

Akkreditierungsagentur
im Bereich Gesundheit und Soziales
Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences



Assessment Report

**for the Application of
Beirut Arab University, Lebanon
Faculty of Health Sciences,
for the Accreditation of the Study Program "Nursing",
Bachelor of Sciences in Nursing**

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Table of content

1	Introduction.....	4
2	Information about the University	7
3	Overview	9
	3.1 Procedure-related documents	9
	3.2 Structural data of the study program	10
4	Expert Report	12
	4.1 Program aims and their implementation	13
	4.2 Structure of the study program	16
	4.3 Admission and Feasibility	26
	4.4 Examination system and transparency	27
	4.5 Teaching staff and material equipment.....	30
	4.6 Quality assurance.....	34
	4.7 Gender equality and equal opportunities	37
5	Conclusion	39
6	Decision of the accreditation commission.....	40

1 Introduction

The Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences (AHPGS) is an interdisciplinary and multi-professional organization. Its mission is to evaluate Bachelor and Master programs in the fields of health and social sciences, as well as in related domains such as law or economics. By conducting 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 implementing the quality assurance recommendations made by the AHPGS. Since 2004, the AHPGS has been a member of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA). In 2006, AHPGS also joined the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (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). Furthermore, the AHPGS has been listed in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) since 2009.

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 criteria¹:

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

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 fulfil the assessment spheres as well as the AHPGS standards. With this

¹ Approved by the AHPGS Accreditation Commission

information, the AHPGS produces a summary, 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 applicable accreditation criteria valid in Lebanon. Consequently, the experts comprise a short summary regarding the study programs.

III. Site visit (peer-review)

The experts carry out a 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. These discussions provide 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, methods of assessment (selection of students, assessment of achievements, students' support), as well as the program management (program administration, external assurance of study quality).

Following the site visit, the expert group writes 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 for the opportunity to issue a response opinion.

The expert report as well as the University's response opinion – together with the provided documents – are 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 foundation for the commission's decision regarding the recommendation for accreditation of the study program. Consequently, the decision – together with all other documentation – is forwarded to AHPGS Accreditation Commission for it to reach a decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

2 Information about the University

Beirut Arab University is a private non-profit institution for higher education that was founded by the Lebanese El-Bir and Ishan Society in 1960 with the Faculty of Arts (since 2016: Faculty of Human Sciences) and the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences. Other faculties were established during the following years, the last of which was launched in 2005, which was the Faculty of Nursing. The Faculty of Nursing was transformed into the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) in 2008 to meet the rising needs of the local community for professionals specialized in health sciences and is considered the most recent addition to the Beirut Arab University (Annex 10). It hosts the departments of Nursing, Nutrition and Dietetics, Physical Therapy and Medical Laboratory Technology.

The University campus is located in the center of Beirut, Lebanon. The Faculty of Health Sciences is situated on the 5th to 6th floors of the Hariri Building, which is an annexation to the main campus that was constructed in 1978. In recent years, the University has established three branch campuses in the cities of Debbieh, Tripoli, and Bekaa. Currently, there are a total number of 7,383 undergraduate and 740 postgraduate students enrolled at the University. The University consists of the 10 following faculties, which together offer 45 undergraduate and 67 postgraduate study programs:

- Faculty of Human Sciences
- Faculty of Law and Political Science
- Faculty of Business Administration
- Faculty of Architecture-Design and Built Environment
- Faculty of Engineering
- Faculty of Science
- Faculty of Pharmacy
- Faculty of Medicine
- Faculty of Dentistry
- Faculty of Health Sciences

The University describes itself as an educational institution classified as a non-profit organization. It is described that BAU's budget and expenses rely mainly on students' tuition fees and all other types of administrative fees that contribute to

about 90% of the University's income. BAU has also delivered its stream of revenues to develop a new funding model in the light of a highly competitive market. The revenue streams are detailed as follows: BAU specialized clinics (the dental clinics, the nutrition and dietetics clinic); consultancy services, laboratory testing and experimentation; Center for Continuous Professional Development (CCPE); Governmental funds for scientific research projects at BAU such as those coming from the National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS); Philanthropic funding coming mainly from donating bodies (SER 2.3.4).

Information about the Department

The Department of Nursing was established in the academic year 2005/2006. At the time being, there are a total of 181 registered students in the Beirut campus and 84 students in the Tripoli campus. The department offers a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a Master of Science in Nursing, which was established in the academic year 2009/2010.

In spring 2015, a bridging program was introduced based on Order of Nurses in Lebanon (ONL) recommendations to maintain quality in nursing education. It allows students who hold a Technique Supérieur (TS) with a minimum average 12/20 to complete at least 50% of required university credit hours to upgrade their degrees from TS to BS.

Since spring 2013–2014, all students of the Medical Sector Faculties have started participating in Interprofessional Education for Healthcare course (IPEH512) as a mandatory requirement for graduation. In IPEH, students encounter clinical case scenarios and try to solve problems using evidence-based practice along with students from other medical fields, including medical doctors, pharmacists, dentists, Medical Lab Technologists, physical therapists and Nutritionists and dietetics. Through interactive learning, students will explore ways in which their professions can work together to optimize patient's care while respecting each other's roles and responsibilities.

The Nursing Simulation Lab on the fifth floor of the Hariri building underwent renovation in 2014 to accommodate more equipment and students. It offers an environment for nursing students to learn and practice skills before real hospital situations. The lab serves various health sciences departments, including Medicine, Pharmacy, and Dentistry (SER 3.2.1).

3 Overview

3.1 Procedure-related documents

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 the Beirut Arab University (hereinafter the University) was submitted to the Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Science (AHPGS) in electronic format on June 23, 2023. The contract between the University and the AHPGS was signed on January 12, 2023.

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	Curriculum
Annex 02	Module Descriptions
Annex 03	Teaching Matrix
Annex 04	Teachers CV (Beirut-Tripoli)
Annex 05	Faculty Handbook I
Annex 06	Faculty Handbook II
Annex 07	Erasmus + Agreement
Annex 08	Clinical Training Manual
Annex 09	Training Agreement
Annex 10	Mobility Exchange List
Annex 11	Work Placement Regulations
Annex 12	Diploma Supplement
Annex 13	Module Chart

Annex 14	Declaration of Commitment
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Alongside the study-program-specific documents, the following documents pertain to all study programs submitted for external evaluation:

Annex A	University Code of Ethics
Annex B	University Strategy (2020–2030)
Annex C	Institutional Review Board
Annex D	Undergraduate Academic Advising
Annex E	Undergraduate Rules and Regulations
Annex F	Student Assessment Guidelines
Annex G	Grading Policy
Annex H	Online Exams Guidelines
Annex I	Online Exams Student Directives

The application as well as the additional documents build the basis for the present summary. The layout bears no significance, as it solely reflects the agreed standard within the University.

3.2 Structural data of the study program

University	Beirut Arab University (BAU)
Faculty/Department	Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS), Department of Nursing
Cooperation partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hammoud Hospital – Sidon, - Al-Makassed General Hospital– Beirut, - Rafic Hariri University Hospital – Beirut - Al Zahraa Hospital – Beirut - Military Hospital – Beirut - Raei Hospital – Sidon, - Labib Medical Center – Sidon, - Sibline Governmental Hospital – Chouf, - Bellevue Medical Center – Mansourieh,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dar Al Ajaza Al Islamiyyah – Beirut, - New Mazloum Hospital – Tripoli, - Nini Hospital – Tripoli , - Haykel Hospital – Tripoli, - Tripoli Governmental Hospital – Tripoli, - Monla Hospital – Tripoli, - Dar El-Chifaa Hospital – Tripoli, - Orange Naso Governmental Hospital– Tripoli, - Hamidi Medical Center – Tripoli.
Title of the study program	Nursing
Degree awarded	Bachelor of Sciences (B.Sc.) in Nursing
Form of studies	Full-time
Organizational structure	Day-time on Campus program. Monday–Friday 8:00–16:00
Language of Studies	English
Period of education	Six semesters (three years)
Credit Points (CP) according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)	212 ECTS
Hours/CP	1 lecture contact hour = 1 credit 2/3 hours of tutorial, practical or clinical classes = 1 credit (Each credit point requires 2 hours of self-study.)
Workload	Total: 3724 hours Contact hours: 2604 hours Individual: 1120 hours
CP for the final paper	2
Launch date of the study program	Academic year 2005/2006
First accreditation	2017 by AHPGS
Time of admission	Fall semester
Number of available places on the program	80 students per year
Number of enrolled students by now	728 students in Beirut 317 students in Tripoli

Particular enrollment conditions	Entrance exam (held twice annually); English test; Aptitude Test (Thinking Skills, Scientific Knowledge: Biology, Chemistry, Physics); Interview.
Tuition fees	The average fees per semester are around 43,470,000 LBP + 2,440USD\$. Fees are calculated based on credit hours undertaken.

Chart 1: Structural data of the study program

4 Expert Report

The site visit was carried out virtually on November 15-16, 2023, according to the previously agreed schedule. Representatives from the head office of AHPGS accompanied the expert group.

The expert group met on September 15 for preliminary talks prior to the site visit. They discussed the submitted application documents and the results of the written evaluation as well as questions that had been raised prior. Furthermore, they prepared the plan of the virtual site visit at the University.

During the site visit, experts conducted discussions with the University management, representatives of the Faculty of Health Sciences, the teaching staff of the program "Nursing" as well as with students currently studying in the program from both campus in Beirut and Tripoli.

The expert report is structured in compliance 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 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 site visit, the results of discussions with the representatives of the University, Faculty of Health Sciences and the Department of Nursing serve as the foundation for the statements made in the expert report.

4.1 Program aims and their implementation

Summary

The general objective of the Nursing program is to prepare competent professional graduates who can meet the rapid changes in the health field with excellence and international standards. In addition, the graduates are capable of serving in different health sectors in a comprehensive and a professional manner (SER 1.3.1). The program is designed to prepare nurses with a sense of responsibility and professionalism and to work and communicate effectively within a multi-disciplinary health care team to meet the needs of the community and the region, while accounting for professional ethics and being committed to lifelong learning.

Furthermore, the program intended learning outcome was set at four levels including: 1) knowledge and understanding, 2) intellectual, 3) practical, and professional 4) general and transferrable skills.

Knowledge and Understanding:

In the Nursing program, students are equipped with comprehensive knowledge and understanding to excel in nursing practice. They learn to identify principles while underlying the interaction between humans and their environment, influencing health, and they recognize the fundamental and health-related sciences underpinning nursing practice. The understanding of the physiological, psychosocial, and educational needs of healthcare consumers is a key aspect of their education. Students are trained to apply the role of nurses in health improvement, health promotion, and palliative care, and to design roles for healthcare teams and providers based on individual or group needs and healthcare settings. Professional scope of practice, principles of effective communication skills, concepts of leadership or management in healthcare, ethical issues, patient rights, evidence-based practice, research processes, and staying updated with nursing advancements are all integral to their knowledge and understanding.

Intellectual Skills:

The program nurtures intellectual skills critical for effective nursing practice. Students learn to synthesize knowledge derived from basic, health, and nursing sciences to develop professional skills and make informed decisions in nursing practice. They are trained to evaluate information logically using systematic approaches and formulate specific plans that consider time, workload, and

available resources within the context of holistic healthcare. Prioritizing actions based on reasoning skills is a key aspect of the students' training. Setting health educational goals according to identified needs and problems is emphasized, along with the ability to analyze current and emerging health needs and issues within society. The students also develop the capacity to design research proposals or independent projects based on the best available research evidence.

Practical and Professional Skills:

The program instills practical and professional skills essential for nursing practice. Students learn to gather pertinent information from a diverse range of sources, including electronic data, and conduct nursing assessments in various healthcare environments while adhering to guidelines and standards. Students are trained to deliver holistic, individualized, and centered care, applying healthcare promotion measures that encompass social, cultural, educational, technological, environmental, legal, ethical, economic, and spiritual considerations. Utilizing teaching and learning principles, students implement educational activities for patients, clients, and subordinates. The program emphasizes practicing in accordance with evidence-based guidelines and standards relevant to healthcare settings, fostering the ability to record data, nursing diagnoses, actions, and outcomes professionally. Furthermore, students gain competence in examining anatomical structures and features of specific human body organs (SER 1.3.3).

General and Transferable Skills:

In the study program, students are cultivated to possess a range of general and transferable skills. They learn to align with the organization's vision, mission, objectives, and values, utilizing evidence-based standards and guidelines to conduct and evaluate nursing performance. Students are trained to assume responsibility for safe, competent, and ethical healthcare, upholding accountability to the profession. Effective communication strategies are emphasized, enabling students to interact skillfully with individuals, groups, and communities using interpersonal, written, and technological methods. Moreover, students are encouraged to embody the roles of role models and mentors, sharing their knowledge and experiences with peers and experienced healthcare providers. Continuous commitment to personal and professional growth is fostered, and students are equipped with leadership skills, both formal and informal, to contribute effectively to healthcare settings. The program also values and teaches

the importance of respecting the cultural diversity of various groups and communities (SER 1.3.3).

Graduates seek for jobs in hospitals and different healthcare settings including: hospitals, primary health-care centers, schools, occupational health clinics, elderly homes, national and international health organizations, research centers, and universities (SER 1.4.1).

The Global Advisory Group of the World Health Organization acknowledges a global shortage of nurses, and Lebanon faces a particularly low nurse-to-population ratio with only 1.674 nurses per 1000 people compared to an international average of 9. Factors such as recruitment, retention, and migration of qualified nurses contribute to the nursing shortage challenge. The influx of Syrian refugees and the departure of skilled nurses to other countries have exacerbated the situation, compounded by economic crises. Graduated nurses leaving the country and the additional burdens of the COVID-19 pandemic and Beirut Blast have strained the healthcare system, increasing burnout risk. A preliminary survey of nursing graduates showed their distribution among various healthcare settings, highlighting the critical role of nurses in public health. Despite these challenges, there is a clear need for more nursing graduates to address the shortage in Lebanon (SER 1.4.2).

Judgement

The experts inquire about the impact of the previous accreditation in 2017. The University explains that due to the international accreditation, many international partnerships were created. Especially in the Nursing program, new partnerships with hospitals were built. According to the University, the number of students increased significantly and the students are aware that their University and study program meet the international standards. The international accreditation is also part of the continuous quality improvement process within the University. The experts are very positive about this development.

The experts also talk to the University about the ability to continue studying after the Bachelor's degree. The University assures a good connectivity to the University's Master's study programs in "Medical Surgical Nursing" or "Critical Care Nursing". The Master's programs are offered in Beirut only, and many

students are willing to commute from Tripoli to Beirut to continue their studies at BAU.

From the experts' point of view, the Bachelor's study program "Nursing" 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.

According to the explanation of the University and the students, the employability after the graduation is very high. Due to the shortage of health care workers in Lebanon, many graduates of the study program "Nursing" start working in hospitals and practices. Many of the former students continue their postgraduate studies after a few years of practical work.

Decision

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

4.2 Structure of the study program

Summary

The program comprises 45 modules, divided into four University Mandatory modules (UM), five University Elective modules (UE), 33 Core Nursing modules (CN), and three Major Elective modules (ME) offered by the department.

There are between six and seven modules in total provided for each semester. All modules have to be completed within one semester.

The list of modules offered:

Nr.	Title	Sem.	CP (not ECTS)
Semester 1			
1	Nursing fundamentals and Professional Ethics	1	3
2	Nursing fundamentals: Practice	1	2
3	Anatomy and physiology for nurses	1	3
4	Pathophysiology	1	3

5	Biochemistry	1	3
6	Human rights	1	1
7	English	1	2
	Total		17
	Semester 2		
8	Adult Health Nursing I: Theory	2	3
9	Adult health nursing I: Practice	2	2
10	Health assessment across life span	2	2
11	Microbiology	2	3
12	Emergency Care nursing: Theory	2	3
13	Pharmacology for Nurses	2	3
14	Arabic language	2	2
	Total		18
	Summer Semester 1		
15	Emergency Care Nursing: Practice		2
16	Elective		2
	Total		4
	Semester 3		
17	Adult Health Nursing II: Theory	3	3
18	Adult health nursing II: Practice	3	2
19	Critical Care Nursing: Theory	3	3
20	Critical Care Nursing: Practice	3	2
21	Psychosocial Aspects of Health and Illness	3	2
22	Communication skills	3	2
	Total		14
	Semester 4		
23	Adult Health Nursing III: Theory	4	3
24	Adult health nursing III: Practice	4	2
25	Research and evidence-based practice	4	2
26	Pediatric health and nursing: Theory	4	3
27	Pediatric health and nursing: Practice	4	2
28	Elective (general)	4	1
29	Elective	4	4

	Total		17
	Summer semester 2		
30	Nursing Practicum		4
	Total		4
	Semester 5		
31	Obstetric and Gynecological Health Nursing: Theory	5	2
32	Obstetric and Gynecological Health Nursing: Practice	5	2
33	Mental health and illness across the lifespan	5	1
34	Psychiatric and mental health nursing	5	3
35	Epidemiology and biostatistics	5	3
36	Elective (general)	5	5
	Total		16
	Semester 6		
37	Community and Gerontological Health Nursing: Theory	6	3
38	Community and Gerontological Health Nursing: Practice	6	2
39	Leadership and management in Nursing	6	3
40	Practicum II and Independent Project	6	4
41	Interprofessional education for healthcare	6	1
42	Elective	6	2
	Total		15
	Total:	6	106

Table 2: Module Oversight

Please refer to the module descriptions (Annex 2) for detailed information on the modules, including the level, the amount of assigned credits, language of instruction, pursued learning outcomes and skills, content of studies, and examinations foreseen in every course of the program. The following modules are studied with students from other faculties:

These courses are designed to provide foundational knowledge and skills to nursing students, enhance their communication abilities, broaden their educational

horizons, and prepare them for collaborative practice within a multidisciplinary healthcare team. Specifically:

- Basic Sciences Modules (BS) - Part of Nursing Program
 - o Biochemistry (BCHM215)
 - o Pathophysiology (PATH 203)
 - o Microbiology (BIOL226)
 - o Epidemiology and Biostatistics (COMM 201)
 - o Anatomy and physiology for nurses (NURS 215)

- General University Requirements
 - o Arabic (ARAB 001)
 - o English (ENGL 001)
 - o Human rights (BLAW 001)
 - o Communication skills (MCOM 001)

- Interprofessional Education for healthcare (IPEH 512)

Courses from other study programs are aligned with nursing program objectives through collaborative efforts among faculty members, course instructors, and quality assurance members. The aim is to ensure that course specifications match the intended learning outcomes and program goals. A designated nursing faculty member further reviews course blueprints to confirm alignment with specifications and coverage of intended learning outcomes. The department of nursing is the sole responsible for implementing the undergraduate program curriculum (SER 1.2.2)

The nursing program is structured over a span of three years, encompassing three distinct phases of coursework: Major Core Courses, General University Requirements, and Major Elective Courses.

The first year of study is dedicated to laying a strong foundation. It includes comprehensive basic sciences such as Anatomy and Physiology for Nurses, Pathophysiology, Biochemistry, and Microbiology. These are complemented by essential nursing components like Nursing Fundamentals and Professional Ethics, Nursing Fundamentals Practice, Adult Health Nursing I: Theory and Practice, Emergency Care Nursing: Theory and Practice, Pharmacology for Nurses, and Health Assessment Across the Life Span. The practical aspect is not neglected, as students engage in Nursing Fundamentals Practice, Emergency Care Nursing

Practice, Health Assessment Across Life Span, and Adult Health Nursing I: Practice (SER 1.3.4).

In the second year, the curriculum advances to more specialized nursing subjects. Courses in Adult Health Nursing II and III Theory and Practice, Critical Care Nursing: Theory and Practice, Pediatric Health Nursing: Theory and Practice, and Psychosocial Aspects of Health and Illness equip students with advanced knowledge and skills. Research and evidence-based practice are integrated into the curriculum to foster a more profound understanding of nursing methodologies. The practical aspect of the program evolves into more intensified and specialized experiences in Nursing Practicum I, Critical Care Nursing: Practice, Adult Health Nursing II and III: Practice, and Pediatric Health Nursing: Practice (SER 1.3.4).

The third and final year encompasses a comprehensive exploration of various nursing disciplines. Students engage with courses such as Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing, Mental Health and Illness across the Life Span, and Community and Gerontological Health Nursing: Theory and Practice. An innovative Interprofessional Education for Health Care course introduces students to interdisciplinary collaboration. Additionally, essential skills in Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Leadership and Management in Nursing, and Nursing Practicum II are imparted. The independent project course encourages students to delve into conducting scientific research and a self-directed exploration (SER 1.3.4).

Throughout the program, the Nursing Simulation Lab plays an important role in bridging theory and practice. It provides a realistic and secure environment for students to refine clinical skills and decision-making, enabling them to learn from both successes and mistakes. This practical experience bolsters confidence, competence, and mastery of psychomotor skills. The curriculum is structured with basic sciences concentrated in the initial semesters, gradually transitioning to more clinically oriented and specialized courses. This approach ensures a gradual and comprehensive development of students' skills and knowledge, ultimately preparing them for a successful and impactful nursing career (SER 1.3.4).

Didactic concepts

The Nursing Department is transitioning from traditional teacher-centered methods to student-focused, active learning approaches. The program employs diverse teaching strategies including interactive lectures, role play, team-based learning, case studies, group discussions, and problem-based learning. Online platforms like

Moodle, Teams, and Zoom are used to support blended learning. Practical experience involves Nursing Simulation Lab sessions and clinical training in healthcare settings. Simulation-based education offers safe opportunities for clinical skill practice and decision-making. Practical experiences, coaching sessions, and faculty office hours contribute to developing practical and professional skills. Students can approach advisors and faculty members during office hours for academic guidance and support (SER 1.2.4).

Furthermore, The Department of Nursing embraces technology for a dynamic learning experience. Multimedia and electronic methods supplement traditional teaching, creating interactive environments. Upgraded classrooms feature multimedia tools, and specialized centers offer internet access. The i-Connect Portal streamlines operations, including online registration and database access. Moodle integration changed learning. It offers customizable course materials, quizzes, and forums accessible anytime. Collaboration between students and instructors is active (SER 1.2.5).

According to the University, amid the pandemic, virtual tools became crucial. Zoom and Microsoft Teams facilitated lectures, meetings, and seminars. Moodle remained essential for course content, exams, and assignments. Microsoft Teams continued for meetings and seminars beyond the pandemic (SER 1.2.5).

Internship and practical relevance

The curriculum emphasizes early clinical exposure, integrating theory and practice throughout the three academic years. A clinical manual is used for each course with clinical aspects, aligning with intended learning outcomes. Practicum courses, a crucial phase, systematically review and retrain clinical skills gained during academic years using a clinical logbook. Clinical rotations occur in various healthcare settings starting the second semester of the program and continuing during summer terms all through the final sixth semester, allowing practical application of acquired knowledge and skills. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the nursing department ensured required clinical training and practicum hours through compensatory measures like extended shifts and condensed schedules (SER 1.2.6).

A designated faculty member oversees clinical rotations, ensuring effective communication between the department and clinical sites. Sites receive course specifications and evaluation forms. Students are given a clinical rotation manual

and are guided in creating portfolios showcasing their activities. The clinical coordinator supervises, observes, and reports on student progress to the Head of Department. As such, Experienced Clinical Instructors (Cis) guide students through diverse nursing disciplines. These courses are coordinated by academic faculty, who collaborate with Cis, experts in their respective fields. Regular meetings address student progress, administrative matters, and healthcare improvements. Cis' roles and responsibilities are outlined in the Clinical Training Manual. Workshops and surveys identify areas for enhancement (SER 1.2.6).

Clinical training occurs in university hospitals, ensuring uniform experiences documented through rotation records. Careful selection of clinical sites aligns with intended learning outcomes. University hospitals provide a consistent and standardized clinical environment, facilitating comprehensive learning (SER 1.2.6).

In correlation to the theoretical parts of the program, this real-world application enhances problem-solving abilities and nursing interventions. Clinical experience integrates classroom and simulation lab knowledge. Evidence-based practice from theoretical courses guides standardized patient care. A research project contributes to professional and practical goals. Clinical rotations bridge theory and practice, fostering meaningful learning and workforce readiness (SER 1.2.6).

Lastly, the Nursing Department ensures clinical rotations' quality through a comprehensive approach. Clinical instructors are selected based on qualifications and experience. They, along with the clinical coordinator, play a key role in students' education. Students undergo orientation, covering hospital policies, safety regulations, and ethical aspects. Weekly meetings assess student progress, addressing weaknesses (SER 1.2.6).

Upon rotation completion, a practical/oral exam is conducted by the hospital with the clinical coordinator's involvement. The department simulates an official entry to practice exam, providing a booklet with sample questions. Graduates must pass this exam and acquire a practice license from the Ministry of Health and Order of Nurses in Lebanon (SER 1.2.6).

To enhance clinical experience, students evaluate clinical sites and instructors, providing feedback for improvements. Placements in diverse, high-quality clinical sites enrich skills. Graduates' employment in recognized institutions attests to the program's clinical quality (SER 1.2.6).

International aspects of the curriculum

The program aligns with international guidelines, producing competent nurses for careers or further education globally. The curriculum is improved through benchmarking against accredited university curricula (SER 1.2.8). Also, the language of instruction in the study program is English.

Internationality of the study program

BAU is engaged in numerous international projects, especially with EU institutions like TEMPUS and ERASMUS MUNDUS. The Erasmus Mundus program enables student and staff exchanges. BAU collaborates with European and Arab universities, promoting mobility and credit transfer (SER 1.2.9).

Recent inter-institutional agreements with Arctic University of Norway and Pavia University support student and staff exchanges. The Nursing Department actively engages in mobility projects with various universities, such as Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, University of Minho, Arctic University of Norway, Ataturk University, and Pavia University (SER 1.2.9).

Research in the study program

The Nursing Department integrates research activities into the curriculum to enhance students' professional skills, expertise, and lifelong learning abilities. The Nursing Practicum II and Independent Project (NURS 416) course involves students in the entire research process, while other courses develop research skills. Dedicated courses like Research, Evidence Based Practice, and Epidemiology and Biostatistics equip students with scientific research tools. Students engage with faculty-published research articles, encouraged to participate in research events, and stay updated with faculty publications on the research wall. This approach instills a research-oriented mindset in students, fostering their growth as capable professionals (SER 1.2.7).

Judgement

The Bachelor study program "Nursing" has a course-based structure and a course-related examination system. Descriptions of the courses are embedded within course syllabi. The course syllabus contains information on the module number, level and semester, module title, credit hours, language, learning outcomes, goals,

and skills, content of the module and the examination. The experts value the detailed syllabus, which enables students to prepare adequately for the individual lectures as well as the scheduled examinations.

The combination and succession of the courses of the study program are consistent with the specified qualification objectives (described earlier). It is assured that students receive the support and guidance they need for the organization and accomplishment of assignments and the learning process in general.

During the round of talks, the experts inquired about interdisciplinary taught modules. According to the University, the General University Requirement courses total to 16 credit hours and can be studied with students from other faculties. They comprise courses like Arabic, English, Human Rights and Communication Skills and also further elective courses. This common learning experience consists of courses that are selectively designed to help students develop their learning skills of writing, speaking, critical reading and thinking, and logical argumentation as well as introduce students to the principles of human rights and its foundations. In addition, an interprofessional education for health care course (IPEH) is offered as an interdisciplinary course in collaboration with all other health and medical faculties in the university. The experts are convinced of the strong interdisciplinary and interprofessional approach of the Faculty of Health Sciences. The staff of the different study programs are in a constant professional exchange.

Furthermore, the experts discuss the strong medical orientation of the curriculum. The University is aware of the focus. According to the experts, the topics nursing theory and ethics in nursing are rather underrepresented and recommend to further strengthen these topics. The University explains that nursing practitioners and further stakeholders are closely involved in the contents of the study program.

The experts further inquired about the graduation project. The teaching staff of the study program "Nursing" explains that the senior project is carried out in groups of four to five students and the goal is to bring theory into practice. The students choose a project with room for quality improvement, collect data on the topic, and write a paper. Some of the papers were published according to the students and teaching staff, which is viewed very positively by the experts. The University also explains that students are encouraged to participate in research projects or pitch their own research ideal from an early point in their studies to spread the research culture of the University. The University organizes an

international conference on nursing with international speakers and hands on simulations. The students appreciate this opportunity to connect with other students and speakers within their professional community.

The experts and the University discuss student-centered teaching methods. The University explains its developments in moving towards interactive, multimethod teaching within the last years. The efforts are clearly recognizable, and engaging students in critical discussions is intended.

The arrangement of internships in the study programs allows acquisition of credits. During the interviews, the experts learned that a clinical manual is used for each course with clinical aspects, aligning with intended learning outcomes. Clinical rotations occur in various healthcare settings starting the second semester of the program and continuing during summer terms all through the final sixth semester, allowing practical application of acquired knowledge and skills. A designated faculty member oversees clinical rotations, ensuring effective communication between the department and clinical sites. The clinical coordinator supervises, observes, and reports on student progress to the Head of Department. Clinical instructors are selected based on qualifications and experience. They, along with the clinical coordinator, play a key role in students' education. According to the University, the number of partnerships with hospitals, mainly in Beirut and Tripoli, were increased during the last years. Besides the clinical rotation, the Nursing Simulation Lab plays a significant role in the practical education of the students. The experts appreciate that supervisors from both the University and the clinic are assigned to oversee students during their clinical placements. The students report that they feel well looked after by both the university and the clinical staff during the internship.

The university attaches great importance to internationality, like for example, international professional exchange. The University further extended its partnerships with universities abroad since the last accreditation. The number of outgoing and incoming students from/to Norway or Italy is growing. According to the University, research oriented mobility is possible as well. The experts see this development as positive.

Thus, the experts conclude that the study program aims at providing students with specialized and interdisciplinary knowledge as well as professional, methodological and general competences. Furthermore, 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 seems to make the workload manageable.

Decision

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

4.3 Admission and Feasibility

Summary

Admission to the institution and study program involves a single procedure, with tailored entrance exams based on program preferences. To be admitted, applicants need:

- Lebanese Secondary School Certificate or equivalent,
- pass the entrance exam (covering English and Aptitude Test), and
- undergo an interview assessing attributes, motivation, and career goals,
- English language requirements must be met through the University's English Exam, TOEFL, IELTS, or SAT scores (IGCSE/GCE completers are exempt from the BAU English Exam).

Those not meeting English exam criteria can join the Intensive English Program. The Admission Council assesses applicants based on qualifications and program capacity. Sociology, Economics, and Humanities certificate holders might require prerequisite courses. Accepted students undergo specified medical tests and receive an enrollment file before registration to guide them (SER 1.5.1).

Full details on admission requirements, transfer student procedures, and other policies are accessible on the BAU admission website. The entire admission process, along with foundational and freshman programs, registration, academic probation, and withdrawal, is outlined in Annex E "Rules and Regulations for Undergraduate Programs".

Judgement

The admission policies and procedures along with the requirements are properly documented and made publicly available. The experts find these requirements fitting and proportional to the study program: Therefore, it was determined that

the admission and student selection procedures correspond to the standards and learning objectives of the study program.

The experts determine a relatively high number of exams to be passed during the "Nursing" study program. The university credibly conveys that the workload of the students is monitored. Asking the students on site about their workload, they consider the workload, the amount, and the examination cycle as appropriate. The type as well as the time of the different examinations is defined and communicated to the students transparently and at the beginning of the course.

The experts confirm that the feasibility of the study program is guaranteed and the amount of student workload is appropriate. As a whole, the organization of the education process ensures the successful implementation of the study program.

Advisors and counselors are available to students who find themselves in need of academic or administrative assistance. Every faculty member holds the position of an academic advisor to a specific group of students. The students on site confirm a very well working consultation and advising system. The teaching staff is easily approachable and students are provided with academic support and guidance required for the accomplishment of the program-related assignments. Students are also provided with social support required for the organization of the learning process. There is a psychological clinic and psychological counselling for students that are affected by trauma, for example.

According to the University, there is a financial aid system for students. Scholarships are, on the one hand, offered to the top three students of the class, and, on the other hand, for financially disadvantaged students.

Decision

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

4.4 Examination system and transparency

Summary

The University uses a continuous assessment approach to measure students' achievement of each course's intended learning outcomes throughout the semester. The Nursing program's courses have specific learning outcomes aligned

with the program's overall intended learning outcomes. These outcomes are evaluated through various assessment methods, including written exams, quizzes, practical exams, reports, seminars, presentations, classroom discussions, and mock colloquiums. Students are informed about the type, timing, and weighting of each assessment at the beginning of each course. The assessments are designed following the "Guidelines for Student Assessment" (Annex F) to ensure fair and comprehensive evaluation. Additionally, a test blueprint is established to ensure all course outcomes are adequately represented in the exams (SER 1.2.3).

According to university regulations, the course's instructor is asked to present at least two written exams during the semester if the course is mainly theoretical without any laboratory or clinical sessions (SER 1.2.3).

Considering the aforementioned, the timing of exams for undergraduate courses is designed to achieve an optimum and highly appropriate scheme of assessment and on a continuous basis, taking into consideration variations in the types and weighing of assessments. The assessments are carried out as follows:

- Weeks 1 – 7 comprise 30% of the total final grade,
- weeks 8 – 12 comprise 20% of the total final grade,
- weeks 13 – 14 comprise 10% of the total final grade,
- week 15 consists of 40% of the total final grade (Final Exam).

For all types of assessment forms, excluding final exams, students facing legitimate reasons for not taking these exams can apply for re-examination. The course instructor assesses the merit of the petition and recommends approval or denial to the Department's council, adhering to the University's prescribed by-laws. Decisions for internal assessment procedures are made based on individual cases' merits. Students who couldn't attend the final course examination or fulfil some course requirements due to uncontrollable conditions may apply for an incomplete grade "I" within a week from the final exam's date. This option is available if they have completed at least 80% of the course requirements and gain approval from the course instructor. The unfinished requirements must be fulfilled by the end of the first week of the following semester, or else a failing grade "F" will be recorded on the student transcript for that course (SER 1.2.3).

Lastly, the University has a non-discriminatory policy towards students with disabilities, providing support tailored to their individual needs. The department council assesses individual cases and recommends appropriate compensation measures to ensure equal opportunities for success. For instance, students with

psychological challenges are offered rescheduling opportunities and extended time in their exams. Furthermore, the University also offers counselling services, assistive technology, and other resources to support students with disabilities and chronic illnesses. However, it is essential to note that the nursing profession requires a high level of physical and mental fitness, and students whose disabilities affect their technical standards may not be able to join the program (SER 1.2.3).

Judgement

The University uses a continuous assessment process to ensure the quality of education for its students. The study programs have 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.

From the experts' point of view, the examinations serve to determine whether the envisaged qualification objectives have been achieved. These examinations are focused on students' knowledge and competences. Nevertheless, 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 high number of assessments during and at the end of each semester manageable. The frequency of examinations, as well as their organizations, is appropriate.

The University guarantees that students with disabilities or chronic illnesses receive compensation regarding time limits, attendance and formal requirements of the study process as well as all final and course-related performance records.

Information concerning the study program, process of education, admission requirements and the compensation regulations for students with disabilities are documented and published on the website.

Decision

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

4.5 Teaching staff and material equipment

Summary

The program employs one full-time associate professor, three assistant professors, two lecturers, and one lab manager. Furthermore, a total of 13 adjunct professors contribute to the teaching staff (refer to teachers' CV Annex 4).

The expected teaching load for core academic faculty is about an average of 15 - 24 contact hours/week, which is documented in the contracts between the University and the faculty members. Part-time faculty teaching hours will be based on the type of agreement with the university (SER 2.1.1).

Out of the total credit hours, 84% of classes are taught by core and adjunct professors. The remaining 16% is taught by members of other faculties in the university. These comprise courses shared with other faculties.

The student ration is based on full-time instructors. In Beirut, the student/faculty ratio is 70/7 or 10 students per professor. In Tripoli, the student faculty ration is 84/3 or 28 students per professor.

Furthermore, the University assures to focus on the academic staff development to enhance the capabilities of its staff by providing them, whenever possible, with professional-development workshops and training courses that are usually organized by the Deanship of Academic Development and Quality (SER 2.1.3). According to the University, BAU also encourages the participation of academic and non-academic staff in Tempus and Erasmus Mundus programs to give them the opportunity to recognize new practices that enhance their skills, performance, and attributes. All faculty members are also encouraged to attend national and international conferences, symposia and workshops, by giving them financial support for transportation, registration fees and living allowance for the event duration as well as to publish their scientific research works in top-ranked journals (SER 2.1.3; Annex B: University strategy).

Concerning further human resources, the Nursing Department assigns two faculty members to oversee clinical rotations in campus and in hospital venues (SER 2.2.1). Two full-time lab managers as well as four part-time lab instructors are available for tutoring practical sessions, lab management, and maintenance (SER 2.3.1).

Premises

The Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS), which also includes the Department of Nursing, is located on the fifth and sixth floor of the Hariri building on the Beirut campus. That space encompasses six classrooms, teaching offices, the dean's office, the registrar's office, the student affairs office, faculty members' offices. The students benefit from various laboratories (SER 2.3.1):

- Nursing simulation laboratory
- Biochemistry laboratory
- Anatomy laboratory
- Nutrition and Dietetics laboratory
- General chemistry laboratory
- Organic chemistry laboratory
- Pharmaceutical microbiology

The FHS in the Tripoli branch is situated in the E-block, which is a three-floor building. It consists of various facilities such as the director's office, six academic staff offices, a room for part-time staff, and an administrative assistant room. The building also comprises six classrooms, along with a ground floor hall. The students benefit from various laboratories:

- Nursing simulation Laboratory
- Biochemistry Lab
- Microbiology Lab
- Zoology Lab

Additionally, the department cooperates with a variety of hospital and private laboratories (Annex 11). The detailed equipment available in the laboratories is listed in the department status report. Two full-time laboratory managers are always available to instruct, demonstrate and assist students with experimental setup as well as keep up with basic maintenance and calibration of equipment. All laboratory experiments and instructions are available in the Laboratory manuals; besides, health and safety guidelines are posted inside and outside the lab to ensure the safety of students.

Library

The University contains eight libraries spread among the Beirut site, Debbieh site, and Tripoli branches. The Medical Sciences Library is located in Beirut and in Tripoli campus and serves students of all Medical Sector Faculties of the University. The

library can accommodate 114 users in Beirut Campus and 72 users in Tripoli campus at the same time which can benefit from the photocopying, printing and scanning machines available to serve users' needs. Interlibrary and interlibrary loan services are also available (SER 2.3.2).

The Library of Health Sciences contains 1,022 books, 175 dissertations and 173 multimedia items in the Beirut Campus (SER 2.3.2). The inventory can be found in physical or electronic format. Students also have access to several electronic library full-text databases, such as Science Direct, Scopus, Access Medicine, CINAHL Plus and MEDLINE Complete.

An electronic list of new arrivals will be issued to faculties concerned to be distributed to faculty members. Then books will be delivered to the medical sciences library (SER 2.3.2).

The University library has an agreement with the Lebanese Academic Library Consortium (LALC) since 2011, to attain better prices from suppliers for electronic resource subscriptions (SER 2.3.2).

Library opening hours are between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, on Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Students have access to the multi search database "EBSCO", which enables them to inquire in other databases. This service is offered free of charge to all faculty, staff and registered students through the BAU portal system "I-connect". Through this portal, students will have access to an automatically add or drop their courses, manage their schedules, look up information about examinations, their grades and cumulative GPA.

Furthermore, "I-connect" enables students to check their emails and keep online communication between them and their instructors. This tool also allows instructors to send their students announcements regarding exams, assignments and can safely upload the lecture notes on it. This system provides remote and on campus access to the electronic library using subscription credentials. Mobile access is also available using the QR-code Reader App (SER 2.3.2; SER 1.6.7).

A computer lab, offered by the University, is also available for students to allow them internet access. Recently, BAU has begun providing campus-wide wireless internet for all its registered students (SER 2.3.1).

Judgement

New teaching staff is thoroughly briefed about the programs and their teaching responsibilities before they start teaching. Overall, the teaching and academic staff at the BAU 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 experts conclude that there is a strong corporate identity and positive group dynamic among the University and the faculty administration. As motivations to teach at BAU, the faculty cites the university's good reputation, good working atmosphere, and support mechanisms related to research and academic development.

The experts find the amount of human resources allocated to the program to be sufficient to carry out its functions. The teaching staff is well qualified and in possession of academic and technical credentials and experience adequate to their tasks.

The University informs its employees about opportunities for personal and professional development transparently, and actively encourages their participation in workshops, training courses and conferences intended to improve their abilities, which is confirmed during the talks with the staff on site.

The University attaches special value to supporting and promoting young scientists. Top students are supported to work as lecturers after graduation and get the opportunity to gain experience as instructors during their studies.

The skills labs are equipped with all relevant devices. From the experts' point of view, the quality of the laboratories and clinical areas, that used to train students in the program, are sufficient.

The two University locations, Beirut and Tripoli, work well together. The curriculum is identical in both locations. The exchange is very active on a student and teaching staff level. The students report that there are busses between the campus. As a whole, it was ascertained by the experts that the Bachelor study program "Nursing" has ample teaching facilities at its disposals.

Decision

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

4.6 Quality assurance

Summary

Beirut Arab University has a Quality Assurance Center (UQAC), whose main function is to evaluate the academic performance of different faculties and to facilitate the improvement of the educational process within the institution (Annexes 5 and 6: Faculty Handbook). Every faculty of the University has a Quality Assurance Unit that is supervised by the faculty dean.

The quality assurance system of the University includes the following procedures:

- Course evaluation questionnaires, in which students evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, conducted online through I-connect,
- students' satisfaction survey (Exit Survey), in which students evaluate the availability of learning resources and the support offered by the University and its units,
- preparation of the staff development program in order to improve the qualifications of the academic staff members,
- academic staff-members evaluation, which is monitored by the dean of the faculty,
- the University's Quality Assurance Committee carries out site visits of each faculty once per semester in order to monitor the academic performance, with a special focus on undergraduate programs and the experiential learning ones. The Committee of the QAC prepares a visit report and forwards it to the University President, who then sends a copy of the report to the relevant dean to take appropriate actions.

In the Nursing Department, the curriculum has been achieved and enhanced based on international benchmark standards (SER 1.2.7). This continuous enhancement is supervised by the faculties' quality assurance units (FQAU) and the University Quality Assurance Center (UQAC), which both perform regular internal auditing to assess the academic performance of the department and make sure the curricular changes are compatible with the University rules, regulations, and policies.

The University claims to seek excellence in research. Due to this, the University has established a deanship for graduate studies as well as an Institutional Review Board (IRB) (see Annex C), which is committed to applying BAU research policy

The Department of Nursing assures that quality assurance is monitored by all members. They are expected to be involved in curriculum planning and development, meeting monthly at the departmental council to discuss departmental issues and concerns including curricular enhancement, staff members' issues, students' issues and quality assurance related issues (SER 1.6.2).

At the beginning of the academic year, a course coordinator is assigned under the supervision of the dean. By the end of each semester, a course report is written related to each course offered during the relevant semester. This report includes basic course information, topics taught and their relevant hours, statistical information about students' attendance, students' assessment and examination results, used teaching and learning methods, administrative constraints, students' evaluation, course enhancement suggestions and an action plan for the following year. Any recommendations regarding revision of the course intended learning outcomes, the assessment method, modification of the course content; requirements for special tools/equipment for implementing the course objectives or any other difficulty faced during the semester are stated in the course report. Then, the course report is submitted by the termination of the course. Noted issues will be discussed in the departmental council and then raised at the faculty council. The course report will also be analyzed by the UQAC representatives during their regular visits to the faculty every semester to evaluate the academic performance (SER 1.6.3).

Other measures taken to course evaluation and enhancement are through feedbacks from stakeholders who are members of the faculty's Advisory Committee, as well as feedback from the students. Moreover, BAU has also included student representatives in the faculty's committees and councils, to ensure their participation in decision-making, to get their feedback and to ensure their satisfaction (SER 1.6.3).

According to the University, practical relevance of the study program is assessed through feedback obtained from students during their rotations at different hospitals and the evaluation of the instructors from the rotation sites regarding

their satisfaction with the students' performance. In addition, the Nursing department follows-up on graduated students working in various settings.

The feedback and comments of the stakeholders, who are members of the Advisory Committee of the faculty, are also of utmost priority to assess the study program. The feedback and follow-up data are collected and discussed in the Faculty Council (SER 1.6.4).

The University assures that all relevant information in concerning the study program is published on the University's website. Information posted includes but is not limited to the mission and vision of the department, program overview with course descriptions, degree requirements and study plan. Furthermore, the I-connect system provides information to the students about their academic requirements; in terms of number of credits taken or left, the complete academic plan and their grades.

In concern with the support of students at the University, every faculty member is assigned as an academic advisor to a group of students, providing them with counselling and guidance. The academic advisor assists in course selection and helps to solve any issues or problems his or her advisees might encounter throughout their enrollment.

All newly enrolled students attend several orientation sessions organized by the Student Affairs Deanship with the participation of the staff members of the faculty. New students also receive a student file, brochures, and a CD containing information about the faculty and departments, requirements for graduation, duties, and rights and the registration for university, faculty, and department mandatory and elective courses.

Judgement

From the experts' point of view, the University has a well-structured system of quality assurance spread across all of its units. The University has developed and documented a concept of quality assurance in the education process, teaching and research, which serves as the basis for the quality-oriented development and implementation of the study program "Nursing".

On site, the University explains the relevance of the quality assurance system at the University. For example, a SWOT analysis is carried out every two years to

set new goals and create an action plan to close possible loops. Feedback from students is highly appreciated and taken into consideration.

The results of the internal quality assurance management are applied for 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. The experts appreciate that regularly meetings on different levels are held to improve the study programs.

Decision

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

4.7 Gender equality and equal opportunities

Summary

BAU is committed to create an atmosphere of intellectual freedom to support personal growth, and calls for respecting differences among people. According to the University, they believe in the equality of people, the value of individual differences, and the unlimited potential of the human spirit. They have a vision of being a multiracial, multicultural, multi-religion and multigenerational academic community.

BAU has its own Code of Ethics (Annex A), a document that is meant to determine the basic ethical standards for the conduct of persons active within the context of the University, to adhere to the freedom of scientific research and teaching, to promote social responsibility and equality among individuals regardless of race, religion, family status, gender, age, physical disability or social status, and to encourage creative thinking as well as constructive criticism. In case of any violation of the University's Code of Ethics, the dean of the faculty issues a misconduct citation for the students' breach of the University's customs and rules, and/or performing prohibited acts as mentioned in the Code of Ethics and Conduct. If three misconduct citations are issued throughout the enrollment period, students may be suspended by the University Council (Annex E: Rules and Regulations).

Judgement

During the visit, it became clear that the University has a well established concept for gender equality. Both the students and the University report that the concept is being put into practice.

The University demonstrates its commitment to the provision of equal opportunities for all students and shows openness for diversity and social development. Overall, the experts conclude that the University's actions on the provision of gender equality and promotion of equal opportunities for students with particular living circumstances are implemented in a transparent manner.

Decision

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

5 Conclusion

The experts see the positive development of the University over the last five years since the last accreditation.

Overall, the experts were impressed and highlight the strong commitment and engagement demonstrated by all levels of the Beirut Arab University. The student-centered philosophy of the University is highly appreciated, as students are treated with care and respect. The structure of the Bachelor's study program "Nursing" is clear, with a good balance between theoretical and practical work. The program follows both national and international requirements and uses modern learning techniques to create a well-rounded curriculum.

The examination system is well-regulated and fair, with a variety of tools available to assess student progress. The staff is highly qualified and there is a good balance between research and teaching. The quality assurance system in place is robust. Evaluation results are used to make changes. The institution has non-discriminatory practices in place for admission and promotes gender equality.

Based on the information from written documents and the results of the site visit, the experts concluded that the Bachelor study program "Nursing" offered at the Beirut Arab 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 topics nursing theory and ethics in nursing should be further strengthened.

6 Decision of the accreditation commission

Decision of the accreditation commission February 15, 2024

This resolution of the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS is based on the University's application, as well as the expert review and the site visit covered in the Assessment Report. The Accreditation Commission has also taken the response opinion of the University regarding the study program into account.

The site visit of the University took place on November 15-16, 2023, according to the previously agreed-upon schedule.

The accreditation procedure is structured according to the Accreditation Criteria developed by the AHPGS. The Accreditation Criteria are developed by the AHPGS in close accordance with the existing criteria and requirements valid in the Federal Republic of Germany and 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 Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS discussed the procedural documents and the vote of the expert group regarding the Assessment Report.

The Bachelor study program requires the obtainment of 106 Credit Hours according to the internal credit hour system. 106 Credit Hours are equivalent to 212 Credit Points according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The regulated study period in the program "Nursing" is three years. The study program comprises 45 modules, divided into four University Mandatory modules (UM), five University Elective modules (UE), 33 Core Nursing modules (CN), and three Major Elective modules (ME) offered by the department. The language of instruction is English. The Bachelor study program "Nursing" is completed with awarding of the academic degree "Bachelor of Sciences in Nursing". Admission takes place every fall semester. The first cohort of students was admitted to the study program in the academic year 2005/2006.

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

The Bachelor study program "Nursing" is accredited for the duration of five years until September 30, 2029.

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 recommendation articulated in the Assessment Report.