2022.

The program curriculum consists of 46 modules, out of which 10 mandatory courses are taught in the preparatory year. 36 modules are taught program-specific, out of which 30 are mandatory and 2 (out of 6) are elective program courses as well as 4 elective university level courses.

Admission requirements of the program include a general school certificate or an equivalent document not later than 3 years as well as an Aptitude Test Certificate (ATC) administered by the National Center for Assessment in Higher Education. Upon completion of the study program, students are awarded with the academic title "Bachelor of Nursing".

The average students' intake is 125 students per year. Admission takes place every September. The first batch of students has been admitted to the program in the academic year 2015/2016. Up to now, 516 students have graduated from the program. The main language of instruction is English. No tuition fees are charged to Saudi nationals. Students also receive monthly governmental stipends until they graduate.

### **3.3 Expert Report**

The on-site visit was carried out on December 12 and 13, 2022, according to the previously agreed schedule. Representatives from the head office of AHPGS accompanied the expert group.

The expert group met on December 11, 2022, for preliminary talks prior to the on-site visit. They discussed the submitted application documents and the results of the written evaluation as well as questions that had been raised. Furthermore, they prepared the plan of the on-site visit at the University.

During the on-site visit, experts conducted discussions with the University management, representatives of the College of Nursing, the Chair, Vice Chair and the teaching staff of the program "Nursing" as well as with students currently studying in the program. Furthermore, they inspected the learning premises, such as lecture halls, seminar classrooms, library, and computer classes. Moreover, experts had the opportunity to see the equipment and the capacity of the laboratories.

The expert report is structured in compliance with the international accreditation criteria from AHPGS which are based on the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG), established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). The study program will be described and analyzed in a comprehensive manner below. The documents submitted by the University, the experts’ feedback to the documents, the observations made during the on-site visit, the results of discussions with the representatives of the University, and members of the Faculty of Nursing serve as the foundation for the statements made in the expert report.

### **3.3.1 Program aims and their implementation**

Taibah University is one of the biggest universities in Medina region and aims to be an internationally recognized, comprehensive Saudi university dedicated to excellence in teaching, research and community service. To achieve this vision, the University has set up a strategic plan with the following directions:

- 1) Excellence in teaching and learning
- 2) Utilizing research & graduate studies for community development
- 3) Building active partnership with the community
- 4) Continuous improvement of administrative & financial management
- 5) Diversifying income resources
- 6) Creating an appealing & inclusive environment
- 7) Enhancing university ranking national, regionally & internationally

During the on-site visit, the experts inquire about the university's internationalization strategy. The university management reports that collaborations with France, the UK, and other countries are planned and partly already implemented. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education has also set up a "Human Capability Development" program, which will make it easier for international students to study in Saudi Arabia in the future. Among other things, a so-called "academic visa" is to be introduced to make the visa process much easier for foreign students. Furthermore, full scholarships for international students are planned. As a consequence, the admission regulations (e.g. being Saudi national) are going to change, which the experts positively acknowledge. The experts welcome these developments and are convinced that the commitment and engagement are given, as many of the

faculty completed their master's degree and PhD programs abroad, which brings nationals in contact with other research strategies and a broader spectrum of experiences from which the University might profit. From the experts' point of view, the assessment of the Bachelor study program "Nursing" according to international standards was also an important first step.

The experts further inquire regarding the research strategy at Taibah University as well as within the "Nursing" program. The experts gained the impression that research as a topic seemed to be deemed very important for all faculty as well as students involved in the study program. The experts learned that there are already plans for the implementation of a master's program at the College of Nursing to further expand the research activities. The experts take a positive note of the vision and strategic development plans. As they were not visible in the provided documents, the experts recommend to present the vision of the College of Nursing more actively, as this will make it more attractive for future students and could also open career paths for students seeking future positions such as managers or even teaching staff. Furthermore, the urgency for completing the University Hospital was mentioned by all stakeholders involved. From the experts' point of view, this would also open up future research possibilities, especially within the master's program. Therefore, the completion of the teaching hospital should be pushed. Lastly, in order to enhance the research skills of students in the "Nursing" program, the experts strongly recommend implementing at least a graduation project as also available at the College of Applied Medical Sciences or even a bachelor thesis as a final proof of academic competencies.

The Bachelor program "Nursing" pursues specific qualification objectives. The program's goal is to prepare the students to participate and cooperate actively in health teams providing nursing care to individuals, families and communities and to expand students' ability to use critical thinking scientifically and professionally in solving patient health problems. The graduates shall be able to work in governmental hospitals, private health care centers, primary healthcare facilities, rehabilitation centers and various community nursing facilities.

The learning objectives of the "Nursing" program are based on standards within the national qualification framework for Saudi Arabia developed by the

National Center for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA). The five domains namely are knowledge; cognitive skills; interpersonal skills and responsibility; communication, information technology, numerical; and psychomotor. The experts confirm that the study program focuses on specific qualification objectives. These objectives cover professional and interdisciplinary aspects and particularly refer to the domain of academic competences, competences necessary for a qualified employment, skills of social commitment and personal development. The experts take especially a positive note on the very positive feedback of the “Nursing” graduates regarding the employability.

From the experts’ point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

### **3.3.2 Structure of the study program**

The Bachelor study program “Nursing” is a full-time study program with a regular duration of four years / 12 trimesters plus one year of rotary internships. The curriculum consists of 46 modules, out of which 10 are to be absolved in the preparatory year.

The first year of the study program aims to familiarize students with the academic environment and set the foundation for the further courses with topics like English language, university life skills, natural and related science. Also, students absolve courses like Arabic language and Islamic culture. These courses are shared between all students of Taibah University. In total, there are 18 courses within the “Nursing” program which are shared with other colleges like the College of Medicine, College of Pharmacy and the College of Applied Medical Sciences. Furthermore, the teaching staff reports on collaborations on the research level regarding graduation projects, where the students have the chance to work in interdisciplinary teams. The experts take positive note of the interdisciplinary collaboration between the health-related study programs at Taibah University. The experts see the planned teaching hospital also as a great opportunity to intensify interdisciplinary cooperation among students and teachers.

After the first year the students begin to have courses specialized for the “Nursing” program. In trimester 4, 5 and 6 the program focuses on the students’ abilities to observe and record. In trimester 7, 8 and 9 an extension of basic nursing skills is implemented to include increasingly complex

diseases. The students are also enabled to demonstrate effective communication skills as well as the management of system disorders during patient care in clinical training. During the final year, the students' progress to the wider application of critical thinking and problem solving to the emergency and critical nursing scenarios. Finally, the process of transitioning into an actual nursing career and the process of enrollment within a course designed to synthesize previous nursing experiences and examine the discipline of nursing as a profession and the multidimensional role of the professional nurse in health care systems is considered.

The experts acknowledge the very detailed course files with its contents and aims, which allows a high level of transparency. In the experts' opinion, the structure of the curriculum and especially the support mechanisms seem to make the workload manageable (*see also criterion 'admission and feasibility'*).

Practical skills are gained during the clinical courses as well as the mandatory internship year which must be completed after the four years of study. During the internship the students work on a full-time basis (52 weeks, 5 days/week, 8 hours/day) at local or regional governmental and private hospitals. The experts appreciate that during the internship students are supervised from both sides, the academic coordinator as well as the clinical instructor to ensure that the objective of the clinical training is met. All interns and supervisors are guided by the policies and procedures contained in the 'internship logbook'. Furthermore, the 'internship and clinical training unit' is responsible to coordinate and facilitate the students' training process between the College of Nursing and the affiliated hospitals. The University ensures that the internship is also regularly evaluated by the students, stakeholders as well as the clinical instructors. If there are any difficulties during the internship, the responsible staff within the "Nursing" program are assisting the students in solving the problem or even changing the placement for the internship. This is also verified by the students, which the experts positively acknowledge.

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

### **3.3.3 Admission and Feasibility**

The admission policies and procedures along with the requirements are properly documented and made publicly available. Admission requirements include:

- being a Saudi national or having a Saudi mother,
- holding a general school certificate or an equivalent document not later than 3 years after school graduation,
- holding an aptitude test certificate administered by NCAAA,
- not exceeding 25 years of age at the beginning of the study,
- passing the personal interview determined by the college.

As the first year of study comprises medical foundations as well as basic knowledge in university life and communication skills to compensate deficiencies from secondary school, the experts determine the admission procedure and requirements to be appropriate. They correspond to the standards of the study program.

The experts draw attention to the relatively high number of exams to be passed during the “Nursing” program. The University states that the system of midterm and final exams is determined by the government. In order to prepare students for the level of difficulty and volume of exams, the type as well as the time of the different examinations is defined and communicated to the students transparently at the beginning of each course. The experts confirm that the University takes measures to guarantee the feasibility of the study program despite the high workload. The organization of the education process ensures the successful implementation of the study program.

On site, it became obvious that the teaching staff follows an “open-door-policy”. In the first week of each year, students undergo an orientation which familiarizes them with available support services and where the colleges and departments are introduced. The experts positively highlight that senior students are also involved in organizing the orientation week and guiding the new students.

As another support mechanism, an academic advisor is responsible for a small number of students from the beginning of each semester. Students are supported through advisors, course coordinators or personal tutors with their registration process, selecting a study program, financial and personal issues and their performance during the semester. If the students have problems besides academic issue, a social support unit is installed at the University. The experts find the support services at the University to be exemplary and conducive to the health and success of the student body.



From the experts' point of view, the requirements of the criterion are fulfilled.

### **3.3.4 Examination system and transparency**

The University uses a continuous assessment process to ensure the quality of education for its students. This is achieved by evaluating the performance of the students through a series of exams and quizzes that are scheduled during the academic trimesters. Students in the "Nursing" program are not required to write a Bachelor thesis or to conduct a graduation project (*see also criterion 1*).

The study program has a course-related examination system. Its implementation, including the grading system, course load regulations, repetition of courses and exams is regulated and transparent for the students. In the experts' opinion, the study program includes a high number of exams which causes a high workload not only for students but also for the teaching staff. The transparent information of examination methods and of the examination schedule at the beginning of each term makes the number of assessments during and at the end of each trimester manageable. An examination can be repeated once. Students who cannot attend the test due to health issues or other unforeseen circumstances are allowed to take the test on another agreed day. If the examination is failed twice, students must redo the course in the following semester. Thus, the experts conclude that the examinations, although numerous, serve to determine whether the envisaged qualification objectives have been achieved or not and are focused on students' knowledge. The requirements to students' performance in examinations are regulated and published. The frequency of examinations, as well as their organizations, is appropriate.

During the round of talks, the University reports on an electronic exam system introduced at Taibah University as part of digital transformation 2019. This enabled the university to maintain its course of studies as far as possible even during the Corona pandemic. Through the digital transformation system all of the course information as well as academic support mechanisms, e.g. add and drop courses or academic advising are provided. The University also offered training programs for students and teachers to get familiar with e-learning, which the experts positively acknowledge.

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

### **3.3.5 Teaching staff and material equipment**

The “Nursing” program is carried out by one female professor, 9 associate professors (5 male, 4 female), 22 assistant professors (8 male, 14 female), 6 lecturers (1 male, 5 female), 2 female demonstrators and 8 faculty members currently on scholarship. Considering the total of 94 male and 254 female currently enrolled students, the student-to-faculty ratio is 1:6 for the male and 1:8 for the female section. The experts positively acknowledge the good ratio.

Regarding the employment process, the qualification and experience of the teaching staff is closely evaluated prior to the appointment decision. Overall, the teaching and academic staff of the College of Nursing shows a very high level of commitment and potential for the execution as well as further development of the study program they are responsible for. The expert group concludes that there is a strong corporate identity and positive group dynamics among the University and faculty administrations.

The experts find the number of human resources allocated to the program to be sufficient to carry out its functions. The teaching staff within the Bachelor program “Nursing” is in possession of academic and technical credentials and experience adequate to their responsibilities. The University informs its employees about opportunities for personal and professional development in clear ways, and actively encourages their participation in workshops, training courses and conferences intended to further their ability which is confirmed during the talks with the staff on site. New teaching staff is thoroughly briefed about the program and their teaching responsibilities before they can start working. Students evaluate the performance of all teaching and other staff periodically.

On-site, the experts were shown around the College of Nursing’s premises at the campus as well as the skills labs, where students within the “Nursing” program gain their practical skills. The experts were satisfied with the quality of the laboratories and clinical areas used to train students in the Bachelor program “Nursing”. The laboratories consist of three laboratories at the male campus (obstetrics & pediatric lab; fundamentals and geriatric; medical-surgical advanced) and eight laboratories at the female campus (two obstetrics and gynecology lab; pediatric lab; emergency and critical lab; two medical-surgical labs; fundamentals and geriatric lab; advanced medical-surgical lab).

According to the experts, the skills labs are equipped with all relevant devices and simulators (Gaumard simulators with computer based programmable human patient simulator; pediatric and infant simulator; birthing simulator and basic nursing care simulator and the adult emergency and critical care simulator). The experts positively acknowledge, that the simulators showed signs of regular usage and the fact that the students were prepared in the laboratories before their clinical placement praised. It was ascertained by the experts that the Bachelor study program “Nursing” has ample available teaching facilities at its disposal. In addition to using the laboratories for the practical courses, the experts recommend using external cooperation opportunities even before the internship, on the one hand to get to know current equipment and on the other hand to evaluate the opportunities of the labor market.

The central library of the University is located on the main campus building. The library offers a collection of study and research material for nursing students. The total number of printed materials related to nursing sciences in the central library is 861 items. In addition to the central library, the College of Nursing has its own ‘small library’ containing nursing and medicine specific books and learning material. The total number of printed materials related to nursing sciences in the internal library is 1175 items at the College of Nursing – female section. An electronic library is available for all students. The University deanship of library affairs manages the central library and its branches, as well as the electronic library. The college library opening periods is currently from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm. The central library opening period at the male section is from 8:00 am to 9:00 pm and at female section from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm (SER 2.3.2).

The experts state that the learning resource materials and associated services are consistent with the requirements of the programs and the courses offered by them.

From the experts’ point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

### **3.3.6 Quality assurance**

The University follows the quality concept of the National Center for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA) from which Taibah University has recently got full accreditation for seven years until 2026.

According to the experts, Taibah University has a well-structured system of quality assurance spread across all its units. The University has established a quality assurance hierarchy which connects from the deanship to quality to all colleges and study programs. The quality assurance measures of the "Nursing" program are divided in two cycles: The course reports are gathered by the course coordinators at the end of the trimester and submitted to the head of the department. The head of the department then reviews all reports and thereafter prepares the yearly program reports, taking all key performance indicators (KPIs) into consideration. All reports are discussed during the departmental board meeting along with the marks and grade distribution. The student evaluations of the individual courses are discussed to list the most important improvement and strength points. The results of this board meeting are then used to prepare an action plan for the next year and to improve the program. The experts conclude that the University has a well-established, documented and published concept of quality assurance regarding the education process, teaching and research, which serves as the basis for the quality-oriented development and implementation of its study programs and, therefore, also for further development of the "Nursing" program. As the University states during the on-site visit, the student council meetings at the program level also plays an important role in the evaluation of the "Nursing" program, which is confirmed by the students.

The results of the internal quality assurance management are applied to the continuous development of the study program. In doing so, the University takes into close consideration the quality evaluation results as well as the analyses of students' workload, their academic accomplishments and feedback from graduates as well as other relevant stakeholders.

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

### **3.3.7 Gender equality and equal opportunities**

The College of Nursing has both female and male students and assures that it provides equal admission, education, examination and participation opportunities for both groups of students. The Taibah University demonstrates its commitment to the provision of equal opportunities for all students, within the cultural boundaries of the local society and shows openness for diversity and social developments. A nursery is available at the

campus, where students get a special discount on child day care. The university counseling center helps students with special living situations. It was founded in 2012 and includes academic, psychological and social mentors and offers individual and group counseling service as well as therapeutic intervention. Furthermore, the medical center provides free health services to the students and their families.

The experts positively emphasize the handling of students with chronic illnesses and/or disabilities. Prior to admission, a medical examination will be conducted and an interview with the academic council and admission committee will be held to discuss whether the student can be admitted to the program. The University has implemented the student disability center. The accessibility of the campus was assured on site. It was well noted that the University was also able to immediately give examples of students benefiting of the support program for disabled or chronic diseased students.

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

### **3.4 Summary**

The experts sum up that the overall impression of the Taibah University is very positive. The experts welcome the internationalization plans in KSA and at Taibah University. Research motivation at the university can also be further strengthened with the help of the development of master's degree programs and the completion of the teaching hospital. Digitalization at the university is working well and is positively noted by the experts. The University presents itself convincingly as an open-minded and dynamic institution with willingness to import new ideas and recommendations for further enhancement.

A number of additional favorable characteristics and achievements of the study program "Nursing" were demonstrated by the management of the University, the representatives of the College of Nursing, those of the departments as well as of the study body, such as a strong commitment to quality assurance and a very well-functioning support mechanism system. Moreover, the experts highlight the thorough and comprehensive curriculum of the study program. Hence, the objectives meet the requirements of the current job market of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Based on the information from written documents and the results of the on-site visit, the experts conclude that the study program "Nursing" offered at the Taibah University fulfills the above-described criteria. Hence, the experts recommended that the Accreditation Commission of AHPGS make a positive decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

For the continuous development of the study program, the experts have outlined the following recommendations:

- The University should present the vision of the College of Nursing regarding implementing a Master study program more actively.
- The completion of the teaching hospital should be pushed and the resulting opportunity to intensify interdisciplinary cooperation among students and teachers should be utilized.
- At least a graduation project as also available at the College of Applied Medical Sciences or even a bachelor thesis as a final proof of academic competencies should be implemented.
- In addition to using the laboratories for the practical courses external cooperation opportunities should be used even before the internship, on the one hand to get to know current equipment and on the other hand to evaluate the opportunities of the labor market.

## **4 Decision of the accreditation commission**

### **Decision of the Accreditation Commission of February 16, 2023**

This resolution of the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS is based on the application, as well as the expert review and the on-site visit covered in the expert report.

The on-site visit of Taibah University took place on December 12 and 13, 2022 according to the previously agreed-upon schedule.

The accreditation decision is based on the “Accreditation Criteria for International Program Accreditation” which have been developed in close accordance with the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG), established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS discussed the procedural documents and the vote of the expert group.

The regulated study period in the program “Nursing” is four years / twelve trimesters + one-year internship (not credited). The study program requires the obtainment of 135 credit hours (CH) according to the internal credit hour system. The study program consists of 46 courses out of which 10 courses are absolved during the unified scientific track and 36 are study program specific. The language of instruction is English. The bachelor study program “Nursing” is completed with awarding of the academic degree “Bachelor of Nursing”. Admissions take place every fall semester. The first batch of students was admitted to the study program in the academic year 2015/2016.

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS considers that all Accreditation Criteria are fulfilled and adopts the following decision:

The study program “Nursing” is accredited for the duration of five years, until September 30, 2028.

For further development and enhancement of the study program, as well as of the University as a whole, the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS supports the recommendations articulated in the expert report. Additionally, the Accreditation Commission recommends to translate the internal credit

hour system into the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and attach it as an appendix to the diploma to ensure international compatibility.